

## The Art Catalogue and Its Ecriture—From Representation of Space to Space of Representation<sup>\*</sup>

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The aim of this paper is to analyze how catalogues classified and described artworks, particularly paintings, and how these classifications and descriptions created a discourse in art history, following the history of the art catalogue published in France, from its period of birth in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to its period of establishment in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Firstly, it is important to reflect briefly on the history of the art catalogue in France. An “art catalogue” here includes an auction catalogue, exhibition catalogue, museum catalogue and catalogue raisonné. The booklet named as “catalogue” in art is thought to have come out of the art market of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Auction catalogues were published at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century in France, slightly later than in Holland and England.<sup>1</sup>

The auction catalogue is of course related to the art market, but also its development is closely associated with the development of the market. As the art market gradually developed at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the French national exhibition, Le Salon, also happened for the first time, with it a published list of exhibited works, so-called “livret”, considered to be the beginning of the exhibition catalogue. Around the same time, publications appeared that explained and commented on royal collections, and the art collections of influential patrons, the beginning of museum exhibition catalogues.

The catalogue raisonné appeared in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, containing a complete list of one artist’s works, classifying, organizing and describing them within a certain system.<sup>2</sup> While its usage was limited in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the number of published catalogues increased at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century. It eventually played a vital part in art history and the art market in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Despite that each of the aforesaid four types of catalogue has its own characteristic content, their systems of classification and organization, as well as their style of describing artworks, are not dissimilar from each other: the catalogue as a form of representation functions as a controlling order in them all. This paper focuses on the history of this very form, and from that, considers what kind of discourse in art history the artworks represented in the catalogues create.

### 1. The Catalogue and the Inventory

It is important to look at the relationship between the catalogue and the inventory, since, as

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<sup>\*</sup> This paper is based on the chapter 6 of my book: Kan Shimamoto, *Art Catalogue – Record, Memory and Discourse*, Tokyo, 2005. (Japanese)

<sup>1</sup> 1 For the birth of the auction catalogue and its development, I refer mainly to Lugt’s *List: F. Lugt, Répertoire des catalogues de ventes publiques intéressant l’art ou la curiosité*, vol 4, La Haye, 1938-1987.

<sup>2</sup> As one of the early catalogues raisonnés in France, see: *Catalogue raisonné de toutes les pièces qui forment l’oeuvre de Rembrandt, composé par feu M. Gersaint, et mis au jour, avec les augmentations nécessaires par les sieurs Helle et Glomy*, Paris, 1751.

stated earlier, the origin of the art catalogue not only comes from the auction catalogue, but the catalogue's vital functionality is connected to it. For instance, the 19<sup>th</sup> century *La grand encyclopédie inventaire raisonné* describes a catalogue as follows. (Note, the word “catalogue” became a regular term in art at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.)

Catalogue: I. Bibliography - (V. Bibliography, chap. Bibliographical rules, t. VI, pp. 613-33, and Library, chap. *Classification of books* and *Catalogues and inventories*, t. VI, pp. 659-662)

II. Arts: - List, enumeration, classification by alphabet or by school, works of art belonging to the collection of a museum or a private collector, or works brought together for a public exhibition or a sale. *Catalogue Raisonné* is a new term adopted by critics, to signal that connected to an inventory of works there is a detailed description accompanied by explanations or comments. Originally, before the catalogues we know today, there were inventory manuscripts, where the objects possessed by an organization or a person were listed. (V. Inventory)<sup>3</sup>

In general, the differences between a catalogue and an inventory appear few, yet their concepts are fundamentally different from each other. An inventory, defined by every dictionary, is something that is counted and documented, which does not necessarily require to be ordered. For example, a present day French dictionary has a description of the word as follows:

Inventory: 1. An estate, an enumeration, in writing and article per article, possessions, furnitures, titles, personal effects: *Making the inventory of an inheritance*. - 2. (1636). *Account*. An evaluation of goods in stock and their diverse values to see profits and losses. -3. A very detailed review of an orchestra.<sup>4</sup>

It was in the 18<sup>th</sup> century that an inventory as a term with a strong association with an individual's property was more emphasized. The *Encyclopaedia* by Diderot and D'Alembert in the 18<sup>th</sup> century describes “inventory” as follows:

Inventories are made of the effects of a treasure or a cart, these kind of inventories can be made official or may simply be private acts.

