

The Renaissance Print



1470–1550



David Landau and Peter Parshall

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How Prints became Works of Art: The First Generation

DURING THE LAST quarter of the fifteenth century as the print began to claim some marginal prominence among the pictorial arts of Europe, print-makers gradually adopted the formal vocabulary of painters and sculptors. At the same time, they began to shed their anonymity as craftsmen. Although both woodcut and engraving aspired to the standards set by the ennobled arts, each print-making technique did so by following its own path. On the one hand, the refinement of woodcut came about mainly through a division of expertise into designing and block cutting, two very different skills that quickly became dependent upon one another. Engraving, by contrast, found its way to maturity through the diversified skills of single artists, especially painters, who were now training themselves to move with great facility from their customary pens, styluses, and brushes to metal-workers' drypoints and burins. Our present task is to examine the early history of these changes as they unfolded more or less concurrently north and south of the Alps. It was a critical stage in the evolution of European printmaking, one that came about partly by exchange of ideas and partly by each tradition acting according to its own independent lights.

BOOK ILLUSTRATION AND SPECIALIZATION IN THE WOODCUT TRADE

Books and prints were close acquaintances from the very outset of printing, as we have seen; indeed, the maturation of the woodcut was a direct consequence of printed book illustration. This was not only a matter of the status that books eventually

bestowed upon prints by their association. Book illustration had much to do with the technical improvement of woodcut making, and consequently with its eventual acceptance as a legitimate medium for the designs of painters. Correlations between the rise of the print and its functional capacity in the book printing industry have long been acknowledged, but mainly on the level of the cataloguing of styles and influences, traffic in woodblocks, and particular alliances between printers and independently recognized masters. It has been calculated that fully one-third of all books printed before 1500 were illustrated.¹ Nevertheless, the book industry has rarely been acknowledged as the dominant and moving factor in the emergence of the print as an independent art form of aesthetic stature and commercial success. Yet the fact is that those areas in which important schools of relief printmaking arose were also closely tied to the book industry. Here we shall consider this relationship and some of the practical and artistic reasons for it.

In Germany the first steps in woodcut book illustration were taken in the early 1460s in Bamberg, marking the beginning of what quickly emerged as a major dimension of the printing industry. It was during the decade of the 1470s, coincident with its proliferation in Italy, that woodcut illustration grew with extraordinary speed. Literally thousands of blocks were designed and cut for book printers in the German-speaking regions, France, and the Netherlands over the next generation. By far the majority of these illustrations were done for scriptural and devotional books, and a large percentage were of a narrative kind. The texts were various and often newly written, and many of them were published with dense illustrations. Thus, early printed book illustration required the invention of a very considerable number of new compositions,



9. Frontispiece, from Bernard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinationes in Terram Sanctam* (Mainz: Erhard Reuwich, 1486). Woodcut. Rijksmuseum Meermanno-Westreenianum, The Hague.

10. *A Holy Man Floating on the Sea*, from *Die Wunderbare Meerfahrt des Heiligen Brandan* (Augsburg: Anton Sorg, ca. 1476), fol. 8v. Woodcut. Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

since the illustrators' repertoire needed to extend far beyond the models available in painting and manuscript illumination.

For the first twenty years or so we have precious little evidence north or south of the Alps about the procedures that publishers followed in developing new cycles of illustration. How often were the designers and block cutters one and the same? Did the designers work under detailed instructions from the author or publisher, or did they read the texts and compose subjects on their own? We may glimpse evidence relating to these questions in a document of 1489 in which Canon Peter Schott complains to the Strasbourg printer Nicolaus Rusch that their plans for an illustrated Virgil were delayed because of difficulties in finding both a designer and a block cutter.² The fact that this was a classical text that had never before been illustrated

in woodcut may well have stimulated both Schott and Rusch to take special effort in recruiting an inventive designer and skillful cutter.

Although the names of the northern artists and craftsmen involved in early woodcut book illustration are almost entirely lost to us, there is a definite stylistic continuity to be discerned within particular regions and indeed within specific workshops. A distinctive style developed in Augsburg and nearby Ulm, for instance, and this style retained its essential character well into the following century, marking these as two prolific centers of woodcut production. The beginnings can be traced to Günther Zainer, who first came to Augsburg at the behest of a monastery to set up a printing workshop on behalf of the residents. This led to one of the most successful printing operations in the incunabulum period, carrying over to Günther's relative Johannes Zainer, who became the main printer at Ulm. Günther issued the first printed book to be extensively illustrated, a two-volume edition of Jacopo da Voragine's *Golden Legend* printed in 1471–72 (fig. 11). These early entrepreneurs were followed by others, such as Anton Sorg, who built upon their success, adopted their designs, occasionally purchased their blocks, and perpetuated the Augsburg style.



burg style. A fine example of the engaging simplicity and cleanliness of this style can be seen in the illustrations for Sorg's *Life of St. Brandon* (fig. 10).

In Swabia and elsewhere the scale of production alone implies that workshops of considerable sophistication and orderliness had developed. We must presume that efficient transfer and copying techniques were being used, and that a major publishing workshop employed quite a number of block cutters at a time in order to complete its larger projects. Much of the early production was not especially challenging to the technical skills of the cutters or designers, however. The first instance where we discover a designer making exceptionally strenuous demands on the woodcut medium is in Bernard von Breydenbach's luxury edition of the *Peregrinationes in Terram Sanctam* published in Mainz in 1486. The illustrations for this account

of a journey to the Holy Land were designed by the painter Erhard Reuwich, who accompanied his patron on the journey, laid out the illustrations, and doubtless oversaw their realization in woodcut and print.³ At the time, nothing north or south of the Alps could equal the intricacy of design and cutting in the frontispiece (fig. 9). The ornamental style of this elaborate heraldic composition drew its graphic sharpness and rich chiaroscuro from sources outside the woodcut medium. Breydenbach's luxurious volume set an influential precedent in northern European book illustration, but one that for some years proved very difficult to match. This was far from a typical case in the early history of printing. Not only did the project have the advantage of aristocratic patronage, but an original program of illustration was undertaken which included the unusual feature of topographical studies; and finally, a designer of acknowledged talent was employed.

With the exception of the Reuwich woodcuts, northern printed book illustrations of the 1470s and 1480s were typically less refined than the work of Italian contemporaries, who eventually achieved magnificently coloristic and textural effects in the language of woodcut. Only rarely did northern blocks sport a comparable sense of pictorial adventure or such a complex understanding of the integration of abstract design with naturalism (fig. 11) as we see displayed in the acknowledged masterpiece of the Venetian school of book illustration, Aldus's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (fig. 12). But the example of Breydenbach stimulated a number of ambitious projects in the north and pointed the way to a far more pictorial and less humble approach to the possibilities of woodcut. By the last decade of the fifteenth century, Nuremberg began to compete with Venice in the sheer extravagance, if not the classical refinement, of her book illustration.

In Italy the major capitals of book printing during the last quarter of the fifteenth century were Venice and Florence.⁴ Although Florence had previously been responsible for producing the most elegant illuminated manuscripts, after an awkward start graphic illustration reached its highest level in Venice. Both styles are shown to have derived ultimately from important painters of the time — Domenico Ghirlandaio and Sandro Botticelli on the one hand, the Bellini family and Vittore Carpaccio on the other. Surely it is not merely a coincidence that woodcut book illustration came into its own in northern Italy precisely during the ripening of what Vasari terms the "second Renaissance style," a style characterized by a manner of deliberate draftsmanship readily translatable into the more limited vocabulary of the woodblock.

Although the style of Italian woodcut illustration from this period echoes the work of monumental painting, there is no evidence to suggest that these same painters were yet directly engaged in making



designs for publishers. Botticelli's drawings for the *Divine Comedy* are a glaring exception, and in any case he employed engraving rather than the less supple woodcut.⁵ Furthermore, this project was abandoned in its early stages, in all likelihood because of the technical difficulties inherent in printing engraved illustrations meant to be integral with a printed text. A concurrent project of this kind was undertaken in the Netherlands — Collard Mansion's scheme for using engravings to illustrate the text of Boccaccio's *Livre de la ruine des nobles hommes et femmes* published in Bruges in 1476. Judging from the different constructions of known copies, this, like the Dante publication, also seems not to have come to fruition.⁶ The engraver of the Boccaccio illustrations appears to have been recruited from among the artists active around the spectacular Burgundian court in the Netherlands. Both of these experiments in printing engraved

11. *St. John Chrysostom*, from Jacopo da Voragine, *Leben der Heiligen* (Nuremberg: Anton Koberger, 5 December 1488). Woodcut. Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

12. *Poliphilus in a Wood*, from *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (Venice: Aldus Manutius, 1499). Woodcut, 106 × 130 mm. British Museum, London.



illustration were under way in the same years, and both entailed the illustration of an Italian literary work doubtless intended for an exclusive audience.

In the case of Italian woodcut illustrations, little is known about those who designed and cut the often exquisite productions of the incunabulum period. Although woodcut makers are documented since at least the first quarter of the century, they appear to have been involved mainly in the printing of playing cards and what they termed *santini*, small images of saints carried for devotion or as amulets for protection.⁷ Essling has demonstrated that woodcut book illustrations in Venice did not fall within the territory of these established woodcut makers. Instead, woodcut book illustrations developed from an old trick used since at least the first quarter of the fifteenth century in Venetian miniaturists' *botteghe*. There the ground was prepared for the illuminator by lightly printing by hand the outlines of the image with a so-called *stampiglia* — a woodblock attached to a wooden handle.⁸ As the fashion for woodcut book illustration spread to Venice from the north, the less scrupulous illuminators quickly adapted this old custom by simply inking more thoroughly and printing more accurately, still using what must have been little more than a glorified *stampiglia*. The stark linearity of Venetian fifteenth-century book illustration that we now admire so much may well have originated in the inherent limitations of the *stampiglia*, which carried only the barest possible outlines of a composition for the illuminator to use as a trace for hand-coloring.

The earliest illustrated books published in Venice were thus produced differently from books printed north of the Alps, and they were made according to a method that contradicted the principal advantage of printing by movable type.⁹ The illustrations of these early Venetian books were stamped into the copies by hand, most often after the book had been bound. This can be easily confirmed by the smudges of greasy ink that occasionally seeped through onto the two or three pages following an illustration — pages that, in a press, could not possibly follow one another.¹⁰ On the whole, very few fifteenth-century Venetian books actually contained true woodcut illustrations.¹¹

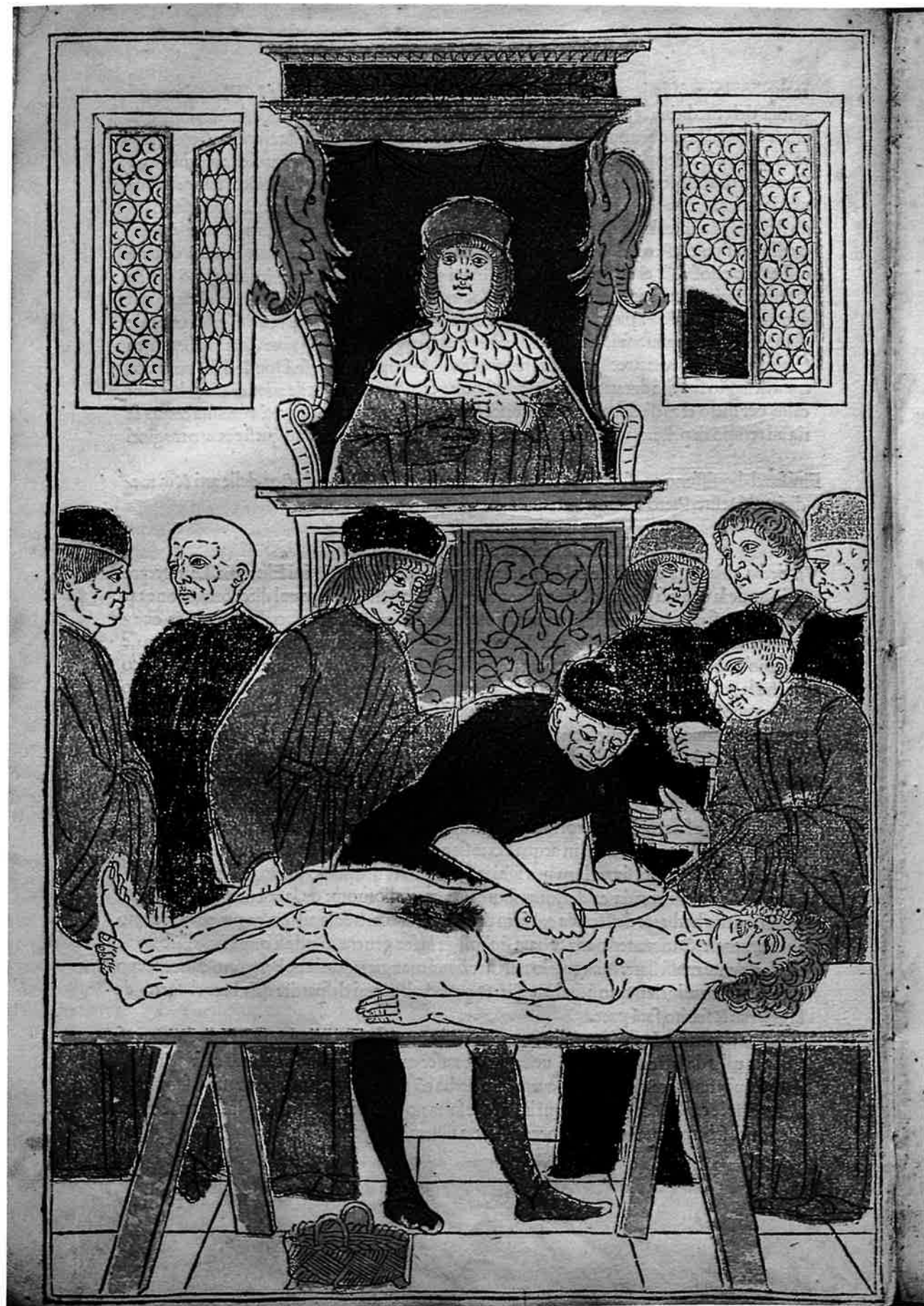
This practice was not confined to Venice. If there is a common denominator among all early examples of illustrated books in Italy, it is the carelessness with which most printers dealt with woodcuts, inserting them where convenient to the publisher rather than the reader. A typical example is a *View of Genoa*, apparently based on a drawing from nature, used a second time in the same book as a view of Rome, with a new title¹² (an efficiency that we also find somewhat later in the Nuremberg *Weltchronik*). In Venice the same woodcuts were used to illustrate books on different subjects by different printers, making it obvious that publishers

— who at this time were one and the same as printers — had little to do with the production of the illustrations. The printers' stocks included only type fonts and initials;¹³ the illustrations were completely controlled by the guild of illuminators who sold or more often rented their woodblocks. For a long period illuminators continued to produce crude woodcuts and to print them by hand after the copies of the book had been bound. Kristeller found signs of this practice well into the 1470s, not just identifying the obvious difference in ink between text and cuts, but also discovering a number of cases in which the same block had been printed twice on one page, something that could only have happened if the printing were done by hand.¹⁴

Both the design and the cutting of the woodcuts was therefore in the hands of illuminators at this early stage, and it is unlikely that they would hire designers, let alone painters, to do a job similar to what they had done for decades. On the other hand, cutting blocks other than in the form of crude *stampiglie* was something they knew nothing about, even if they may have been unwilling to admit it. This curious set-up explains why so often in the early history of Venetian book illustration the design was good but the cutting very coarse. This happened outside Venice as well: the *De re militari* by Robertus Valturius, published in Verona in 1472, has beautifully designed illustrations — probably the work of the sculptor and medallist Matteo de' Pasti or of Valturius himself — but it is clear that no experienced cutter was available for the job.¹⁵

A gulf soon grew between what the market — and therefore the publishers — sought and what the illuminators could offer, until the 1480s when there was a fairly abrupt improvement in the quality of illustrations, likely the result of new designers and cutters entering the fray, and illuminators abandoning it. The task of block cutting seems to have been taken up by sculptors in wood and *intarsia* makers, since their skills were closest to those required in handling the cutting of a small woodcut. We know, for instance, that some of the leading *intarsia* makers of the time, such as Lorenzo Canozi di Lendinara and Matteo Civitali, turned to publishing illustrated books and probably cut many of the images themselves.¹⁶ At the same time, the role of designing images was taken over by artists whose names we might not recognize today but who carved a niche for themselves by specializing in this activity. Indeed, many of them are known not by their names but only by their styles, although a few signed their productions conspicuously.¹⁷ Hind calls the two most important designers of the 1490s the "popular designer" (now known as the Pico Master) and the "classical designer," responsible respectively for the 1490 and 1493 editions of the so-called Malermi Bible. He

13. *Anatomy Lesson*, from Johannes de Ketham, *Fascicolo di Medicina* (Venice: Johannes and Gregorius de Gregoriis, 1493/94). Stencil-colored woodcut, 300 × 198 mm. Private collection.



also notes the emergence in Venice of an increasingly competitive market for good designers, though these were still often let down by insufficiently experienced cutters.¹⁸ Thus special relationships formed between Venetian designers and cutters, relationships that would set the pattern for many a collaboration during the sixteenth century.¹⁹

Towards the close of the century there is further improvement in the quality of Venetian book illustrations, with an increasing use of parallel hatching, taken straight from the example of Mantegna's engravings,²⁰ and with the arrival on the scene of one or two extremely gifted designers. This resulted in an obvious change in attitude to woodcut illustrations on the part of the public. The two greatest books published in Venice during the fifteenth century, the *Fascicolo di medicina* of 1494 (fig. 13) and the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* of 1499 (fig. 12), contain such high-quality illustrations that it is possible, if not probable, that one of the leading painters of the city was prevailed upon to provide the designs. All the obvious names have been proposed for the authorship of these beautiful images, from Montagna to Cima, from Jacopo to Giovanni Bellini, but what is important here is the extent to which the status of woodcuts had changed over the preceding twenty years. Now an artist rather than a specialized craftsman was involved in the creation of a relief print. This was an important development, setting a precedent for such distinguished followers as Jacopo de' Barbari and Titian.

