



Structure and connections of Alexander Golitsyn's agents network on the European art market of the 2nd half of the 18th century

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Imagem: Anonymous artist, drawing of a bronze statue bought by Facius in Frankfurt, from the collection of baron Schmidt, advisor of Margrave of Baden-Durlach, June 1771 (RAGADA, Fonds 1263, opis 1, N° 3210, F89).

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Abstract

This article presents the structure of Alexander Golitsyn's agents network, its areas of activity on the European art market and the connections of its agents. These protagonists are connoisseurs, notorious personalities, artists and simple agents initially unfamiliar with art dealing. Active mainly in the Netherlands, german territories and Italy, they were in contact with other actors of the artistic world, collectors, Russian diplomats, agents, intermediaries, merchants. Thus, the Golitzine network was part of a larger Russian network, to which it should be linked.

Keywords

Art market; networks; art agents; art dealing; art collection.

Resumo

Este artigo apresenta a estrutura da rede de agentes de Alexander Golitsyn, suas áreas de atuação no mercado de arte europeu e as conexões de seus agentes. Esses protagonistas são conhecedores, personalidades notórias, artistas e simples agentes, que inicialmente não estavam familiarizados com o comércio de arte. Ativos principalmente na Holanda, nos territórios alemães e na Itália, eles estavam em contato com outros atores do mundo artístico, colecionadores, diplomatas russos, agentes, intermediários, comerciantes. Assim, a rede de Golitsyn fazia parte de um sistema russo maior, com a qual estava vinculada.

Palavras-chave

Mercado de arte; rede; agentes da arte; negociantes de arte; coleção de arte.

Alexander Mikhailovitch Golitsyn (1723-1807) was a member of a great Russian aristocratic family, that saw several of its members distinguish themselves in the history of art collecting. Early in his career, he spent a lot of time abroad, first at the Russian Embassy of the Netherlands in the 1740's, then in France and England as a Russian ambassador in the 1750's. Back in Saint Petersburg in the 1760's, he was named vice-chancellor, a title that put him in charge of the College of Foreign Affairs. Despite his position, he was kept out of all strategic decisions; it was another influential figure, Nikita Panin (1718-1783) who informally managed the Russian Foreign Policy during the reign of Catherine II. Alexander Golitsyn was rather in charge of College Affairs, he maintained a steady correspondence with the Russian diplomats and agents abroad and, partly due to his european contacts, was led to act as a mediator for several acquisitions and orders for Catherine II. Golitsyn held this position from 1762 to 1775, and in 1776 he left the capital to settle in his house in Moscow where he resided until he passed away.

Much like most of his aristocratic counterparts and moreover like the Impress, the vice-chancellor started acquiring works of art in the 1770's, paintings and sculptures, in order to constitute his own collection, that was then scattered during the 19th century. His catalogue is now preserved in the Hermitage museum archives in Saint Petersburg¹ and indexes 312 pieces. To constitute his collection, the vice-chancellor leaned on a network of Russian diplomats in Europe, that he knew well enough, some of which had already taken part in purchases for Catherine II.

Those agents who worked on behalf of the vice-chancellor formed what we could commonly call the "Golitsyn Network" [Fig.1].

The network's section established in the Germanic zone was well and durably made so by Ivan Simolin (1720-1800), a Russian diplomat in Regensburg. This key figure coordinated the search and acquisitions of art pieces for Alexander Golitsyn within the local market of Regensburg, Koln, Frankfurt, Bonn, Munich, and even had a few contacts in Italy. Other diplomats and agents, out of Simolin's network, impelled in different parts of Europe, for instance, Andre Belosselsky in Dresden, Conrad René de Koch in Italy, Oldecop in Amsterdam. These actors belonged to a wider Russian network that spread throughout Europe, of which the "Golitsyn network" was only one of the many links.

Furthermore, though their participation is sometimes difficult to point out and to quantify from the written sources, some members of the Golitsyn family made a significant contribution to Alexander's collection and transfer of European art works and objects to Russia more globally.

Ivan Simolin's network

The strongest network of agents was deployed on the Germanic territory, coordinated by Russian plenipotentiary minister Ivan Simolin in Regensburg. The major source of any light on this network is the correspondence between Golitsyn and Simolin, preserved by the Russian State Archive of ancient acts (RGADA²) in Moscow, notably the 1770 to 1771 letters that predominantly concerns the artistic commissions for Prince Golitsyn, to the cost of the regular political content. The network was built thanks to Simolin's initiative of asking "a few friends from Bas-Rhin to keep an eye out for opportunities and sales happening in their area, thus prescribing them with a few guidelines they should follow"³.

Designating as “friends” people who joined a network was common practice at the time, as explained by Michel Espagne (1992: 436). We are not able to say to this day if these “friends” ever responded. However, we will soon encounter a figure that would be of particular significance in operating the agents network in this geographic zone, Johann Facius.

The Facius network

Johann Facius is mentioned in Simolin and Alexander Golitsyn’s correspondence as early as 1765, the year he entered the Russian services, in a completely different context as the one of the aristocrats. At the time, Facius was in charge of recruiting German families to voluntarily migrate to Russia⁴. Simolin seems to appreciate him and talks of him in glowing terms, describing him as a greatly clever subject, wise and cautious. In July 1770, Simolin entrusted him with his search of art pieces for Golitsyn’s collection. Facius was then living in Bonn and would travel to Rhin’s nearby towns, in Frankfurt or Köln, where he tended to potential sales and followed the dispersion of current collections, some of which lasted several years, notably Ehrenreich’s and Uffenbach’s in Frankfurt. One of the agent’s sons lived in Frankfurt and assisted his father in his activity. Furthermore, Facius used a common market practice and would occasionally enlist the help of experts and advisers, all of them local artists, to judge of the quality of the art before his purchase. Notably painters like Georg Melchior Kraus, Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein (1751-1829), German portraitist and friend of Goethe, Schütz, Lambert Krahe, Johann Andreas Benjamin Nothnagel and Johann Matthias Schild.