An inventory of inheritance is an enumeration and a description of movables and titles and papers of the deceased....

An inventory is an official document for conservation that testifies the property and rights of an individual or community inheritor....<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *La grand encyclopédie inventaire raisonné des sciences, des lettres et des arts par Société de Savants et de Gens de Lettres....*

<sup>4</sup> *Larousse de la langue française, Lexis*

<sup>5</sup> *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des Sciences, des Arts et des Métier....*

Here is emphasized that an inventory is a written document that conserves an accumulation of “things”. From a long time ago, the accumulation or documentation of accumulated things has been practiced in the places where a concept of property exists, and has continued through to the present. When it comes to an “inventory” in the context of art, a list of a museum's permanent collection soon comes to mind.

While an inventory depicts individual or collective properties as a record and a memory, it is also a table of contents that shows the power and preferences of the accumulation of property: the kings and aristocrats of the past, and the capitalists and nation states of modern times. In the case of a catalogue, however, these characteristics are slightly different. In a catalogue, the form, classification based on a certain order, is not the only issue, since even though a catalogue does represent an accumulated property, it does not only do this.

Inventories were being published in the 17<sup>th</sup> century because inheritors for some reason put the property of the deceased on sale, and this is when the inventories become catalogues, one of the origins of catalogues. The 19<sup>th</sup> century *Encyclopaedia* above-mentioned also describes this. Of course it does not mean that all property was published in catalogue-form, but one origin of catalogues is certainly derived from this property inventory. And in fact, an auction catalogue in the 18<sup>th</sup> century had a preface stating that it was simply a printed list of assets.<sup>6</sup>

It can surely be supposed that an inventory of property becomes a catalogue because there is a commercial market making use of that property. In terms of the history of how the art catalogue came to exist, a catalogue can be thought of as a modification of the list in the market (the auction space). Most of the early booklets called “catalogues” in art, as a matter of fact, are auction catalogues, as were book catalogues first printed for clients of book-sellers. The appearance of a catalogue, or the booklet given the title of catalogue, thus is associated with a market. When an inventory of a property becomes a catalogue, it symbolizes the property as a product, not as the property of an owner. The forms of how a catalogue is classified and described govern this very representation, which raises a critical issue in the theory of the catalogue.

Now we will try to show these forms and what they were as the change of “the representation of space” to “the space of representation”.

## 2. The Representation of Space

Firstly, I would like to show through some examples that early catalogues embodied a documentation of the space in which artworks were accumulated. To begin, a livret of the early Salon (\*fig 1), published in 1699, which can be supposed as a model for

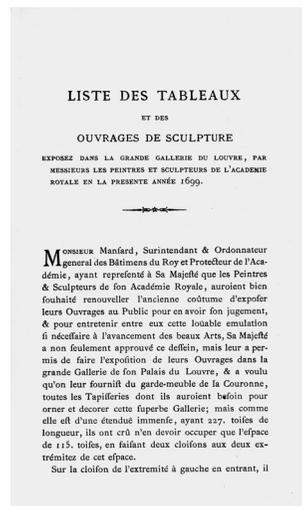


Fig.1 Salon livret of 1699

<sup>6</sup> “ We don’t follow more than the order of inventory in this catalogue.” in *Catalogue des tableaux, dessins, estampes...après le décès de feu Pierre Le Brun*, Paris, 1771.

later Salons, states early on:

On the partition on the extreme left when entering, there is a large dais in green velvet with large braids strainers in gold and silver, another level and a carpet walk beneath it with two portraits, one of His Majesty, and one of the Bishop, by Mr. Person....

In order to continue describing these paintings in an orderly fashion, we start on the front of the side of the carrousel by the pier VI. where paintings by Mr. Coipel the elder are shown.

That is to say,

His portrait and the family are on the same tableau.

Hercules sacrificed to Jupiter after his victories.

Hercules deified, or the apotheosis of Hercules.<sup>7</sup>

Descriptions like this continue for 13 pages. What is critical to note is Grande Gallerie as an exhibition space, not the catalogue's original classification system, generates coherence throughout the livret's descriptions. The livret follows sculptures and paintings displayed facing each other on the walls between windows, stretching from one end of the space to the other, with numbers up to 21 attached to each wall. (A total number therefore would be 42, and there must surely have been a number for the exhibition space.) It does not indicate the sizes of the artworks. This 1699 livret can be said to be a catalogue that represents an exhibition space.

