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Johann Michael von Hermann (1793–1855): A predecessor of Max Schweidler?

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Abstract: The restorer Johann Michael von Hermann (1793–1855), famous in the early nineteenth century, has long fallen into oblivion. A recent discovery of his work associated with old master prints at the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München has allowed a close study of his methods and skills as well as those of his pupil Ludwig Albert von Montmorillon (1794–1854), providing a fresh perspective on the early history of paper conservation. Von Hermann's method of facsimile inserts was praised by his contemporaries, before Max Schweidler (1885–1953) described these methods in 1938. The present article provides biographical notes on both nineteenth century restorers, gives examples of prints treated by them and adds a chapter of conservation history crediting them with a place in the history of the discipline. In summary, this offers a surprising insight on how works of art used to be almost untraceably restored by this team of Munich-based restorers more than 150 years before Schweidler.

Keywords: conservation history, paper, conservation theory, facsimile inserts, historical treatment

1 Introduction

Johann Michael von Hermann (Figure 1) settled in Munich in 1821, where he soon earned the reputation of a first-rank restorer. This was six years before the chemist, art collector, restorer and art critic Friedrich Gottfried Hermann Lucanus (1793–1872) offered early comments on paper restoration in a mere few pages of his book *Anleitung zur Restauration alter Oelgemälde und zum Reinigen und Bleichen der Kupferstiche und Holzschnitte* published in 1828

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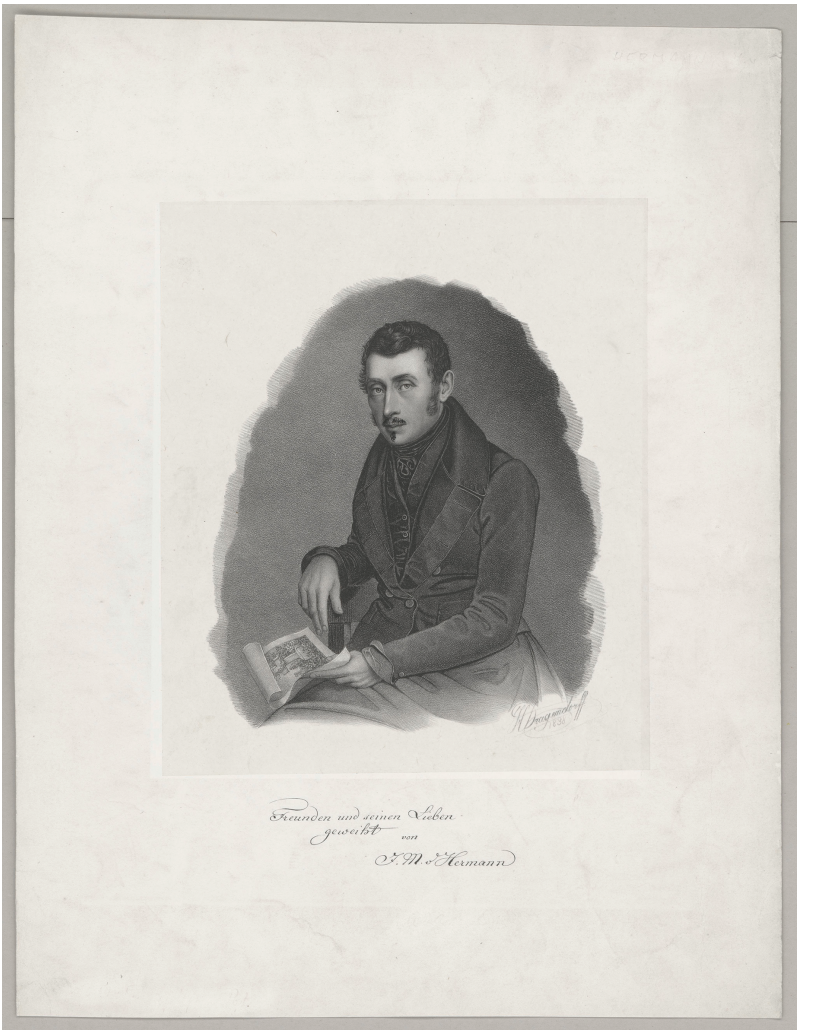

Figure 1: Heinrich Dragendorff: Portrait of Johann Michael von Hermann, 1838, lithography on chine collé, 438 x 336 mm (sheet), Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, inv. no. 2015:170 D (diffuse light).

(Lucanus 1828). Two more decades were to pass before the Frenchman Alfred Bonnardot (1808–1884) would in turn publish his *Essai sur la restauration des anciennes estampes et des livres rares* in the year 1846, which would then become an early standard reference in restoration literature (Bonnardot 1846). Animated by the latter, the German artist, engraver and lithographer Joseph

Friedrich August Schall (1785–1867) published *Ausführliche Anleitung zur Restauration vergelbter, fleckiger und beschädigter Kupferstiche usw*. in 1863 (Schall 1863). He not only is said to have offered restoration services for payment but to have introduced his techniques to other artists (Stevenson 1995, 118). More importantly, he was familiar with the technique of mending by paring the edges of original and additional paper and describes it in his book (Schall 1863, 16–17).

Based on recent evidence, it becomes apparent that von Hermann was an expert in facsimile repairs much earlier than Schall and may have been instrumental in developing or even inventing this technique.