Although the primacy of Venice in book production by 1500 was not in question, on average the quality of book illustration was superior in Florence. It was not until 1490 that illustrations appeared in a Florentine book, but when they did they seemed to be better designed, cut, and impaginated than at anywhere else at the time.²¹ Indeed, the colophon of the greatest Florentine illustrated book of the century, the *Epistole e Evangelii*, printed by Lorenzo Morgiani and Johann Petri for Piero Pacini da Pescia in 1495, reminds the reader of the richness and quality of its truly extraordinary cuts.²² The very fact that practically all Florentine book illustrations were surrounded by decorative borders in imitation of frames, suggests that these small images were meant to be perceived as individual compositions.²³ As in Venice, Florentine cutters worked for different printers — who, in turn, worked with different publishers — but did not normally design the images themselves. Because of the exceptional imagination and daring of many of them, it has often been suggested that some of the best painters of the time were discreetly involved.²⁴ In the light of Botticelli's precedent, this may, indeed, have been the case. If it was, it is even more extraordinary than may appear at first sight, since there is evidence that books illustrated with woodcuts were disregarded by literati, that

few reached the libraries of great collectors, and that, instead, they were destined for a much larger, and supposedly less refined, audience of Florentine citizens. Many early publications illustrated with woodcuts were little more than pamphlets, often printed as programs for *rappresentazioni* and *giostre*, and were enjoyed and discarded after use; this is why they are so exceedingly rare.²⁵

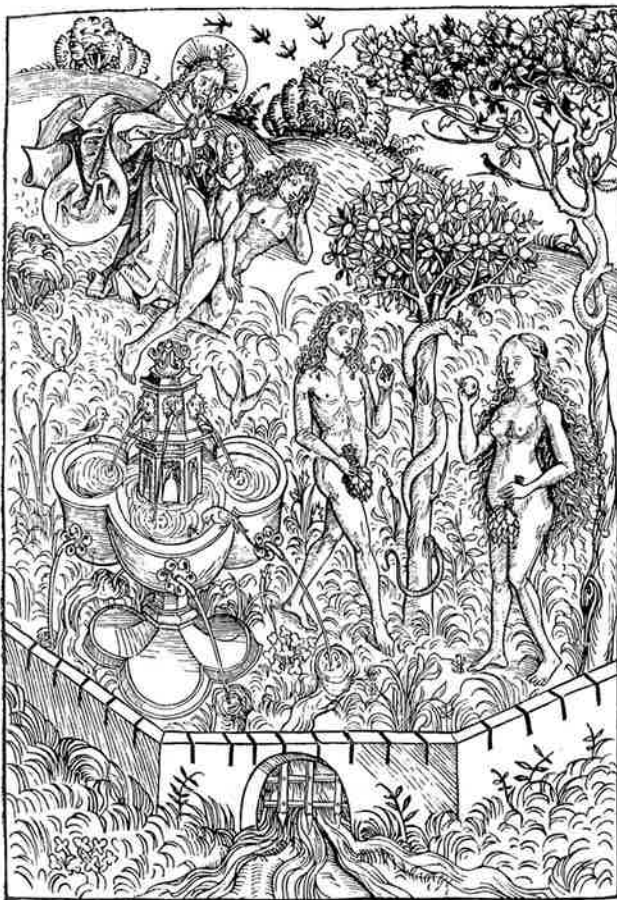
THE NORTH

ANTON KOBERGER'S ENTERPRISE

Anton Koberger built up Europe's largest printing establishment in the conservative and wealthy mercantile center of Nuremberg in south-central Germany. Through a network of agents posted all across the continent, and through close connections with other printers, Koberger distributed his publications over a wide area. A true citizen of his town, Koberger was less a pioneer than he was adroit at recognizing and promoting the innovations of others and at maintaining a high standard of production within his firm. His bibliographical contributions to the history of fine printed books rest on the imagination and mediation of such learned men as Sebald Schreyer and Hartmann Schedel. Yet his impressive productions reflect a financial genius that kept Koberger ahead of his competition and relatively immune to the effects of piracy.

As early as 1488 Koberger printed a luxury edition of Jacopo da Voragine's *Lives of the Saints*, and then in 1491 the *Schatzbehalter* appeared, a finely illustrated devotional text.²⁶ Koberger's best-known and most ambitious undertaking was Hartmann Schedel's famous Nuremberg *Weltchronik* of 1493, a publication that followed in the steps of the *Peregrinationes in Terram Sanctam* to set a new standard for illustrated book printing in northern Europe. Whereas Aldus Manutius captured an influential corner of a narrower humanist trade in book publication, Koberger absorbed much of the northern European market for biblical and devotional texts, and cultivated a particular taste for fancy productions both in the vernacular and in Latin. The introduction to the archetype for the great *Weltchronik* declares that it is "not meant for students of antiquity, but rather for the delight of the general public."²⁷

As in Italy, the style of German book illustration grew out of local roots, chronologically coincident with the evolution of Italian book decoration but stylistically more or less immune to it. Koberger's house designers were Michael Wolgemut and Hans Pleydenwurff, draftsmen with a strong sense of graphic layout both in the design of an individual composition and in the construction of a page. Comparison of the woodcuts executed for the *Schatzbehalter* with those of the *Weltchronik* completed only two years later betray a significant shift in style



and particularly in graphic sensibility (figs. 14, 15). The cuts for the earlier text are engagingly rhythmic and graceful, the later ones staccato and angular. The compositions for the *Schatzbehalter* tend to weave over the whole surface of the block, whereas those in the *Weltchronik* are relatively liberal in their allowance of white, unprinted regions. Here priority is given to the arrangement of figures within a framed field, with greater stress on contrasting areas of dark and medium tone. These differences lie with the designs themselves, not with the skill of the block cutters, which is in each case sufficient to the task though not exceptional.

The extended cycle of woodcut illustrations in the *Weltchronik* controls the positioning of the text on the printed sheet in a way that sustains the stark flatness and legibility of the page. However much indebted to manuscript illumination for its initial inspiration and its strategy of integrating text with illustration, the *Weltchronik* emerged a product of the printer's and printmaker's sensibility. In all likelihood this project served directly or indirectly to incubate Albrecht Dürer's special passion for the woodcut. Though much is known about the creation and financing of the *Weltchronik* at various stages, we are entirely uninformed about the block cutters who finally realized the designs for the printer. There must have been a number of them,

and they seem to have been mostly well schooled and moderately well disciplined. Yet these craftsmen remain anonymous, with the possible exception of Dürer, whose participation in the design or in the cutting of these blocks has only been inferred on insecure stylistic grounds.

Nevertheless, Koberger's procedure for illustrating the *Weltchronik* changed the history of specialized woodcut making in northern Europe. The contract agreements reflect what must have been a new manner of arrangement for printers and their backers confronted with financing large illustrated books.²⁸ The project involved six major players: apart from Koberger himself, there was the author Hartmann Schedel, two financial contributors named Sebolt Schreyer and Sebastian Kammermeister, and the two aforementioned painters, Wolgemut and Pleydenwurff, who were responsible for the illustrations and additional matters as well.

The first of the two known contracts for the publication is dated 21 January 1491, and it establishes the relationship between the illustrators and the sponsors, Schreyer and Kammermeister. The painters were committed to providing the archetype or layout for the book; they also had the responsibility for overseeing the cutting of the woodblocks as well as protecting and maintaining their quality while the edition was being printed. Much empha-

14. *Fall of Man*, from Stephan Fridolin, *Schatzbehalter* (Nuremberg, 1491). Woodcut, 250 × 170 mm. Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

15. *Fall of Man*, from Hartmann Schedel, *Nuremberg Weltchronik* (Nuremberg, 1493). Woodcut, 255 × 223 mm. Multnomah County Library, Portland, Oregon.

sis is given to guarding the designs in order that they not be pirated in the course of printing. Wolgemut and Pleydenwurff were to be advanced 1,000 Rhenish *gulden* to cover their expenses in acquiring the paper and having the book printed. Surprisingly enough, they also had to see to its distribution and sale. The first profits were to be set aside to cover the initial outlay of Schreyer and Kammermeister, in other words their 1,000 *gulden* advance to the painters and any other costs they might incur in the meantime. Thereafter, the profits were to be divided evenly among the painters and their sponsors. It will be noted that Koberger was not party to any of this. The backers also maintained the right to undertake reprintings, though on the understanding that the two painters were to keep an option to participate on an equal basis and to manage the refurbishing of the blocks if this were necessary. Should Schreyer and Kammermeister choose not to reprint the book, then Wolgemut and Pleydenwurff were free to do so on their own. All matters of contention involving these arrangements fell under the arbitration of Koberger.

A second contract was made two months later, on 16 March 1492, this time between Koberger the printer and the sponsors. The second contract sets the conditions for acquiring the paper and managing the printing. The size and quality of the paper is specified, with examples supplied as a minimal standard to be exceeded. The manner of paying for the paper is laid out in some detail, since it constituted a major capital expense and could easily result in the printer being caught short between expenditures and returns. Once printed, the finished sheets were to be purchased from Koberger by the sponsors at a cost of four Rhenish *gulden* per ream. When the printing was completed, the blocks and the archetype were to be returned to Schreyer and Kammermeister.²⁹

These contracts for the *Welchronik* point to certain practices relevant to our study. To begin with, the publication of the book was funded independently of the printer, whose job it was to provide the expertise in fine printing along with the facilities for carrying it out. Koberger functioned largely as a job printer and seems to have borne no direct liability for the eventual success or failure of the project. Secondly, Koberger's "house draftsmen" were not really subordinates in the undertaking but rather entrepreneurs, acting almost as equal partners with their sponsors Schreyer and Kammermeister. It seems the painters, like the printer, were not committed to provide any capital for the venture. Rather, their interest in the profits derived entirely from the fact that they contributed what was most essential to the success of the book, namely, its woodcut illustrations. That they did not retain the rights to their designs foretells a pattern that would become standard in the later history of printmaking, once publishing houses took control.

Blocks were too important as collateral, and in Koberger's day they tended to remain with the principal investors. The designers took their profits from the distribution and sale of the book. One might have expected Koberger himself to have taken care of distribution, since it was he who must have had the necessary contacts with agents and printers elsewhere. Finally, though Koberger's role in the enterprise appears at first to have been most sharply delimited — entailing the lowest risk and consequently the lowest potential gain — he was nevertheless the manager of the overall arrangement. The contracts therefore establish an interesting set of checks and balances designed to ensure that those expert in a particular area carried the obligation for that part of the project along with an appropriate expectation of gain. The author disappears from sight, doubtless having been paid off for his efforts well ahead of the arrangements for realizing his text in print.³⁰

As we have implied, the block cutters go unmentioned in the *Welchronik* contracts. Probably they were recruited from Koberger's stable and were under the supervision of the painters. On the basis of another document we can, however, reconstruct the financial worth of the Nuremberg block cutter's skill. In 1494 Sebald Schreyer undertook the patronage of a second publication that was at least comparable, if not even more ambitious, in scope. This was the *Archetypus triumphantis Romae*, an anthology of classical authors that so far as we know never appeared from the press, or, if it did, no example of it has survived. Schreyer contracted in two stages with the chief author Peter Danhauser for preparing the text and illustration of the project. This seems to have been a case where the author figured importantly as a sort of production manager overseeing details in furthering the work. Danhauser's initial arrangement with his sponsor included board, payment for materials and labor, and also a share in the expected profits. The author's benefits were to be rendered partly in cash and partly in copies of the publication. In the second contract, made in 1496, the two parties agreed to a much expanded vision of the project and to organizing the transcription of exemplars, and the illustration, typesetting, proofing, and printing of it within a specified length of time.³¹

The specific expenses are interesting, as they provide us with the only complete record of which we are aware prior to 1500 that includes costs for all stages of making woodcut illustrations. For the better part of the woodcut designs drawn on paper (217 designs of various size or complexity), Danhauser paid over nine *gulden*, from which it can be deduced that most of the designs cost between ten and eleven *denar* each.³² These preliminary drawings established the layout and were then enhanced and likely modified in the final scheme, which required no fewer than 233 large and 83

small woodcuts, nearly one hundred additional designs. For the 316 woodblocks required, Danhauser again paid his carpenter a little over nine *gulden* (about eight or nine *denar* for the larger blocks and half that for the smaller ones). For drawing the designs directly on the blocks, the illuminators were paid altogether a little over thirty-seven *gulden* — about three times what it cost for the preliminary designs done on paper; a large design on a block ran about thirty-four *denar*, a smaller design half this.³³ Drawing the designs on the blocks was in effect to execute the complete design such that it would be suitable for the exigencies of the cutting. This was where the real skill came in. To judge by the exemplar for the *Weltchronik*, the preliminary designs were only rough sketches, simply a guideline for the printer estimating his page construction (figs. 16, 17). The final transfer may also have included putting down a ground or oiling and polishing the surface of the blocks as well. It is notable that at each stage the author appears to have engaged different craftsmen.

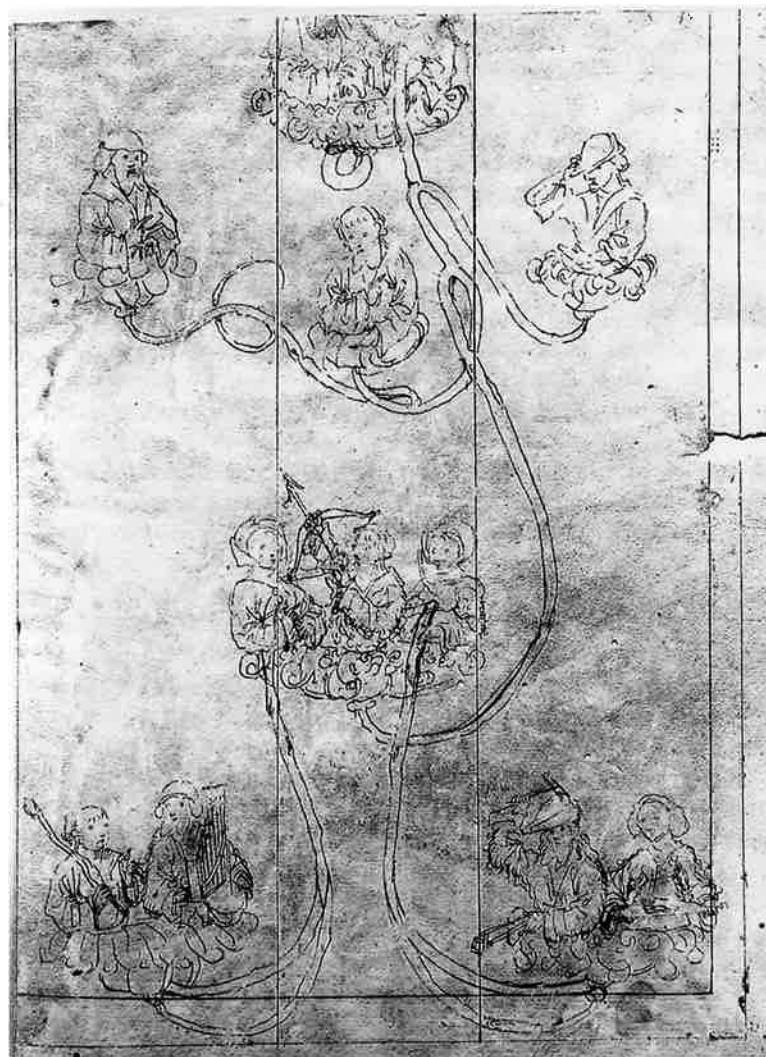
The most serious expense in this part of the project, however, lay in the cutting of the designs on

the blocks. This was done by, or under the supervision of, a *Formschneider* named Sebolt Gallensdorfer — 233 large blocks were cut for a little over half a *gulden* each (one hundred thirty-five *denar*), and 83 smaller blocks were cut at half the price of the larger ones, for a total of nearly one hundred and fifty *gulden*.³⁴ Thus, as with the transferred designs, the costs of cutting were calculated by size. If we compute the total design cost — ten or eleven *denar* for the original design plus thirty-four or seventeen *denar* for drawing onto a block — it turns out that the cutting of a design cost almost exactly four times the amount paid for its initial invention and transfer. Very likely this reflects the time required at each stage and takes relatively little account of the designer's creative task in generating an appropriate figure. In sum, for any one of his large blocks, Danhauser expended around three-quarters of a *gulden* which paid for the wood, the preliminary design, the finished draftsmanship, and the cutting.

It seems that if the blocks were ever completed they were never published in conjunction with a text.³⁵ We can only assume that the subjects were

16. *Adam's Descendants*, page layout for the *Nuremberg Weltchronik*. Pen and ink, 394 × 270 mm. Nuremberg, Stadtbibliothek.

17. *Adam's Descendants*, from *Nuremberg Weltchronik*, fol. 10r. Woodcut, printed surface, 375 × 220 mm. Private collection.



simply too peculiar to be of use elsewhere and were relegated to the scrap pile. It is not known for certain why the Danhauser project never reached completion, but the contracts tell us something about the enormous financial commitment entailed in putting together an extensively illustrated publication of this kind. The accounts for the *Archetypus* run over three hundred thirty-five *gulden* for the illustrations alone, which must be a large part of the reason why it may never have been printed.

There is a long history of major projects for which the enormous cost of illustration was paid out with the consequence either of bankrupting the project or seriously retarding the printed edition.³⁶ Each case may have its own explanation, and printers embarking on such projects could face a high financial risk. Expensive books were not secure investments, and clearly a part of Koberger's genius was the fashion in which he managed to support his enterprises through encouraging financial backing from others. By sharing costs and profits with other publishing houses and collaborators (very likely including the designers if not the block cutters as well), he was successful in bringing many of his projects to completion. Given the time required for finishing a major book, the crucial difficulty for printer and publisher was cash flow. Furthermore, this became most critical at the final stage when paper had to be purchased in very large quantities to bring out a first edition. The design and execution of illustrations could be spread out over a long period of time without serious loss, and wages for the actual printing operation were a relatively low expense. But when it came to printing, a full edition had to come forth in short order lest a printer's type fonts remain indefinitely tied up. All recent studies of the early printing industry have confirmed this point. Illustration was expensive, but paper and available type fonts were more often than not what determined whether a text got beyond the designing stage to be typeset, printed, and put on the market.

Anton Koberger's *Weltchronik* and its related publications set an important precedent for woodcut production. Not only did Koberger establish a high standard, he also unveiled the potential market for luxury printed books in the north. It is not clear whether the *Chronik* actually reaped a significant profit. Judging from the number of unsold copies and outstanding accounts listed in the final reckoning in 1509, fully fifteen years after the initial printing, it may well have been only a modest success. In spite of Koberger's influence, the text was pirated soon after it appeared, and must certainly have reached a broad distribution in its various versions.³⁷ The motive behind the *Weltchronik* enterprise should in any case not be explained entirely on financial grounds. It served to promote the reputation of its printer. For the two Nuremberg humanists Hartmann Schedel and Sebald Schreyer,

the book was a glorification of Nuremberg itself and a statement of the new historical consciousness then emerging in northern lands. In this respect as well, the *Weltchronik* set a precedent for the use of printing and especially of woodcut.