Secondly, we can look at an auction catalogue from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. This auction catalogue, published in 1739 in Paris, is a set of wood prints and drawings collected by a person named Hermand.<sup>8</sup> Despite that the catalogue's organizer and editor are unknown, it does show a highly organized quality compared to the list-like catalogues that had come before. On the title page is printed the location and method of the auction, as well as the retailers where the catalogue was sold. Moreover, a short description of the auction in the form of a "notification" appears at the beginning of the main text. Putting such a "notification," a "foreword," or a "preface" at the start of the text became a norm later on. As this position of text was organized, the catalogues became documents of art history, discarding the inventory-like character. The first characteristic of the catalogue, after breaking from the inventory, is a representation of space. Looking at Hermand's auction catalogue, particularly the early part in which the etching of the 17<sup>th</sup> century painter and print-maker Israel Silvestre are classified into 4 categories:

N.1 One box filled with grand views, decorations, Caroussels....

N.2 One box filled with 65 grand views of town....

N.3 One box which contains 620 views of castles, landscapes, etc.

N.4 One box filled with 227 views of foreign towns....

<sup>7</sup> *Liste des tableaux et des ouvrages de sculpture exposez dans la grande Gallerie du Louvre...en la presente année 1699*, Paris, 1699.(Rep., Liepmanssohn et Dufour,1869)

<sup>8</sup> *Catalogue des estampes et dessins du Cabinet de feu d'Hermand, dont la vente se fera en detail aux Galleries du Louvre*, Paris, 1739.

Given that the works are collected and classified per box allows us to suppose that the collection itself was accordingly put into the boxes and classified. Short descriptions about the state of the prints and their values follow afterwards. Awareness for another kind of classification style and for product descriptions emerges, distinct from “counting”-style descriptions in the inventory of property. This classification is based on the actual condition of the collection, on the already existing concept of classification. The format of catalogue, representing a collection itself, is the same as the early Salon’s livret.

### 3. The Representation of Gaze

The fact that the original catalogues symbolize space indicates that the gaze of clients and viewers, an act of viewing artworks, is also embodied in them. That the catalogues represented a spatial visibility brings up a critical issue when thinking about the early catalogues.

Representation of vision became more apparent in Salon catalogues and early collection catalogues than auction catalogues, as seen in the examples of the early livret and in the descriptive form of the collection catalogues.<sup>9</sup> The exhibited works are described in the way they are viewed in actual exhibitions, as a representation of the space. When considering a catalogue as a form of écriture, it can be seen that it is écriture that includes an aspect of spatial visibility with the écriture of the counting list. Representation of vision is one of the most significant characteristics of the early art catalogues. It can be said that the art catalogue was born as one of the mechanisms defined as a place to view accumulated artworks.

This state of the early catalogues reminds one of another form of depicting vision, many of the so-called Gallery Paintings produced in Flanders in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the century of the birth of the art catalogue.<sup>10</sup> The appearance of this genre of Gallery Paintings portraying the art collections of kings, aristocrats and bourgeoisie, resembles the representation form of the early catalogues.

*Gallery of Archduke Leopold* by David Teniers is one example. (fig. 2) Paintings hang all over the wall in the back of the room, and sculptures and medals have been put on the desks and the floor of the hall. This scenery does not seem to accurately reflect the Duke’s collection, but rather it seems that the painter arranged many



Fig.2 D. Teniers , *Gallery of Archduke Leopold* (ca.1651), Petworth House, Sussex, The National Trust

<sup>9</sup> As an example of collection catalogues in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, see: L.-F. Dubois de Saint-Gelais, *Description des tableaux du Palais Royal avec la vie des peintres à la tête de leurs ouvrages*, Paris, 1727.

<sup>10</sup> For the Gallery Paintings in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, see: S. Speth-Holtehoff, *Les peintres flamands de cabinets d'amateurs au XVIIe siècle*, Bruxelles, 1957. P. Georget et A.M. Icoq, *La peinture dans la peinture*, Dijon, 1982.(Exhibition Catalogue)

things for the work, which of course does not dispute the fact that the Duke Leopold possessed everything painted here, only that it does not only show the Duke's right of possession. Nor does it simply show the Duke's artistic and cultural wealth, and thus his power, although that is one practical objective of the painting. Nor does it merely show off Teniers's skill, who was known as a painter of imitation, one who could freely imitate a famous painter's style. What needs to be discussed here is the meaning depicted in the painting that is far beyond the social and cultural implications.