Lambert Krahe⁵ (1712-1790), from Köln, left for Italy to escort his guardian, Count Ferdinand von Plettenberg, Clément-Auguste de Bavière’s prime minister, appointed in 1736 as the ambassador for Pope Clément XII’s court in Rome. The artist lived in Rome until 1756 where he constituted a wide collection of paintings, sculptures, over 13000 drawings and 23000 prints. While in Rome, he took advantage of his time there to supply palatin elector Charles Théodore de Bavière with Italian pieces for his prints (Gaehtgens; Marchesano, 2011: 5) collection. When he returned from Italy in 1756, he was offered the position of director for the Düsseldorf paintings gallery and several years later of the Düsseldorf Academy.

It would appear that this figure’s experience and knowledge could guarantee the reliability of his expertise. That being said, the market intrigues and lack of trust would render this notable figure’s judgement questionable. Facius consulted him regarding a presumed original by Pieter Brughel, that he was about to buy; another version of the same painting was located at Düsseldorf painting gallery⁶. According to the vendor, Krahe attested to its originality and identified the one in Düsseldorf as a copy. But when Krahe discussed with Facius on the matter, he expressed the complete opposite: the original was in Düsseldorf and the one being sold was a copy.

Another figure of interest is Georg Melchior Kraus (1737-1806), a German artist⁷ who studied under Johann Heinrich Tischbein (1722-1789). In 1762, Kraus set out to travel to Paris, where he studied in the workshop of Johann Georg Wille (1715-1808), like a number of German artists. After his return to Frankfurt in 1766, he traveled to Switzerland, Erfurt and Vienna. He would periodically come back to Frankfurt, where Facius called on his services with the Ehrenreich collection acquisition.

The painter Christian Georg Schütz (1718-1791) was another artist linked to Golitsyn's German network, mainly active in Frankfurt. He seems to have been very involved in the town's painters guild, and was renowned for his notable frescos and landscapes.

Kraus, Tischbein and Schütz were known for their commercial activity within the artistic domain (North, 2000: 98; Wettengl, 2000: 71-72), which incidentally was not exclusively limited to the Frankfurt art market. Kraus and Schütz stayed in touch with Johann Georg Wille in Paris, like number of his students, and served as his artistic agents. In his diary, Wille mentions them several times, and that they would supply him with paintings from the German art market (Wille, 1857: 211, 542).

Agent Facius was in contact with artists Johann Matthias Schild⁸ (1701-1775) and Johann Andreas Benjamin Nothnagel (1729-1804). Schild was a wildlife artist and portraitist, and a painter at the court of Clément-Auguste (1700-1761), Köln's elect, and that of his successor, Maximilian-Friedrich (1708-1784). Johann Andreas Benjamin Nothnagel⁹ (1729-1804), from Frankfurt, produced mostly Jewish representations. He was also an art collector (Stockhausen, 2005: 99) (Ketelsen; Stockhausen, 2002: 30) and was very involved with the art market. The post-mortem sale of this figure took place in Frankfurt in 1818¹⁰. His collection consisted of 243 paintings as well as drawings, etchings and books.

The Guglielmi Network

Another figure that was linked relatively early to the Golitsyn network was the Italian painter Gregorio Guglielmi (1714-1773), whose name is mentioned for the first time in the Simolin correspondence in 1770¹¹. Guglielmi was born in Rome, where he officiated until 1751¹². Some sources depict him as one of Francesco Trevisani's pupils¹³. Starting in 1752, he was successively hired to serve at a number of European courts, first in Napoli, then in Dresden in 1753; he continued his career all throughout Europe, we can find Guglielmi in Vienna, Stuttgart, Berlin, Turin, Bergamo and eventually in Augsburg, where he resided in 1770 when he joined the agents network that revolved around Ivan Simolin in Regensburg. For the first time, Simolin expressed his intent on allowing Guglielmi's contribution regarding Alexander Golitsyn's artistic acquisitions in August 1770. Simolin informed the prince that he intended to solicit Guglielmi's services "to enquire his opinion on the purchases to be done, concerning beauty as well as cost and this skilled artist would be happy to provide advisory support"¹⁴. Quite quickly, the artist went from the status of an occasional adviser to the one of an actual agent, intimately involved in the process of acquiring art pieces. To this occasion, he took on several roles, namely that of the agent who explores the market in search of opportunities, that of the expert capable of assessing the pieces on their quality and cost. And finally, he would clean and restore a number of paintings before sending them off to Golitsyn.

Guglielmi's implication in this network was as short as it was profitable, as he was essentially active from August 1770 to the end of 1771. Guglielmi took part in the expansion of this network, appealing to people in various European cities, which incidentally attests to a vast network of personnel acquaintances that he gathered as he was travelling Europe. This is how a friend of his, a "Giovanni Ravanni", took care of buying paintings in Innsbruck, an anonymous "friend" found paintings in Bologna, another found sculptures in Rome and another yet acted in Guglielmi's interest in Munich.