Anton Koberger's printing projects had immediate consequences for Albrecht Dürer, Koberger's godson and an apprentice of his house draftsman Hans Wolgemut. Dürer was almost certainly an apprentice in the workshop during the making of the *Weltchronik* and also during the very first stages of designing the *Archetypus*. In 1495, after returning from his *Wanderjahr* in Italy, Dürer must have quickly set about designing the cycle of woodcut illustrations to the Revelations of St. John, the most celebrated and markedly un-Italianate achievement of his early career. As the colophon proclaims, the *Apocalypse* was printed by Dürer himself and published in 1498 in separate editions with Latin and German texts. In its format the *Apocalypse* departed from the usual priority of text over illustration in printed books. The text is heavily abridged and printed on the reverse of the illustrations, though not arranged so that the appropriate image always appears facing its passage of text. It is as though the artist included the text as an ornament to lend something additional to his compositions without finally challenging their self-sufficiency, in short a reversal of the usual ordering of text and illustration.

There is no question that Dürer conceived his *Apocalypse* cycle principally as a bound portfolio of images accented by a text. This project also shows that the idea of publishing a book of images alone, without any text to accompany them, was not one that had occurred to Dürer, or one that was as yet acceptable to the market. We may infer something about the level of its reception from the fact that when Dürer reprinted it in 1511 with a newly conceived title page he did so only in a Latin edition (fig. 183). Most likely, Dürer's clientele for this cycle was drawn largely from among the better educated. The *Apocalypse* was no doubt quickly recognized as an extraordinary artistic achievement and purchased accordingly by clerics and humanists, who must have regarded it less as an object of religious meditation than a work of the draftsman's art meant for the private library or print cabinet. In fact, inventories of print cabinets and libraries throughout Europe frequently record copies of Dürer's books later in the sixteenth century. As a collector's object the *Apocalypse* set an important landmark in the history of the woodcut, a sign that it was no longer merely a form of vernacular art but rather a medium capable of aspiring to the highest level of excellence. The illustrated book and particularly the lavish imprints from the Koberger printing house were critical steps in bringing about a reassessment of the woodcut in the Renaissance.

ANTON KOLB AND JACOPO DE' BARBARI: NORTHERN ENTERPRISE ABROAD

By any measure, one of the most spectacular achievements of monumental woodcut making during the Renaissance was the great *View of Venice* of 1500, designed by the Italian master Jacopo de' Barbari (figs. 18, 19).³⁸ This aerial perspective of the city, recording virtually every street and every building, covers nearly four square meters of wall space when its six sheets are properly assembled. Not coincidentally, this extraordinary monument to Venice emerged straight out of a tight web of associations with Nuremberg. The *View* was produced under the auspices of Anton Kolb, a Nuremberg merchant resident in Venice. Kolb's relations with book publishers back in his native city are well recorded. In fact we know that he was engaged in selling copies of Schedel's *Weltchronik* in Venice sometime before 1499 when he finally settled accounts with Koberger for thirty-four copies held on consignment.³⁹

Jacopo de' Barbari was a Venetian who had by then been active for an undetermined length of time in the city. Circumstantial and later documentary evidence points to an encounter between Jacopo and Dürer during the northern master's *Wanderjahr* in 1495. Dürer arrived fresh from Wolgemut's shop where the *Weltchronik* had only recently been completed. Reciprocal influences later on suggest that the two artists were much impressed with one another's work.⁴⁰ We do not know how long the project for the *View of Venice* was under way before its publication in 1500. However, given the elaborate surveys and other preparations needed to carry out such an undertaking, Kolb must have engaged Jacopo about the time he would have met Dürer, or very soon thereafter.

Just as the young Dürer was drawn to the city of Venice, so Jacopo de' Barbari was attracted to Nuremberg. Jacopo must have departed from Venice shortly after he completed the designs for the aerial map, since he is already documented at work for Maximilian in April 1500 as a "portraitist and illuminator" (contrefeter und illuminist) with a year's stipend of 100 Rhenish *gulden*, fully six months before Kolb applied to the Venetian Senate for permission to publish the *View of Venice*. Probably it was Kolb who commended the Italian painter to the Emperor's service. We also know that Kolb, Jacopo, and Maximilian were engaged in some project together shortly thereafter, since the three of them are recorded as settling an account in 1504.⁴¹ In any case, it is very clear that we have here a notable intersection of artists and patrons who together played an essential role in changing the character of the woodcut medium.

Apparently the design and publication of the

View of Venice were sponsored by Kolb principally as a financial enterprise. However, it is hardly likely that he could have brought it off without the cooperation, indeed the encouragement, of the alert and protectionist Venetian Senate. Considering the military application of accurate maps, one cannot imagine Kolb completing the project, including printing and publishing the blocks on Venetian soil, without official sanction. It is in any case certain that the Senate endowed Kolb with a full copyright and an uninhibited privilege to sell and export the *View* for a four year period.⁴² Indeed, this appears to be the first instance of an official privilege being issued for an image, not strictly speaking a work of art, but nevertheless an important extension of a practice initiated in Venice when a printer was granted a privilege for a specific text in 1486.⁴³ Certainly it is not coincidental that the first recorded privilege for a book was issued in Venice, a city that kept tight control over commerce and sought every means to protect its own interests and those of its residents where they served the economic and political ends of the state.

Anton Kolb's appeal to the Venetian authorities includes mention of the fact that no woodcut of such size utilizing blocks of this scale had ever been done before. The consequent difficulties in printing seem to have been partly claimed to justify the high cost he wished to charge for the *View of Venice* in order to recoup his expenses. He was granted permission to sell it for three ducats a copy. The quality of cutting in most portions of the blocks is very high, indeed superior to the cutting of two other woodcuts with designs by Jacopo de' Barbari which Paul Kristeller regards as having been cut in a manner characteristic of Venetian work around this time. Consequently, Kristeller proposes that Kolb or Jacopo may have commissioned German block cutters to undertake the task.⁴⁴ If so, the project was even more strikingly an import. Unmentioned in the appeal for the privilege is the fact that the paper used for these prints is as unprecedented as the size of the wood blocks. As we have noted earlier, the only means of accounting for the paper used by Kolb is to suppose that a special commission was arranged for that as well.⁴⁵ The best paper among the first state impressions is of very high, uniform quality, and it is well worth noting that this aspect of the project was an ambitious technical achievement in itself.

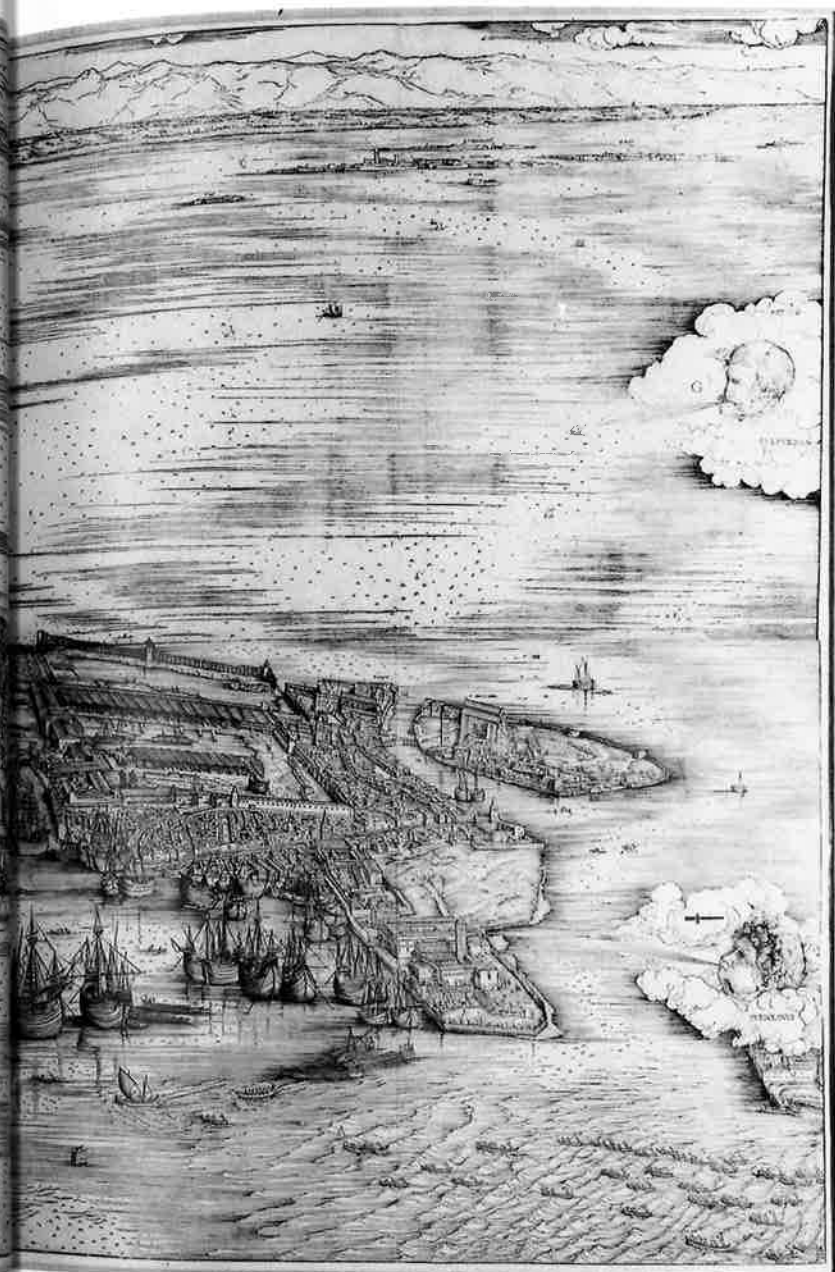
Anton Kolb's permission to sell the *View of Venice* for three ducats a copy establishes our first firm record of a price for a major woodcut, albeit of a very special sort. What value does this figure represent? It is instructive to recall that those copies of the *Weltchronik* recorded in Kolb's possession in 1499 were valued at better than one and a half ducats a piece. Since these were on consignment, the figure probably does not reflect their retail value. At any rate, the great aerial map was worth at



least twice the price of Anton Koberger's prize publication. Consider as well the catalogues of books from Aldus Manutius's press recorded in 1499 and in 1503: certain of his Greek editions, including the works of Aristotle, cost three ducats a volume. Thucydides and Herodotus were priced at a ducat each. These were quarto and folio editions, octavos and Latin editions costing a fraction of this. They were intended for an elite market, indeed the sort of market that would likely have been attracted to the *View of Venice*, and furthermore would have had the means to display it.⁴⁶ Quite clearly, luxury editions of books with lavish illustrations, like the aerial map, were intended for a discriminating and privileged clientele. The *Welchchronik*, or *Liber chronicarum* in the Latin edition, and Colonna's *Hypnertomachia Polifili* were well beyond the means of most professional people, not to say the average artisan. Aldus's complete set of Aristotle would

have cost two months' salary for a teacher in Venice in the early sixteenth century.⁴⁷

Much has already been written about the significance of Jacopo de' Barbari's *View of Venice* as a cartographic, propagandistic, and artistic achievement. For our purposes it should be stressed that the undertaking itself and its technical achievement depended upon the entrepreneurial and artisanal expertise of Nuremberg as well as Venice. The conception of this woodcut derives ultimately from Erhard Reuwich's fold-out view of the city in Breydenbach's *Peregrinationes in Terram Sanctam* published in Mainz in 1486, and subsequently from the orientation, though not the accuracy, of city views established by Wolgemut in the Nuremberg *Welchchronik*. Although innovative in many respects, particularly in perspective and surveying practices that led to a topographical plan of unprecedented scope and accuracy, the *View of Venice* would



not have been realized without the ambitious explorations in printing being pursued by northern European publishers in the late fifteenth century.

The artistic and cartographic importance of the *View of Venice* was certainly recognized in its own time, as the unusually large number of surviving impressions attests. But the *View of Venice* was a business enterprise as well and accordingly done for profit more than for the renown of its designers and patrons. It is most significant that on the block no reference appears to the publisher, the artist who designed it, the block cutters, or indeed to the privilege granted by the Venetian Senate. We can identify the financial backer only through notarial records and a diarist's reference to him, neither source bothering to name the designer. Conceivably, Jacopo de' Barbari did mean to include a signature covertly in the magnificent figure of Mercury who

overlooks the city prospect like a resplendant Savior enthroned at the Judgment, for Mercury bears the caduceus, Jacopo's personal insignia. Whether this constitutes a signature or not, it can hardly be taken as an effective gesture of self-promotion (fig. 19).⁴⁸ More to the point is the long tradition of honoring Mercury as the patron god of merchants. The god is embraced by an inscription proclaiming precisely this association: "I Mercury shine favorably on this above all other emporia" (MERCURIUS PRE CETERIS HVIC FAUSTE EMPORIS ILLVSTRO). Importantly, this cartographic view was commissioned by a merchant of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi to celebrate his adopted city as a great center of commerce. Given that it was issued anonymously, the *View of Venice* can be understood as a civic publication only in an indirect way. Nevertheless, it bears all the characteristics of a promotion and certainly proclaims the stature and

18. Jacopo de' Barbari, *View of Venice*, 1500. Woodcut from 6 blocks, 1390 × 2820 mm. British Museum, London.

19. Jacopo de' Barbari, *View of Venice* (detail).

20. Master ES, *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian*. Engraving (Lehrs II.157), 152 × 105 mm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

magnificence of the city on an impressive and entirely unprecedented scale.

These few examples give an idea of the importance of the illustrated book for the early cultivation of fine woodcut making, especially in the major centers of Nuremberg and Venice. It was, of course, these two cities that fertilized the early career of Albrecht Dürer, the first to undertake woodcut making for its artistic potential. The finely made woodcut for a collector's taste was only likely to become a reality once the skill of block cutting achieved a level of sophistication equal to the pictorial demands being put upon the image in the Renaissance. Luxurious book printing and extraordinary projects like Jacopo de' Barbari's *View of Venice* had the effect of placing the woodcut within the ken of the highest orders of patronage. These endeavors supplied the medium with expertise and with respectability. They were critical steps toward making woodcut suitable even to the artistic ambitions of an emperor.

NORTHERN ENGRAVING AND THE INVENTIONS OF THE MASTER ES

The early history of engraving in the north followed a different pattern of development from what we have seen in woodcut. Despite close connections with metalworkers and occasionally with book illuminators, engraving was never allied to a dominant source of patronage in the way woodcut was to book printing. Perhaps largely for this reason the earliest distinguishable personalities in the history of printmaking are engravers, and the first of these to leave a corpus of work that is substantial, widely varied, and strikingly individual is now known only by a pair of letters that appear in a few of his prints — the Master ES.⁴⁹ In all likelihood the Master ES began making prints in the 1450s and continued doing so until 1467, the date appearing on what are probably his last plates.

Although the Master ES's career immediately precedes the period of greatest interest to us, his engravings pose a number of questions about the early status of prints and their relation to other media. This is, of course, a crucial matter for interpreting the advent of the *peintre-graveur*, and along with it the eventual liberation of printmaking from its status as a craft. Our concern here will be to interrogate the scarce evidence that we have about the activities of the three major northern engravers of the century in order to understand better the conditions which made possible the artistic ascendancy of the print. Here two essentially technical factors take on critical importance. The first is the capacity of the instruments employed (along with the skill of their handlers) to generate an image that could be perceived as competitive with the illusionistic stan-



dard set by painting and the ornamental standard set by fine metalwork. The second is the development of a means of incising and printing a plate such that good quality impressions could be taken from it in reasonably large numbers. Bridging these technical matters is a third and more elusive factor, the cultivation of a new market for prints, and along with that the emergence of engraving as a medium having an identity, and consequently an interest, peculiarly its own.

Sometime during his early years, the Master ES composed the first of several versions of a *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian* (fig. 20). It was a subject that had special currency in times of plague, a threat that was in any case never far from the public mind. From an engraver's point of view a plague image (or *Pestbild*) was a commercially secure one because it was bound to be in regular demand. However, the *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian* was also an unusually challenging subject pictorially. Not only was there the chastely naked body of the saint to portray, but his executioners had to be rendered in strained and contorted postures wrestling with their sinister machinery, and typically an open landscape was required as well. We get a good sense of the Master ES's style from this print, the way he spread out his composition like an ornamental surface laid over the sheet, with deep contours from the burin used to define the margins of each major element. His formal syntax was based mainly upon extended ungulating incisions, parallel scoring, a short leaf-shaped gouge, and a won-

derfully vigorous screw pattern. In the slightly labored quality of the Master ES's line we can sense the resistance of the copper to the burin being driven through it, a feature that is also betrayed in frequent slips of the tool recorded in the impressions. Perhaps he was accustomed to a burin less sharp than it might have been, and he had likely not yet discovered the usefulness of a pillow to balance and control the plate while he worked on it.

The composition of the *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian* is oddly fitted together, rather as if it were a pastiche of figures rearranged from other sources. Indeed, it has been argued that it was based on a lost painting of the Strasbourg school.⁵⁰ Regardless, the artist did not concern himself much with a plausible organization of the episode. The spatial dynamics are quite detached from the action of the figures. For example, in the foreground a crossbowman aims point blank at Sebastian while his cohort, withdrawing a bolt from the tree, stands perilously in the line of fire behind the saint. In the middle distance a third bowman takes his aim directly out of the landscape at us, the innocent and unsuspecting admirers of the image. He seems placed there to bring us up short, as indeed he does. This is a deftly executed, not to say witty, passage of foreshortening that gains further effect through the artist's use of his favorite scissor-step pose. The Master ES certainly did not invent this arresting motif. In fact the crossbowman had a prior history as a workshop model and continued to be used in other prints and also on playing cards.⁵¹ The bowman is a device for prompting our attention in a way that helps to make the space of the image more credible. The Master ES used the motif in another of his engravings — *Emperor Augustus and the Tiburtine Sibyl* (Lehrs II.192), where, from the city gateway in the distance, the bowman once again catches us looking down the wrong end of his sights. This *trompe l'oeil* has no relation to the subject of the print, but of course that is not the point. He is a cipher for the artist's presence, our antagonist so to speak, stalking us from behind the scenes.