Von Hermann was a famous master of the historical restoration craft, namely the "Erfinder der wahren Kupferstich-Restauration" (literally: the inventor of the genuine copperplate engraving restoration) as he was called by Julius Max Schottky (Schottky 1833, 276–277). Possibly von Hermann was forgotten over time because he did not publish anything of his own, to the point where he is not even named in the more recent literature on the history of the conservation profession.

The most comprehensive description and appreciation of von Hermann comes from the Munich cleric, lithographer, art critic and collector Canonicus Balthasar Speth resp. Späth (1774–1846) (Speth 1821, 294–296. On Speth see: Nagler 1838, 126–127; von Wurzbach 1862, 386–387; Holland 1893, 144; Thieme and Becker 1923, 499). Relying on brief biographical notes, Speth panegyrically praises von Hermann for his craftsman skills in the magazine *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände* in 1821. At the same time confirming and crowning his article, Speth cites a full-length testimony on von Hermann from August 6th, 1816 by Adam von Bartsch (1757–1821), the first curator of the k. und k. Hofbibliothek in Vienna (the Imperial and Royal Court Library). The original of the testimony has not survived (Rieger 2014, 348, note 1578). Both expertises by Speth and von Bartsch turned out to be highly beneficial for von Hermann: published in a magazine read by both collectors and a public interested in the arts, it spread his fame and promoted his work further. To which extend von Hermann initiated this article by Speth as strategical advertising tactic must remain unsolved. Shortly afterwards, in 1823, Joseph Heller (1798–1849) also praised von Hermann's skills in his publication *Praktisches Handbuch für Kupferstichsammler oder Lexicon der vorzüglichsten und beliebtesten Kupferstecher, Formschneider und Lythographen* (Heller 1823–1825, 15).

2 Johann Michael von Hermann

As Speth records (Speth 1821, 294–296), Johann Michael von Hermann was born in 1793 as the son of a German nobleman in Vienna. From 1805 onwards, he attended

the Wiener Akademie der bildenden Künste, (the Fine Arts Academy in Vienna) as a student of Johann Hagenauer (1732–1810) in order to become a painter and etcher. After the dramatic shrinking of his paternal fortune during the war of 1809–1811, von Hermann focused on earning money by restoring damaged engravings. At that time already, he had started collecting old master prints from the German, the Netherlandish and Italian schools for his own enjoyment.

Von Hermann's most skilful restoration of damaged engravings, as Speth reports, convinced influential people throughout Vienna. His clients were, among others, the Duke Albrecht of Saxony-Teschen, the k. und k. Hofbibliothek in Vienna and the Counts of Fries and Harrach. Works were thus sent to him from Italy, Paris, London, Berlin and other cities for restoration purposes. Speth describes von Hermann's measures as versatile: he benefited first of all from his drawing skills, especially as he had to complete losses in the depiction with a pen or a brush, which allowed him to perfectly imitate lines made with a burin. Von Hermann is also said to have developed chemical procedures and mechanical devices of his own, yet no further details on this subject were provided. He is said to have successfully removed both absorbed and surface stains as well as to have bleached yellowed or browned paper. He was able to fill in losses, missing parts on the edges and, more difficultly, in the centre of the sheet so well that no one could detect them, either from the colour or from the quality of the paper: even the most translucent sheet, when held against the light, showed no trace of the repairs. Missing parts of the depictions were redrawn by him after the most exquisite copy available. The result of these measures was described by Speth as being so perfect that even the most experienced eye of a connoisseur had to be fooled by it. Speth finally stated that von Hermann could challenge every skilled connoisseur to detect one of his repairs without running the risk of losing. The same skilfulness allowed him to add a paper margin to narrowly trimmed platemarks and then imitate the indentation of a plate, without leaving any noticeable trace (Speth 1821, 294–296).

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, large margins were seen as desirable criteria by collectors and could even raise the value of a sheet. As the addition of a large margin often meant pressing the sheets with high pressure and therefore losing the original relief of the platemark, fake platemarks had become a necessity. The skills of von Hermann were so outstanding that the term "hermanisieren" ("to hermanize") was even established in order to describe restorations done so perfectly (Wurzbach 1862, 386–387).

In the year 1821, von Hermann moved from Vienna to Munich, where he became active as an art dealer and founded the *Hermann'sche Kunsthandlung und Lithographischer Verlag* (Eckel 2001, 164). Around 1823/24, he rented an apartment in the so-called Himbsel-Haus on the Maximiliansplatz and later opened a shop in Kaufingerstrasse 17. The choice in his shop was manifold, comprising oil paintings

of contemporary artists, glass paintings, drawings, engravings and products he issued as a print publisher (Müller 1845, 112). He also decided to make his own collection of old masters accessible to anyone interested (Speth 1821, 296). His collection might have been the basis for his art shop. Von Hermann succeeded rapidly and played an important role in the Munich art scene. His art shop soon claimed to have the first rank among all comparable institutions in Munich (Schottky 1833, 276). Furthermore, von Hermann was one of the founders of the Münchner Kunstverein in 1824 and officiated as its first *Conservator* i.e. curator (Langenstein 1983, 76–78). He even housed the Kunstverein by subletting a hall and two small rooms in his own apartment (Morgenblatt 1824, 329; Langenstein 1983, 76–78). His involvement in the Kunstverein facilitated von Hermann to develop his connections, as well as to expand his circle of clients. One of the members present at the founding meeting of the Münchner Kunstverein, on November 26th, 1823, was Franz (François) Brulliot (1760–1836), head of the Munich Kupferstichkabinett (Langenstein 1983, 61). Moreover, this offered von Hermann the opportunity to strengthen his ties with this institution.