We can already tell that the network put in place by Simolin from Regensburg was not restricted to the German territory, but spread through Italy as well. Each of its branch was subjected to fluctuations, as its contributors would only get involved if needed, depending on the circumstances. Michel Espagne writes that the network's artificial omnipresence created its own market and that the European space gave it meaning (Espagne, 1992: 440). As a matter of fact, it was the local market's supply that gave the Golitsyn network its meaning and opportunities fluctuations created short-lived branches, vital to a single place at a given time. The opposite was also valid, as market supplies was strongly influenced, for Golitsyn, by the area where its permanent agents resided.

In short, the network hierarchy was organized in the following way. Ivan Simolin remained its coordinator for 2 years. He relayed the information and commands to the contributors and kept the collector informed, he fulfilled a variety of management and organizational tasks. From Regensburg, Simolin supervised Johann Facius' actions in Bonn, Frankfurt and Köln; Facius' son assisted him in Frankfurt on many occasions, as well as artists and experts in each town of his geographic zone. Simultaneously, Simolin kept in touch with intermediaries in Rome, Bologna, Munich and Innsbruck. The network's structure was well established, with a "chain" of mobilized individuals, in spite of their often temporary implication. This network's example proves once again the permeability of frontiers within 17th century Europe.

We alluded to the importance of trust that was often an underlying but vital aspect in the making of an art collection. The market protagonists' expertise did not necessarily guarantee their reliability, which is where family ties would come into play.

The Golitsyn Family ties

Dimitri Alekseevitch Golitsyn (1734-1793), our collector's cousin, is well known of the Art market historians for his intermediary activity in Catherine II's acquisitions, first in Paris (1756-1793) then from The Hague (1769-1782). This erudite man spent most of his life on diplomatic service abroad. The extensive correspondence he maintained with Alexander Golitsyn contains, for the most part, discussions on political matters, there is little to be found about the vice-chancellor's Art collecting activity. And yet, Dimitri Golitsyn took part in art pieces and furniture for his cousin in Europe, in Paris around 1766, then in the Netherlands in the 1770's. His interventions, for lack of frequency, were originally quality purchases. In Paris in 1765-1766, he gathered an important ensemble of furniture pieces, fireplace framings, couches, sofas and armchairs, for Alexander's new home in Saint Petersburg. Tables from the master marbles masons Adan family and Parisian mirror expert Antoine-Mathieu Poupart Trumeaux¹⁵ are featured amongst these pieces. Later on, Dimitri Golitsyn chose paintings for Alexander from the renowned Gerrit Braamcamp cabinet, during his auction in Amsterdam in July 1771. Two paintings out of the chosen ones were purchased by the banker Ludovic Hovy for the account of Golitsyn, a *Rhin view* by Jan Griffier and an Eglon van der Neer¹⁶ painting. These pieces are not identified today, but the quality of the Braamcamp collection is unprecedented, as well as the success of the sale that attracted eminent buyers, amongst which the Duke of Choiseul (Michel, 2007-2: 138-139) and Catherine II.

The quality observed by Dimitri Golitsyn's from The Hague purchases contrasted with the large number of mostly mediocre ones made from Simolin and his network. The exchanges concerning that matter were rare between the two cousins compared to the abundance of correspondence between Alexander Golitsyn and Simolin, recounting the selection process, the purchase and the commissions expedition to Saint Petersburg in full details. This example demonstrates that trust and personnel ties are the true foundations of the network's strength, which is not necessarily linked to the frequent occurrence between its protagonists. Family ties, as it were the case with the Golitsyns, constituted an artistic transfers observatory from Europe to Russia, despite a lack of written evidences or the discretion within their exchanges regarding the matter.

This is confirmed by a similar relationship that Alexander Golitsyn maintained with another member of his family, Dimitri Mikhailovitch Golitsyn (1721-1793), who spent his life abroad, holding the title of Russian ambassador in Vienna for 3 decades at Marie-Therese of Austria's court then Joseph II's, from 1761 to 1792. A true art amateur, a collector of a greater caliber than Alexander, he formed a collection of close to 300 paintings and graphic artworks, including 4127 drawings. When he passed away in 1793, his collection was bequeathed to Alexander Golitsyn, who fulfilled his late cousin's will and built a hospital in Moscow, later named Golitsyn Hospital. In one of its aisles, Golitsyn ordered that a painting gallery be set up, also from his cousin's will, destined to welcome both cousins' collections in their almost entirety. The gallery opened in 1810, after Alexander passed away.

The story of the two collections joined in Russia's first public painting gallery bears witness to the trust between the two cousins, and beyond that, of an obvious connivance of the respective artistic interests, even of their vision of private art collector's evolution. Their correspondence reveals exchanges on art pieces acquisitions, as Dimitri helped Alexander Golitsyn with some of his European purchases, but it had limitations¹⁷. It can only attest to the bond between them, which is confirmed by their actions. Some of Dimitri Golitsyn's letters from Vienna reveal that he offered pieces to his cousin in Russia, 2 paintings by Johann Georg de Hamilton¹⁸ in 1781, a wood painting by Jacob Toorenvliet¹⁹ in 1782, stating he already possessed one in his own collection and didn't need another. It is not known how many paintings our collector received as a gift from Vienna, but these examples vouch for a seemingly regular practice. The provenance of two-thirds of the paintings in the inventory of Alexander Golitsyn's collection is unknown²⁰. Among them, Austrian pieces by Adam Braun (1748-1827), Peter Strudel (1660-1714), Johann Georg Platzer (1704-1761), which strangely recall the taste and content of Dimitri Golitsyn's Austrian collection. All these facts indicate that his influence on Alexander's collection was more important than a few simple intermediary actions.