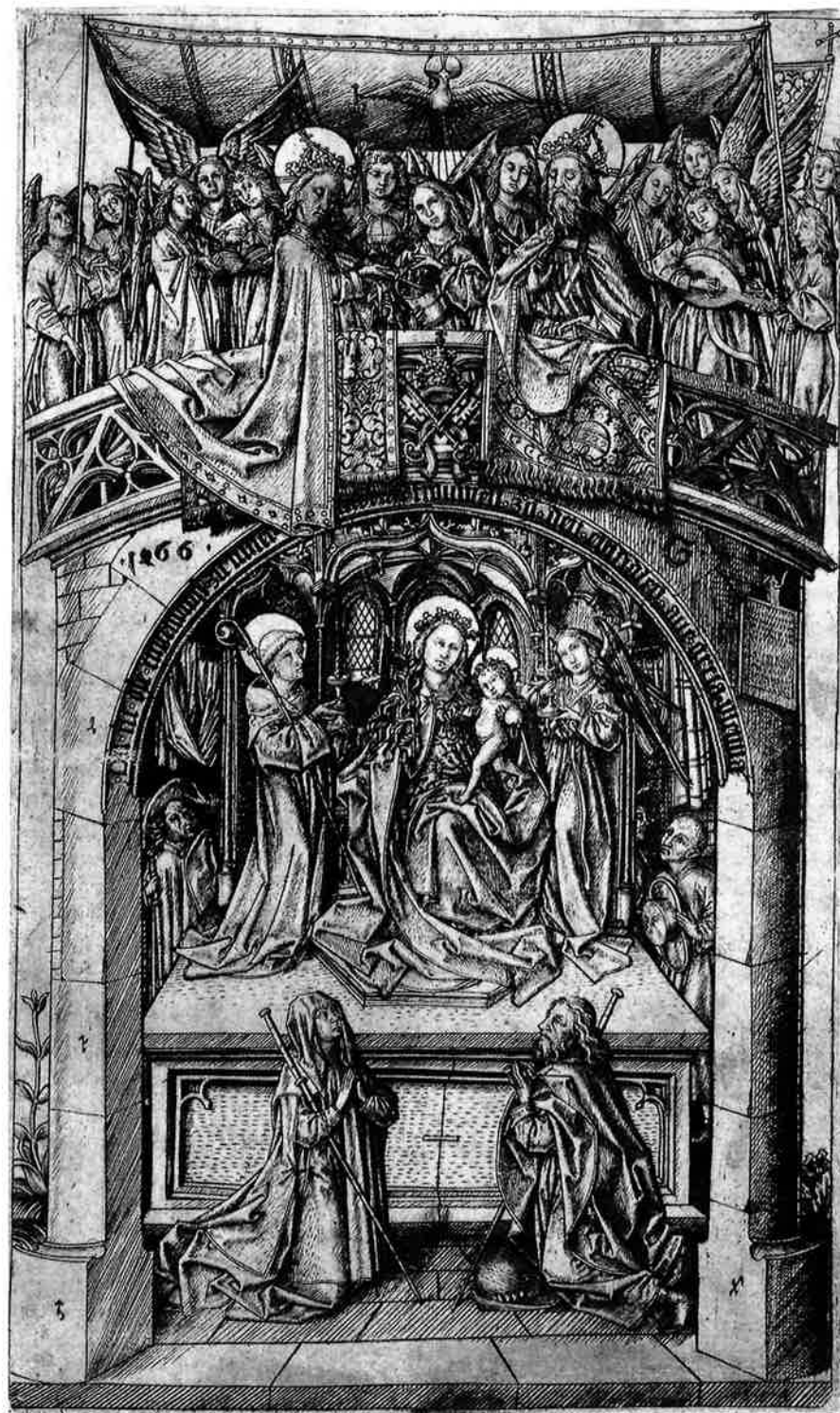
By their self-conscious presentation alone, the prints of the Master ES demand to be taken seriously. But what of their originality? We must acknowledge the artistic subordination of engraving at this stage in its history, and also its undoubted dependence on the prestige and example of other media. The case has been forcefully put that many fifteenth-century northern prints were intentionally made to reproduce specific works of art. In fact, like the *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian*, the Master's *Augustus and the Tiburtine Sibyl* has also been argued to be a reproduction of a fifteenth-century painting, now lost.⁵² This hypothesis is based upon closely similar formulations of figures and stylistic affinities between the engravings and certain surviving works from the upper Rhine region. Yet,

in the absence of any clear and complete correspondence of one existing work with another, we cannot be certain whether these two prints are in fact detailed or even summary reproductions of paintings. There are, however, a number of instances where, by carefully reconstructing the history of a composition, engravings have been shown to be derived ultimately from paintings. On the basis of a careful examination of certain of these cases, Fritz Koreny has asserted that the origins of the reproductive print — in his terms, a print made primarily to record another work of art made in a different medium — are traceable to this, the earliest phase of the engraving medium.⁵³ As Koreny admits, the case for this hypothesis rests almost entirely upon the meticulous reconstruction of lost prototypes, since we presently have but one case in which a fifteenth-century print can be securely shown to have copied a painting.⁵⁴

Intriguingly, most of the prints put forward as examples of reproduction can be traced back to the milieu of Netherlandish painting. As Koreny points out, a practice parallel to the one he is seeking to uncover among early printmakers is evident in the tradition of early Netherlandish art, where there appears to have been a demand for paintings that were close copies or shop replicas of other works. A number of these survive today, some of the best known of them stemming from the workshop of Rogier van der Weyden. The quality of certain of these replicas is so high that their attribution and relative priority are often still in dispute. Koreny cites this frequency of painted copies in the Netherlands along with the close relation of several early engravings to compositions that seem also to have originated in this region as evidence that, already from the period before the advent of the *peintre-graveurs*, a certain percentage of engravings were made as reproductions specifically in order to publish well-recognized and much-admired prototypes in a more available form. The implication of this hypothesis bears importantly on the whole enterprise of early printmaking and therefore requires our further attention.

Let us for a moment digress on the phenomenon of copying in early Netherlandish painting. To begin with, we should question whether the number of such painted workshop copies found in the circle of Rogier van der Weyden, for example, can best be explained as a response to the esteem of particularly well known originals. Literal copies of major altarpieces or portions of them are few compared to the replicas of private devotional images, and these, of course, would not have been widely available to the public in the first place. Is it not more plausible to explain most of these cases as evidence of an efficient workshop practice of recycling approved and successful models, that is to say an extreme symptom of a visual tradition that was inherently conservative, rather than as a

21. Master ES, *Large Einsiedeln Madonna*, 1466. Engraving (Lehrs II.81), 209 × 125 mm. Art Institute of Chicago.



result of the widespread veneration of particular masterpieces? Consider, for example, the extraordinary number of recognizable variations on Rogier van der Weyden's *Altarpiece of St. Columba* (Munich, Alte Pinakothek), a great many of which come from the hands of independently recognized masters such as Dirk Bouts, Hans Memling, and Gerard David. Such cases point to the extraordinary power of certain compositional inventions within the Netherlandish tradition, but not necessarily to the

acknowledged reproduction of a given masterpiece.

These same characteristics of imitation can be found in abundance in schools of manuscript illumination exactly contemporary with the development of printmaking. It is clear that model-books were being widely used in scriptoria, and that compositions and individual figures were being recopied many times in the same and different workshops, sometimes for decades. The capacity to improvise upon a vocabulary of standard figural and compositional types is part of the artistic fertility of early Netherlandish painting, a trait underwritten by the practice of making and disseminating workshop drawings. The evidence for patrons seeking replicas of widely known and particularly venerated originals is scant, and the evidence for an interest in miniature replicas is even smaller. In an age where the cultic significance of an image still held precedence over its status as a work of art, the practice of recording a prototype was bound to be approximate at best, and concerned more with essential identifying features than with capturing the lineaments of a style or a figural invention. In this important sense it is inappropriate to think of the fifteenth-century practice of imitation in any general way as reproduction.

Reproductive prints were eventually to have their day, of course, but this would come along with a more conscious sense of the importance of the work of art as such, and with the canonization of artistic genius. Northern prints in the Master ES's time were certainly an imitative if not a reproductive medium, but even the degree of the Master ES's dependence may be overstated. Intaglio printmakers quickly found a comfortable place within the milieu of modified compositions and conventional figure types being traded about the painters' workshops of the southern Netherlands and along the middle and upper Rhine. It was precisely in this constant and often imaginative exchange that the capacity for invention was best exercised. This was an arena for improvisers and pasticheurs, the dependence of prints being only a relative condition typical of the pictorial arts in general.

Furthermore, it is important to recognize that the nature of conservatism and innovation within early printmaking must be differently understood if one is speaking of intaglio prints rather than woodcuts. Woodcut designers and block cutters were challenged to realize new subjects by the demands of publishers who needed book illustrations. It is often forgotten that during the last quarter of the century, woodcuts of unprecedented devotional, narrative, and allegorical subjects were commissioned in great numbers by book printers. For the freelance engraver, invention was another matter, the choice of subject for the most part being left entirely up to him. There were, of course, typical sorts of things such as coats of arms that had currency in the repertoire of metalworkers' shops,

or popular devotional images like the Virgin or local saints common to the repertoires of both engraving and woodcut. But the intaglio printmakers had to generate fresh subjects for themselves. They were catering from the beginning to an open and less clearly defined audience. In effect, when it came to subject matter, the engravers were left to their own devices whereas the woodcut designer was, more often than not, set his problem by the publisher. Under these conditions, and considering patterns of development in the pictorial arts of the period generally, printmakers were bound to seek ideas among the painters as well as the other arts, but this is quite apart from suggesting that engravers actually set out or were commissioned to reproduce works in other media.⁵⁵

In 1466 the Master ES worked under commission from the Swiss Monastery of Einsiedeln, then celebrating its quincentenary jubilee. This event commemorated a miraculous appearance of the Virgin and Christ child accompanied by angels supposed to have occurred in the year 966, a miracle for which a papal indulgence was granted and a chapel dedicated on the site. The Einsiedeln commission entailed making at least three and very possibly many more prints to be sold under the auspices of the monastery to the flood of pilgrims come to worship at the shrine. Three prints portray the miracle taking place in an approximate representation of the actual shrine, and all of them bear the date 1466 (Lehrs II.68, 72, 81). The most elaborate of these is the so-called *Large Einsiedeln Madonna*, the only one of them also to carry a signature — the date in the upper left soffit of the chapel arch, and the letter *E* in the right soffit (fig. 21).⁵⁶ It is notable that in 1466 and the following year the Master ES first dated his plates (fourteen of them), and seemingly first marked them with the letters *E* or *ES* (eighteen plates). Since they were intended to be commemorative, the Einsiedeln prints obviously required the date on independent grounds not necessarily connected to the aspirations of the maker, and yet the commission may well have provoked the Master ES to make a steady practice of dating as well as initialing his prints.

The prospect that the Master ES might have finished his career in the employ of the Swiss monastery has been suggested, most forcefully by Horst Appuhn, who proposes that the initials *ES* are in fact not related to the identity of the printmaker but rather to the patron, and that the practice of initialing and dating was stimulated by the Master's connection with the monastery rather than out of a wish to claim his work as his own. This quite plausible hypothesis must be questioned first on grounds that two of the three prints representing the Einsiedeln shrine itself carry no initials at all, and second because of the likelihood that certain dates appear as if they were added retrospectively.⁵⁷ In our opinion the interpretation of these



22. Master ES, *Virgin Mary in Prayer*, 1467. Engraving (Lehrs II.61), 152 × 112 mm. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

letters has not yet been conclusively resolved, and likely cannot be resolved without firm documentary evidence. In any case, Appuhn's hypothesis is sufficiently compelling to cast serious doubt on any assumption that the Master ES was in fact the first printmaker to present his work with a systematic claim to authorship, in some respect anticipating the practices of the *peintre-graveur*.

Whatever the explanation, the dating and initialing of engravings was an important precedent that must have been meant to identify the prints by their origin. There is a further piece to the puzzle presented by the Master ES's late works, a technical feature that so far as we are aware has not previously been recognized. In strong impressions of several of the dated engravings such as the *Virgin Mary in Prayer* (fig. 22) there are traces of a newly shaped burin, or less likely the adoption of some new means for printing plates. The difference can be discerned in the ragged edge along the richly inked and most deeply incised lines of some of the dated prints, a characteristic we have not observed elsewhere except in cases where plates may have been reworked. It is by no means self-evident that this change would have been perceived as a formal improvement. Rather, it appears to indicate a technical alteration made in order for the plate to yield a larger number of good impressions, and indeed these prints are among those that survive in several examples.⁵⁸ Both the identification of the plates and the technical change may have been

precipitated by an encounter with the goldsmith and engraver Israhel van Meckenem whom we know to have acquired a large number of the Master's plates. To this we shall return shortly.

Thus, the culmination of the Master ES's activity was a propitious moment in the history of printmaking. Whether he himself or the Monastery of Einsiedeln inspired the monogramming and dating of these prints, the practice was nevertheless a recognition of their importance as commodities worthy of being claimed. The technical evidence reinforces this conclusion, since it points to an interest in increasing the size of editions, and therefore acknowledges a commercial potential being pursued as the medium matured and presumably as its practitioners began to acknowledge a wider market potential. Furthermore, the extraordinary degree of influence being exercised by the Master ES's prints, especially on metalwork and sculpture, was probably becoming evident to him by the later stages of his career. The omnipresence of the ES figure type may have played a part in the monastery's decision to engage this particular engraver's services on its behalf.

23. Master ES, *Nativity*. Engraving (Lehrs II.23), 206 × 162 mm. Art Museum, Cincinnati.

24. Martin Schongauer, *Nativity*. Engraving (Lehrs V.5), 258 × 170 mm. Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin.

MARTIN SCHONGAUER: HIS INNOVATIONS AND HIS IMITATORS

The engravings by Martin Schongauer of Colmar took a crucial step towards the imitation of nature as it was understood in Renaissance terms. His career sharply revised the conventional approach to the medium by bringing it into line with a prevailing style of calligraphic draftsmanship and tonal modeling, and in this respect he played a role in the evolution of the northern European engraving that is directly comparable to the impact of Mantegna in Italy. Both artists have in common the discovery of new ways in which the graphic relation of line to paper could be orchestrated into forms defined by volumes and tones, rather than forms composed from discrete shapes in coded schema. The marked technical as well as stylistic differences between Schongauer and Mantegna, however, alert us to the fact that a successful imitation of nature could be accomplished by very diverse means. The change in Schongauer's work was made possible partly by the extraordinary refinement of his burin work, but the true differences have more to do



with his very conception of engraving than with technique in the narrower sense.⁵⁹

To illustrate these assertions more clearly, let us turn for a moment to consider the change in the manner of representation between the Master ES and Schongauer. Two versions of the *Nativity* engraved in near identical scale, one an early work by the Master ES and the other an early work by Schongauer, establish the widest extremes of style and technique in the work of the two engravers (figs. 23, 24). We can suppose that both prints were executed essentially with the same sorts of instruments at hand, though slight variations in shape and temper must certainly be assumed. Furthermore, both masters employed the basic vocabulary of strokes fundamental to the engraver's art — parallel lines, cross-hatching, and stippling. Yet Schongauer's print evokes an extraordinary pictorial quality in comparison to the work of his predecessor. Exactly why is this so?

The Master ES approached his descriptive problem systematically. On the ground plane and the brick wall behind, shadowing patterns shift from one area to the next according to fixed formulas. Bright light is signaled by an array of parallel flecks, medium shade by cross-hatching or hatching over the stipple. Surfaces on different perspective planes are separated by shifting the direction of a shading pattern — diagonal to cross-hatching or diagonals altered to a different angle. Though the figures are neatly disposed in a conventional arrangement, the sense of space they occupy is constricted by the rigid planarity of the architecture and its own inconsistent relation to the frame. The Master ES never quite broke away from a patterned sense of design where figures and props compete for attention within a cluttered arena unmodulated by subtleties of light and shade. It is an exaggeration of a compositional quality that was, to be sure, common even to painting at the time, but nevertheless it lent an important linear emphasis that limited the print's ability to obtain certain pictorial effects. To speak of these earlier prints as patterns is to acknowledge something of their aesthetic character as well as their practical function. Schongauer was not in fact so revolutionary in his conception of engraving as it might at first seem, however. In the Master ES's later work, such as the spatially complex engraving of the *Virgin Mary in Prayer* (fig. 22) dated 1467, there is a liberal use of cross-hatching, and we can discern closer attention to describing variations in surfaces throughout the print. One still recognizes the degree of system that gave his earlier compositions their particular order and coherence, but in the late work he began to turn more directly to the manner of rendering promoted in painting. Partly this became possible because of an increase in technical facility, but we must also recognize that by furthering the complexity of materials and spaces he portrayed,

the Master ES consciously set out to heighten the order of difficulty in achieving a successful representation.

Martin Schongauer took his technical cue from the later style of the Master ES. Simultaneously he cast a sensitive eye upon the achievements of contemporary painters working along the Rhine, and especially in the Netherlands. Schongauer staged his early version of the *Nativity* by first enclosing the scene within an irregular architectural frame placed inside the rectangular space of the sheet. As he rendered the figures and their surroundings, he concentrated primarily on evoking a sense of textural variation and profusion of detail — the pits and furrows of the masonry, the carefully observed plants and furry animals, details that are enhanced by allowing other areas of the image to be obscured in darkness. On a minute level the standard vocabulary of strokes is varied — stippling sometimes in straight parallel lines, but more often random and curled; hatching deployed according to the logic of actual architectural surfaces; and modeling lines conforming to the shape of a thing, be it an element of architecture, a figure, or a passage of drapery. We can see these devices anticipated in the late engravings of the Master ES, but they are now realized with a control of the burin equal to what can be managed with a pen. The fundamental difference is that Schongauer engraved coloristically, that is to say with the eye of a painter who understands light as a function of texture, and texture as a principal objective to be sought in describing a surface. From the early Master ES to the mature Schongauer, engraving overturned its formal premise and, less importantly, acquired a superior technical facility. Schongauer was the first to realize the promise of the Master ES's bowman: judged by the measure of the painters, a printed image might indeed effect a successful *trompe l'oeil*.

The profound importance of Schongauer's stylistic innovation was recognized almost immediately by his contemporaries. Like the prints, his paintings lean strongly towards the monumental and sculptural aspects of the Netherlandish tradition. We now come to the point where a truly intimate relationship between painting and printmaking was consummated. Yet almost as quickly as it appeared, it began to be redefined by Schongauer in the stark graphic layout evident in much of his later work. What is crucial to understand about this first moment of intersection between graphic art and painterly sensibility is its implication for the status of the print as a collector's item. For there is no doubt that Schongauer initiated a new stage in the qualitative regard for prints. The evidence to support this claim is various and mainly inferential, but when taken together it is highly convincing.

Max Lehrs records over 3,000 engraved plates made in northern Europe during the fifteenth-

century. The number of surviving impressions from those plates is of course higher, although the percentage of unique impressions is considerable. Of these 3,000 prints, over 300 are given to the Master ES, 115 or 116 to Schongauer, and about 620 to Israhel van Meckenem — around one-third of the entire known production attributable to a mere three masters. It is reasonably certain that all of Schongauer's engravings have come down to us, since nearly all of those that we have survive in a number of impressions. Compare this to the Master ES, whose corpus includes 95 unique impressions (nearly one-third of the total), and an additional 50 known in only two impressions — nearly half of his recorded production suspended by the merest thread.⁶⁰ In fact, taking into account the copies and incomplete series by the Master ES that are extant, an original oeuvre of somewhere around 500 engravings has been projected.⁶¹ Two reasons for this discrepancy in survival rate come to mind. The first of them is that Schongauer's technique allowed him to pull a larger number of strong impressions from his plates. But there is a second and more important factor: that Schongauer's prints were highly esteemed on the market already in the artist's own lifetime, and furthermore that they retained this value for the two to three generations it took for print collecting to become widespread and retrospective in its ambitions.