The painting is, obviously, aiming to show the Duke's collection, indicating that this can be called meta-painting, a painting about the painting collection. What is important is that these paintings are supposedly expected to be viewed, and thus the collection itself is represented as something to be viewed. This act of being viewed is placed in a dual relationship with gaze. The main concept of the Gallery Paintings, including the Teniers, is an act of viewing.

Despite that the paintings represent an act of viewing, defining the main subject of gaze, whether Duke Leopold, Teniers, or those who ordered (and enjoyed) the paintings, is not our issue here. Naturally, specifying a main subject itself is an interesting issue since doing so reveals the social function of the space. However, the critical issue here is, again, the fact that viewing artworks itself, mostly paintings in this case, became an essential subject. Speaking semiotic, it is an issue of viewing as "signifiant" governing the meanings attached to the painting, which is seen in early catalogues. The early catalogues, visualized by texts, are in fact, Gallery Paintings, exhibitions and their paintings. Art catalogues, as *écriture* of viewing a space, came to exist.

Since open collection rooms, auctions and exhibitions served as places for viewing artworks, their catalogues are self-evidently expected to be *écriture*. Is it really so obvious that these places functioned as places for viewing from the early period of the catalogue? Considering the meanings tied to the painting of Duke Leopold's collection, it can be seen that the collection room did not necessarily have that function, but rather served as the space for the physical possession of cultural properties, of accumulated artworks. In this sense, the collection rooms up until the 17<sup>th</sup> century were not a space for viewing. Gallery Paintings thus indicate a new condition that the collection room, by being painted, becomes a place for viewing, just as the same thing happened with the early auction catalogues, as well as the Salon's *livret*. The birth of the art catalogue and a catalogue as representation of space mean that the space for accumulated artworks came to open as a space for viewing such artworks.

Why did the act of viewing in paintings and the catalogues, linked to the tradition of the inventory, become a subject? It is a complicated question, but this is surely connected with a transformation in the reception of paintings from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Although this issue needs to be researched carefully, first it is important to point out that the enjoying (consuming) of paintings was not just about viewing. This is not only hinted in the Gallery Paintings but by investigating the acceptance of paintings up until the 17<sup>th</sup> century we can understand this.<sup>11</sup> From

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<sup>11</sup> For concerning the reception of painting from 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century in France, see: R. de Piles, *Conversations sur la connaissance de la peinture et sur le jugement qu'on doit faire des tableaux*, Paris, 1677.(Rep., Slatkine, 1970.); *Cours de peinture par principes*, Paris, 1708.

the 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, paintings are enjoyed by an act of gazing in a purely visual sense, a tendency that grows in strength. Painting the paintings, a concept of a meta-painting must certainly relate to consciousness of pure visualization.

In this era, an act of viewing became an essential quality in the acceptance of paintings. If we label this gaze as “viewing,” the fact that viewing became a subject in “Gallery Paintings” and early art catalogues connects to the movement of “viewing” paintings. Its gaze works in the spaces, such as auctions and Salons, and creates by *écriture* a new index form in art. Further, this *écriture* is surely a part of the birth of “viewing”.

At the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century, the first public museum, the Louvre, was founded. While auctions, exhibitions, and royal collections had already established themselves as places for viewing, it is noted that the catalogue of the museum also brought this same tendency to the foreground. When the space for accumulated artworks comes to open in the form of an art museum, a catalogue defines the museum as a space for viewing. The subject of gaze in this case, needless to say, are the citizens under the name of the public, and the eyes of citizens became an essential theme later on in the catalogue form.

Likewise, new places, such as auctions, collections, exhibitions, museums, all of which were established in the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, are set as places for being gazed at in a catalogue. A record of a space acquires an opportunity to become the memory of gazing.

#### 4. The Space of Representation

The catalogue kept its original format only for a short period. The catalogue as the representation of a space lost its strength and moved on to a further phase. New forms were welcomed, in the case of an auction catalogue, in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century; with the Salon’s *livret* in the 1740s; the art museum, soon after its foundation. A catalogue suddenly began to evolve autonomously within itself and it created a form of representation, based on systemized classification and description.

While differences in the format of classification and description, depending on the places where catalogues are created, do apply, it is interesting to focus on and bring together how an art catalogue established its own peculiar form of representation.

