

Berlin – Paris: Transnational Aspects of French Art Auctions in the Middle of the Nineteenth Century

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In a previously unrecognised obituary for the Paris-based German art dealer and art historian Otto Mündler by Wilhelm Bode, Mündler is praised as a source of knowledge for the Berlin museum and described as an institutionally external actor who actually assisted with acquisitions for various German collections during both the 1850s and 1860s.¹ Bode commends Mündler as a patriotic art agent ‘who, in the diaspora, in the humblest of circumstances, always upheld his Germanness and was a credit to it.’² Mündler had moved to Paris in 1835, in his early twenties, but had kept ties to Berlin in particular. In the following text he serves as a case study for the international circulation of knowledge and artworks.³ The other case study in this text is the Berlin-based dealership Lepke, run by Louis Eduard Lepke and later his son Rudolph Lepke, who established ties with Paris, a transfer in the opposite direction to Mündler. While Mündler’s success in the market was due to his knowledge of old masters, with a certain focus on the Italian Renaissance, Lepke connected markets for living artists between the two cities.

In the valuation of works of art, the setting of a price is the last step, the result of a discursive attribution of quality; in this regard, aesthetic and commercial evaluations merge. The structure of this mediation is characterised by

1 On Otto Mündler, see: Tilmann von Stockhausen, “Otto Mündler als Agent der Berliner Gemäldegalerie,” *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 39 (1997): 99–113; Rolf Kultzen, “Einiges über die kunsthistorischen Leitbilder Otto Mündlers,” in *Hülle und Fülle. Festschrift für Tilmann Buddensieg*, ed. Andreas Beyer (Alfter: VDG, 1993), 323–35; Jaynie Anderson, “Otto Mündler and his Travel Diary,” in *The Travel Diaries of Otto Mündler, 1855–1858*, eds. Carol Togneri Dowd and Burton Frederickson (London: The Walpole Society, 1985), 7–64; Barbara Götzte, “Quellen zur Kunstgeschichte. Otto Mündler—Tagebücher,” *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 39 (1997): 115–22.

2 Wilhelm von Bode, “Die Großherzogl. Gemälde-Galerie im Augusteum zu Oldenburg,” *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* 42 (1907): 284.

3 Circulation is understood here in the sense of both economic traffic and cultural transfer. For methodological reflections on the topic of transnational circulation, see the introduction and the texts in: Catherine Dossin, Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, and Thomas Da Costa Kaufmann, *Circulations in the Global History of Art* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015).

the concept of the “knowledge market;” knowledge that is ordered and able to spread is essential in order to stabilise the accumulation of value.⁴ The boundaries of this circulation of knowledge are fuzzy. It begins in the market and in museums, but also in scholarship. An extended definition of circulation must therefore consider not only objects, actors and money, but also knowledge itself and its media. Such a model of transnational exchange can accommodate both aesthetic and economic aspects. In this way it does not deal with the art market as a clearly separate sphere beyond the art world, but instead relates economic aspects to supposedly purely artistic ones.

In the nineteenth century there was considerable exchange between the Berlin and Paris art worlds, with a steady transfer of individuals, artworks and knowledge between the two metropolises. This is reflected in sources including exhibition catalogues, press articles, lists of pupils, address books and correspondence. However, documents from the art market also contribute to the picture of this transnational exchange. During this period, auctions developed into a leading forum of the art world in Paris. This was a time when individual galleries could be places of transnational exchange; however, Parisian auctions were also central hubs with large audiences. Auctions became a catalyst of transnational encounters in the art world. This text aims to contribute to the field of transnational art history from the perspective of art market research.⁵ It seeks to contribute to the research on the Parisian auction market in the middle of the nineteenth century,⁶ and on transfers between Paris and Berlin.⁷ The central questions explored here are how the French auction market can be positioned in the context of transnational art history, and how it supported the varied processes of circulation. These questions will be answered by examining several auctions related to Lepke and Müндler in the 1850s, as well as the networks around these events.

4 Isabelle Graw, *High Price: Art between the Market and Celebrity Culture* (Köln: Sternberg Press, 2009), 9.

5 The term “transnational” is used here instead of “international” as this text is not only about two art dealers who built up international networks, but also about how they actively moved objects, knowledge and themselves across national borders. In the example of Otto Müндler we witness very specific transfers between primarily Paris and Berlin, but also including Italian cities, Amsterdam and London.

6 Manuel Charpy, “Le Théâtre des objets. Espaces privés, culture matérielle et identité bourgeoise” (PhD diss., University François-Rabelais de Tours, 2010); Nicholas Green “Circuits of Production, Circuits of Consumption: The Case of Mid-Nineteenth-Century French Art Dealing,” *Art Journal* 1 (1989): 29–34.

7 France Nerlich, *La Peinture française en Allemagne, 1815–1870* (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l’Homme, 2010), 235–50; Stockhausen, “Agent der Berliner Gemäldegalerie.”

The text will first summarise the situation in 1852 at the newly created auction house Hôtel Drouot in Paris and the early history of the Lepke firm in Berlin. It will then show how the Drouot was the site of Lepke's early auction endeavours, inspiring their use of auctions in Berlin. The second case study of Otto Mündler will then show how this far more mobile actor used Paris as a platform to reach back to Berlin, but also to circulate between Italian cities, London and Amsterdam.

The Hôtel Drouot

The art markets in Berlin and Paris in the middle of the nineteenth century are marked by an imbalance of art auctions in the two cities. Lepke's auction house in Berlin opened in 1869, whereas in Paris the monumental auction house Hôtel Drouot existed since 1852, and auction houses specialising in art had existed since the second half of the eighteenth century (Fig. 6.1). French auctioneers held a state-sanctioned monopoly. In the nineteenth century they were organised in a chamber and their number was limited to eighty.⁸ The auctioneers' monopoly covered the various forms of auction, which included judicial sales, the sale of seized property and estate auctions. Apart from this, there were voluntary auctions by dealers, collectors, artists and private individuals, meaning that the items traded ranged from everyday objects, fashion and wine, to horses, books and paintings.

The Hôtel Drouot was the central venue of French art auctions in the second half of the nineteenth century. Auctioneers had opened the space in 1852 and centralised the auctions there. Hundreds of auctions were then held each month;⁹ every day, thousands of objects were on display.¹⁰ In the 1850s, this monumental centre for the art trade stood in stark contrast to how things were done in Berlin. The beginning of a relevant art auction market in Berlin is associated with the work of Rudolph Lepke, who successfully established an auction house in the 1870s and 1880s.¹¹ Berlin was considered an insignificant place for the art market during the preceding decades—one which was primarily of

8 Isabelle Rouge-Ducos, *Le crieur et le marteau. Histoire des commissaires-priseurs de Paris (1801–1945)* (Paris: Édition Belin, 2013), 33.