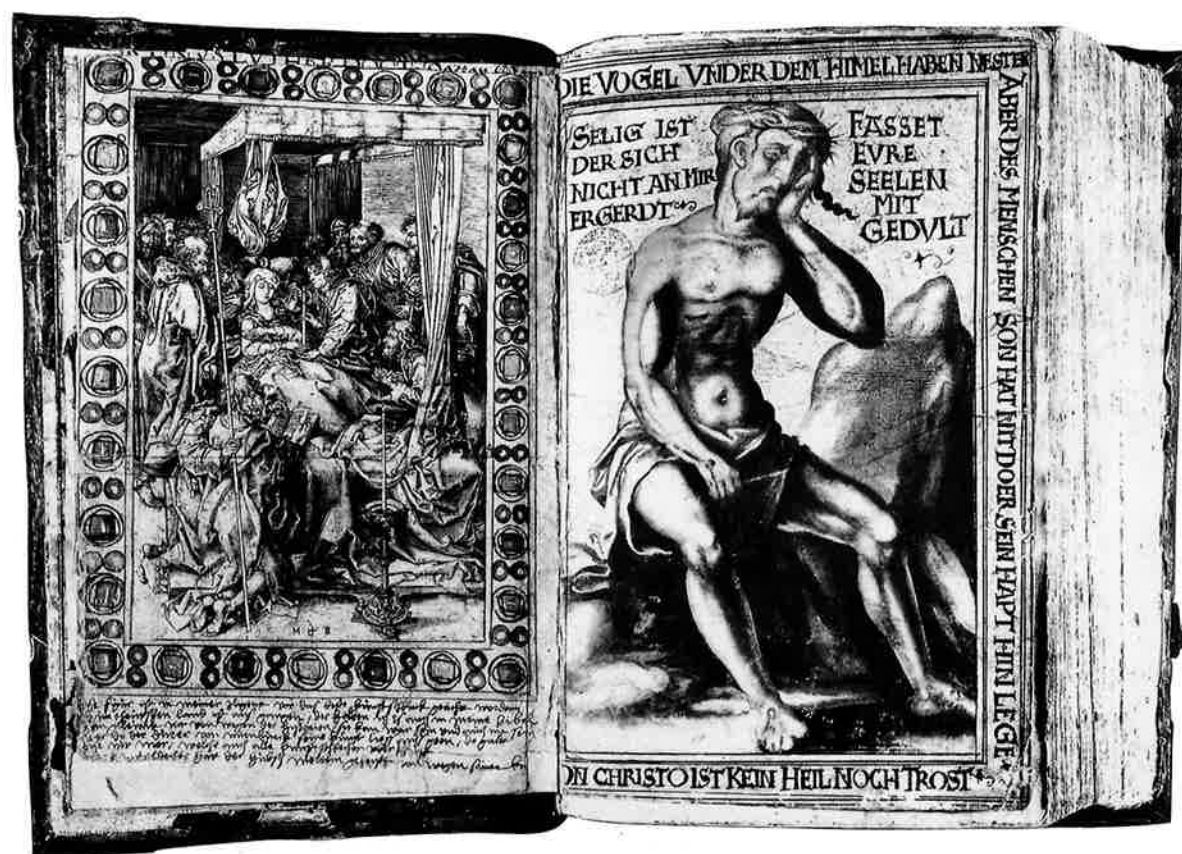
Around 1550 an embroiderer named Hans Plock

living in the Saxon town of Halle turned his two-volume edition of Luther's Bible into a kind of picture album. He ornamented the Bible with a selection of Grünewald's drawings as well as a large number of other drawings, engravings, and woodcuts which he pasted in between passages of text and onto the endpapers at the back. Plock had previously lived in the Catholic stronghold of Mainz, from which he was expelled for his Protestant beliefs, an allegiance that makes his enthusiastic regard for prints and drawings especially interesting. Beneath an impression of Martin Schongauer's somber and impressive engraving of the *Death of the Virgin* (fig. 25), Plock made the following note in his own hand:

This image was judged in my youth to be the finest work of art to have come out of Germany; therefore I pasted it into my Bible, not because of the story, which may or may not be true [properly portrayed]. However, once the unsurpassed engraver Dürer of Nuremberg began to make his art, this [estimation of quality] no longer holds. The engraver was called "Hübsch Martin" on account of his art.⁶²

Schongauer's *Death of the Virgin* (fig. 26) was frequently copied and certainly meets the stature Plock claims for it (figs. 27, 28). Even in a rather modest passage like this one, Plock's regard for the print carries a sense of nostalgia and a special

25. Martin Schongauer, *Death of the Virgin*. Engraving (Lehrs V.16) and *The Man of Sorrows*, drawing in grisaille. From the Plock Bible. Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin.





respect for Schongauer's founding place in German printmaking. Indeed, already in Plock's time Schongauer's work may have been difficult to acquire and accordingly expensive.⁶³

The two prints by Schongauer discussed thus far are strikingly pictorial in their profusion of stuffs and their complex arrangements of detail. The *Death of the Virgin* with its suitably tenebrous and elegiac atmosphere and its gallery of emotive gestures and expressions particularly aspires to intimate narrative involvement and devotional intensity. Both it and the *Nativity* are virtuoso performances in rendering and were much imitated. Possibly the most influential of all Schongauer's prints, however, is the great *Procession to Calvary* (fig. 29), a large engraving that demonstrates, among other skills, the master's ability to print a sizable plate successfully. The pictorial dimension of Schongauer's engravings, most dramatically illustrated in this above all of his prints, demonstrates the artist's integration within the tradition of Netherlandish painting and its extended sphere of influence. The general composition and certain of the figures in the *Procession to Calvary* are drawn from a formulation of this subject that almost certainly descends from the workshop of Jan van Eyck. Others of Schongauer's prints as well as his paintings reflect a close awareness of the work of Rogier van der Weyden and Dirk Bouts. For Schongauer, engravings of this kind were fundamentally and unmistakably extensions of the painter's art — his supple method of adapting and improvising upon compositional types derives entirely from the formal conservatism and love of narrative detail manifested in contem-

porary painting. In a sense the *Procession to Calvary* repaid Schongauer's debt to this rich and varied resource, in that the engraving was imitated and excerpted by painters as well as printmakers again and again for decades after its appearance. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that this was the most influential print made in northern Europe throughout the full span of our inquiry.

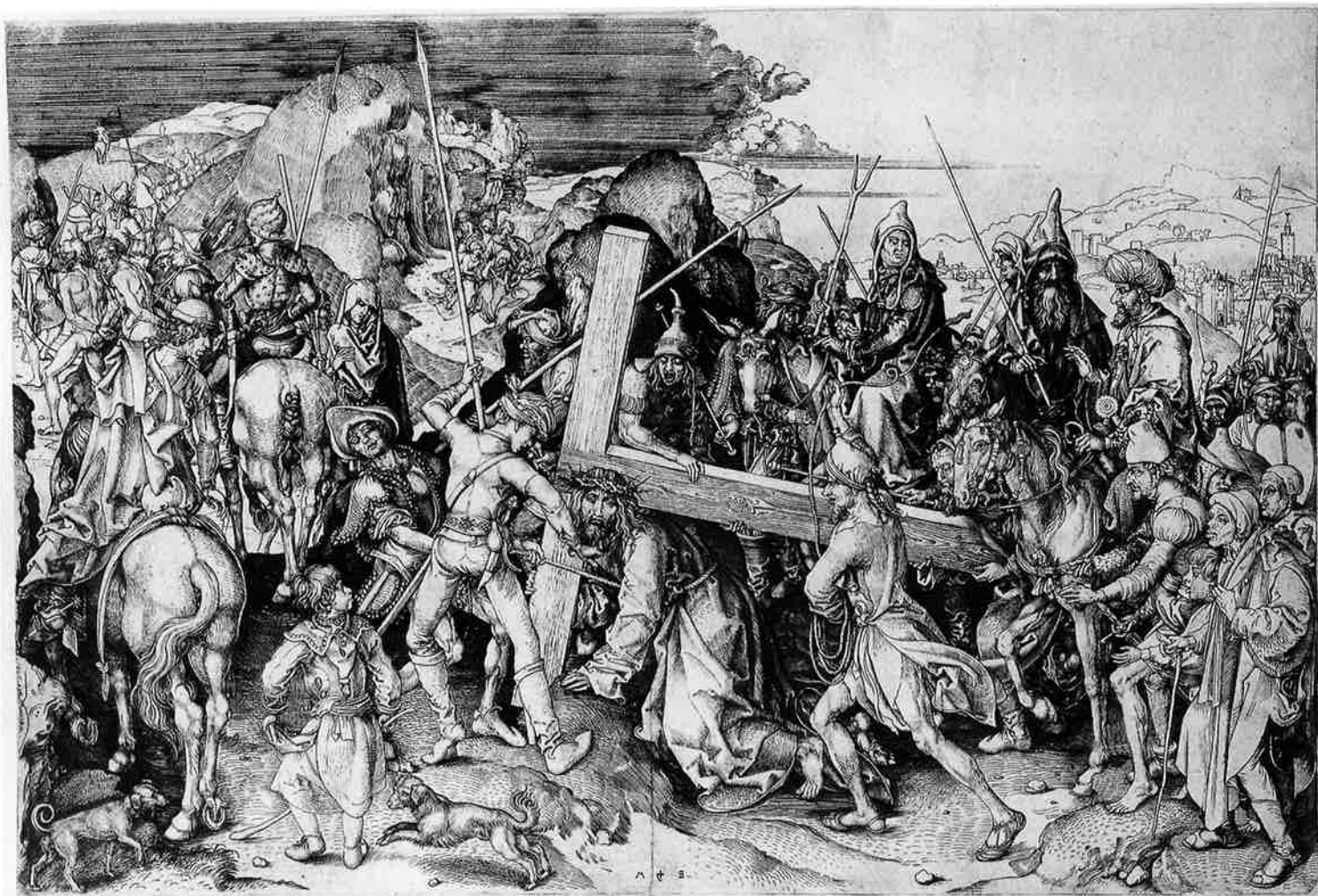
In his mature years it seems that Schongauer, alongside the ambitious pictorial aspirations represented by the *Procession to Calvary*, pursued a more abstract approach to compositional design. In engravings like the *St. Sebastian* (fig. 30), for example, he was content with a bare suggestion of landscape and mainly stressed the delicate pattern of the tree arrayed against the white of the sheet and the finely drawn figure of the saint made serene and graceful in the condition of his martyrdom. The same sensibility is evident in an emblematic image such as the *Griffin* (Lehrs V.93), both intensely naturalistic in its zoological fantasy and artificially heraldic in its pose. In these two engravings we see Schongauer's embrace of graphic effects, a reductive formal preference that Dürer would recapitulate in the first decade of his own explorations in engraving. It is as though in their campaign to take possession of the technical facility of engraving both masters passed through the imitation of painting on their way to achieving an aesthetic more closely defined by the basic elements of printmaking — the glistening line of ink on the white of a rag paper sheet.⁶⁴

The high regard for Schongauer's work and the authority it lent to the intaglio medium is most

26. Martin Schongauer, *Death of the Virgin*. Engraving (Lehrs V.16), 255 × 169 mm. Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin.

27. Wenzel von Olmütz, *Death of the Virgin*, 1481. Engraving, copy after Schongauer (Lehrs VI.11), 254 × 168 mm. British Museum, London.

28. Israhel van Meckenem, *Death of the Virgin*. Engraving, reverse copy after Schongauer (Lehrs IX.49), 248 × 167 mm. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.



29. Martin Schongauer, *Large Procession to Calvary*. Engraving (Lehrs V.9), 284 × 426 mm. Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel.

dramatically reflected in the wave of copies that soon surged onto the market. Israhel van Meckenem produced fifty-eight copies of Schongauer's prints; Wenzel von Olmütz, around fifty; the Monogrammist AG, thirteen. At least another half-dozen copyists within equally close range can be cited. Cycles such as the *Passion of Christ* (Lehrs V.19–30) and the *Twelve Apostles* (Lehrs V.41–50) were done by several different imitators and seem to have been exceptionally in demand. The many copies produced by the Schongauer school range from close replicas of his prints to free variations on them.⁶⁵

Wenzel von Olmütz, active through the 1480s until the late 1490s, was among the first to pillage Schongauer's accomplishments systematically.⁶⁶ Wenzel signed his copy of the *Death of the Virgin* with his full name and the date: "Wenceslaus de Olomucz. Ibidem. 1481" (fig. 27). This is the first dated instance of a northern European printmaker signing his full name in the plate, and as such it is an important moment in the history of the medium. Why did he choose a copy of another master's work on which to declare himself so fully? By proclaiming his identity and his town it would seem

Wenzel was also laying special claim to the print itself, despite what we know of its real origin. This curious signature has been read as an anticipation of the later practice of including the engraver's name on the plate along with the designer, thus asserting the importance of skilled execution as well as invention.⁶⁷ But the implication of Wenzel's signature is less modest. It would seem he is proclaiming that the maker of the object is its rightful author. Most of the early copyists issued their works under their own monograms in this way without any reference to the model. In this sense we see again that a replica is not so much an honor intentionally bestowed on a prototype as it is an appropriation of an image by the copyist. We cannot, of course, be certain how such prints were deemed by those contemporaries who could recognize them as copies, but it is difficult to suppose that they were ever purchased as substitutes for an acknowledged original.

Wenzel von Olmütz was the first major pirate of the profession: out of the ninety-one engravings recorded in Lehrs's catalogue, the vast majority are known to be copies of other masters. Of the fifty done after Schongauer, over two-thirds are in the

same orientation as the original.⁶⁸ In only a small percentage of cases can we infer a specific iconographic prohibition against reversal, such as the need to retain a benediction delivered with the right hand, the placement of the wound in Christ's right side, or some other such requirement. Even these points of orthodoxy were ignored from time to time by printmakers, though with Wenzel's copies it tends to be prints of unusual and particularly secular subjects that are reversed rather than more familiar devotional stories. Wenzel's usual practice suggests that he held the formal integrity of his models in high regard, but that he was not in the business of perpetuating Schongauer's name and reputation in preference to his own.

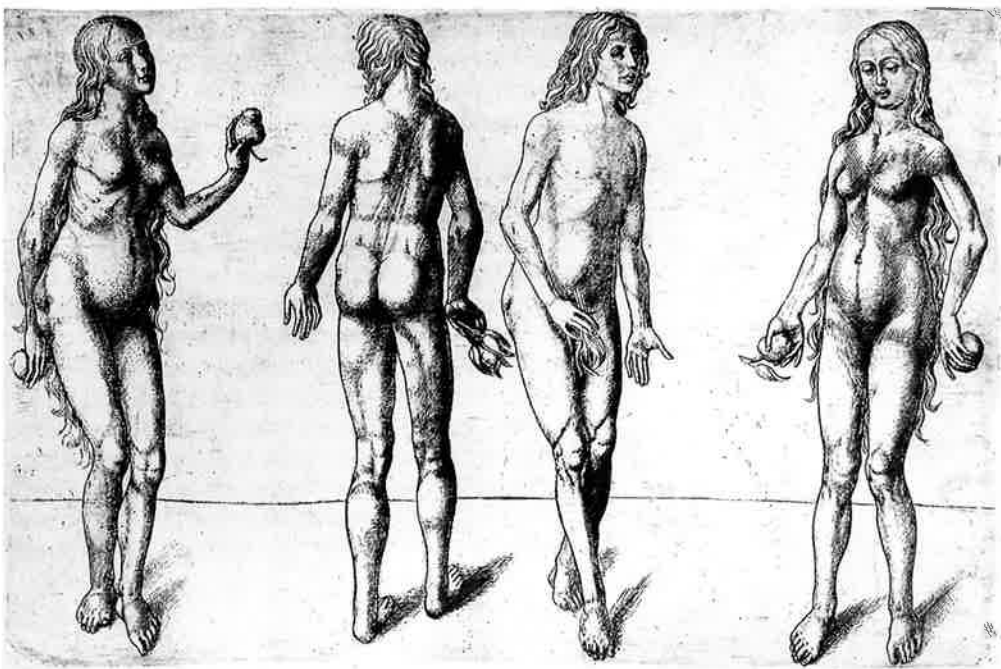
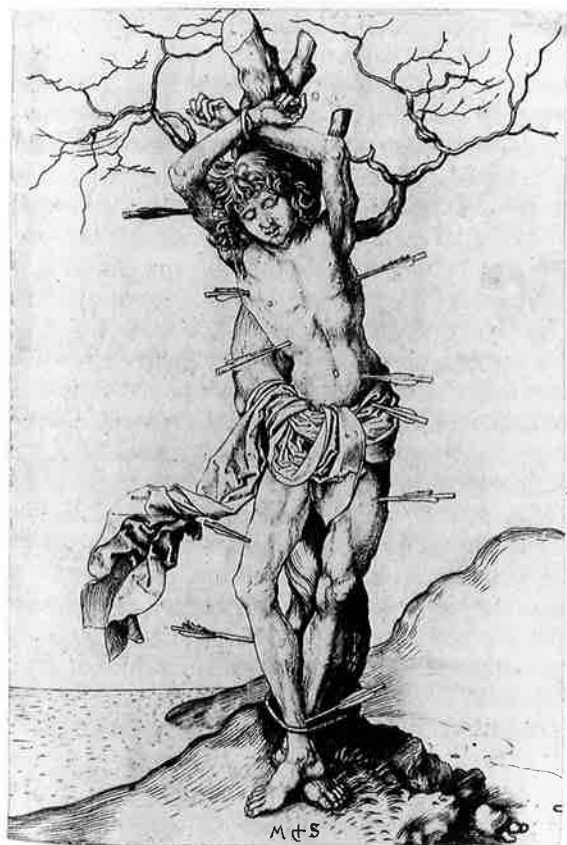
We can conclude that the surge of copies after Schongauer's prints must reflect admiration on the part of printmakers and buyers for the autonomous qualities of the work. Copies were not being acquired as secondary versions of well-known originals so much as representatives of an admired style of printmaking. This hypothesis is reinforced by the number of prints presumed to be after lost drawings by Schongauer or members of his workshop, pastiches based on his prints and drawings, and prints done recognizably in Schongauer's manner. For example, at a sharp distance from the slavish copies of Wenzel von Olmütz, we find a handful of extraordinary engravings by the little-known Master PM. There are only five prints attributed to his hand, all of good quality and all done in the resolved ambience of Schongauer's style.⁶⁹ Most astonishing among them is an engraving of two pairs of nude figures posed front and

back as if based on a set of life studies in a painter's workshop (fig. 31). They are clearly identified as Adam and Eve in that she is holding apples and he modestly covers his sex in a manner typical of representations of the Fall.⁷⁰ Certainly they are based upon sketches done in the format of Temptation scenes, but most curious is the fact that this print was definitely not conceived as a biblical narrative or in any commonly recognized sense as a finished design. The light, preliminary outlines of the four figures were tentatively inscribed in dry-point before the application of the burin. And yet despite their lack of finish, the exceptional delicacy of the draftsmanship, the gentle treatment of interior modeling, the indications of *pentimenti* in certain areas, and the carefully observed nudes all suggest a print done with unusual skill and sensitivity.