3 Ludwig Albert von Montmorillon

Ludwig Albert von Montmorillon (1794–1854) had in many ways a similar biography. He was draughtsman, engraver, lithographer, restorer and art dealer active in Munich (Nagler 1838, 432–433; Thieme and Becker 1931, 98). He had enrolled November 4th, 1814, at the Kunstakademie (Academy of Fine Arts) in Munich for the class of engraving (Matrikelbuch 1809–1841), furthermore he was appointed as an art expert at the Royal District and City Court in Munich. He was also a teacher at the royal Pagerie (an educational institution for the young aristocracy) and a pensioner of the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich. In 1840, he requested a concession for an art and antiques shop (Eilbote 1840, 797). The latter, located in Karlstrasse 10, offered a wide range of both old and new paintings, engravings and lithographs (Müller 1845, 112). The art writer Georg Kaspar Nagler (1801–1866) reports that von Hermann trained his colleague von Montmorillon in his specific method of print restoration, who in turn was able to provide such great results in no time that the most famous cabinets, whether at home or abroad, soon entrusted him with their sheets. Thus, brilliantly restored sheets of von Montmorillon were said to be in the Munich Kupferstichkabinett and in the famous private collection of the Prussian General-Postmaster Carl Ferdinand Friedrich von Nagler (1770–1845) that was acquired by the Berlin Kupferstichkabinett in the year 1835. Furthermore, prints treated by

Montmorillon can be found in other German as well as in French, Italian and English collections. All of this despite the fact that von Montmorillon was not able to use his left arm due to a mishap in his childhood (Nagler 1838, 432).

This clearly shows that von Hermann did not keep his knowledge to himself, but instead willingly shared it with others. He is allegedly said to have given up on restoration after having founded his art shop (Schottky 1833, 278), yet this is contradicted by the fact that well after the death of von Hermann, a published notice in the art shop's own leaflet *Kunst-Antiquarium der L. A. von Montmorillon'schen Kunstsammlung* from June 1st, 1855 requests that everyone still having "Restauranda" at von Hermann's should get in touch with the shop of von Montmorillon (Kunst-Antiquarium 1855, Nr. 8 and 9). This implies that the two art dealers and restorers must have worked very closely together.

In an article published on July 5th, 1831 in the *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände,* von Montmorillon underlined the fact that he had worked as restorer for many years and thereby issued a *Rüge* (reprimand) to paper manufacturers (von Montmorillon 1831, 212). He complained about the insufficient durability of contemporary paper compared to sheets dating back to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The art scholar Julius Max Schottky (1797–1849) spoke of von Montmorillon as a restorer in whom he had the utmost confidence (Schottky 1833, 279).

4 Max and Carl Schweidler

A comparative example would be the famous restorers Max Schweidler (1885–1953) and his brother Carl Schweidler (1884–1962). Both were active since the beginning of the twentieth century in Berlin as masters of their profession. Most informative about Max Schweidler, who died on August 30th, 1953 in Stuttgart, is the obituary held by Max Hettler at the funeral service in the Stuttgart crematory on October 30th, 1953 (Hettler 1953, 416–417), where one can also find that Max Schweidler had moved from the blocked Berlin to Stuttgart to build up a new workshop and teach lessons on the restoration of prints at the Stuttgarter Graphische Fachschule (the Stuttgart Technical College for Graphics; since 1972 named Johannes-Gutenberg-Schule). Probably he was recommended to this school by his publisher Max Hettler, who himself was teaching there as part-time professional specialist (Barthel 1953, 96).

Max (1885–1953) had learned from Carl (1884–1962) and was more the theorist who published the methods of his brother. Thereupon the relation between the two Schweidler brothers seemed to have changed for the worse (Perkinson 2006, 2–3; Brückle 2007, 9–13). Their methods were listed in Max

Schweidler's book *Die Instandsetzung von Kupferstichen, Zeichnungen, Büchern usw.*, which was first published in 1938, then again as a revised edition in 1949 (Schweidler 1938; Schweidler 1949). Therefore, the perfect restorations are attributed mostly to Max Schweidler, consequently it is him who became infamous for having deceived many collectors and restorers. Referring to the measures of Schweidler, one even uses the English term of "deceptive repair", as his nearly invisible restorations of damaged sheets gave the impression that these were perfectly preserved impressions. Schweidler was especially well-known for his impeccable inlay-method. He pared the edges of the original paper along losses as well as the margins of a perfectly fitting piece of insert paper, so that it would have the same thickness as the original sheet. He managed to make the restorations close to unrecognisable, even in transmitted light. He would choose the insert paper to be attached as identical as possible to the "patient", according to its quality, colour and structure. This necessitated an enormous stock of papers from each single era. Furthermore, Schweidler knew how to imperceptibly restore flattened platemark reliefs on the print, as well as how to add false margins with specific instruments. He did not, indeed, shy away from producing false chain lines and water marks (Perkinson 2006, 1–7).