9 Archives de Paris, Paris, Déclarations des Ventes 1854, D1E3 107.

10 Jules Champfleury, *L'hôtel des commissaires-priseurs* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1867), vi.

11 According to Malkowsky, the first auctions of Lepke took place in the 1860s. See: Georg Malkowsky, *Rudolph Lepke's Kunst-Auctions-Haus. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Berliner Kunsthandels* (Berlin, 1912), 39.



FIGURE 6.1 M.A. Texier, *Une vente de tableaux, à l'Hôtel des Commissaires-Priseurs*, 1868, in *L'Univers Illustré. Journal Hebdomadaire* 10 (1868): 276 (detail)

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local interest.¹² In Prussian Berlin during the middle of the century, auctions were still held under the supervision of royal auction commissioners, such as Theodor Müller and A. Meyer.¹³ They were responsible for both court-ordered and voluntary auctions, a system comparable with France's official auctioneers, who also had such a dual role in the nineteenth century.¹⁴ The institutional setting was very similar in Berlin and Paris, although the art auctions in Berlin had not yet reached a comparable importance. New archival material related to the Lepke firm shows that, long before 1869, the company was testing out the auction business in its reach towards the Parisian market.

12 Malkowsky, *Rudolph Lepke's Kunst-Auctions-Haus*, 41.

13 Sale catalogues are the main source here, e.g.: Th. Müller, *Verzeichniss einer, aus dem Nachlasse eines hohen Staatsbeamten herrührenden, Sammlung von Gemälden, so wie von Handzeichnungen und neueren Kupferstichen, welche den 18. October 1847 und die folgenden Tage in Berlin durch den K. Auctions-Commissarius Herrn Th. Müller öffentlich versteigert werden sollen* (Berlin: Müller, 1847).

14 The catalogue cover of Th. Müller, *Alexander von Humboldt's Kunst-Nachlass, welcher am 17. September 1860 und den folgd. Tagen [...] durch den k. gerichtl. und aussergerichtl. Auctions-Commissarius für Bücher und Kunstsachen Th. Müller [...] versteigert werden soll* (Berlin: Müller, 1860) documents this double function.

The Lepke Art Dealership in Berlin

The Lepke art dealership was founded by Nathan Levi Lepke in Berlin in 1839. Both of his sons, Louis Eduard Lepke and Julius Lepke, as well as his grandson, Rudolph Lepke, worked in the art trade and continued to run the company in various forms.¹⁵ While the auctions held at the Lepke art dealership in the period after 1869, when it was run by Rudolph Lepke, are well documented, we know very little about the company's earlier commitment to this form of business from the time it was established around 1840. As will be explained below, the company's activities in Paris are revealing when it comes to the auction business.

Another Berlin art dealer, Louis Sachse, was also cultivating an intense exchange with Paris at that time, with a particular focus on reproduction technologies, such as those in printmaking and photography, the latter of which had been recently discovered. In 1827, at the age of 29, he spent half a year in Paris in order to study lithography at the institute of Knecht, Senefelder et Cie.¹⁶ The following year, he opened his own lithographic institute in Berlin. Also in the middle of the century, one of the Lepkes—presumably Louis Eduard Lepke—was active in Paris; Sachse's diaries mention an encounter in 1851.¹⁷ Just like Sachse, the Lepke art dealership was also involved in the publication of printed reproductions, and in addition it also imported French paintings to Berlin. The art magazine *Dioskuren* distinguished the two competitors, Sachse and Lepke, from one another based on their public image, claiming that Sachse and his exhibition rooms had a more popular orientation, while Lepke was more professional and reserved.¹⁸

An 1853 auction catalogue originally issued by auctioneer Theodor Müller bears the handwritten note 'My first catalogue, Lepke.'¹⁹ It remains unclear whether this was the first Louis Eduard Lepke auction to be officially led by Müller, or whether it was the first catalogue in Rudolph Lepke's library. Evidence of a possible early collaboration with Müller exists in the form of later catalogues by Louis Eduard Lepke and Louis Sachse, which document

15 Handelsregister des Königl. Stadtgerichts zu Berlin, in *Königlich Preussischer Staats-Anzeiger* (1864): 1979.

16 Anna Ahrens, "Louis Sachse," in *Pariser Lehrjahre. Ein Lexikon zur Ausbildung Deutscher Maler in der Französischen Hauptstadt*, vol. 1: 1793–1843, eds. France Nerlich and Bénédicte Savoy (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 249–51.

17 Annette Schlagenhauß, "Die Kunst zu handeln. Louis Friedrich Sachse—Lithograph, Kunstförderer und Kunsthändler in Berlin," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 42 (2000): 288.

18 Max Schasler, "Kunst-Kritik. Berliner Kunstschau," *Dioskuren* 38 (1865).

19 Malkowsky, *Rudolph Lepke's Kunst-Auctions-Haus*, 38.

their cooperation in the 1860s and 1870s.²⁰ In the 1850s it was uncommon to find the name of an art dealer mentioned on the cover of a catalogue, but during the 1860s and 1870s, the front pages of the Berlin catalogues changed considerably in favour of more explicitly mentioning them, as was customary in France, where they performed the function of so-called experts. These experts were often not only authorities on their subjects, but they were also directly involved in arranging the auctions, meaning that they were internal rather than external actors at the auction house. This extended to their direct economic participation in auctions, as in cases where they were held on behalf of the expert.

In Berlin, art dealers originally appeared in catalogues as the places where they were distributed, prior to a single dealer's name appearing on the front page. Two documented examples from Berlin show a more explicit mention of Lepke on the cover as the catalogue publisher in 1865, and in the early 1870s there was also a clearly marked division of duties, with Sachse named as the director of the auction and a small addendum mentioning Müller as the auctioneer.²¹

Lepke's 1855 Auction in Paris

Towards the middle of the century, the Lepke art dealership in Berlin explored the terrain of French auctions by means of imports and exports. Previously unrecognised material from an archive in Paris reveals that they were already active at the Hôtel Drouot by 1855.

On 3 December 1855 Lepke held an auction in collaboration with the French auctioneers at the Hôtel Drouot. This auction took place anonymously, with the provenance in the catalogue indicating only 'M. X*** de Berlin.'²² It is only

20 Louis Eduard Lepke, *Panneberg'sche Gemälde-Sammlung. I. Abtheilung. Original Gemälde alter und neuer Meister welche am 17. und 18. Mai d. J. [...] durch den Königlichen Auctions-Commissarius für Kunstsachen, Herrn Dr. Th. Müller [...] versteigert werden* (Berlin: Lepke, 1865) and Louis Sachse, *Achte Berliner Versteigerung geleitet durch die Hofkunsthändler von L. Sachse & Co. In Berlin 41 vorzügl. Original-Aquarellen moderner Meister ferner 31 schöne Federzeichnungen des renommirten Malers Herrmann Kauffmann in Hamburg [...] sowie 11 Original-Zeichnungen des Historienmalers und Professors Adolph Menzel [...]* Auctionator: Königl. Auctions-Commissarius Herr Th. Müller (Berlin: Sachse, 1871).