Why was such effort lavished upon something seemingly planned from the outset as a trial piece? Engraving was manifestly a secondary interest for the Master PM. Lehrs has proposed that the artist's familiarity with the nude implies he was a sculptor, though there is no particular reason to suppose that sculptors worked from life any more than painters. Judging from the adept handling of the human figure in miniature, it is more likely the engraving was done by a manuscript illuminator or by a panel painter. Three of the compositions attributed to this master betray the symptoms of having been trial pieces or workshop models, if not yet collector's items. The two most ambitious prints — the *Women's Bath* (Lehrs VI.5) and the *Massacre of the Innocents* (Lehrs VI.2) — are not only unusually complex subjects, but they require the managing of nude and clothed figures in a variety of difficult poses. Clearly, in some circles engraving was becoming an experimental medium by the close of the

30. Martin Schongauer, *St. Sebastian*. Engraving (Lehrs V.65), 165 × 111 mm. British Museum, London.

31. Master PM, *Adam and Eve*. Engraving (Lehrs VI.1), 139 × 209 mm. British Museum, London.



32. Israhel van Meckenem, *Self-Portrait with his Wife Ida*. Engraving (Lehrs IX.1), 129 × 174 mm. British Museum, London.



fifteenth century. In all likelihood the Master PM was a painter attracted to engraving for its suppleness and agility in recording and replicating good draftsmanship.

Original work of exceptional quality therefore does emerge from among the circle of Schongauer's close followers. For lack of documentary evidence, none of the sundry copyists and the other artists working in Schongauer's manner has been securely connected to his shop, though it is certainly probable that some of them were trained there. At the very least a considerable wealth of workshop drawings must have been circulating from an early date. All this leads us to the conclusion that Schongauer's career must have coincided with the beginnings of print collecting in the north. Indeed, more than that, he must have stimulated it. When Albrecht Dürer set off in 1495 on the first leg of his *Wanderjahr*, it was Schongauer he hoped to see. For well over a decade Colmar had been recognized as the locus of fine engraving north of the Alps. Such a marked change in the patterns of production that led to widespread copying seems to imply a growth in the market for prints of unusual design and varied subject matter. Schongauer contributed to northern printmaking something that it had not previously known: an authoritative style. In the north a *peintre-graveur* had definitely arrived.

ISRAHEL VAN MECKENEM: ENTREPRENEURIAL PRINTMAKER AND PIRATE

Schongauer's achievement can be best understood almost entirely within the framework of contemporary painting, and regarded in this context he supplied the requisite degree of quality to draw the attention of a discriminating public to the virtues of a replicated medium. In seeking to publish his designs, it is self-evident that he was also attentive to the commercial advantages of the print. However, it was Israhel van Meckenem who explored this potential in a systematic and genuinely inventive way. The span of his work overlapped the activity of Schongauer and Mantegna, as well as the early stages of Dürer's, Jacopo de' Barbari's, and Marcantonio Raimondi's careers. However, Israhel's name was struck long ago from canonical accounts of early printmaking, particularly as the preferences of scholars and collectors centered on the rise of the *peintre-graveur*.⁷¹ And furthermore, we can fairly well guess that none of these masters was likely to spend much effort marveling over the subtlety of Israhel's craft. Nevertheless, it can be argued that his contribution to the eventual success of printmaking as an art form was the equal of any. Indeed, in certain very particular respects he can be

counted as the most historically important northern printmaker at work around 1500.

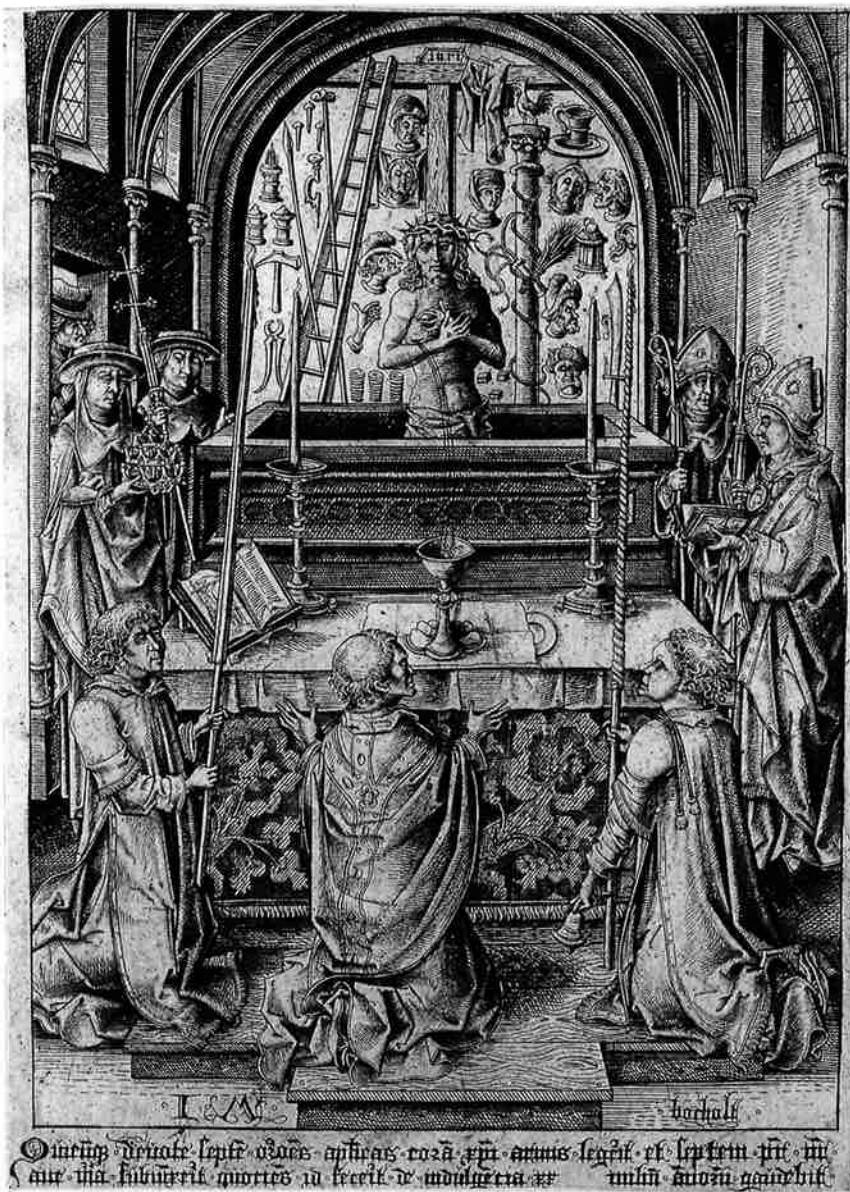
The heresy of this statement lies in the fact that Israhel was undoubtedly the most voracious pirate in Renaissance printmaking. Out of the several hundred prints connected with his name, only 10 percent have not been identified as reworked plates, copies, or probable copies of other prints. Not only did he acquire a large number of plates by the Master ES, he made around two hundred copies of the Master ES's prints as well. Israhel acquired and reworked plates from several other printmakers which he also issued under his own name. In his early years as a copyist, Israhel tended to be rather blunt. Occasionally he copied closely, but, like Wenzel von Olmütz, more often he redrafted a composition in the harsh and identifiable vernacular of his own style. Israhel rarely bothered about the propriety of reversing his prototypes. He incised his plates deeply and composed in rich matrices of line to ensure the longevity of his plates. Their draftsmanship is characteristically stilted and the figures often strained, altogether lacking the Netherlandish gracefulness that Schongauer managed so well. This may appear to make a very good case for ranking him among the deadbeats rather than the heroes of printmaking. But evidently this was not the view held by his contemporaries, nor was it the opinion of commentators writing up to a century after Israhel's death in 1503. As early as 1505 the German humanist and chronicler Jacob Wimpheling cited Israhel van Meckenem without prejudice alongside Dürer and Schongauer as a founder of the printmaker's art whose work, he claimed, was then being sought after by painters throughout Europe.⁷² So far as we are aware, this judgment was nowhere contradicted in northern accounts of early printmaking throughout the entire course of the century.

Although Martin Schongauer had come from a family of goldsmiths from whom he certainly learned the use of metalworking tools, he made his living mainly as a painter and a printmaker. Israhel, in contrast, advertised himself as a goldsmith on the rare occasions when he identified his profession in the signature on his plates. This is not at all surprising given the fact that goldsmiths were regarded as the elite among craftsmen. And as we can further see from his *Self-Portrait with his Wife Ida* (fig. 32), the first instance of a formal self-portrait in a print, he was certainly very conscious of his status and of taking opportunities to advance his reputation. Circumstantial evidence points strongly to the conclusion that Israhel received his initial training as an engraver under his father, also known as the Master of the Berlin Passion, and later with the Master ES, probably in Switzerland or in Alsace. If the Master ES introduced printmaking on a large scale in northern Europe, and Schongauer carried it to technical refinement, then Israhel was responsible for

realizing its full potential as a commercial enterprise. He recognized the value of engraved plates as commodities, and he was undoubtedly very canny in assessing the appeal of various sorts of subjects for different audiences. We know nothing about the means he employed for distributing his engravings, though he must have cultivated some channels for exporting them from the town of Bocholt where he seems to have lived the better part of his career. Some of Israhel's prints definitely moved great distances in short periods, as we know, for example, from their acquisition and use by painters and manuscript illuminators already in the last decade of the century in an area extending from the Baltic to Spain.⁷³

Israhel's work improved in the last decade of his career, and in some degree this change was related to an encounter with the work of Hans Holbein the Elder in Augsburg. He fell under the influence of Holbein's style during the 1490s, when he issued a suite of prints of the *Life of the Virgin* (Lehrs IX.50–61) that have been convincingly shown to be closely made after drawings (no longer extant) by Holbein or his workshop. Israhel, of course, copied from many sources, and there is no way of knowing whether his models were consigned to him, purchased, or purloined for this purpose.⁷⁴ In any case, the connection between these two men raises the question of whether we might have a northern European counterpart to the arrangement Marcantonio Raimondi had with the Raphael workshop in Rome. Holbein's influence is part of a general improvement in the quality of Israhel's draftsmanship during the mid- to late 1490s, a change sufficiently marked to ask whether there may not have been a new face about in the Bocholt workshop, or whether Holbein sought the services of a proven mimic in order to capitalize on his talent.

There is no doubt that Israhel van Meckenem took ample advantage of the efforts of others and often did so as a matter of pure expedience. But it is commonly disregarded that within conventional categories of subject matter and within the small percentage of prints that appear to be his own, Israhel broke new ground that proved to be remarkably fertile for the later history of printmaking. We can see this indirectly in some of the ways he found to market his prints, and also in his invention of new subjects and new strategies for presenting them. Israhel pursued the commercial possibilities of replicated devotional imagery in a concerted way, and in this context made the first self-declared reproductive print we know of in northern Europe. He furthered the occasional practice of earlier printmakers in developing cycles and compositions of several prints that could be marketed separately or together. Israhel also introduced a range of topical references into his prints, a feature that may have been stimulated in part by the work of the House-



book Master. And finally, he broke away from conventional means of formulating religious narratives, and introduced new strategies for thinking about the interplay of pictures with texts. Let us examine each of these endeavors in turn.

Israhel van Meckenem was apparently the first to issue engraved (as opposed to woodcut) indulgences granting relief from purgatory in exchange for enacting specific devotional exercises. A notorious instance of this is a *Mass of St. Gregory* probably from the 1480s (fig. 35), which bears an inscription promising 20,000 years' pardon for each recitation of three prayers made before the image. In the following state of the engraving Israhel burnished out the number and increased its allowance to 45,000 years!⁷⁵ These were not authorized indulgences issued under the aegis of the Church, but rather a bootlegged version with an inflated reprieve that was never subject to papal review. And yet, despite their lack of official status, one cannot but wonder how prints of this kind may have helped to fuel the discontent that eventually led to Luther's reforms.

Like the *Pestbilder*, prints meant to protect against plague, the popularity of the Gregorian image of Christ had a certain guaranteed interest. For similar reasons, Israhel made two other engravings reproducing a mosaic icon in Rome (fig. 33), an object that still survives in the Church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme. In Israhel's time this Byzantine, or Italo-Byzantine, icon had come to be venerated as the actual image made after St. Gregory's vision, and as a consequence Santa Croce was then becoming a favorite site for pilgrims visiting the Holy City.⁷⁶ Both of Israhel's two engravings carry an inscription declaring them to be true copies, in effect reproductions of this icon. Although such a case has obvious parallels with the *Einsiedeln Madonnas*, it is the first we know of in which a northern print was made to perpetuate the value — in this instance explicitly the cultic value — of another image. That these prints probably date from the mid- to late 1490s suggests that they were made in anticipation of the jubilee year of 1500 when the incidence of pilgrimages to Rome, and of course to Santa Croce, would greatly increase.

Part of Israhel van Meckenem's genius for the market rested on what we would currently term "packaging." For example, like Schongauer he published a number of prints in small sets and cycles especially suitable for pasting into devotional books as illustrations or bound together and sold in suites. A bound copy of Israhel's *Passion* cycle was printed with two scenes to a sheet arranged so as to be folded into a quire. That is to say, the engravings were printed in pairs, not according to the Passion story but so that they would follow the proper sequence after they were bound together.⁷⁷ He also printed a set of six engravings showing the twelve Apostles in pairs with a single portion of the *Credo*

inscribed on each print (Lehrs IX.294-99), such that the full set is required in order to have the complete text. We can trace the origin of issuing prints in sets to engraved series by the Master ES and the Master of the Banderoles, but Israhel was the first to make a regular practice of it.⁷⁸ Israhel also made and printed plates with separately framed but contiguous images placed together with the engraver's signature distributed across them, such as the single plate of *Sts. Mary of Milan, Luke, Theophista, and Eustace* (fig. 34).⁷⁹ Here the placement of the signature suggests the intent to have either two or four figures together as a composition, but they can all just as well be cut apart and treated separately.

A number of Israhel's religious subjects suggest that he was addressing a regional audience. Some of the less common saints in his repertoire, like St. Quirinus of Neuss, were especially venerated in the region of the lower Rhine where he lived and worked. Furthermore, there is some basis for supposing that the panoramic engraving of *Judith and Holofernes* (Lehrs IX.8) actually depicts the lifting of the siege of Neuss, which the artist him-

self may have witnessed, and indeed the attention to military detail is striking.⁸⁰ Documentary references of this sort were new to prints at the time, though it was an idea that had a future, for example in the portrayals of sieges and battles that occupied many printmakers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in making propaganda for princes and appealing to the public attraction to war news.

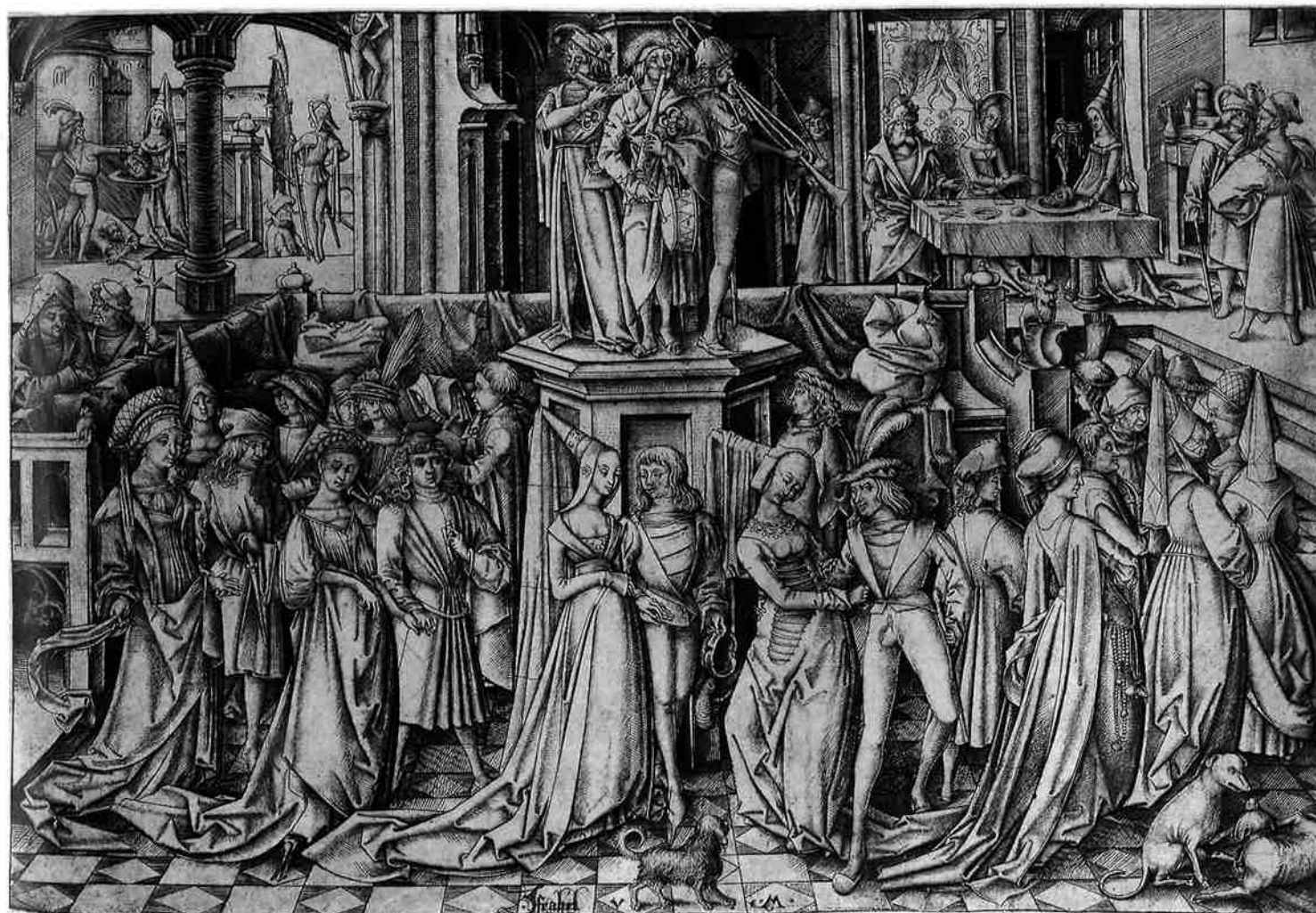
This inclination to topicality is also a feature of Israhel's pictorially most ambitious engraving, the *Dance at the Court of Herod* (fig. 36). Here he staged a New Testament subject as a patrician dance in a contemporary palace hall with merrymakers and musicians attired in the Burgundian fashion of the day. To be sure, there is nothing strikingly original about portraying a biblical story in contemporary garb, but Israhel has gone to the length of specifying the court where the celebration takes place. It was pointed out some time ago that the artist has taken care to show the three musicians sporting the piper's badges which identify their special office in the town of Münster.⁸¹ This appears to be evidence that the artist meant to recall a particular seasonal event recognizable to a local population. Such top-

33. (top left) Israhel van Meckenem, *Imago Pietatis*. Engraving (Lehrs IX.167), 172 × 119 mm. Albertina, Vienna.