##### Geopolitical Classification and the Chronological Arrangement

A definitive characteristic in the transition between the initial and secondary phases of the catalogue indicates that a concept of classification becomes clear in each category. In auction catalogues, for instance, a concept of geopolitical headings in three Schools, the Italian School, the School of Flanders and Holland, and the French School, rank higher in the classification. This classification concept grows even more fragmented when including a number of other Italian Schools. For instance, Schools of Cities, Rome, Florence and Venice, sometimes rank at a lower level in the classification. However, setting Schools of City as classification items gradually disappeared in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

There is also another concept of classification under this geopolitical itemizing. While not

known as an “item”, the birth as well as death dates of painters (or the period in which the painters were active) were put into the system of classification description. This arrangement by chronology cannot be seen in the early art catalogues, which were characterized by the representation of spaces. Although there are numerous examples of this arrangement, it appeared distinctly in the auction catalogues established by Pierre Remy. And the auction catalogues of the following generation, J.-B.-P. Le Brun and Alexandre Joseph Paillet, naturally employed this chronological ordering.<sup>12</sup>

The chronological arrangement certainly relates to the historiography of art in the art history books, art dictionaries, and encyclopedia that were being published from the end of 17<sup>th</sup> century. There is no room to detail the history of French art historiography, but art catalogues began employing the chronological description used by art books - such as, *Conversation* by André Félibien in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, *Painter's Life* by Roger de Piles, *Painter's Life* by Dezallier d'Argenville in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, *Dictionary of Painters in Flanders and Holland* by Descamps, and more<sup>13</sup> - meaning that the catalogue acquired a discourse of art history.

Catalogues, not only classifying and organizing the artworks at auctions, exhibitions, collections, and museums, but employing a discourse of art history, came already to embody an entirely different form to that of their early period. At actual auctions, however, there was no chronological system. Thus auction catalogues, which are based on Schools and a system of descriptive classification of chronology, with just this, created a different discourse from reality.

Catalogues of royal collections followed auction catalogues, arranging painters and their artworks based on the three Schools, as well as the birth and death dates, or the period when the painters were active. In actual collection rooms, a kind of principle of masterpiece-ism and the size of paintings determined the way in which works were exhibited, with relatively no consideration of the chronological order.<sup>14</sup> The fact that most of the auction catalogues of the 18<sup>th</sup> century are collection catalogues can be said to imply that the catalogues of royal collections naturally imitated the pioneering auction catalogues.

In the meantime, a concept of classification for the Salon livret gradually became fixed in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Livret, initially representing the space of the Salon, later utilized an artwork descriptive system based on status in Academy (Académie Royale de la Peinture et de la Sculpture). Participating artists and their works were arranged respectively by their status, such as director, dean, professor, associate professor, or *agrés* (artists admitted to be its member).

Furthermore, it is important to note that this hierarchy relates to the subjects of the paintings. Hierarchy of subjects, a core painting concept of the 18<sup>th</sup> century French Academy, is a question

<sup>12</sup> For details concerning chronological order by painters in auction catalogues, see : Kan Shimamoto, *op.cit.*

<sup>13</sup> French titles of art books referred here : A. Félibien, *Entretiens sur les vies et sur les ouvrages des plus excellents peintres anciens et modernes...*, Paris, 1725.)(Rep., Gregg Press, 1967); R. de Piles, *Abrégé de la vie des peintres, avec des réflexions sur leurs ouvrages...*, Paris, 1699.; A.-J. Dezallier d'Argenville, *Abrégé de la vie des plus fameux peintres...*, Paris, 1745; M.-J.-B. Descamps, *La vie des peintres flamands, allemands et hollandaise...*, 4vols., Paris, 1753-1754.

<sup>14</sup> For concerning the display of paintings in collections of 18<sup>th</sup> Century France, see : A. McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre. Art, Politics, and the Origins of the Modern Museum in Eighteenth-Century Paris*, Cambridge University Press, 1994.

of the value of painting between “history of painting” and “painting of genre”. Those who rank high in the hierarchy, from director to professors, were “history painters”, presenting mainly history paintings to the Salons. Those who ranked low in the hierarchy were placed as “genre painters”, those who painted landscapes, still life, and scenes of everyday life. Therefore, the catalogue based on the status of painters, also represents hierarchy of subjects, “history painting” and “genre of painting.”