21 *Ibid.*

22 Charles Pillet, Commissaire-Priseur, M. Febvre, Expert, *Catalogue d'une collection de 70 tableaux, bonnes reproductions d'après les plus belles œuvres des Musées de Dresde, Vienne, Munich, Berlin et autres provenant du Cabinet de M. X*** de Berlin, dont la vente aura lieu*

possible to assign ownership to Lepke through an analysis of the auction record at the Archives de Paris.²³ The auction was held on behalf of the expert Alexis Febvre, who in turn was a middleman for Lepke—a common practice at the time.

This 1855 Parisian auction lends weight to the assumption that the early Lepkes were already conducting auctions in Berlin as early as the 1850s, as was suggested by the unclearly marked catalogue from 1853 noted above. This means that Lepke used a similar approach in Paris and Berlin to test a new business model by means of middlemen and official auctioneers, Febvre and Pillet in Paris, and Müller in Berlin.

In Paris, Lepke auctioned copies of works from collections in cities including Dresden, Vienna, Munich and Berlin. Despite the fact that the auction contained no originals, it was held in one of the large, prestigious halls intended for art auctions on the upper floor of the Hôtel Drouot and was conducted by Charles Pillet, the most important auctioneer at that time. Apart from the inclusion of numerous old masters, such as Raphael, Titian, Metsu, Correggio, Murillo, Rubens and Guido Reni, one of the focal points of the auction consisted of fifteen pieces after the Berlin artist Eduard Meyerheim. The auction was opened with two copies of his works. The fact that a Berlin art dealer opted to offer such works in Paris should be considered within the context of the *exposition universelle* of 1855, which took place the same year. This exhibition prepared Paris audiences for art from Prussia, and Lepke's auction allowed them to acquire copies after famous paintings, including two paintings by Eduard Meyerheim, which had been displayed at the *exposition universelle*.²⁴ The public sale of copies was therefore able to tie in directly with this exhibition.

This auction is not only further evidence of Lepke having been involved in the auction market from very early on, but it also offers insight into their transnational marketing strategies. As a direct result of the international exhibition in 1855, Lepke introduced copies into a flourishing Parisian market in the middle of the century. At the same time, a connection was established with the museums that held the original works. This auction was a multi-layered process of translation and transfer.

Hôtel des Commissaires-Priseurs rue Drouot, N. 5, Grande Salle N° 5 le lundi 3 décembre 1855 à une heure (Paris: Pillet, 1855).

23 Archives de Paris, Paris, Procès-verbaux Vente Febvre Lepke, 3 December 1855, D48E3 47 N° 3949.

24 Friedrich von Bötticher, *Malerwerke des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, vol. 2, part 1 (Leipzig: Schmidt & Günther, 1901), 44.

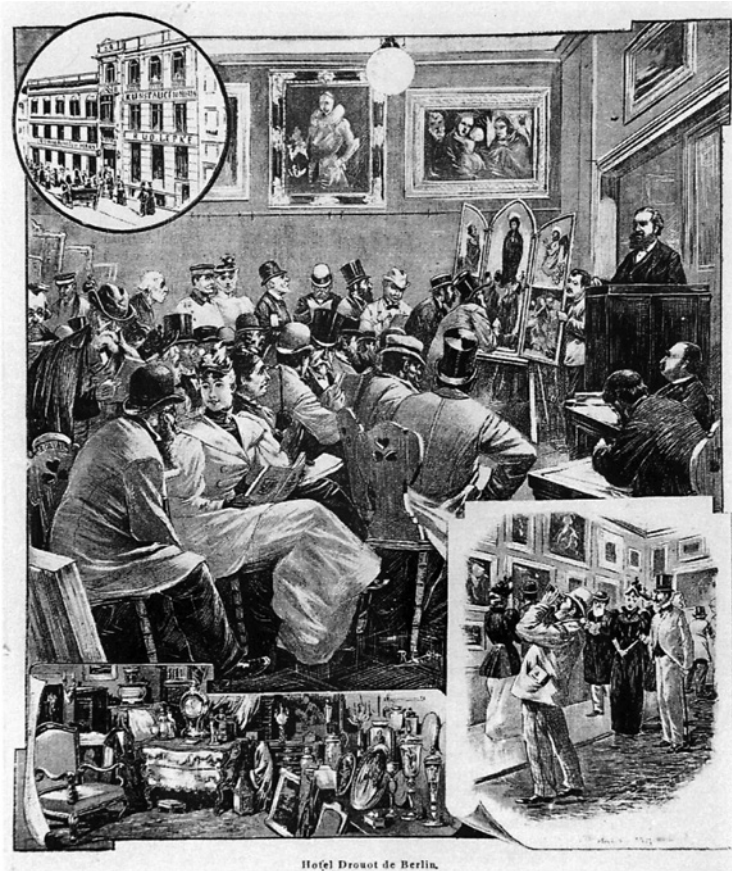


FIGURE 6.2 Anon., *Hôtel Drouot de Berlin*, 1895, in *Der Sammler* 1895. After Karl Heinz Arnold, *Auktion in der Kunst* (Frankfurt am Main: Kramer, 1998), 68

Lepke and the “School” of Barbizon

While Lepke was busy making Meyerheim and other German artists accessible to Parisian audiences, the dealership in Berlin was also becoming a well-known address for the purchase of French art (Fig. 6.2). Eduard Meyerheim’s son Paul later recalled that as a youngster, in 1858, his father had taken him to the Lepke gallery to view French landscape paintings.²⁵ Being introduced to French art in

25 Paul Meyerheim, “Meine Erinnerungen an Teutwart Schmitson,” in *Kunst und Künstler* 2 (1904): 342.

Berlin by an art dealer and by his father as his teacher was completely normal for him. Eduard Meyerheim sought to expose his son to new artistic trends at the very beginning of his interest in painting—trends that he personally sometimes viewed critically. There was an additional way in which art dealers—including Lepke and Sachse in particular—created access to French art; they arranged for French artists to appear at the academic institution that was Berlin's Akademie exhibition.²⁶

Years later, Paul Meyerheim remembered these early encounters with the art trade and embarked upon an educational tour of his own. His journey took him via Paris to the forest of Fontainebleau at Barbizon, where he created three known works.²⁷ One painting is a war loss of the museum in Gdansk;²⁸ another oil painting, entitled *Stag in the Forest of Fontainebleau* has been lost; and one watercolour, the whereabouts of which are unknown, was last seen in a private collection.²⁹ Both his first encounter with French art, while he was still in Berlin, and his educational tour took place outside of traditional academic structures. This reflected the overall change in the French art world during the second half of the nineteenth century, with the weakening of the academy's authority and the emergence of alternative modes of circulation, such as independent exhibitions and galleries.³⁰ Meyerheim experienced this changing art world in the 1850s and 1860s when he became successful in his role as an outsider. As a popular circus and animal painter, he found himself free from certain academic demands. This resulted in his initial rejection in Paris, and as such he was unable to achieve his primary goal of spending time at one of the city's well-known artist's studios, which is why he left for Barbizon. Despite his problems with the training structures in Paris, he was later able to exhibit in the city, participating in the Salon in 1866 and 1867. Furthermore, Ludwig Pietsch reported that during his stay Meyerheim was a respected figure in local artistic circles.³¹

26 Schlagenhauff, "Die Kunst zu handeln," 271.

27 Lukas Fuchsgruber, "Paul Meyerheim," in *Pariser Lehrjahre. Ein Lexikon zur Ausbildung Deutscher Maler in der Französischen Hauptstadt*, vol. 2: 1844–70, eds. France Nerlich and Bénédicte Savoy (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 163–5.