34. (top right) Israhel van Meckenem, *Saints Mary of Milan, Luke, Theophista, and Eustace*. Engraving (Lehrs IX.307), 165 × 109 mm. Albertina, Vienna.

35. (bottom left) Israhel van Meckenem, *Mass of St. Gregory*. Engraving (Lehrs IX.353), 200 × 141 mm. Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin.

36. Israhel van Meckenem, *Dance at the Court of Herod*. Engraving (Lehrs IX.367), state II, 214 × 316 mm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



37. Israhel van Meckenem, *Ill-sorted Couple*. Engraving (Lehrs IX.502), 161 × 110 mm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

38. Israhel van Meckenem, *Juggler*. Engraving (Lehrs IX.503), 159 × 108 mm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



39. Israhel van Meckenem, *Fight for the Pants*. Engraving (Lehrs IX.504), 159 × 109 mm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

40. Israhel van Meckenem, *Church-Goers*. Engraving (Lehrs IX.499), 163 × 110 mm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



icality as we find in the *Dance at the Court of Herod* lends a special twist to Israhel's astonishing subordination of the biblical event within a panoramic composition, the most striking and innovative aspect of the image. St. John the Baptist's beheading occurs discreetly in the left background, and the presentation of his head on the plate is shown in the right background opposite.⁸² Suppressing the scriptural and dramatic significance of the scene like this can be read in quite contradictory ways — that the martyrdom is a mere pretext for exploiting an interest in costumes and courtly fêtes, or on the contrary that it is emphasized all the more sharply by its very understatement. Since this is one of the largest of Israhel's prints and also among his most experimental treatments of narrative subject matter, we must acknowledge this print as an important speculation on his part about the public appeal of prints around 1500.

Israhel was not the first engraver to invest a religious scene with the characteristics of a genre scene, but along with the Housebook Master he was the first to do so in a concerted and imaginative way. An ambitiously large composition like the *Dance at the Court of Herod* anticipates certain of Lucas van Leyden's engravings in which a biblical event is found secreted somewhere in an open landscape or a crowded scene. The anecdotal appeal of a print such as this can be found in Israhel's treatment of profane subjects as well, and here

his inventions are among the most engaging and original of all. Often as not these subjects are directed against human foible and carry a satirical bite, though at other times they seem to be more neutral observations of intimate exchange, social custom, or sartorial fashion. Among the best known of his genre scenes are twelve engravings of couples, all of them in courting postures of one sort or another. A sustained play on flirtation, legitimate or uncondoned, runs through the full list of these suggestive encounters: an ill-sorted couple appears, with an old man wishfully placing his hand on a young woman's hip (fig. 37); a juggler demonstrates his talent to a thoroughly unimpressed maiden, his shoes untied, his purse dropped at his feet, and a flagon of wine conspicuous beside him (fig. 38); encouraged by the devil, a young girl drubs her mate with a distaff in an effort to capture his pants (fig. 39); a pious couple walk in procession to church, and he glances back with a fetching smile to catch her eye while at their feet a dog scratches a nagging itch of its own (fig. 40); a man plays a small table organ while a young lady pumps up his bellows, the waiting bedroom visible through the window behind (fig. 41); seated at the foot of a bed, a young dandy plumed with ostrich feathers embraces an overclad (and pregnant?) housewife, his sword momentarily discarded but his knife discreetly jamming the bolt on the bedroom door (fig. 42).



41. Israhel van Meckenem, *Organ Player*. Engraving (Lehrs IX.507), state I, 159 × 109 mm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

42. Israhel van Meckenem, *Couple Seated on a Bed*. Engraving (Lehrs IX.508), state II, 160 × 109 mm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

43. Housebook Master, *Two Nuns*. Drypoint (Lehrs VIII.71), unique, 95 × 78 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.



Profane subject matter invaded the pictorial arts through the medium of prints. The story of this incursion is a long and intricate one which we can only touch upon in our present inquiry. Engravings initially took the lead in exploring the appropriateness for the market of the quotidian, the anecdotal, and the satirical. Given the degree to which religious subjects dominated the more commonly accessible forms of pictorial art up until the late fifteenth century, it would be unreasonable to expect painters and engravers to turn abruptly to aspects of daily life in a direct and unmediated way. Such a notion of pure observation would have had little significance for artists or buyers. The printmaker's problem was precisely how to invest the commonplace with some meaning through the addition of a story or a bit of popular wisdom. Hence, each of Israhel van Meckenem's images of couples plays to some degree on the obvious, not to say universal, theme of sexual advance and parry. Courtly literature and decorative art had long indulged this topic, and now, adjusted to a more satirical slant, it entered the iconographical lexicon of the printmakers.

A good number of Israhel's prints including the couples have elaborate banderoles looping around the figures as if ready for inscribing. This is a common feature not only in Israhel's work; it is also the basis for the name by which the Master of the Banderoles is known. Banderoles are also frequent in the drypoints of the Housebook Master, for example in his *Two Nuns*, portraying one nun reading to or instructing a companion who sits attentively listening (fig. 43). It is impossible to imagine that all of these prints with their empty banderoles betray unfinished states, particularly in

the case of Israhel van Meckenem who took inordinate pride in exercising his spikey calligraphy. Rather, it may have been expected that collectors themselves would inscribe these strips with sayings or proverbs, or even with dialogue as we often find engraved on prints of this period or later.⁸³ The banderoles may serve as an invitation to interpret, to provide a witty aphorism for the subject; in this sense they represent an artist's ploy to engage the ingenuity of his client in playing at inventing a subject.⁸⁴ The empty banderole is a device that tells us something important about the early development of "subjectless" art, or genre imagery as it eventually came to be termed.

The happy and frequent combinations of printed images with inscriptions in the north results partly from the practical fact that woodcuts and engravings could so easily accommodate texts. But at a more complex level, the interplay of pictures and texts reflects a clientele that had as yet no sufficient aesthetic rationale for attending to or possessing an image for its own sake. Thus, an important endeavor of printmakers during the last quarter of the century was precisely to find ways of making printed images self-sufficient by providing them with the means for their own interpretation. The difficulty of managing this task without the help of words has much to do with the close association we find between prints and texts in our period, not just in book illustration but in the single-leaf print as well. This was a relationship that evolved over the Renaissance into a particular fondness for allegorical subjects, personifications, emblems, and literary conceits, as well as into more popular expressions such as broadsheets and instructional posters. Many prints were simply meant to be "read" in the manner of an exemplum or an aphorism.

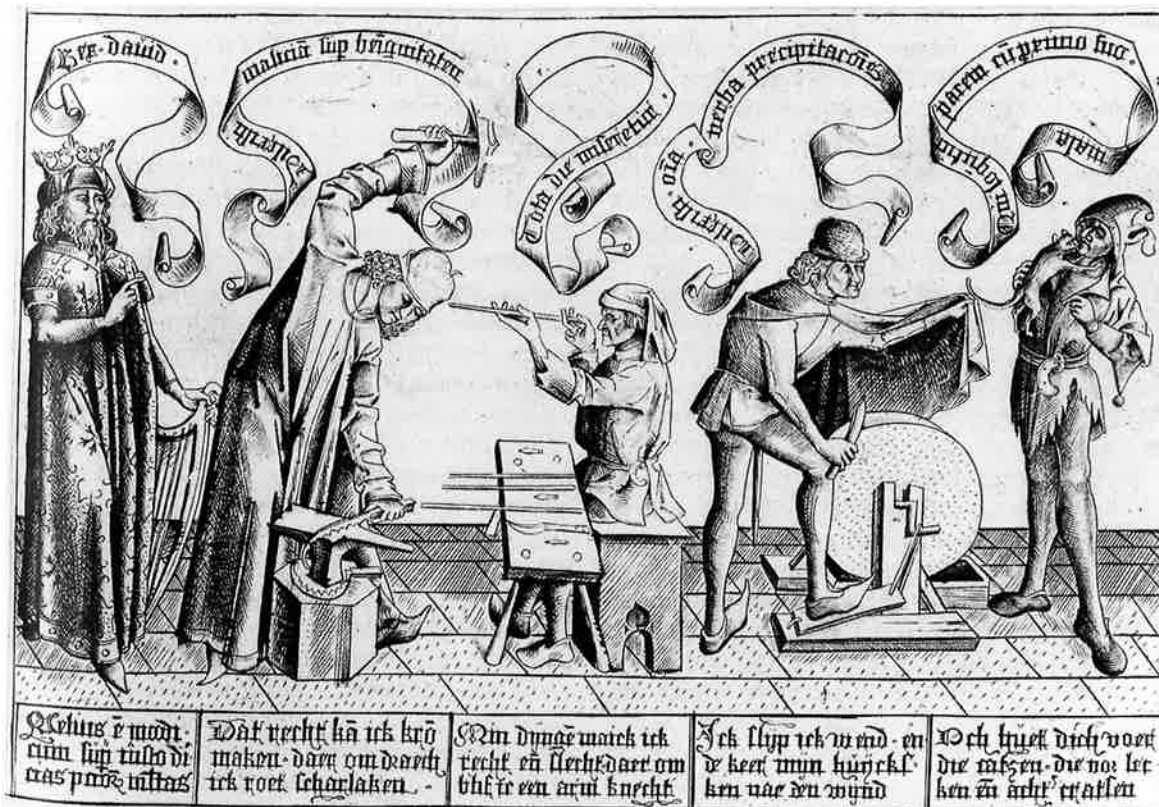
Israhel van Meckenem was more acutely aware of the peculiarities of the print as a marketable commodity than any of his peers or his predecessors. His innovative constructions of secular and narrative subject matter show this very clearly. Furthermore, he experimented in a strikingly original way with figurative imagery. Probably already in the late 1480s, Israhel made a very curious engraving of *King David with Sayings from Psalms* (fig. 44).⁸⁵ The iconography of this print appears to be unprecedented in its joining of popular proverbs with quotations from scripture to orchestrate a sequence of moral admonitions. Standing at the left, King David introduces to us three artisans and a fool. The action of each character is glossed with two passages of text: one from Psalms and the other a popular saying or aphorism. Each of the characters acts out the sense of the aphorism, an arrangement that results in a sort of program for reading figurative imagery in texts and pictures. We begin with the relatively abstract poetry of Psalms, which requires the skill of an exegete to unveil its meaning. These verses are then given

their counterparts in proverbial folk wisdom, which are in turn illustrated by the depictions of craftsmen and the fool who transform what are, in effect, "figures of speech" into action. King David the psalmist announces the opening theme of the print: "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked" (Ps. 37:16). The first figure to his right shows a well-attired man hammering a sickle against an anvil. The banderole above him reads: "Thou lovest evil more than good, and lying rather than to speak righteousness" (Ps. 52:3). And below, the corollary proverb: "What is true I can make crooked; thus I wear red scarlet."

The sequence continues accordingly to the smithy who makes his shafts true, and as a consequence of his honesty practiced in a dishonest world he remains poor. Following him is a knife sharpener who "slips and slides" his way deceitfully through life, and lastly the poor fool who does not recognize the cat that first will lick and then will scratch.⁸⁶ This set of aphorisms cast in three languages, one of them visual, would have found its closest counterpart in the rhetorical techniques of popular preachers such as Johann Geiler von Kaisersberg of Strasbourg, and later on in the more scholarly context of Erasmus's massive corpus of proverbial and aphoristic wisdom, the famous *Adagia*. The condensed formulations of Israhel's print give us a lesson in the allegorical reading of language and image, an essay on the relation of textual and visual metaphor proceeding from the

obscure suggestions of Old Testament verse to the proverbial expressions of the common people. Incorporated into the bargain is a satire on various walks of life extending from the charlatan hammering away in a doctor's gown to the fool in his cap and bells, the favorite moral punching bag of the time. The cleverness of this engraving is surely not the product of a pedestrian and uninventive imagination.

Present here are the seeds of several important tendencies that would develop in the print repertoire as it matured in the hands of subsequent generations. So far no evidence has arisen to suggest that the prints we have been discussing ultimately belong, like so many of Israhel's plates, to the work of another artist. It cannot be entirely coincidental that the most innovative prints issued under his name are not only characteristic of his style but betray no clear connection to his usual sources. Israhel was above all else a printmaker with a canny eye for the market. Seen from this perspective, his inventions are simply another aspect of a well-organized commercial enterprise. They reflect the fact not only that Israhel took whatever he could find, but that if he could not find it, he invented it himself. Not only the variousness of his inventions, but also the clever turns on the conventions of others were meant to cultivate a public that was accustomed to thinking of images as always having something to say for themselves. Israhel was a minor genius when it came to making images that could talk.



44. Israhel van Meckenem, *King David with Sayings from Psalms*. Engraving (Lehrs IX.487), state II, 143 × 208 mm. British Museum, London.

EARLY TRACES OF PRINT COLLECTING

We have followed the expansion of print production over the last quarter of the fifteenth century in northern Europe partly with an eye to inferring changes that must have been taking place in the market. Being small, transportable, and relatively inexpensive to produce, the print by its very nature had a kind of autonomy that needed to forge a context for itself. In order to do this, prints had either to depend upon existing interests or to generate an interest of their own, a simple condition of any market that does not depend upon a bespoke relationship between maker and patron. Prints were an early form of "found object," a medium that required marketing and was thus inherently inclined to induce the phenomenon of collecting.

But is there good evidence of print collecting as such being undertaken in northern Europe already during the late fifteenth century? The one substantial instance of someone known to have assembled prints in large number during these years is Hartmann Schedel, a well-educated town dweller and a professional man who perfectly fits the profile we have outlined for the likely buyer of the finer prints being made at the time. Yet his tastes turn out to have been quite different from what we would expect.

Hartmann Schedel, Nuremberg medical doctor, humanist, and author of the *Weltchronik*, acquired several hundred prints during his lifetime. Some three hundred of these are accounted for since he used them to ornament the books in his library, a substantial part of which can still be identified among the holdings of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich. Pasted into these volumes are large numbers of engravings, metalcuts, and woodcuts, and a smaller number of paste prints, drawings, and hand-painted miniatures. Schedel's varied acquisitions seem to have occupied him over a period of several decades up until his death in 1514.⁸⁷ In many cases the loose sheets were pasted onto the boards at the front and back of his codices. They were also entered into blank pages in the body of the text, and sometimes placed where space was apparently left for them between passages of Schedel's own writings. Many of the prints were hand-colored, most often rather badly and most likely by Schedel himself. Often the relation between the subject of an image and the text it accompanies is indirect if not completely irrelevant, and in other instances the placement appears to have been carefully determined. Sometimes the connection is quite inventive, such as the use of the *Raising of Lazarus* to illustrate a text on the immortality of the soul by Marsilio Ficino. Sometimes it is even whimsical, as for example the use of *Christ Appearing to the Magdalene in the Garden* to ornament a text on medicinal plants.⁸⁸ The way

Schedel displayed his prints suggests an element of personal play and private pleasure that we associate with the collector's mentality, but whether we can properly term his print holdings a collection is less clear. Schedel's acquisition of prints and his arrangement of them lack a degree of system that seems basic to the notion of collecting as we find it manifested, for example, in Schedel's approach to building up and organizing his library. Nevertheless, Schedel's is a case that tells us much about one educated person's attitude to prints, and perhaps also something about the availability of prints as well.

The practice of pasting prints into books must have been very common, since so many prints were made in series as though they were intended to be kept together in this way, perhaps specifically intended as cycles of illustration for certain kinds of books. The most conspicuous example of this practice is the number of Passion cycles that survive among the engravings of the incunabulum period. In addition to Israhel van Meckenem's *Passion* there are several other examples that survive intact or are in some way able to be connected to codices or cycles of prayers.⁸⁹ It was not a large step for someone like Schedel to begin to use prints rather randomly as book illustrations. The association of prints with books was a customary one by 1500 and would have a continuing history among collectors. The development of the print album in the sixteenth century really begins with these more limited enterprises.

From what can be reconstructed of his holdings, Schedel's prints were made almost exclusively in local workshops, if not in Nuremberg itself then mainly in south Germany or along the Rhine, the few Italian prints such as those by Jacopo de' Barbari also no doubt acquired while the artist was working in Nuremberg. This suggests that Schedel did not actively seek prints abroad, but rather bought what was readily available to him in the shops, at the fairs, and on the streets of his home town. The parochial character of Schedel's acquisitions implies that apart from the very few *peintre-graveurs* who had begun to be recognized internationally by 1500, most prints did not achieve a very wide geographical distribution in these early years. Still more remarkable than the regional nature of Schedel's sources is the absence of prints by some of the major figures of the time, most conspicuously work by Schedel's fellow townsman Albrecht Dürer. Only the small woodcut *Passion* and a book illustration by Dürer have been connected with the collection. Conceivably, Schedel had other prints by Dürer that he treated differently, possibly keeping them in portfolios or albums that have since been lost or dismantled.⁹⁰ We cannot eliminate the possibility that his interest in prints abated after 1500, or that the more valuable portions of his holdings were later stripped

away and sold off. However, the equally surprising absence of prints by Martin Schongauer tends to support the conclusion that Schedel was not guided by the standards of artistic quality we know to have been held by some of his more visually cultivated peers. Though Hartmann Schedel was a good scholar, it begins to look as though in the pictorial arts he may simply have had indifferent taste.

Thus we finish our examination of the first phase of Renaissance printmaking in northern Europe on an uncertain note. No doubt some of the printmakers themselves were beginning to recognize the true promise of the new medium, both its technical and its artistic possibilities. By 1500 the range in quality of prints being made was broad, and we can only suppose that the market for them was equally widely distributed. Yet if Hartmann Schedel was not buying engravings by Schongauer and Israhel van Meckenem, who was? And how widely were they being distributed? In his encomium to German printmakers of 1505 previously mentioned, Jacob Wimpfeling boasts that Schongauer's work was already known in Italy, Spain, France, and Britain.⁹¹ Though inevitably there is an element of hyperbole in this claim, Schongauer's influence abroad can be confirmed on other grounds. Nevertheless, it is likely that by 1500 most prints continued to be sold nearby the place they were made. Prints had not yet won a secure position in the artistic hierarchy, and partly as a consequence of this, whatever interest they may have found among collectors and patrons has gone almost entirely unrecorded. There must have been a good many lesser Schedels about, but it would be an exaggeration to think of them as constituting a community of collectors for whom printmakers were conceiving their products. Rather, the acquisition of a print must still have been an occasional thing done for any one of many possible reasons, some of them perhaps quite capricious. One gets a sense of this anarchy in the range of works by the masters we have been discussing, and indeed a sense of all things being possible must also have been evident to them.