This descriptive system based on the subjects of works corresponds more or less to the actual order of Salon's exhibition. In exhibition rooms, a big history painting was hung on an upper part of a wall, and at the bottom, there were “paintings of genre”. From top to bottom, the hierarchy of subjects is visualized on the wall of the Salon. So we can say that the livret of secondary phase includes the feature of the early catalogues, representation of a space, however the actual walls of the Salon do not visualize correspondence between the artist's status within the academy and the subject of the painting. For example, more than in the livret, the works on the actual Salon walls were displayed miscellaneously, as history painters often exhibited “paintings of genre”. In this sense, the hierarchy of the participating painters and their works is most present in the livret.

The transformation in the catalogue form engendered a new character, one in which a catalogue itself became a space that symbolizes something in art, from mere representation of an actual space to a space of representation. In particular, space of representation in auction catalogues should be highlighted. The reason is that, in contrast to the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and onwards, there were still not many opportunities to see art and auction catalogues provided a wealth of information about artworks, but also that art history and art discourse can be expounded through its form of representation as a catalogue. To exaggerate a little, the art discourse established in catalogues eventually influenced exhibition concepts of museums (Schools- and chronologically based exhibition methods). However, the catalogue as a space of representation again went through a transformation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## 5. Art Catalogues in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

### Alphabetical Order

A study of the art catalogues of the 19<sup>th</sup> century reveals that classification based on artists' names in alphabetical order appeared as a major concept, first employed by auction catalogues for painting, the Salon livret, and the exhibition catalogues of the developing museums.

Of the many examples, one Salon livret (\*fig 3) can be seen as an early case of adopting this alphabetical order, published in 1795 when the innovations of the Academy initiated by French Revolution

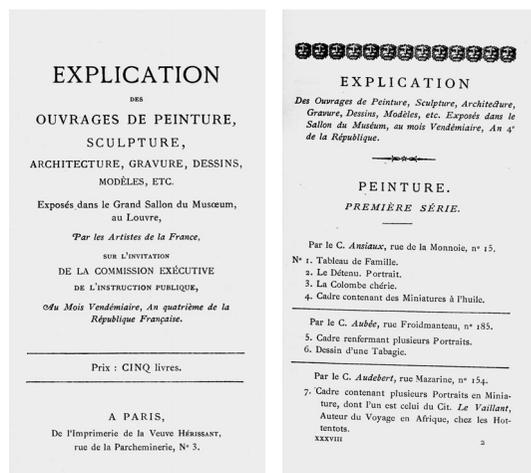


Fig.3 Salon livret of 1795(title page and first page of catalogue)

had calmed down, and a new type of Salons stabilized. First, referring to the notification on the first page:

During the last two Salons, we thought about numbering the works, in order to save the public from having to leaf through this booklet often, but experience has proven that this order is impossible to maintain, and that the public would not appreciate this kind of detailed and unnecessary precaution. The public wants be led to the works they are attracted most; and to make sure that it is able to find everything with ease by following this booklet in which we made categories of paintings, sculpture, architecture and engravings by series....

To keep enough latitude, each series is numbered by thousand. As such, numbers one to thousand are paintings, and if it takes place, that of sculpture will start at 1001, that of architecture at 2001, and that of engravings at 3001.

To make sure to not compromise perfect equality with an incompatible preference, all artists will be put in their series in alphabetic order. They will each have their name and their address on the note with their works....<sup>15</sup>

Here, in this first part of the catalogue, the concept and objective of alphabetical classification, which will be mentioned later, is described:

#### Paintings

##### First series

By C.Ansiaux, de la Monnoie Street, 15.

No. 1. Painting of the family.

2. The Prisoner. Portrait.

3. The Darling Dove.

4. A frame with miniatures in oil.

By C.Aubee, Froidmanteau Street, 185.

5. A frame with several portraits.

6. Drawing of a smoking room.<sup>16</sup>

A format of alphabetical arrangement of painters became the norm not only in exhibition catalogues such as *livret*, but art catalogues of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in general. In auction and museum catalogues, however, in which diverse paintings are mixed, the classification based on the three Schools since the 18<sup>th</sup> century is a concept precedent over the alphabetical order.