28 Małgorzata Danielewicz, ed., *Straty wojenne Muzeum Miejskiego w Gdańsku*, vol. 1 (Gdansk: Muzeum Narodowe w Gdańsku, 2005), 80.

29 *Gemälde und Zeichnungen von Paul Meyerheim, Akademische Kunstaussstellung Kgl. Akademie der Künste vom 1. April bis zum 12. Mai 1900* (Berlin: Königliche Akademie der Künste, 1900).

30 Harrison C. and Cynthia A. White, *Canvases and Careers: Institutional Change in the French Painting World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965); Robert Jensen, *Marketing Modernism in Fin-de-Siècle Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

31 Fuchsgruber, "Paul Meyerheim."

Meyerheim's early experience illustrates the parallels between academic and commercial circulation, a relationship that became more acute as the century progressed. The relationship between the two is demonstrated particularly clearly by the Salon exhibition. Before the advent of galleries in France, artists had almost nowhere other than this exhibition to display their works and in turn to attract potential buyers. This relationship is evident not only through the emergence of more commercial exhibitions. Even the Salon itself, as an academically staged venue, was a commercial forum.³² The way Lepke tied in commercially with the annual exhibition by holding an auction the same year was a strategy intended to take advantage of the Salon.

Meyerheim's educational tour, which did not take place in the Parisian studios, can also be seen in this context. The Barbizon school of painters sought both new spaces to exhibit as well as new areas of artistic practice. In this regard, the auction house was a relevant exhibition space for them, as Simon Kelly has studied in the case of Narcisse Díaz de la Peña and Théodore Rousseau.³³ In the 1850s these artists organised individual auctions, which for them represented a significant link back to the city. It was within this changing art market and exhibition practice that Lepke anchored his Parisian auction, which offered works including some by the living artist Eduard Meyerheim.

Lepke's activities in French art in Berlin in turn demonstrate that the new network of spaces extended beyond national borders. Lepke's business, as experienced and described by Paul Meyerheim early on, indicated that the move away from academic spaces was not a dead end, but instead resulted in new artistic contacts and practices.

Auctions accelerated the relationship between exhibitions and sales, reducing the exhibitions into a condensed form held in advance and lasting one or two days and accelerating the circulation process in favour of a concentrated succession of lots in a temporally and spatially concentrated public event. French landscape painters used the auction house as a new space for their art, even in the innovative format of individual auctions, which were comparable to highlighting an artist in a solo exhibition. As a rule, however, group auctions were also held, during which the same art dealers who made the individual auctions possible—such as the highly influential Pierre-Firmin

32 Gerrit Walzcak, "Werben und Verkaufen: Ausstellungen und der Kunstmarkt im Paris des 18. Jahrhunderts" (paper presented at the annual workshop of the Forum Kunst und Markt, Berlin, 22 November 2014).

33 Simon Kelly, "This Dangerous Game': Rousseau, Diaz and the Uses of the Auction in the Marketing of Landscapes," in *Soil and Stone: Impressionism, Urbanism, Environment*, eds. Frances Fowle and Richard Thomson (Edinburgh: Visual Arts Research Institute Edinburgh, 2003), 33–48.

Martin—would offer a curated selection of works for auction.³⁴ These auctions took place regularly at the Hôtel Drouot and contrasted with the range of collections placed on the market as a result of estate auctions. Lepke then introduced curated auctions in Berlin based on the Parisian model.³⁵

As we have seen, Lepke used the exhibition circuits as a platform for his business, supporting the circulation of painters from Berlin in Paris and painters from Paris in Berlin. This two-way transfer was based on their precise knowledge of the market in both cities. In a move towards establishing an auction house in Berlin inspired by the Parisian market, Lepke amplified their involvement from circulating artworks to importing an entire business model.

After their initial experiments in 1853 and 1855, the Lepke dealership started to become more visible in auction catalogues again in the 1860s with the Panneberg sale of 1865. This sale was still handled by Louis Eduard Lepke, under the supervision of the royal auction commissary, Theodor Müller. The situation changed in 1869, when his son, Rudolph Lepke, opened an auction house. He was the first of the Lepke family to be an auction commissary himself, eliminating the necessity of relying on cooperation. His competitors were either very specialised—like Amsler und Ruthardt, who held print auctions—or went out of business—like Sachse, who went bankrupt. Consequently, Lepke called the auctions that took place in his salesroom ‘Berliner Kunst-Auktionen’ (Berlin art auctions) and numbered them serially (number 100 was reached in 1873). Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the press even called Lepke’s space the ‘Hôtel Drouot de Berlin,’ possibly because of the auctions he held in Berlin in cooperation with the Hôtel Drouot starting in 1876.³⁶ This moniker again points to Lepke’s success in bridging the auction markets of Berlin and Paris.

34 Numerous catalogues of Martin, often cooperating with the auctioneer Boussaton, document this. See for instance: Boussaton, Commissaire-Priseur and Martin, Expert, *Catalogue de Tableaux et dessins modernes [...] Samedi 24 Mars 1855 [...] Hôtel des Commissaires-Priseurs, rue Drouot, N° 5, Grande Salle [...]* (Paris: Boussaton, 1855).

35 One of the first auctions of Rudolph Lepke already leaves out any mention of a collector or provenance: Rudolph Lepke, *Catalog von Oelgemalden, Aquarellen und Skizzen neuerer Meister. [...] 9. December 1869 [...]* (Berlin: Lepke, 1869).

36 The press depicted Lepke’s space with the caption ‘Hôtel Drouot de Berlin’ (Fig. 6.2). The original source for this illustration nor the article possibly accompanying it could be traced. According to Karl Heinz Arnold, it is from *Der Sammler* in 1895.

Otto Mündler's Gallery in Paris

The transfers that Louis Eduard Lepke and Rudolph Lepke fostered were different from those of Otto Mündler, who operated internationally as an art dealer (Fig. 6.3). While they all adapted to existing market conditions in mobilising their specialised knowledge, the resulting business operations took another shape with Mündler. The transfers that the Lepkes effected were linear—exporting German Art, importing French art—while the activities of Mündler, both when it came to the circulation of expertise and to the circulation of artworks, were related to his great mobility. He organised his movements from a gallery in Paris, which he ran for over three decades.