The importance of personal trust in art dealing is measured by the number of warnings in the letters or fraud instances. "Italy is crowded with swindlers trying to catch foreigners out by selling them copies as originals and modern as antique"²¹ as Friedrich Melchior Grimm wrote to Alexander Golitsyn. When expertise and trust are found in a person, they become invaluable, as it is not always the case. Facius recalled an occurrence on Frankfurt painter Johann Andreas Benjamin Nothnagel, whom he consulted as an expert in anticipation of a sale, and who pre-empted Facius by buying the piece he was interested in to offer it to him at a higher price than its actual value²².

Consequently, for Alexander Golitsyn the geographic supply in art objects and art pieces was considerably dependent on the connection he kept with people on site. For instance, Dimitri Golitsyn's departure from Paris to The Hague resulted in an almost complete end of important Parisian acquisitions for our collector, apart from a few exceptions; on the other end, the number of his purchases from the Netherlands increased. Alexander was never able to re-acquire a steady contact on Paris despite numerous attempts, which his letters attest to.

The Golitsyn Network at the crossroad with Russian networks in Europe

A number of diplomats and agents supplied Alexander Golitsyn with paintings, each at their own pace, without actually being a part of the principal network run by Simolin. This includes Andre Belosselsky in Dresden, Johann Henry Frederic Oldecop in Amsterdam, Conrad René de Koch while he was travelling in Italy, and other figures even more casual, all more or less integrated in the vast European network that connected Russia and Europe.

Russians in Europe, being there on a diplomatic mission, a pedagogic or leisure trip, created their own exchange and support networks, involving a broad-spectrum of activities. Transmitting correspondence, writing recommendation letters, helping newcomers to get acquainted with a city, engaging in sales of wine, spices, tobacco, Lyon silk, luxury goods, furniture and finally artwork. This national network's operating within an international Europe was common, as demonstrated by the English in Rome during the same period and the Italians in Saxony (Espagne, 2005: 99 – 102). These members acted on the model of networks at that time, which both intermingled and distinguished themselves, thus dissolving into a vast phenomena of European network, that is well known in its aspect of correspondence exchanges by the concept of the Republic of Letters²³.

These networks were multifunctional and exchanges of different nature followed the same paths. The same person would at times hand over a letter, food products or clothes, then books and etchings, when they weren't on artwork investigation duty. It was therefore quite trivial for an 18th century agent to take charge of sales of various scales, starting up with print or food items purchases, which then led some of them to become art dealers²⁴.

It is essential to pay attention to small caliber agents or art dealing "auxiliaries", their correspondence regularly contains indications about other market protagonists; neglecting this cog would lead us to miss part of the art objects dealings to Russia and we would end up with an incomplete picture of the Russian network in the Europe of the Enlightenment.

We often find the same agents and intermediaries for private purchases as well as imperial ones, therefore the Golitsyn network protagonists acted on behalf of other collectors.

Johann Henry Frederic Oldecop (v. 1736-1789) was an agent²⁵ for the Russian diplomatic service established in Amsterdam. A notice published after his passing in the *Nouvelles extraordinaires de divers endroits* points out his acting as a court advisor and Russian Empress agent in Amsterdam for 36 years²⁶. As a matter of fact, his seniority in his service was quite substantial, we have already learned he was a Russian agent during the 1750's, but we possess very few biographical information

about him. He is presumed to be the son of a certain Siegfried Henrich Oldecop, confirmed to have been the secretary at the Russian Embassy of Amsterdam in the 1740's. From that time on, Oldecop father seemed to supply the Academy of Sciences of Saint Petersburg in various materials, instruments, paper and statues²⁷. The son pursued his affairs and was named « commission agent » according to 1750's archival sources from the Academy of Science in Russia²⁸.

His correspondence with Golitsyn was extremely abundant. It included all genres of commissions, of which he was responsible as intermediary, notably a “commission of books, paintings, rarities and groceries”²⁹. He began his relationship with Golitsyn as a general agent that would specialize in artistic purchases, but his position is important on a strategic level. Amsterdam was a key transit city, a key port to travel towards the Baltic Sea and Saint Petersburg. This is why Oldecop collaborated with the Simolin network, in charge of dispatching the cases that were sent to him from Frankfurt and Köln through the Rhin. Amsterdam was also an important place for art dealing and it didn't take much time for Oldecop to redirect his commissioner agent activity and to start progressively acquiring artworks for Golitsyn in 1770.

Meanwhile, the vice-chancellor was not his sole Russian customer, on the contrary, Oldecop's key geographic position, his steady relationship with Russia, his seniority all account for his contacts with numerous Russian aristocrats. He was in contact with Mikhaïl Vorontzov (1714-1767), the chancellor during Elizabeth's time, an art philanthropist and collector, and he exchanged with him already in 1760 on the account of the Dutch merchant Pieter Fouquet and a catalogue of paintings³⁰. He was also in charge of painting purchases for Zakhar Tchernichev (1722-1784), Marshall and Russian political figure, governor of Moscow since 1782³¹.

The art pieces search for people who knew each other within Saint Petersburg's aristocratic world resulted in conflicts of interest or awkward situations. Alexander Golitsyn received a set of paintings that Oldecop had purchased for him. He noticed one appeared to be missing; much to his surprise, he found the missing painting with Zachar Tchernichev, which he did not fail to mention to the agent, adding with obvious bitterness that the pieces Oldecop would send Tchernichev were superior to his³². At another occasion, Oldecop sent Golitsyn a painting by Gerard Dou asking him to not disclose it if he desired to return it, so that he could offer it to Count Zakhar Tchernivhev, “who would have had all the reasons to get angry if he knew it had already been handled by another”³³.