In the beginning of the twentieth century, when Schweidler was active as a restorer, his profession was still considered a secret trade. It thus seemed all the more important that Schweidler revealed his techniques and procedures in a handbook. Timothy P. Whalen, Director of the Getty Conservation Institute, called Schweidler's publication "a magician's handbook in which he was revealing his most baffling tricks" (Perkinson 2006, IX). Perkinson mentions that he did not know of any author before Schweidler with such a profound understanding of the technique of chamfered repairs (Perkinson 2006, 9; see also Clarke 2002, 52), yet, one must add the examples of von Hermann's and von Montmorillon's restorations. Even as neither von Hermann nor von Montmorillon left any written documentation or recipes, the sheets treated by the two Munich restorers speak their own language: these are the earliest datable, nearly imperceptible restorations of losses that can be attributed to distinct persons. Whether the Schweidler brothers knew anything about the methods of their predecessors remains a matter of speculation. As the old master prints restored by Schweidler are well characterised by the term *to schweidlerize*, or *Schweidlerization*, many years before, the restorations of von Hermann had also been given the hallmark of excellence with the neologism *hermanisieren (to hermanize)*. While, so far, any deceptive or facsimile repair is mostly related to Schweidler (Stanton 2002, Laz et al. 2014, 259–269, Dieter et al. 2019) from now on, at least two more possible executors must be taken into consideration.

5 Ethics

Bearing in mind the outstanding restoration skills of the two Munich-based practitioners von Hermann and von Montmorillon, one must not forget that they, like the Schweidler brothers, too, severely trimmed and retouched prints at the cost of the original substance and refurbished them to make them fit the zeitgeist. Claiming to make objects look like they had never been touched before, they crossed the line between skillful restoration and actual deception and are obviously far away from contemporary conservation ethics. They irretrievably removed original substance, their only goal being to make interventions undetectable under any circumstances. Thus, they were clearly not interested in leaving any clarifying treatment documentation. In fact, it is this missing informative and undeceiving documentation that makes their treatments unethical to our modern understanding of conservation. We are unable to determine to what extent the original was altered, yet damaged. This approach, in English accurately referred to as "deceptive repair", does not meet the currently prevailing guidelines in terms of conservation and preservation of original substance (E.C.C.O. 2003).

6 Examination of treated prints

A few prints in the collection of the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, acquired between 1823 and 1839 from Johann Michael von Hermann's art shop in Munich, offer the rare possibility to link repair techniques to specific persons from the dawn of restoration, in this case von Hermann and his pupil von Montmorillon.

6.1 Prints treated by Johann Michael von Hermann

In 1825, the engraving *Adam and Eve with Cain* (Figure 2), made by Lucas van Leyden in 1510 (165 × 114 mm, sheet, NHD 11a, inv. no. 67727 D), was sold by Johann Michael von Hermann to the Munich Kupferstichkabinett. Apparently, the sheet had been reworked. Indeed, while Hollstein indicates that the dimensions up to the borderlines are 162 × 120 mm, the Munich engraving measures 162 × 114 mm, i.e. an identical length and a six-millimetre shorter width.

Figure 2: Lucas van Leyden: Adam and Eve with Cain, 1510, engraving, 165 x 116 mm (sheet), Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, inv. no. 67727 D, recto (diffuse light): The print has been trimmed on both sides and along the top and measures a six-millimetre shorter width and is 2 mm shorter in height.

The right side of the print is missing 6 mm of the original image. On the recto, this serves as the most obvious indication that the print underwent significant alteration. In fact, at least 6 to 8 mm must have been removed along this side. On the left side, the heel of Adam is truncated very slightly compared to the other prints in mint condition (Figure 3), indicating that the entire left side was cut a little, too. The top edge was slightly trimmed removing parts of the borderline. Then 3 mm strips of matching paper were added to all three edges. The missing design areas on the right and the borderlines that frame the image were inpainted in black ink, using a brush. The partly missing upper borderline was overpainted with black brush and pencil, while on the lateral margins a platemark was imitated with pencil only, as shown on the close-up (Figure 4). The lower edge is the only one that has remained in its original condition.

Because of their seamless overlapping, the additions blend in perfectly. Even in transmitted light (Figure 5), one cannot see any trace of thicker or thinned out areas (Japanese paper fibres on the right edge of the verso are hinging remnants of more recent date). The additions as well as the original paper were accurately shaved down along the edges, so that by the overlapping conjunction of these thinned areas, the original thickness of the paper could be attained. This regularity in paper thickness has been maintained over the whole length of the additions. At no point, even on the verso of the sheet (Figure 6), does any protruding part (for instance browned adhesive) reveal the intervention. The light paper tone of the additions matches perfectly well with the original paper, thus making the sheet appear quite homogeneous.