Otto Mündler was born in Bavaria in 1811, trained in theology in Berlin under the likes of Friedrich Schleiermacher, and traded in paintings in Paris in the middle of the century.³⁷ From 1855 to 1858 he worked as a travelling agent for the National Gallery in London,³⁸ also cooperating with the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin beginning in the 1850s, for which he also attempted to work as an agent.³⁹ He ended up in the art trade following a time working as a private tutor. His first experience of the business was the sale of his employer's collection.⁴⁰ He moved to Paris in 1834, at a time when galleries were just beginning to establish themselves there.

Mündler's gallery was founded within this milieu in the 1840s,⁴¹ initially at 7 rue St.-Georges and 15 rue Pigalle (although no information survives about these locations),⁴² and later at 9 rue Laval. The listing for his gallery on rue Laval in the 1862 issue of the *Annuaire des artistes et des amateurs* states: 'Tableaux anciens de toutes les écoles, principalement de l'école italienne.'⁴³ Adolphe Joanne wrote that it boasted a 'superb' Rubens and a 'delightful' Murillo.⁴⁴ In an obituary Alfred Woltmann described the gallery as a social meeting place, a kind of salon, whose regular guests included members of the Bonapartist art world:

37 Götze, "Quellen zur Kunstgeschichte," 116.

38 Anderson, "Otto Mündler and his Travel Diary."

39 Von Stockhausen, "Otto Mündler als Agent."

40 Anderson, "Otto Mündler and his Travel Diary," 9.

41 Götze, "Quellen zur Kunstgeschichte," 117.

42 These early addresses appear in letters that are cited by von Stockhausen and Kultzen. See: Tilmann von Stockhausen, "Ein Michelangelo für Berlin? Otto Mündler und Gustav Friedrich Waagen," *Kunstchronik* 48 (1995): 182; Rolf Kultzen, "Giovanni Morelli als Briefpartner von Otto Mündler," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 52 (1989): 392.

43 Jacob Chavignerie, ed., *Annuaire des artistes et des amateurs* (Paris: Renouard, 1862), 82.

44 Adolphe Laurent Joanne, *The Diamond Guide for the Stranger in Paris* (Paris: Hachette, 1867), 288.



FIGURE 6.3

Ernst Fröhlich, *Untitled (Missa Pschorr)*, in Giovanni Morelli, *Balvi magnus: das ist kritische Beleuchtung des balvischen Missale* (Munich, 1836), s.p. (detail). After Jaynie Anderson, "The Morelli Conference in Bergamo," *The Burlington Magazine*, 129 (1987): 597. Otto Mündler can be identified in this depiction of the Bavarian circle of Giovanni Morelli

Here the rich and noble picture collectors of France and England would often stop by, and here one might also meet Princess Mathilde and Prince Napoleon as well as [Henri] Rochefort, who for his part is also an avid lover of paintings. Mündler was considered the most experienced in these circles, someone to whom collectors, dealers and aficionados could turn for advice and information.⁴⁵

45 Alfred Woltmann, "Otto Mündler," *Nationalzeitung*, 8 May 1870: 1.

A gallery like this was a counterpart to the accelerated process of circulation occurring on the auction market. At the same time, Mündler himself was a highly visible figure at the Hôtel Drouot, as will be shown.

Mündler's collaboration with the Rothschilds in Paris may be seen as a further important example of his commercial cooperation and international activity. This contact is first documented in 1835 in his first Paris diary.⁴⁶ In his obituary for Mündler, Lützow provides further information about the 'Barons of Rothschild [...], who used to purchase their paintings by old masters only when brokered by Mündler, and on whose behalf he also, as far as we believe is true, travelled to St. Petersburg a few years ago.'⁴⁷ The fact that Mündler travelled to St. Petersburg is confirmed in Bode's memoirs and can be dated to the spring of 1869.⁴⁸ One example of Mündler's brokerage for the Rothschilds is the San Donato auction of 1868 in Florence.⁴⁹ Conversely, Mündler also used his connection to the Rothschilds for his scholarly work; in a piece written for Crowe and Cavalcaselle's *Les Anciens Peintres Flamands* in 1857, he describes a painting owned by the Rothschild family, Jan van Eyck's *La Vierge*.⁵⁰

Mündler, who had been described as a patriotic agent and who, according to Bode, retained his 'Germanness,' was very well established in the Parisian art world, active intellectually as well as commercially, and always balancing between the two. As an author, he also examined a picture from the Pereire family collections, Rubens's *Apollo and Marsyas*.⁵¹ As lending bankers the Rothschilds were more cautious on the art market than the Pereires' *Crédit Mobilier*, which supported riskier transactions involving art.⁵² While Mündler, who was critical of speculating with art, worked for the Rothschilds, Théophile Thoré-Bürger was instrumental in building the Pereire collection. Mündler also maintained contact with contemporary artists in Paris, including German

46 Götze, "Quellen zur Kunstgeschichte," 116.

47 Carl von Lützow, "Otto Mündler," *Beiblatt zur Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* 14 (1870): 114.

48 Wilhelm von Bode, *Mein Leben*, vol. 1 (Berlin: H. Reckendorf, 1930), 27.

49 Anon., "Vente publique aux enchères de vingt-trois tableaux des écoles flamandes et hollandaises provenant de la galerie San Donato, de Florence, appartenant au prince Demidoff, faite à l'hôtel des commissaires-priseurs de Paris, le 18 avril 1868 (M. Francis Petit, expert)," *Journal des amateurs d'objets d'art et de curiosité* 12 (1868): 46.

50 Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, eds., *Les Anciens Peintres Flamands, leur vie et leurs œuvres* (Brussels: Heussner, 1862), 97–8.

51 Otto Mündler, "Apollo und Marsyas. Oelgemälde von Rubens," *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst* 4 (1866): 225–36.

52 Nicholas Green, "Dealing in Temperaments: Economic Transformation of the Artistic Field in France during the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century," in *Critical Readings in Impressionism and Post-Impressionism: An Anthology*, ed. Mary Tompkins Lewis (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 37.

artists in particular, such as the Winterhalter brothers and Schlesinger and Magnus from Berlin. He saw Magnus ‘almost daily’ during his frequent visits to Paris.⁵³

His gallery was connected to his apartment on the first floor, a semi-private space that was not visible from the street.⁵⁴ His direct business partner, Emmanuel Sano, lived in the same house. Sano was a marine painter from Antwerp who changed careers after arriving in Paris, instead focusing on the trade of paintings. He eventually became adviser for the collection of Prince Napoleon at the royal palace.⁵⁵ Another resident in the same house was the dealer-expert Adolphe Coûteaux, who worked at the Hôtel Drouot. His liquidation auction took place on rue Laval in 1863.⁵⁶ So far no evidence has been found of any direct business links between Mündler and Coûteaux. Coûteaux did, however, supervise an auction by Sano in his capacity as an expert, meaning that there is evidence of collaboration between these two men.⁵⁷

The house at 9 rue Laval was originally a studio house with two apartments. It was home to the painters Eugène Flandrin and Alfred Stevens—brother of the dealer Arthur Stevens—in the 1850s.⁵⁸ After they had moved out, Mündler, Sano and Coûteaux converted the house into a place dedicated to the art trade. Coûteaux had an office on the ground floor, Mündler’s apartment and gallery were on the first floor, and Sano lived on the third floor.⁵⁹ Once Coûteaux, Sano and Mündler no longer lived in the house, Paul Eudel, who was known as the chronicler of the Hôtel Drouot, purchased the building in 1885 and lived in it until 1889.⁶⁰ Today he is remembered by a plaque on the house, the façade of which has since changed considerably. For many decades, the building and its at times international residents had close links to the auction house.