In any sense, an adoption of the alphabetical order is the concept that divides catalogues of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the 19<sup>th</sup> century. While in the art world the alphabetical order was already used

<sup>15</sup> *Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture, gravure, dessins, modeles, etc.,...*, Paris, 1795, Avertissement.(Rep., Liepmansohn,1871)

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p.13

as a catalogue index, and for painter's dictionaries in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, comparing with ordering by chronology, the fact that it sets a more semiotic as well as abstract concept of classification anticipates not only catalogues of the 19<sup>th</sup> century but today's catalogues as well.

Even though the alphabet is abstract, it is not to say that it has no meaning or neutrality. Referring again to the notification of the livret of 1795 quoted earlier:

To make sure to not compromise perfect Equality with an incompatible preference, all artists will be put in their series in alphabetic order. They will each have their name and their address on the note with their works.

The alphabetical order, adopted by the livret during the French Revolution, conceptualizes an ideology of "equality", indicating that the alphabetical classification is not just a mere abstract sign, a sign merely for the sake of classification.

The catalogue arranged by alphabetical order relates with the way in which viewers gaze at artworks (the gaze of the subject). Painters and their works, organized alphabetically, do not have the same privilege associated with the 18<sup>th</sup> century's academic hierarchy. Viewers gaze at painters and their works with a sense of equality, which links to a concept of a "public" and from that to the museum's idea of public-ness.

A catalogue cannot exist without the intervention of ideology, revealing that a catalogue, a form of representation, is always conceptualized somehow. It is critical to note that alphabetical ordering form, characteristic of 19<sup>th</sup> century catalogues was adopted alongside French Revolutionary ideology, and has an entirely different starting point from the alphabetical ordering as a concept of index existing up to the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

A sense of equality associated with the alphabet was possibly secreted in the catalogues from the birth of the 19<sup>th</sup> century civil society. However, as the Revolutionary era came to an end and evolved into Napoleon's imperialist government, the policies towards art stabilized, and the alphabetical ordering seemed to become a systematic itemization for immediate arrangement of artworks. Whether a Salon or museum, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century of vastly increasing exhibits, alphabetical ordering was the simplest classification item to organize a large quantity of works.

However, this classification generated a major contradiction within a catalogue. It is important to remember that the classification by the three Schools, by historical chronology, and by the painter status system of the livret, all represented a discourse on art history. While an adoption of the alphabetical arrangement in livret is closely connected to the abandonment of the hierarchy system, what is more significant is that it destroyed the discourse of the chronological system. It does not indicate that the catalogues of the 19<sup>th</sup> century altogether abandoned the discourse of art history created by this historical chronological system, but what is an issue to be investigated is whether it means that the catalogues depicted the discourse of chronology without contradicting alphabetical arrangement. In the process of this investigation, a serious study about an art catalogue begins, and one can talk of the birth of modern art catalogues for the first time. Lastly, we look at the catalogues for paintings exhibited in Louvre Museum in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## 6. The Catalogue for Painting by the Louvre Museum

It was in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when an art catalogue entered a new, definitive era, the basis for the modern catalogue. At the Louvre, the first catalogue, of Italian School painting, edited by the curator Frédéric Villot, was published in 1849. The catalogue, *Frédéric Villot: Instruction of Pictures Exhibited in the Galleries of the Imperial Museum of Louvre, the First Part, the Italian School*, included 553 artworks in 212 pages (in-8° format).<sup>17</sup> This catalogue was reprinted and revised many times up until the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, and became a foundation for the Louvre's exhibition catalogues of today. In addition, the catalogue, *The German, Flanders, and Holland Schools*, was published in 1852, also edited by Villot, as was *The French School*, in 1855, which, again, was reprinted, as well as revised, repeatedly. These three catalogues dealing with the three schools of the 18<sup>th</sup> century were thus systematically published.

Looking more closely at the first part of Villot's catalogue, *The Italian School*, what is interesting is the notification text discussing a method of how to catalogue: up until this era, no one had written more on museum catalogues than Villot. It is critical to think about the new concept and form of museum catalogues, quoting, firstly, this concept from the notification:

In an age where eminent critics try hard to refute the mistakes accredited for a long time, and to propagate the serious studies by writing full of healthy erudition, the directors of the Museum don't seem to do their duty by only publishing a dry nomenclature of paintings exhibited in the Louvre. For a long time they thought that just indicating the subject accompanied by a number would be enough to satisfy everyone, namely artists, amateurs and the curious. They didn't consider that lack of interesting and useful information in those notices was one of the principal causes that create guilty indifference towards the masterpieces that are worth to be so concerned and admired.