Similarly, two years before, in 1823 von Hermann sold the engraving *Samson and Delilah* (Figure 7) by Lucas van Leyden, dating back to ca. 1505, to the Munich Kupferstichkabinett (282 × 201 mm, sheet, NHD 25a, inv. no. 67048 D). This sheet, too, must have been damaged along the edge, for von Hermann narrowly trimmed it along the inside of the borderlines, subsequently adding 2 mm wide paper strips on which he then repainted continuous borderlines with black ink. During his restoration work, he sketched these borderlines on the verso – for what purpose remains unclear – with a pencil (Figure 8). A possible explanation might be that he marked the position of the borderlines which served as orientation line while he was paring down the mends. Schall (1863, 16–17) indicates to mark the position of the overlap on the original's verso with a pencil. Maybe the pencil marks are simply the unlucky imitations of a plate mark. Prior to this, a few tears in the upper right corner and in the middle of the sheet must have been mended, along with a larger loss in the lower right edge, which was skilfully equalized with the original paper. The recto of the print

Figure 3: Lucas van Leyden: Adam and Eve with Cain, 1510, engraving, 163 × 118 mm (sheet), The British Museum, London. inv. no. 1849, 1027.9. (diffuse light). © The Trustees of The British Museum.

appears complete and seems unaltered. It requires transmitted light to identify the added edges by close-up inspection where it becomes evident that the chain lines end sharply before the added margin (Figure 9). A larger inlay at the lower

Figure 4: Lucas van Leyden: Adam and Eve with Cain, inv. no. 67727 D, detail of the right margin (transmitted light): The lighter mending paper can be clearly distinguished from the original paper. The image is retouched with black ink, the platemark is imitated with pencil.

Figure 5: Lucas van Leyden: Adam and Eve with Cain, inv. no. 67727 D, (transmitted light): Overlappings of the mendings along the upper and the lateral margins are not discernable. The darker areas at the upper left margin result from hinging residuals.

right edge (Figure 8) is hard to identify on the verso because of the well-matching paper tone. Even on the recto, one only becomes aware of the inlay after close inspection, although it has not been retouched, most probably since

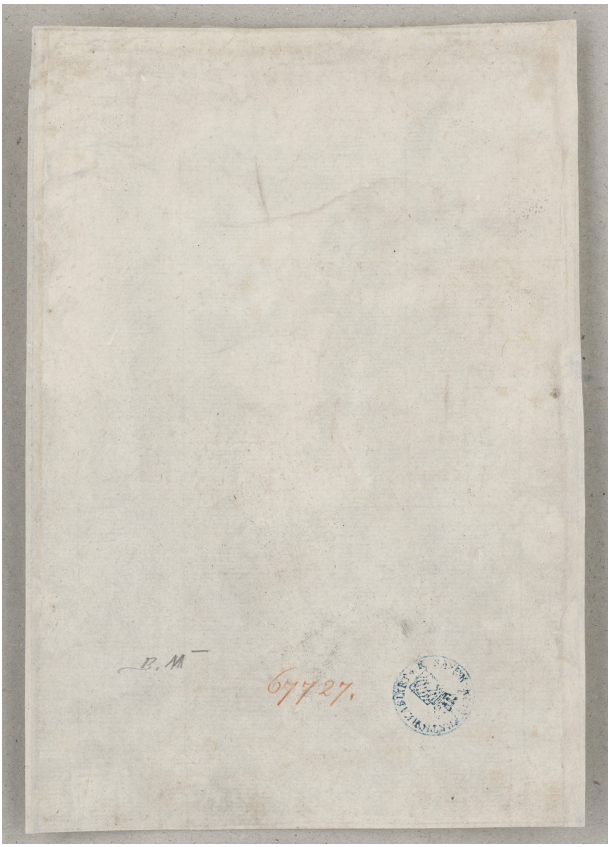

Figure 6: Lucas van Leyden: Adam and Eve with Cain, inv. no. 67727 D, verso (diffuse light): Notice the even paper tone, the completed margins do not stick out.

von Hermann did not have access to another copy of the print he could have used as a model.

6.2 Prints treated by Ludwig Albert von Montmorillon

Whilst, so far, the inventory of the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München counts three restoration works identified as von Hermann's (beside the faultless sheets purchased from his art shop), a greater batch of prints came from Ludwig Albert von Montmorillon's shop and thus can showcase his restoration skills to a larger extent. Except for prints contemporary to his lifetime, all prints the Staatliche

Figure 7: Lucas van Leyden: Samson and Delilah, about 1507, engraving, 283 × 202 mm (sheet), Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, inv. no. 67048 D, recto (diffuse light).

Graphische Sammlung München bought from his shop were restored. Two etchings of the Lucas van Leyden collection were acquired directly from von Montmorillon, and thirteen, obviously treated etchings of the Balthasar Speth collection were auctioned at von Montmorillon's shop. Seven other etchings were also purchased from him for the Munich Israhel van Meckenem collection. All of these prints show the same early type of restoration work, i.e. added paper margins.