Otto Mündler strategically positioned his gallery in a bohemian quarter. Many artists, among them Narcisse Díaz and Charles Hoguet, lived on the

53 Letter from Otto Mündler to the director of the royal painting gallery in Berlin, Gustav Friedrich Waagen, from Paris, dated 24 February 1846, published in: Stockhausen, “Ein Michelangelo für Berlin?,” 182.

54 Archives de Paris, Paris, Calepins du cadastre rue Laval, 1852, D1P4 0621.

55 Anderson, “Otto Mündler and his Travel Diary,” 10.

56 Boussaton, Commissaire-Priseur, and Petit and Roussel, Experts, *Catalogue de meubles d'art anciens et modernes [...] composant la collection de M.A. Coûteaux [...] vente [...] en son domicile rue Laval, N° 9 [...] 21 Avril 1863* (Paris: Boussaton, 1863).

57 Pouchet, Commissaire-Priseur, and Coûteaux, Expert, *Tableaux modernes composant la collection de M.E.-S. [...] dont la vente aura lieu le lundi 22 Janvier 1855 [...] rue Drouot, N. 5 [...]* (Paris: Pouchet, 1855).

58 Archives de Paris, Paris, Calepins du cadastre rue Laval, 1852, D1P4 0621.

59 *Ibid.*

60 Archives de Paris, Paris, Calepins du cadastre rue Laval, 1852, D1P4 0622.

same street or had their studios there.⁶¹ The Hôtel Drouot was a short walk from rue Laval. Mündler must have been a regular guest at the art auctions, since many key texts about the auction house mention him as an important, notable figure. He was established in the Parisian art market and used it for transnational circulation, as further evidence from auctions illustrates.

Mündler's and Sano's Auctions in the 1850s

Mündler's dispersal of the collection of paintings he shared with Sano before starting to work for the National Gallery in London represents a major turning point in his activities and his connection with the auction market. This dispersal took the form of several auctions, orientated towards specific audiences in three European capitals: Paris, London and Amsterdam. The catalogues and an archived record demonstrate how the two dealers made use of various auction locations to offer the works—some of them even at multiple auctions.

The pair held an initial auction in 1853.⁶² As was often the case, the auction was announced anonymously as the 'Cabinet de M.M ...,' and was conducted by the auctioneer Bonnefons de Laviaille and the expert Alexis Febvre, who often supervised art auctions at that time. It did not take place at the Hôtel Drouot, but at a competing location operated by dissenters from the chamber of auctioneers on rue de Jeûneurs, which was shut down soon afterwards.

The record reveals that more than a third of the ninety-four works were bought back, twenty-nine by the conducting expert, five by Sano, and one by Mündler.⁶³ Here Mündler and Sano were particularly busy when it came to the higher-priced works, so it seems that the auction was not a success. Since the auction was announced anonymously, only the twenty-nine buy-backs by the expert were recognisable as such. In the case of individual paintings, it appears that the repurchased works were brokered by Febvre before returning to Sano and Mündler. Some of them reappear in an auction by Sano in 1857.⁶⁴

61 Pierre Miquel, *Eugène Isabey, 1803–1886: la marine au XIX^e siècle*, vol. 1 (Mauris-la-Jolie: Martinelle, 1980), 238.

62 Bonnefons de Laviaille, Commissaire-Priseur, and Febvre, Expert, *Catalogue d'une intéressante collection de tableaux anciens, des écoles italienne, française, hollandaise et flamande, provenant du cabinet de M. M*** [...]* *Hotel des Ventes rue des Jeûneurs*, N. 42 [...] 14 Mars 1853 [...] (Paris: Bonnefons de Laviaille, 1853).

63 Archives de Paris, Paris, Procès-verbaux vente de tableaux Febvre, 14 Mars 1853, D48E3 45 N° 3681.

64 *Catalogue of a small cabinet of choice pictures, the property of a gentleman, selected from the collections of marshal Soult, The Count Pourtales, The Duke of Padua [...]* *Auction [...]* May, 1857 (London: Christie's, 1857).

This took place at Christie's in London, two years after Mündler found employment in that city. A Frans Hals painting of fishermen that had been repurchased by Febvre in 1853 was offered at both auctions, as was a Canaletto, depicting the Grand Canal and Rialto in Venice, which had been repurchased by Mündler in 1853. A portrait of Philip IV by Velázquez was bought back by Sano and then offered at the London auction. Both art dealers therefore used London in a new attempt to auction works following the large number of buy-backs that had been necessary in Paris.

No such continuity can be demonstrated with another extensive auction that has been associated with Mündler, held in Amsterdam in 1854.⁶⁵ The selection of artists shows some overlap, for example with Jacob Ruysdael, David Teniers and Jan Weenix. This auction also included approximately one hundred lots featuring contemporary artists. It was tailored to the Netherlands, with early and more recent Dutch art. Furthermore, a panorama of the city of Amsterdam was also offered for sale and was even featured on the catalogue cover along with a series of cityscapes.

Sano also organised another auction of his own in this period. In 1855 his collection of modern paintings, including numerous works by Narcisse Díaz, was auctioned in Paris.⁶⁶ This auction was supervised by Coûteaux, an expert and his neighbour at 9 rue Laval. The fact that Mündler and Sano did not work as experts themselves, which was quite common for art dealers in those days, but instead that they relied on established experts, shows their position towards the auction market. They remained consignors and buyers, and therefore external actors.

Mündler and Sano, who as immigrants were very familiar with Paris by that time, selected multiple channels for the dispersal of their gallery. The individual auctions at different locations emphasised different aspects and were in some cases only associated with one of the two men, although it has been shown that direct connections can be established between individual auctions. This indicates that they knew how to use their transnational networks in order to offer works more than once.

65 *Catalogus van eene voortreffelijke en uitgebreide verzameling schilderijen [...] afkomstig uit een der voornaamste europesche kabinetten [...] 23 en 25 September [...]* (Amsterdam: Roos, 1854).