A similar laconism, perhaps excusable back then, won't be anymore. Times have changed....<sup>18</sup>

The Louvre's new experiments with catalogues were made possible, Villot writes, thanks to the re-structuring of the gallery after August 27<sup>th</sup> 1848 to reflect citizens' evaluations. These catalogues were academically robust works, and, in contrast to the catalogues of the past, had a strong awareness of the era of correcting mistakes long believed in, of expanding the methods of serious research. Villot also writes of "information related to painters and their works are classified in the following manner"<sup>19</sup>, listing eight categories as the main parts of a description of catalogue:

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<sup>17</sup> F. Villot, *Notice des tableaux exposés dans les galeries du Musée National du Louvre, 1er partie, école d'Italie*, Paris, 1849. For a history of catalogues of the Louvre Museum in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, see : J. J. Marquet de Vasselot, *Répertoire des catalogues du musée du Louvre(1793-1917) suivi de la liste des directeurs et conservateurs du musées*, Paris, 1917.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., Avertissement, p.V.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., Avertissement, p.VII.

1. Name of painter, date of birth and death, place of birth and death, painter's school
2. Biography of painter
3. Indication of subject; material; size of figures
4. Size of picture(tableau)
5. Description of picture
6. Prints made after the picture
7. History of picture
8. Indication of principal restorations and change of sizes which pictures had suffered at various times<sup>20</sup>

While including the three Schools as concepts with priority is nothing surprising, organizing eight categories indicates a new era for the catalogue. In fact, the catalogues edited by Villot systematized the post-18<sup>th</sup> century art catalogues based on an “academic” vision, one which played a vital role as groundwork for the newly born “study of art history.”

While Villot's catalogues raise many issues not just about the catalogue, but also art history and museums, this paper only focuses on the issue of the alphabetical arrangement in catalogues. Villot refers to this at part of categorie 1, *name of painter, date of birth and death, place of birth and death, painter's school*.

It was after hesitating for a long time that we decided to adopt, in this catalogue, the alphabetic order over the chronologic order, it's more reasonable, wiser, but evidently less convenient for a large number of visitors who, not well versed in the history of art, don't have the time while walking through the halls to consult the tables and the reference numbers to find the descriptions of the paintings in front of them. It would be preferable to have the same order in the exhibition as there is in the description of the paintings; but to do this we face insurmountable difficulties, for the moment at least, for the realization of a project we abandoned only with regret. What is more, in order to reconcile as many interests as possible, we put a chronologic table of all masters at the end of each school, which supplements the defects the alphabetic arrangement may have from a scientific point of view.<sup>21</sup>

The question of whether an order of artworks in catalogues should be arranged on the basis of chronological order or alphabetical order has already been seen auction catalogues and the Salon livret in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

In Villot's catalogues, however, the issues shifted to whether or not a catalogue is a guide-book for exhibitions, or whether catalogues are academically consistent or not. What is interesting here is that museum catalogues in this era came to exist as something academic (scientifique), and where the arrangement of artworks is the most critical issue. However, the “academic” catalogue

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., Avertissement, p.VII-XII.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., Avertissement, p.VII.

and alphabeticalization being contradictory, Villot puts an index of the artists' chronology at the end of the catalogues to resolve this.

The catalogue itself arranges painters of exhibited artworks by the alphabetical ordering system, and places detailed descriptions of the works corresponding to the eight categories mentioned earlier. Starting from an explanation of painters up to the history of the works' restoration, all historical and contemporary data on the artworks is recorded in the catalogues, in addition to drawings. A catalogue functions as a space for a discourse accumulating complete data on painters and their works. What Villot calls "art history" is missing here, since he gave up representing "art history" for the sake of the alphabetical ordering system. He aimed to create the function of an accurate index in the museum as an actual space.

Even in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, catalogues had the function of an index. Rather a catalogue, in general, was an index - like a table of contents. However, as a space that represents art history, it changed in character. The catalogues of the 19<sup>th</sup> century re-gained the function of index, with a strong awareness of the vast information and "scientificité" of a work. And it is this very awareness that distinguishes the 19<sup>th</sup> from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In this sense, Villot's catalogues, though supported by a study of the history of artworks, pushed the chronological order, the basis of art history as a discipline, out of the catalogue. In contrast to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, however, outside of the catalogue is where art history discourse overflows.