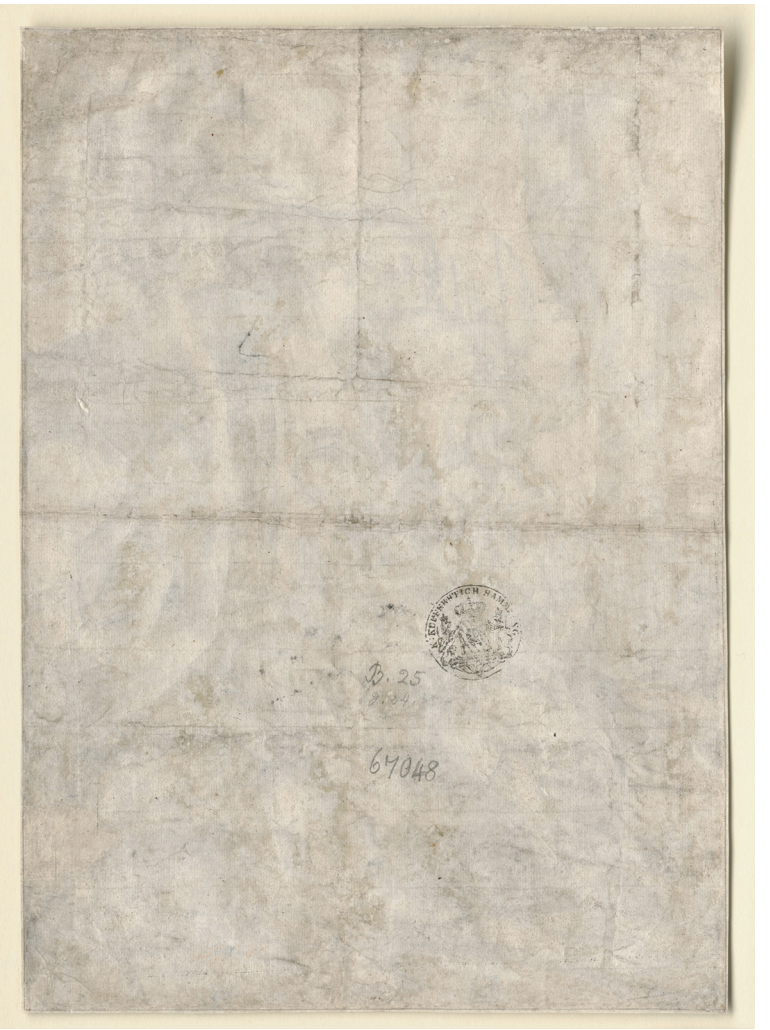

Figure 8: Lucas van Leyden: Samson and Delilah, inv. no. 67048 D, verso (diffuse light): The inlay at the lower left margin is hard to distinguish due to its well-adapted paper colour.

Two engravings of Israhel van Meckenem (fifteenth century) will be presented here as illustrative examples of von Montmorillon's work: *The Apostles Peter and Andrew* (Figure 10), 217 × 148 mm, sheet, HG 294, inv. no. 96944 D and *The Apostles Matthew and Thaddeus (or Simon?)* (Figure 11), 217 × 148 mm, sheet, HG 299, inv. no. 96945 D. Both engravings were purchased for 40 fl. (i.e. guilders) each on January 2nd, 1833, in von Montmorillon's art and antiques shop in

Figure 9: Lucas van Leyden: Samson and Delilah, inv. no. 67048 D, recto, detail (transmitted light): The added margin on the top and the left are discernable, they do not show chain lines.

Munich (Riether 2006, 235–236). The print of *The Apostles Matthew and Thaddeus* was sharply trimmed along its upper and lateral borderlines, while three overlapping strips of 5–7 mm width (out of which 3.5 mm are visible on the recto) were added on its verso, only the lower edge does remain in its original condition (Figure 12). The overlapping areas of the original and additional papers, along with the strips, were carefully pared. On the recto no traces of intervention are detected with the naked eye. In transmitted light though, irregularities can be observed: The edges of the overlappings appear to be discernibly darker, while the mending paper cannot be distinguished with the naked eye, due to its laid

Figure 10: Israhel van Meckenem: The Apostles Peter and Andrew, 15th cent., engraving, 217 × 148 mm, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, inv. no. 96944 D, recto (diffuse light).

lines going horizontally along the narrow lateral margins. Thorough examination under transmitted light reveals that the chain lines of original and mending paper do not match along the upper margin (Figure 13). Other alterations include a long

Figure 11: Israhel van Meckenem: The Apostles Matthew and Thaddeus (or Simon?), 15th cent., engraving, 218 × 150 mm, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, inv. no. 96945 D (diffuse light).

tear, in the saw of Saint Thaddeus, mended with thin paper and retouched with a black brush, as well as borderlines which were drawn over with a black pen.

The sheet with *The Apostles Peter and Andrew* (Figures 10 and 14) appears to have been treated the same way, at around the same time. Since collectors

Figure 12: Israhel van Meckenem: The Apostles Matthew and Thaddeus (or Simon?), inv. no. 96945 D, verso (diffuse light): The diagonal mend of the saw is clearly visible. The additional margins were at first – mistakenly – interpreted as hinging residuals.

appreciated a large margin, four overlapping strips (7 mm on the upper edge and 15 mm on the lower edge) surround the print with a 3.5 mm wide margin along its borderlines. In this case as well, the printed borderlines of the original have been

Figure 13: Israhel van Meckenem: The Apostles Matthew and Thaddeus (or Simon?), inv. no. 96945 D (transmitted light): The additions at the upper and both lateral margins are clearly discernable.

Figure 14: Israhel van Meckenem: The Apostles Peter and Andrew, inv. no. 96944 D, verso (diffuse light).

partially sacrificed, then drawn over again on top of the completions with black ink, either with pen or brush. On the lower edge, the sheet has been tightly trimmed underneath the depicted scrolls, and was renewed from there onwards, including the entire vertical hatching with a black brush (see white dotted line in Figure 15).

The overlapping and thus darker areas of the added paper strips are well distinguishable in close-up (Figure 16), along with a mended tear in the hair of the Apostle Andrew (Figure 14) that was retouched with black brush dots on the recto. On the lower margin, the typical scratches of a copperplate have been realistically imitated with a black brush, while the artist's monogram "I M" has been inpainted (Figure 17), apparently using the sheet with the Apostles Matthew and Thaddeus – that at that time lay on the worktable of von Montmorillon – as a pattern. In fact, the original print shows a slightly different, more squiggled monogram (Figure 18). Finally, a fake platemark has been added in pencil on the lower margin in order to feign an untouched overall impression.