66 Pouchet, Commissaire-Priseur, and Coûteaux, Expert, *Tableaux modernes*.

Italian Art as Capital

Mündler's knowledge of the Italian market was his capital, which he was able to use to his advantage in Paris and later in London and Berlin. He had spent several years travelling in Italy, together with Charles Locke Eastlake, in the 1840s and then later as a travelling agent when Eastlake was head of the National Gallery.⁶⁷ An important partner for Mündler in his tapping of Italian art was Giovanni Morelli, who for a time lived together with Mündler in Paris.⁶⁸ At that time Italian institutions tried to prevent the export of Italian art and those in charge were cautious when it came to art acquisitions, although such a purchase was a legal condition to prevent export. If Italian collections refused to buy, Morelli would use his contacts with European collectors and agents, heavily contributing to the "drain of Italian art," much of which was former church property. This was despite the fact that he personally presided over the commission that watched over artworks of national value, which often caused conflicts with his subordinate, Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, in the 1860s.⁶⁹ Mündler also travelled around Italy with Cavalcaselle.⁷⁰ Here Morelli was essentially patriotic, first offering paintings, for example, to Italian institutions and then to the National Gallery.⁷¹ In contrast to what has been written about Guiseppe Baslini, the most famous Italian dealer, Morelli tried to take into account issues of national heritage and not simply sell to the highest bidder.⁷² In one instance, Morelli even blocked the transfer of a work from the Venetian Manfrin collection to Berlin—Giorgione's *The Tempest*—which Bode wanted to purchase. Morelli prevented the required amount from being paid out at the Italian bank and was thus able to secure the work for his own customer, Prince Giovanelli.⁷³

The historical context behind the trade in early Italian art was dominated by changes in who owned church art as well as the wartime situation in Italy. Accordingly, in his letters Morelli expresses his feeling of being torn between participating in the political disputes in Italy, in which he was deeply involved,

67 Anderson, "Otto Mündler and his Travel Diary," 9.

68 Letter from Otto Mündler to Friedrich Rückert dated 13 May 1859, quoted in: Kultzen, "Giovanni Morelli," 326.

69 Kultzen, "Giovanni Morelli," 374–5.

70 Anderson, "Otto Mündler and his Travel Diary," 39.

71 Letter from Giovanni Morelli to Otto Mündler dated 14 November 1860, printed in: Kultzen, "Giovanni Morelli," 389.

72 Anderson, "Otto Mündler and his Travel Diary," 19.

73 *Id.*, 33.

and the opportunities of attributing and buying artworks from Italian collections and churches.⁷⁴ In this regard we can extract many details about the export of art from Morelli's published letters to Mündler, which have been annotated by Rolf Kultzen. They include information about delivery periods of ten to twelve days, how shipments were influenced by the wartime situation, and individual business contacts, such as the collector and restorer Giovanni Secco Suardo, the Averoldi family, and also the English collector James Hudson, who resided in Turin from 1852.

Mündler in the Networks of the Knowledge Economy

Mündler had built up a powerful commercial network during his many travels to Italy. But again the second way to profit from these tours was in the knowledge economy, as a prolific expert of Italian art. Throughout his life Mündler sought out activities outside of the trade in paintings, which was his main occupation. On several occasions he expressed criticism of the art trade and what he perceived as an intensification of the commodification of art in Paris in particular.⁷⁵ After beginning his career as an art dealer, from the middle of the century he began to work in publishing.

This was based on both his period of training, which he used to directly study objects in Berlin exhibitions,⁷⁶ as well as his subsequent travels in Italy and to several European collections.⁷⁷ Mündler was therefore a connoisseur in the classical sense, who could use his observations to conduct skilled artistic comparisons that in turn made him an historically oft-cited authority in discussions concerning the attribution of paintings. He applied this knowledge both in the market and by becoming involved in the still-young field of art studies, in particular by producing numerous lexicon articles.⁷⁸

74 Letter from Giovanni Morelli to Otto Mündler dated 29 July 1864, printed in: Kultzen, "Giovanni Morelli," 395–6.

75 Letter from Otto Mündler to unknown recipient dated 24 April 1868, quoted in: Kultzen, "Giovanni Morelli," 330.

76 Letter from Otto Mündler to the director of the royal painting gallery in Berlin, Gustav Friedrich Waagen, from Paris, dated 24 February 1846, published in: von Stockhausen, "Ein Michelangelo für Berlin?," 181.

77 Anderson, "Otto Mündler and his Travel Diary," 9.

78 Von Stockhausen, "Agent der Berliner Gemäldegalerie," 111.

First, Mündler used his experience from travelling and visiting museums in Paris to write a critical catalogue in French of the Italian collection at the Louvre.⁷⁹ This publication is even mentioned in Flaubert's *L'Éducation sentimentale*, which notes that a German had written an entire book on the flaws of the catalogue, and as such 'foreigners' were making fun of the French.⁸⁰

As a writer, he was, however, more successful in German-speaking countries as a correspondent from Paris. Mündler reported from Paris for the *Deutsches Kunstblatt* from 1851 until 1855, before he began working in London. In the 1860s he assumed the post of foreign correspondent in Paris for the *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*. He wrote several auction reports for both magazines. His auction reports should not be regarded as lists of prices achieved by the lots, but rather as a genre of their own—one that attempts to paint a clear picture of the respective auctioned collection and its history. The art market and art history are closely intertwined here in a history of collecting. In 1852 the art collection of the recently deceased King Louis-Philippe was auctioned in Paris. The historical dimension at stake here is not only that a collection of the July Monarchy was sold in the early Second Empire, but also—as Mündler explained in this report—that the context of the revolution of 1848 was still strongly felt. The turbulent political climate of the time is reflected in this sale of a royal art collection. Mündler reported on the auction in the *Deutsches Kunstblatt* and indulged in highly detailed descriptions of the paintings, which had been damaged by the hostilities of 1848.⁸¹ He even speculated about how one particularly visually powerful picture probably made the looters stop what they were doing; the events had given it a sudden new contemporary relevance, and it was spared from damage. The auctions Mündler described were linked to historic events, and he in turn historicised the auctions. Here his knowledge of European collections merged with his proximity to the art market, so he was highly suited to writing about the dispersal of collections in the auction market.

That Mündler himself only conducted a single auction in Paris is evidence of his lack of confidence in the auction market as a platform for dealers. Nevertheless, he is regarded as a central figure of the Parisian auction market. He appears in various historical texts about the Hôtel Drouot as a respected

79 Otto Mündler, *Essai d'une analyse critique de la notice des tableaux italiens du musée national du Louvre accompagné d'observations et de documents relatifs à ces mêmes tableaux* (Paris: Didot, 1850).

80 David Eksedjian, review of *The Travel Diaries of Otto Mündler 1855–1858* by Carol Togneri Dowd and Burton Frederickson, eds., *Journal of the History of Collections* 1 (1991): 107.