Oldecop's other customers were Grigori Teplov (1717 - 1779), aristocratic collector, Ivan Tchernichev (1726 - 1797), head of the Admiralty College³⁴, General Pietr Passeck (1736 - 1804)³⁵, Bakounin State advisor³⁶, Grand Huntsman Semën Vassilievitch Narychkin (1731 - 1807), the Dowager Countess Vorontzov, seemingly the widow of Mikhaïl Illarionovitch Vorontzov (1714 - 1767) - art collector in the 1760's, and Ivan Ivanovitch Betzky (1704 - 1795)³⁷, President of the Saint Petersburg Academy of Arts and collector, Alexander Borisovitch Kourakin (1752 - 1818)³⁸. Further study of this agent's activity would prove more fruitful regarding the Russian networks on the European art market and the history of Russian collections of the 18th century.

The Golitsyn network that was deployed in Italy was a lot less consistent than the one in northern Europe. By contrast, the Golitsyn agents here were more included in a vast circle of the Russian network. For instance, Conrad René de Koch, secretary for the Russian Embassy in Vienna, traveled to Europe with Alexander Golitsyn's nephew, young Prince Nicolaï Alekseevitch Golitsyn (Berelowitch, 2011: 193) (Krutchkova; Paroucheva, 2012: 73), of whom he was the private tutor; they went through Switzerland, Italy, France, England and the Netherlands (Krutchkova; Paroucheva, 2012: 73-78). To our knowledge, it is mainly during this journey that de Koch took care of art purchases on behalf of Alexander Golitsyn, on account of the opportunities that his European travels entailed (Cassidy, 2011: 400). We cannot say if this activity extended passed his return.

A few "auxiliaries" assisted the shipment of acquisitions made for Golitsyn from Italy via Livorno to Saint Petersburg, François Jermy, as well as John Dick and Robert Rutherford, merchants and English consuls.

François Jermy's commercial activity within this port town was apparently quite spread out, but, apart from a few disparate information about him, little is known about his activity. Outside of the Golitsyn network, from the limited supply of information we have on François Jermy, he was linked to the Pierre Grandin the Elder's textile company from Normandy from 1765 to the 1770's³⁹. He can also be found in Joseph Vernet's *Books of Reason* (Lagrange, 1864: 344). He was then called "Francesco Jerry" and appeared as a correspondent for the English John Sargent, member of the Parliament, who ordered a marine to Vernet in 1765.

John Dick (1721-1804) was primarily a merchant, then British consul in Livorno from 1754 to 1776. Robert Rutherford (1719-1794), merchant and English consul in Livorno, was apparently known with his partner for their reception of travelers arriving in Italy (Galt, 1820: 84). He was no stranger to the artistic world and he demonstrated a certain sensibility towards it. The American artist Benjamin West, who arrived in Italy in 1760, had several contacts with this protagonist (*Ibidem*: 84, 126). The painter Jacob Philipp Hackert seems to know him and names him in a letter to Golitsyn⁴⁰. Catherine II rewarded the two Englishmen for their services⁴¹.

The expeditions were often made by sea route from Livorno to Hamburg, strategic relay port. Written sources revealed the name of Russian agent Henri Gross (1729-1797) in Hamburg, in charge of receiving shipments and dispatching them to Saint Petersburg.

Marquis Paolo Maruzzi, (1720-1790) a banker from Venice, had some business affairs in Saint Petersburg starting in 1766, then, in March 1768 (Tchetchuline, 1896: 190), in order to reinforce the commercial as well as political bonds between Russia and the Republic of Venice, particularly within the scope of the conflict between Russia and Turkey, he was named Russian consul of this city. Maruzzi was also associated to some of Golitsyn's acquisitions, he was in charge of dispatching the purchases from Venice⁴². This figure's involvement is made clear in the purchases on behalf of Count Semen Vorontzov (1744-1832), a Russian Ambassador in Venice and London⁴³, or even for Catherine II (Antonov, 1980: 220-223), for whom he collaborated with previously mentioned Conrad René de Koch as he was visiting Venice.

Gaspard Santini (1733/34-1794) (Androsov, 2006: 102-115; 2012: 191-196) is another Italian banker based in Rome, linked to the art market and the Russians. He was in charge of payments for Catherine II's roman purchases. Moreover, he was linked to numerous private Russian collectors, Alexander Bezborodko (1747-1799), Ivan Tchernichev (*Ibidem*: 192, 195) and of course Alexander Golitsyn, for whom he was in charge of shipping the purchases ordered to Jacob Philipp Hackert⁴⁴.

Although Santini, Maruzzi and de Koch were renowned by Art historians, a bit less for the latter, they were far from being able to compete with Reiffenstein. A key figure of the Roman art market, he was in contact with a vast network of agents, merchants and collectors of different nationalities. Incidentally, it would be impossible to recall Catherine II's purchase without mentioning Reiffenstein's name, he was her artistic agent in Rome and had strong links with the Russian court as an advisor of the Empress who corresponded directly with him⁴⁵. Ivan Chouvalov, founder of the St Petersburg Academy of Arts and collector himself, met Reiffenstein in Rome in 1768 and supported his candidacy to become an agent of the Academy. A favorable response was granted at the beginning of 1771. From that point on, Reiffenstein was to care for the Academy students while they were visiting Rome, assist with diverse purchases for the Academy and eventually hire artists (Medvedkova, 2011: 63-66).

Golitsyn took advantage of the contact established between Reiffenstein and the Russian court and exchanged a few letters with him on paintings and sculptures on sale in Rome in the beginning of the 1770's⁴⁶. For instance, Reiffenstein assisted Conrad René de Koch as he was in charge of acquisitions for Alexander Golitsyn in Italy⁴⁷.