Contrary to the seemingly well-preserved recto, the verso shows today traces of von Montmorillon's restoration work. The manner of its execution, however, not only concealed the treatments effectively carried out by von Montmorillon, but has also lead to misinterpretations.

Although the mended tear on the verso of inv. no. 96945 D (Figure 12) is clearly recognizable as such today, the discoloration of the added margin areas on the left, right and top edge of the verso can easily be confused with hinging residues that often occur along the edges. This is particularly misleading as in this case the print does have authentic mounting residues composed of adhesive and paper fibres along the lower edge.

At the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, the verso of many sheets were not accessible due to a mounting method common up to the 1960s, in which four V-shaped paper hinges were attached along the edges of the original and onto the cardboard. During the treatment of the Meckenem collection, between 2004 and 2006, the sheets were detached from their acidic cardboards, which allowed documenting the mending and facsimile repairs of tears and losses. The surrounding added margins of the Apostles (Figures 12 and 14), however, were overlooked and the visual appearance of these mendings on the verso – certainly fully in line with von Montmorillon's spirit – mistakenly interpreted as remains of the former mounting.

In order to conceal all traces of restoration work visually, von Montmorillon indeed coated the verso of the original paper with a thin brown glaze, thus imitating the remains of a former, brownish aged flour paste that can usually be found on the verso of a sheet after removing old linings or mountings. The small brown grains on the surface, typically a coarse component of this flour paste, seem deceptively real and were then interpreted as such until recently, but are

Figure 15: Israhel van Meckenem: The Apostles Peter and Andrew, inv. no. 96944 D, verso, (transmitted light): The additions along all margins are clearly discernable. The dotted line indicates the edge of the original paper.

Figure 16: Israhel van Meckenem: The Apostles Peter and Andrew, inv. no. 96944 D, recto, enlarged detail of lower right corner (transmitted light): The overlappings appear darker than the rest of the paper.

thoroughly inpainted with colour. He must have done this to blend in the original paper with his mendings. Now that the mendings have discoloured into a red-brown tone, they clearly stand out and can mistakenly be interpreted as mounting remnants. One must imagine them in a different colour, i.e. similar to the original

Figure 17: Israhel van Meckenem: Initial IM from the Apostles Peter and Andrew, print of Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, inv. no. 96944 D (diffuse light): The initials IM and the scratches in the plate are inpainted, imitating those on inv. no. 96945 D (Figure 11).

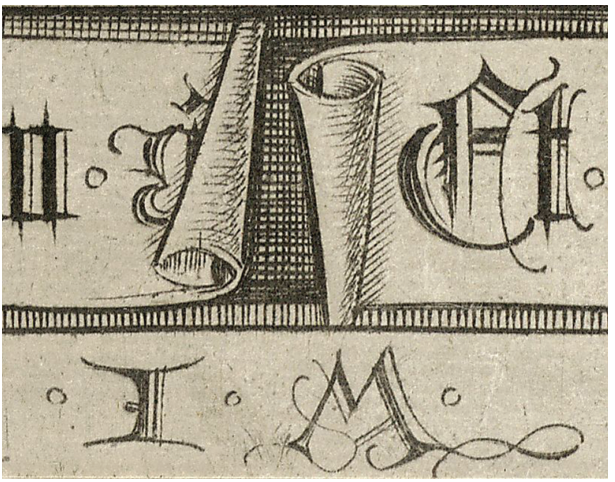

Figure 18: Israhel van Meckenem: Initial IM from the Apostles Peter and Andrew, print of The British Museum, London, inv. no. 1845,0809.332. (diffuse light): The letter M differs from the inpainted Munich print. © The Trustees of The British Museum (diffuse light).

paper. How much the mends, linings and inserts on the verso have changed in appearance over time, or how closely they used to match the "paste-coated" areas of the original paper, remains a matter of speculation. One must assume that the verso of the sheets used to appear homogeneous and did not arise suspicions concerning any restoration. There is no other explanation for such an extensive manipulation but the aim to make the repairs invisible.

Chances are that von Montmorillon himself found remains of aged, browned paste on one or the other sheet that he used in order to conceal his work and replenish the verso, thus unifying the original tone of the sheets with the repairs.

Of about 22 sheets reworked by von Montmorillon in the collection of the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, 21 exhibit this kind of glaze on their versos, or at least remnants of it. Furthermore, these 21 sheets have clear, visible hatchings or brush strokes in the very areas covered with the imitated paste residues. One example is the verso of the engraving of *Saint Peter* by Lucas van Leyden, 120 × 75 mm, sheet, NHD 87b, inv. no. 141417 D. The parallel, vertical brush strokes in the lower area of the sheet as well as hatchings in the upper left area clearly stand out (Figure 19).

Figure 19: Lucas van Leyden: Saint Peter, c. 1510, engraving, 120 × 76 mm, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, inv. no. 141421 D verso (diffuse light): Note the vertical hatching of the imitating paste glaze in the lower part, as well as the diagonal hatching in the upper left of the sheet.