81 Otto Mündler, "Aus Paris. Versteigerung Orléans," *Deutsches Kunstblatt* 25 (1851): 199–200.

authority who could often be found in the audience and was highlighted by Philippe Burty and Henri Rochefort in particular as a connoisseur, given the institutionalised expertise of the internal actors of the auction house and the coup that an experienced buyer was able to land by using specialised knowledge.⁸² Even away from this auction house literature, Mündler is treated as someone who generated relevance and was clearly separate from the experts; an 1868 auction announcement in *Le Monde Illustré* states: ‘The name of Mr. Haro, expert, the opinion of Mr. Th. Gautier and Otto Mündler are, for sure, the best guarantees one could offer as proof that this collection is worthy in every way to gather the attention and sympathy of all connoisseurs.’⁸³

With this activity he was, however, pursuing other goals than the circulation of art between private collectors, which was usual in the auction market. In his first contact with Berlin—a letter to Gustav Waagen—Mündler expresses his intention to save Michelangelo’s *Madonna and Child with St John and Angels* ‘from the grave of so many art treasures and bring it to safety and for general display to a museum in the fatherland,’ albeit against the stated wishes of the owner, who wanted it to stay in England.⁸⁴ Mündler’s offer was unsuccessful. In Mündler’s view, the private ownership of artworks was the grave from which they had to be saved, and they needed to be brought into public collections. Here the auction represented another potential means of gaining access. To that effect, in the 1850s he tried to participate in the Parisian auctions on behalf of Berlin, although this never grew beyond a few minor commissions and did not last. The reason for this lay in the extensive withdrawal of the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin from the expanding international art market under director general Ignaz von Olfers, while Mündler was probably still influenced by the museum’s acquisitions from 1830 onwards and also overestimated the authority of Waagen, who was subordinate to Olfers.⁸⁵ There were only a few cases where the Gemäldegalerie used Mündler as an agent in Paris, for example, in the auction of the Soult collection in 1852, in which the Berlin gallery made an exception and attempted to bid because of the personal support

82 Henri Rochefort, *Les petits mystères de l’hôtel des ventes* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1862), 50; Philippe Burty, ‘L’Hôtel des Ventes et le Commerce des Tableaux,’ in *Paris. Guide par les principaux écrivains et artistes de la France*, vol. 2 (Paris: Librairie Internationale, 1867), 959–60.

83 Anon., ‘Le vente de la collection de M. le comte d’Espagnac,’ *Monde Illustré* (1868): 288.

84 Letter from Otto Mündler to the director of the royal painting gallery in Berlin, Gustav Friedrich Waagen, from Paris, dated 24 February 1846, published in: von Stockhausen, ‘Ein Michelangelo für Berlin?’, 180.

85 Von Stockhausen, ‘Agent der Berliner Gemäldegalerie,’ 178.

of Frederick William IV.⁸⁶ He also worked for it in an advisory capacity more regularly in the 1860s, yet they still did not have enough confidence to conduct business through him.

The situation at the German museums offered no chance of an institutional career for a person like Müндler, but he nonetheless devoted himself extensively to their collections in his scholarly work. Summarising Müндler's academic legacy, Rolf Kultzen writes that his interest in these institutions 'had a widely acclaimed impact which continues to this day, in the form of thorough discussions of recently published catalogues of paintings.'⁸⁷ Thanks to Charles Eastlake, he was then able to work as a travelling agent for the National Gallery in London, which enabled him to once more spend extended periods in Italy. He had long been friends with Eastlake and had already travelled to Italy many years earlier, which formed a good basis for their cooperation; he lacked a similarly close contact in Berlin.

Not until the 1860s, after his time in London, did he increase his dealings with Berlin's cultural sphere, where the art market was steadily advancing—as was shown in the case of Lepke. Although Müндler was unable to establish himself as a purchasing agent for Berlin, he still played a role in the German museum scene, also as a result of his close contact with the young Wilhelm Bode shortly before his death.⁸⁸

Following his death, the representatives of the Berlin museums attempted to use Müндler's structured knowledge from his Italian travel notes. Julius Meyer and Bode took Müндler's diaries with them when they toured Italian collections in 1872–73.⁸⁹ Due to the changed circumstances in the country, however, they did not attain the benefits they had hoped for in terms of acquisitions.⁹⁰ To this day, comments from Müндler's diaries, of which those produced for London were published in transcribed form in 1985, are still often found in museums' documentation on the provenance of works. Here Müндler's knowledge has been applied once more for reasons quite unrelated to acquisition interests.

86 *Id.*, 102–3.

87 Kultzen, "Einiges über Otto Müндlers," 327.

88 Rolf Kultzen, "Otto Müндler als Freund und Förderer des jungen Bode," in *Kenntenschaft: Kolloquium zum 150sten Geburtstag von Wilhelm von Bode*, eds. Thomas Gaetgens and Peter-Klaus Schuster (Berlin: Mann, 1996), 49–55.

89 Kultzen, "Otto Müндler," 51.

90 Bode, *Mein Leben*, 70.

Conclusion

The economies of the art world not only involve the circulation of actors, knowledge media and art objects, but their very interaction with each other also constitutes the valuation of art. These economies are not reducible to sales contracts for artworks and to the prices of artworks, but pervade the various aspects of the creation, mediation, transformation and reception of art. The direct art trade on the part of galleries is only a limited component of the art market; other actors need to be considered as well, such as scholars, critics, collectors and museum workers, who form the historical canon that provides orientation for valuations. The knowledge and discourses associated with these other figures have their own economies, such as the structures of production and consecration at academies, yet they are characterised by the fact that what they convey can ultimately take into account both the price of art and artistic values. Knowledge forms a connecting medium between differently structured models of valuation. In the nineteenth century, the networks of the gallery, academy, scholarship and collections extended far beyond national borders.

While the Lepke art dealership tangibly opened German collections up by making the works available as copies and bringing them to Paris, Müндler's activity in this regard was partly intangible, as he also opened up collections in a scholarly sense. Both of these activities were effective in the field of the transnational trade of art as well as in the transnational historiography of art, their clear difference being the two actors' orientation towards either the auction house or the museum. While Müндler's own auctions in the 1850s may be regarded as a provisional end to his involvement in the art trade, in favour of a reorientation towards the museum, the Lepke auctions from the mid-1850s were only the beginning of what was later a rapidly expanding auction industry. From Paris Müндler attempted to shift his attention back towards Berlin, actively turning away from the art market, of which he spoke negatively in correspondence. Only in London did he go on to find the temporary institutional work that he had hoped for. Lepke, on the other hand, launched his first auction in Paris before transferring the local principle of auctions as an instrument for marketing art to the burgeoning art market in Berlin.

Lepke's case clearly demonstrates that the transfers of knowledge through numerous auction reports, for which figures like Müндler were responsible, fell on highly fertile ground. What becomes apparent in both case studies is that the Paris auction house became the platform of a complex system of circulation—one that was not limited to art alone; rather it became an accelerated exhibition space and a catalyst of transnational art encounters.

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