The Golitsyn network was malleable, permeable to various participants, to notorious personalities as well as to small-scale agents initially unfamiliar with the art market. The activity of the network participants spread out on a vast Northern European territory all the way to Italy. A steady core coordinated by Ivan Simolin existed for several years, then disintegrated progressively, leaving behind a few occasional and ephemeral participants, perhaps to the exception of the Golitsyn family members, whose role seem to have been important. The family ties' trust left little written confirmations, but some facts, in question throughout this article, have us believe in its importance and strength.

Golitsyn's agents are part of a larger Russian network of the 18th century European art market, which gathers participating actors to artwork transfers from Europe to Russia. The same intermediaries were frequently in contact with several collectors based in Saint Petersburg. A Russian network was drawn little by little, linking different countries together with Saint Petersburg. This image still appears quite mixed on account of the lack of synthesis work on the subject of the Russian presence within the European art market. Russian networks still need to be explored and studied for the whole Europe of the 18th century, some cities having been studied more than others. Surprisingly, Paris is amongst the ones with a lack of information. The Russian presence is certainly largely accounted for, however, we are not able to pinpoint a steady Russian agents and private buyers network on the abundant Parisian market, to the obvious exclusion of Imperial purchases. Considerable work remains to be done on this subject, which would provide valuable information to our knowledge of networks in the European art market of the 18th century.

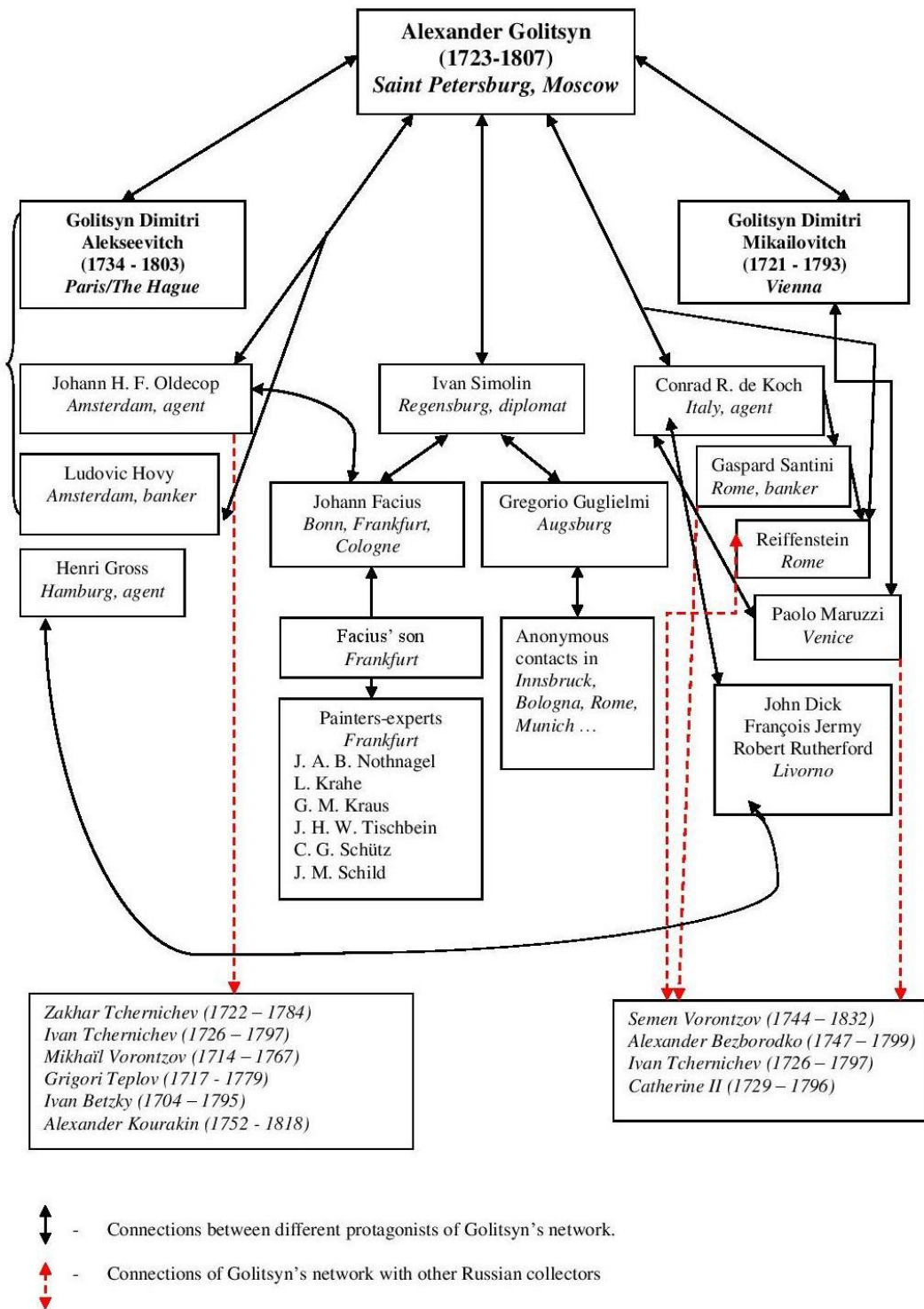


Fig.1. Alexander Golitsyn Network; fonte: autora

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Notas

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¹ *Description de la collection des tableaux, marbres et bronzes du Prince Alexandre Michailowitsch Galitzin, ancien Vice-Chancelier de l'Empire, Conseiller privé actuel, Grand Chambellan, Sénateur et chevalier des Ordres de Russie et de l'Aigle blanc de Pologne*, 2 vol, Fonds 1, opis 6A, N° 122 (partie 1), Archives of the Hermitage, Saint Petersburg, Russia.