Anyone specialised in paper artworks has come across paste residues on the versos of prints, typical remains and often browned residues. This does not excuse but might explain the lack of attention payed to these skilfully applied, discreet brownish remains of adhesive and lining on the verso of these sheets. However, this has changed during the examination of the Lucas van Leyden collection now that the phenomenon has occurred on all prints from von Montmorillon's atelier and thus called for a re-examination which in turn revealed the method of von Montmorillon. His method has now become an identifying feature of his restoration style.

7 Discussion

Even today, more than one hundred and fifty years after their interventions, the masterful craft of Johann Michael von Hermann and Ludwig Albert von Montmorillon has left the treated prints in a pristine-looking condition. The two practitioners endowed with such craftsmanship skills can be distinguished in their styles. From the two examples presented in this essay, von Hermann appears to have been a more cautious restorer than his pupil Ludwig Albert von Montmorillon. Indeed, von Montmorillon's master preferred restraint to completing a missing print design without a model at hand. What is more, the margins he added, only a few millimetres wide, are more discreet than his pupil's. As for von Montmorillon, he developed his own recognisable style of restoration, which he then applied to everything that he ever handled: he regularly used overpainting and other concealing additions in order to cover up his mendings and inserts. In short, he distracted from actual, bigger flaws in exchange for a minor blemish.

The biography of Johann Michael von Hermann showcases the common entanglement of several professions at the beginning of the nineteenth century: He followed an artistic academic training, moved on to restoration and, at the same time, ran his own art shop as well as worked as an art publisher. There was neither a specific career nor a structured training for restorers. At the time, restoration was considered an empirical secret trade, and the profession was to take shape only much later. Johann Michael von Hermann gained his knowledge autodidactically and developed his own methods, which he then passed on to his pupil back in Vienna (Speth 1821, 295), the name of this particular pupil still remains unknown as of today. Later in Munich von Hermann introduced his method to von Montmorillon.

From a present-day perspective, however, several difficulties arise from the union of artist, restorer and dealer into one same person. The main conflict consists in the temptation to "improve" a poorly conserved sheet as inconspicuously as possible by one's own hand in order to sell it for a higher price afterwards. Still, one

cannot assume that the measures undertaken by von Hermann and von Montmorillon were intentional forgeries. The aesthetic values of the times preferred perfect looking prints, with false margins and platemarks as well as inpaintings at cost of original substance. Artisanal skills were readily appreciated, even when they sometimes pushed the limit. Therefore, we cannot apply our contemporary ethical standards to the art trade and restoration of the early nineteenth century (ICOM 2017). Instead we need to explore the historical technique for all particular details that can be transferred and adapted to a contemporary, state-of-the-art approach in the treatments of tears and losses, as done by Dieter et al. (2018, 5–17), as well as in a course held at Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste Stuttgart in 2017, that introduced the recently developed Berlin insert paper (produced by Gangolf Ulbricht, Berlin) particularly suitable for facsimile mendings in a modern approach.

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Zusammenfassung

Johann Michael von Hermann (1793–1855) – ein Vorgänger von Max Schweidler?

Der Restaurator Johann Michael von Hermann (1793–1855) war zu Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts berühmt und ist heute in Vergessenheit geraten. Von Hermanns Methode der Faksimileergänzung und des Ansetzens von Blatträndern wurde von seinen Zeitgenossen überschwänglich gelobt, während die aktuelle Fachliteratur diese spezifische Fähigkeit meist Max Schweidler (1885–1953) zuordnet, dem ersten, der diese Methode detailliert beschrieben hat. Vor kurzem gelang es, den Restaurator von Hermann mit außergewöhnlich gut gearbeiteten Faksimileergänzungen an Druckgraphiken aus dem Bestand der Staatlichen Graphischen Sammlung München in Verbindung zu bringen. Anhand dieser Blätter konnten sowohl seine Arbeitsweise als auch die seines Schülers Ludwig Albert von Montmorillon (1794–1854) genauer untersucht werden. Es werden die Lebenswege dieser beiden frühen Graphikrestauratoren dargestellt und von ihnen restaurierte Druckgraphiken vorgestellt. Der Beitrag öffnet damit ein neues Kapitel in der Restaurierungsgeschichte der Druckgraphik über 150 Jahre vor Schweidler.

Resumé

Johann Michael von Hermann (1793–1855) – un prédécesseur de Max Schweidler?

Le restaurateur Johann Michael von Hermann (1793–1855), célèbre au début du 19ème siècle, est maintenant tombé dans l'oubli. Depuis peu, on a pu l'associer à plusieurs œuvres conservées à la Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München.

À l'aide de ces exemples et d'une étude attentive des méthodes de ce professionnel qualifié – ainsi que de Ludwig Albert von Montmorillon (1794–1854), son élève – une nouvelle perspective s'ouvre sur l'histoire de la restauration. La méthode de von Hermann pour combler des lacunes de façon imperceptible a été particulièrement appréciée par ses contemporains, tandis que la littérature spécialisée actuelle attribue cette compétence à Max Schweidler (1885–1953), le premier à décrire la méthode de réparation fac-similé en 1938. La contribution fournit une biographie de von Hermann et de von Montmorillon, présente et compare les estampes qu'ils ont traitées, et essaie de rétablir leur prestige dans l'histoire de la discipline. Cela donne un aperçu surprenant pour les conservateurs, restaurateurs et collectionneurs sur la façon dont les œuvres d'art ont été restaurées de façon presque imperceptible, plus de 150 ans avant Schweidler.

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