² *Rossijskij gossoudarstvennij arkhiv drevnik aktov* [Russian State Archive of ancient acts], Moscow.

³ "(Je prierai) quelques amis sur le bas Rhin de veiller aux occasions qui se présenteront et aux ventes qui se feront dans leur voisinage, en leur prescrivant quelques règles après lesquelles il faudra se conduire", RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N°3208, F8r, letter from Simolin to A. Golitsyn, Regensburg, July 19th 1770.

⁴ RGADA, Fonds 1263, op. 1, N°3202, F20r, letter from Simolin to A. Golitsyn, Regensburg, April 21st 1766.

⁵ For more information on Krahe, his activity and his collection see Brink; Wismer 2013, especially the essay of Rosenberg H., "Lambert Krahe – eine biographische Skizze", p. 39-75. See also Kunibert, 2013.

⁶ On Krahe and Düsseldorf gallery see Brink; Wismer 2013.

⁷ The biography of the artist: Ch. Kröll, "Kraus, Georg Melchior", *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, 12, 1979, p. 686; Hüsgen H. S., *Nachrichten von franckfurter Künstlern und Kunst-Sachen, enthaltend das Leben und die Wercke aller hiesigen Mahler, Bildhauer... nebst einem Anhang von allem was in öffentlichen und Privat-Gebäuden merckwürdiges von Kunst-Sachen zu sehen ist, mitgetheilt und... gesammelt von Henrich Sebastian Hüsgen*, Frankfurt, 1780, p. 195-196.

⁸ M., J. J., "Schild, Johann Matthias", *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, 31, 1890, p. 203.

⁹ Stricker, W. "Nothnagel, Johann Andreas Benjamin". In: *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, 24, 1887, p. 35.

¹⁰ Cf. Lugt, vol.1, 1938, N° 9426, August 3rd 1818, Frankfurt, Nothnagel Joh. Ad. Benj., Tabl. 243, Dess. Est. Liv. 896 + 91, Total numbers 1230, 110 pages, A: SBF, SIF.

¹¹ RGADA, Fonds 1263, op. 1, N°3208, F1, letter from Simolin to A. Golitsyn, Regensburg, March 26th 1770.

- ¹² See E. Borsellino. "Gregorio Guglielmi". *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Vol. 60, 2003, p. 724-728.
- ¹³ *Ibidem*, p.725. E. Borsellino says that according to J.-P. Mariette and L. Pascoli Guglielmi was a student of Francesco Trevisani; according to a different source, he was a student of Sebastiano Conca, see P. von Stetten, *Kunst – Gewerb – und Handwerks Geschichte der Reichs-Stadt Augsburg*, II, Augsburg, 1788, p. 207s.
- ¹⁴ "(S'il se présente quelque chose dans ces environs comme à Augsbourg et à Munich, j'aurai recours au Sr. Guglielmi) pour savoir son avis sur les emplettes à faire, tant pour la beauté que pour le prix et cet habile artiste se fera un plaisir de m'assister de ses conseils", RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N°3208, F21r, letter from Simolin to A. Golitsyn, Regensburg, August 6th 1770.
- ¹⁵ RGADA, Fonds 1263, op. 1, N° 1118, F100-101, expenditure account for the years 1765-67, letter from D. Golitsyn to A. Golitsyn, The Hague, August 15th 1770. The translations of archival sources in the text into English are mine.
- ¹⁶ RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N° 946, F23r, letter from L. Hovy to Alexandre Golitsyn, Amsterdam, August 16th 1771.
- ¹⁷ RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N° 1151, 1152, 1153, letters from D. M. Golitsyn to A. Golitsyn, Vienna, 1780-1782.
- ¹⁸ RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N° 1152, F3r-v, letter from D. M. Golitsyn to A. Golitsyn, Vienna, July 25th 1781.
- ¹⁹ RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N° 1153, F18, letter from D. M. Golitsyn to A. Golitsyn, Vienna, March 23th 1782.
- ²⁰ *Description de la collection des tableaux, marbres et bronzes du Prince Alexandre Michailowitsch Galitzin, ancien Vice-Chancelier de l'Empire, Conseiller privé actuel, Grand Chambellan, Sénateur et chevalier des Ordres de Russie et de l'Aigle blanc de Pologne*, 2 vol, Fonds 1, opis 6A, N° 122 (partie 1). Archives of the Hermitage, Saint Petersburg, Russia.
- ²¹ "L'Italie est peuplée de fripons qui cherchent à attraper les étrangers en leur vendant des copies pour des originaux et du moderne pour de l'antique", RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N°1084, F4r, letter from F. M. Grimm to A. Golitsyn, Paris, October 12th 1772.
- ²² RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N°3529 F31r, letter from Facius to A. Golitsyn, Bonn, June 25th 1774.
- ²³ See on the Republic of Letters D. Roche, *Les Républicains des lettres. Gens de culture et Lumières au XVIII^e siècle*, Paris, 1988.
- ²⁴ This was the case of the French merchant Jérôme de Vigneux, see Michel, 2006: 174-175.
- ²⁵ He received the title of "Agent de Sa Majesté Impériale" in 1772 (RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N°2514, F3r, letter from Oldecop to A. Golitsyn, Amsterdam, January 28th 1772). He said that at this moment he was on the Russian service since 20 years (RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N° 2513, letter from Oldecop to A. Golitsyn, Amsterdam, September 13th 1771), which means that he started it at the beginning of 1750's.
- ²⁶ *Nouvelles extraordinaires de divers endroits*, N° 4, Leiden, January 13th 1789 : "Nous apprenons d'Amsterdam, que Mr. Jean-Henri-Frédéric Oldecop, Chevalier, Conseiller de Cour de S. M. l'Impératrice de Russie, & ayant résidé depuis plus de 36 ans comme son Agent & Chargé de ses affaires à Amsterdam, y est mort le 5 de ce mois, après une longue Maladie, dans la 53^{me} année de son âge".
- ²⁷ According to the inventory, the Archives of the Academy of Sciences of Saint Petersburg preserve the letters and the bills of Siegfried Henrich Oldecop for his acquisitions made for the Academy.
- ²⁸ The guide of the Archives of Sciences of the USSR: G. A. Kniazev, L. B. Modzalevskij (dir.). *Trudi Arhiva Akademii nauk SSSR. Obozrenie arkhivnykh materialov*, 1946, vol. 2, N° 5, p. 245.
- ²⁹ "(Daignez me continuer, Monseigneur, Votre haute Grace et puissante Protection, joint de Vos gracieux ordres et très respectable) commission, soit en livres, tableaux, raretés ou provisions", RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N° 2512, F20r, letter from Oldecop to A. Golitsyn, Amsterdam, October 26th 1770.
- ³⁰ RGADA, Fonds 1261, op.11, N°160, F1r, letter from Oldecop to M. I. Vorontzov, Amsterdam, June 30th 1760.
- ³¹ RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N°4991, F5r, letter from A. Golitsyn to Oldecop, June 11th 1773.
- ³² *Idem*.
- ³³ "(Si Votre Altesse n'approuva l'emplette faite je ferai remettre le Tableau à S. E. Mg le Comte Zach. de Czernichew,) qui auroit lieu de se facher, s'il sut que ce fut déjà passé par d'autres mains.", RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N° 2516, F13a-v, letter from Oldecop to Alexandre Golitsyn, Amsterdam, May 24th 1774.
- ³⁴ RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N° 2514, F29v, letter from Oldecop to Alexandre Golitsyn, Amsterdam, October 9th 1772.
- ³⁵ J. Stählin, *Zapiski Jacoba Stählina ob iziatchnikh iskusstvakh v Rossii [The notes of Jacob Stählin on fine arts in Russia]*, vol. 1, ed. Malinovsky K. V., Moscow, 1990, p. 377.
- ³⁶ RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N° 2513, F8v, letter from Oldecop to A. Golitsyn, Amsterdam, May 21st 1771.
- ³⁷ Letters from Oldecop to Alexander Golitsyn, Amsterdam : RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N° 2514, F42v, October 9th 1772; *Ibidem*, F18r, June 27 1772 ; RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N° 2515, F3r, September 17th 1773.
- ³⁸ *Archives du Prince F. A. Kourakine*, vol. 9, 1901, p. 306, letter from Oldecop to A. Kourakine, Amsterdam, April 4th 1777.
- ³⁹ A. Becchia, "Correspondants européens. Analyse du réseau épistolaire d'une entreprise textile normande au XVIII^e siècle". In : Ch. Rolland, *Autour des Van Loo. Peinture, commerce des tissus et espionnage en Europe (1250-1830)*. Conference proceedings, Rouen, 2012, p. 180.
- ⁴⁰ RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N° 890, F3v, letter from Hackert to A. Golitsyn, Rome, October 28th 1774; RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N°891, F1r, letter from Hackert to A. Golitsyn, Rome, April 8th 1775.
- ⁴¹ Rutherford received the title of Baron for having organised the supplying of the Russian fleet during the war 1768-1774 and John Dick was granted the Order of Saint Anna. See A. Cross. *By the banks of the Neva*. Cambridge, 1997, p. 80.

⁴² See on Maruzzi's activity the following letters: RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N° 1114, F80v, letter from Dimitri Alekseevitch Golitsyn to A. Golitsyn, Paris, April 16th 1766 ; *Ibidem*, F246v, letter from D. A. Golitsyn to A. Golitsyn, Paris, July 31 1766 ; RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N°1712, F7v, letter from A. Golitsyn to H. Gross, St. Petersburg, April 20th 1771 – on dispatching of paintings and sculptures from Venice.

⁴³ *Archives du prince Vorontzov*, N° 29, Moscow, 1883, p. 313. Letter from Reiffenstein to S. R. Vorontzov, Rome, September 12nd 1778.

⁴⁴ RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N°891, F2, letter from Hackert to A. Golitsyn, Rome, April 8 1775.

⁴⁵ On the relations of Johann Friedrich Reiffenstein with the Russians et on his role as agent and advisor of Catherine II see Frank, 2005: 183-191; *Idem*, 2003 : 44-48; *Ibid.*, 2001: 87-95; Medvedkova, 2011: 63-66.

⁴⁶ RGADA, Fonds 1263, op. 1, N° 3005, 3007, 5219, 5220, letters of A. Golitsyn and Reiffenstein, 1771-1773.

⁴⁷ Conrad René de Koch writes about Reiffenstein in his letters: RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N° 1713, F2r, letter from de Koch to A. Golitsyn, January 25th 1772, Rome. Reiffenstein also mentions de Koch in his correspondence, see RGADA, Fonds 1263, op.1, N°3005, F2, letter from Reiffenstein to A. Golitsyn, August 10th 1771, Rome.

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