❖❖❖ ITALY ❖❖❖

The early development of engraving in Italy took roughly the same formal point of departure as in Germany, but almost immediately Italian engraving betrayed aspirations of a grander order than anything we find along the Rhine until well into the 1470s. Already in the decade before Schongauer's work began to mature, Mantegna had embarked upon engravings of astonishing scale and pictorial ambition. Masters of independently recognized stature turned to engraving earlier in Italy than in the north, and not surprisingly they began much earlier to think of it in various ways as an exten-

sion of painting. Thus, for example, Italian plates were often large, and more importantly their prints incorporated pictorial devices that suggest the intention of displaying them in quite formal ways on the walls of houses and in monastery cells. Italian engravers were quick to pursue the illusionistic potential of the monochrome print, and they repeatedly sought to invest their images with a sense of presence and importance.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TONAL SYSTEM

The key to bringing the print into line with the principles for pictorial representation outlined by Alberti in the 1430s was to develop its capacity for registering tone, and consequently for coherent modeling of three-dimensional form. It was natural that the earliest attempts to produce tone in a print should involve the use of thin, straight, parallel lines. Such a solution had been in use in northern drawings for some time, but was particularly fashionable among artists working in the 1440s, when the first prints were made from metal plates (fig. 3). The Master of the Playing Cards was obviously inspired by contemporary drawings, if not by his own, when he first attacked the surface of a plate with a tool that must have been very close in shape to a silverpoint.

There are advantages and disadvantages in this technique, as printmakers were soon to discover: its main virtue is that the raised metal edges at either side of the grooves — the burr — produce a rich tone filling the white space of the paper between contiguous lines. Most of the surviving impressions of prints by the Master of the Playing Cards have a richness and warmth that had not previously been achieved, or more probably even sought, in drawings of the period. The shortcoming of drypoint is that the fragility of the raised metal edges, and their tendency to be pushed back into the groove, mean that very few impressions can be pulled from a plate before most of its tonal richness is lost. It is doubtful that this in itself was seen at the time as a particularly worrying inadequacy, as there is no evidence that many impressions *were* pulled from a plate. Most of the prints by the Master of the Playing Cards are known in only one or two impressions, all very early and rich, and there are only a couple of his plates known to have been used in a worn state.

Andrea Mantegna, the artist who can best be claimed to have "invented" printmaking in Italy, must certainly have seen a German print, either by the Master of the Playing Cards or by the Master ES.⁹² In Mantegna's first experiments with printmaking, which probably date from the 1460s, we can see the influence of his German predecessors. Throughout his career he sought new means of

167. Voet, *Golden Compasses*, II, pp. 220-21, n. 3. This figure receives support from a second document of 1587, a contract between the architectural draftsman Juan de Herrera and two Italian printers brought to Spain especially to print a set of engraved plates of the Escorial. The contract stipulates 4,000 impressions from each plate. Italian paper was imported for the task. C. Wilkinson Zerner, et al., *Philipp II and the Escorial: Technology and the Representation of Architecture*, exh. cat. (Providence, R.I.: Brown University, 1990), pp. 44-45.
168. Carel van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck* (Haarlem, 1604; repr. New York, 1980), fol. 212v.

Notes to Chapter III

1. S. H. Steinberg, *500 Years of Printing*, 3rd ed. (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1974), p. 158.
2. Lilli Fischel, *Bilderfolgen im frühen Buchdruck: Studien zur Inkunabel-Illustration in Ulm und Strassburg* (Constance and Stuttgart, 1963), p. 13, n. 11.
3. Most recently, Jan Piet Filedt Kok, et al., *Livelier than Life: The Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet, or the Housebook Master, ca. 1470-1500*, exh. cat. (Amsterdam, 1985), pp. 19-21, 281-84, with further bibliography.
4. There is no better survey of this field than Arthur M. Hind's *An Introduction to a History of Woodcut* (New York, 1935; repr. London and New York, 1963), where pp. 396-558 of the second volume are devoted to Italian fifteenth-century book illustration.
5. Most recently on the fate of this project, see Peter Dreyer, "Botticelli's Series of Engravings 'of 1481'," *Print Quarterly* 1 (1984), pp. 111-15. There are earlier cases of the use of engravings in a printed book, one by the same publisher as the Botticelli prints: Antonio Bettini da Siena, *Monte Santo di Dio* (Florence: Niccolò di Lorenzo, 1477), including three engravings printed directly on the book paper. Arthur M. Hind, *Early Italian Engraving* (London, 1938-48), vol. I, pp. 97-98. Another case is that of the *Summula de pacifica conscientia* (Milan: Filippus de Lavagnia, 1479), for which see Hind, *History of Woodcut*, II, p. 521. The earliest instance is an engraved map; see Hind, *History of Woodcut*, II, p. 528.
6. *Le cinquième centenaire de l'imprimerie dans les anciens Pays-Bas*, exh. cat. (Brussels: Bibliothèque Royale, 1973), pp. 219-22, cat. no. 102, gives a detailed account of the various extant states of the edition, reflecting the difficulties the printer faced in attempting to integrate intaglio and letterpress.
7. Paul Kristeller, *Early Florentine Woodcuts* (London, 1897; repr. London, 1968), p. ii.
8. Prince d'Essling, *Le livres à figures vénitiens* (Paris and Florence, 1907-14), vol. III, pp. 53-55.
9. For a similar practice in Rome and in Naples, see Hind, *History of Woodcut*, II, pp. 398 and 410, respectively.
10. D'Essling, *Les livres à figures*, p. 53. Moreover, not all copies of the same edition of a book contain either the same woodcut illustrations, the same number of them, or the same combinations.
11. See Paul Kristeller, "La xilografia veneziana," *Archivio Storico dell'Arte* 5 (1892), pp. 95-114.
12. In the 1486 edition of *Supplementum Chronicarum*, printed by Bernardino Benalio; see Hind, *History of Woodcut*, II, p. 456.
13. We know, for instance, that Erhard Ratdolt took his stock of initials to Augsburg when he moved back there. See Hind, *History of Woodcut*, II, p. 460.
14. Kristeller, "La xilografia veneziana". In these cases he was also able to ascertain that the cuts were not casts of each other, another common practice, for which, see Hind, *History of Woodcut*, II, pp. 413, 521.
15. Hind, *History of Woodcut*, II, pp. 410-12.
16. Kristeller, "La xilografia veneziana." Giancarlo Schizzerotto, *Le incisioni quattrocentesche della Classense* (Ravenna, 1971), pp. 114-20, has convincingly ascribed one woodcut to Lorenzo.
17. We know, for instance, of a Bernardus, "painter of Augsburg," who was a partner of Ratdolt's, and whose name appears on a number of books, often before that of the publisher himself. Hind, *History of Woodcut*, II, pp. 458-60.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 464-66.
19. It is interesting to note that it was always the cutters, rather than the designers, who signed the blocks — the monograms most often found are those of the Masters "b," "N," and "ia." This was a custom that would be followed thereafter in many similar situations, both in woodcut and in engraving. It was also the practice in Florence; see Kristeller, *Early Florentine Woodcuts*, p. xxxviii.
20. Hind, *History of Woodcut*, II, pp. 483, 485, 494. Hind suggests that parallel hatching came to Venice through Florentine book illustration; see, however, Kristeller, *Early Florentine Woodcuts*, p. xl, and our discussion here of this issue in relation to engravings and drawings on pp. 66-68.
21. Kristeller, *Early Florentine Woodcuts*, *passim*.
22. Hind, *History of Woodcut*, II, p. 538.
23. Kristeller, *Early Florentine Woodcuts*, p. xi; see also Hind, *History of Woodcut*, II, p. 531.
24. Hind, *History of Woodcut*, pp. 533-36. But see, for an opposite view, Kristeller, *Early Florentine Woodcuts*, pp. xxiv-xxv.
25. Hind, *History of Woodcut*, II, p. 529; and Kristeller, *Early Florentine Woodcuts*, p. xxii. For a recent discussion of the subject, see *Le temps revient: Il tempo si rinnova: feste e spettacoli nella Firenze di Lorenzo il Magnifico*, exh. cat. (Florence, 1992), *passim*.
26. Stephan Fridolin, *Der Schatzbehälter: Ein Andachts- und Erbauungsbuch aus dem Jahre 1491*, facsimile with text and commentary by Richard Bellm (Wiesbaden, 1962).
27. Adrian Wilson, *The Making of the Nuremberg World Chronicle* (Amsterdam, 1976), pp. 66-67.
28. Elizabeth Rücker, *Hartmann Schedels Weltchronik* (Munich, 1988), pp. 232-35, transcribes the documents.
29. There were at least two archetypes made for the printing, a layout for the illustrations with pen sketches giving a rough approximation of each subject and its placement on the page, and a second layout with only a summary indication of each illustration and the text written in where the letterpress was to be placed. Peter Zahn, "Neue Funde zur Entstehung der Schedelschen Weltchronik, 1493," *Renaissance Vorträge. Stadt Nürnberg Museen* 2/3 (1973), pp. 1-46.
30. For an interesting discussion of authors, printers and subsistence, though with several misleading conclusions about printmakers, see William A. Coupe, "'Poets' and Patrons: Some Notes on Making Ends Meet in Sixteenth-Century Germany," *German Life and Letters* 36 (1983), pp. 183-97.
31. Danhauser was a jurist by training and a close friend of Konrad Celtis whom he later followed to Vienna. Danhauser eventually became Professor of Jurisprudence there in 1512. The Danhauser contracts have been cited frequently in the literature on prints. For transcriptions, see Bernhard Hartmann, "Konrad Celtis in Nürnberg" *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg* 8 (1889), pp. 61-62; and more recently Elisabeth Caesar, "Sebald Schreyer: Ein Lebensbild aus dem vorreformatorischen Nürnberg," *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg* 56 (1969), p. 55.
32. For the value of the *gulden*, see Appendix. The contract reads 192 drawings for 8 *gulden* 2 *pfund*, and 5 drawings for 1 *pfund* 20 *denar* (nearly the same amount per image); and then 20 very cheap drawings for 1 *pfund* 2 *denar* (only 1.6 *d* compared to 10 and 11 *d* for the other 197). Note that these figures add up to 8 *g* 4 *pf* 22 *d*, which does not tally with the sum of 9 *g* 3 *pf* 4 *d* given in the contract. We have no explanation for this discrepancy. A cost of 2 *fl* 1 *pf* 20 *d* for two reams of paper for the designs is also recorded.
33. The 37 *gulden* figure of course takes account of the increase in the

- number of designs. There were 233 large and 83 small drawings put on the blocks, the small ones half the size judging from the next entry, for a total of 37 g 1 p 16 d, about 34 d for the large blocks and 17 d for the small ones. It is worth noting in this context that a drawing of an *Annunciation* by Dürer is inscribed apparently in his hand "vmb ein pfund." Hans Rupprich, ed., *Dürer: Schriftlicher Nachlass* (Berlin, 1956-59), vol. I, p. 206.
34. Item von den figuren in die hulzen prettlein zu schneiden zalt Sebolt Gallensdorfer, nemlich von 233 grossen, ie von einem 4 pf 15 d, und 83 kleinen, je von zweien 4 pf 15 d, tut 1235 pf 8 d, facit an geld, den gulden zu 8 pf 10 d gerechnet, 148 fl. 1 pf 28 d.
 35. There are a number of single woodcuts which have been connected with this apparently aborted project. Valerian von Loga, "Beiträge zum Holzschnittwerk Michel Wolgemuts," *Jahrbuch der königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 16 (1895), pp. 236-39, proposes 25 sheets in Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett; 13 in Vienna, Hofbibliothek; and one in a private collection in Hannover which he supposes may have been intended for it. Most of these compositions are woodcut copies of Italian engravings including a series of the *Triumphs of Petrarch* that provide a *terminus post quem* of 1492, right for the Danhauser project. Von Loga provides only circumstantial evidence to support his hypothesis that these were intended for the *Archetypus* — their probable origin in the Wolgemut workshop, their date, and the classical and Petrarchan themes. Von Loga notes that known impressions are probably late, seventeenth to eighteenth century. Most recently a monumental, two-block woodcut showing a schematic stemma of the Roman emperors from the foundation of the empire to Theodosius has been attributed to the Danhauser project (Wilson, *Nuremberg World Chronicle*, p. 242), yet this proposal is made without any explanation or argument for the connection. There is an impression of this woodcut now in Berlin (Kupferstichkabinett, German School, inv. 477-112), not specifically cited by von Loga, and there especially seems no reason to assume any connection, particularly as the woodcut (565 × 440 mm) is much too large for a book illustration. Although reference to these various woodcuts as part of the original Danhauser project persists in the scholarly literature, we see no firm grounds for accepting the connection.
 36. For example, Francesco Petrararch's *Von der Artzney bayder Glück* with an extensive program of illustrations designed specially for the text took over ten years to appear from the Augsburg press. The text was translated from the Latin: *De remediis utriusque fortunae*. The most recent discussion of this remarkable cycle of illustrations is: Hans-Joachim Raupp, "Die Illustrationen zu Francesco Petrarca, 'Von der Artzney bayder Glueck des guten und widerwertigen' (Augsburg 1532)," *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 45 (1984), pp. 61-62, for details of its production. A still more conspicuous case of retarded publication was the woodcut projects of Maximilian I (see Chapter V).
 37. Rücker, *Welchronik*, p. 124. Already within a couple of years Johannes Schönsperger of Augsburg published a pirate edition in smaller format.
 38. The woodcut survives in three states and was reprinted in the nineteenth century. It is assembled from six blocks to a full dimension of 1340 × 2820 mm. See the important study of Jacopo de' Barbari by Jay Alan Levenson, "Jacopo de' Barbari and the Northern Art of the Early Sixteenth Century" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1978). The most extensive discussion of the print is Juergen Schulz, "Jacopo de' Barbari's *View of Venice*: Map Making, City Views, and Moralized Geography Before the Year 1500," *Art Bulletin* 60 (1978), pp. 425-74. For further bibliography, see Terisio Pignatti, "La pianta di Venezia di Jacopo de' Barbari," *Bollettino dei Musei Civici Veneziani* 9, 1-2 (1964), pp. 48-49. A total of twelve sets of impressions from the first state survive, five of these in Venice. A list of eleven with minimal descriptions is given in Pignatti, pp. 40-41. Schulz, p. 474, restores an additional copy (Berlin, Staatliche Museen) which Pignatti believed to have been destroyed.
 39. Among Koberger's records of accounts with foreign agents we find reference to "Anthoni Kolb 34 Exemplare, abzüglich 51 Dukaten 18 Pf. 16 H." (1499).
 40. Terisio Pignatti, "The Relationship between German and Venetian Painting in the Late Quattrocento and Early Cinquecento," in *Renaissance Venice*, ed. John Hale (London, 1973), pp. 250-54.
 41. For the documents bearing on Jacopo's early career, see Luigi Servolini, *Jacopo de' Barbari* (Padua, 1944), pp. 45-76. A summary and interpretation of the documents relevant to Jacopo and Albrecht Dürer is given in Hind, *Early Italian Engravings*, V, pp. 142-43.
 42. The full text of the document (which survives only in an abstracted copy) is given by Schulz, "Jacopo de' Barbari's *View*," p. 473.
 43. Rudolf Hirsch, *Printing, Selling and Reading, 1450-1550* (Wiesbaden, 1967), ch. 6. This is the earliest record we know of. In 1502 Aldus Manutius was given an exclusive patent for his Greek type. The history of printers' protections in Venice is given in more detail by Leonardas Vytautas Gerulaitis, *Printing and Publishing in Fifteenth-Century Venice* (Chicago and London, 1976), ch. 3. This subject is taken up on pp. 299-302.
 44. Paul Kristeller, *L'œuvre de Jacopo de' Barbari* (Berlin, 1896), pp. 3-4. This conclusion is repeated in the catalogue by Horst Appuhn and Christian von Heusinger, *Riesenholschnitte und Papiertapeten der Renaissance* (Unterschneidheim, 1976), p. 45.
 45. For a full discussion of Kolb's paper, see Chapter II.
 46. For a condensed summary of the prices for Aldus's books, see Harry George Fletcher III, *New Aldine Studies: Documentary Essays on the Life and Work of Aldus Manutius* (San Francisco, 1988), pp. 90-91. It has been noted elsewhere that the prices listed in Aldus's catalogues are probably not normal retail prices. Most often they are lower. These lists may have been directed to dealers rather than collectors and therefore indicate wholesale prices. See Gerulaitis, *Printing in Venice*, p. 9.
 47. Cited by Fletcher, *Aldus Manutius*, p. 90.
 48. It has also been proposed that one of the four winds is a self-portrait. Pignatti, "La pianta," pp. 11, 15.
 49. Holm Bevers, *Meister E.S. Ein Oberrheinischer Kupferstecher der Spätgotik*, exh. cat. (Munich: Staatliche Graphische Sammlung; and Berlin: Kupferstichkabinett, 1987), pp. 64-66, cat. no. 72.
 50. Lilli Fischel, "Le Maître E.S. et ses sources Strasbourgeoises," *Archives Alsaciennes d'Histoire de l'Art* 14 (1935), pp. 187-89, arguing the relation of the Master ES to Hans Hirtz, the Master of the Karlsruhe Passion. In response, see Bevers, *Meister E.S.*, p. 65.
 51. Fritz Koreny, *Spielkarten, ihre Kunst und Geschichte in Mitteleuropa*, exh. cat. (Vienna: Albertina, 1974), pp. 227-28, cat. no. 172. The bowman's popularity continued at least another two centuries. E.g., an engraving after Jacques de Gheyn II (Holl. 108).
 52. Fischel, "Le Maître E.S.," pp. 185-229; and Lilli Fischel, "Werk und Name des 'Meisters von 1445,'" *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 13 (1950), pp. 108-12. Qualifying this view, see Bevers, *Meister E.S.*, pp. 65, 79.
 53. Fritz Koreny, "Über die Anfänge der Reproduktionsgraphik nördlich der Alpen" (Doctoral diss., University of Vienna, 1968), *passim*. See especially the conclusions on pp. 70-79, 150-52. The case here is built mainly upon the engravings of the Master of the Banderoles and Israhel van Meckenem, whom we shall discuss later. See pp. 10-16 on the distinction between various types of dependency — copy, reproduction, engraving "after" (*Nachstich*), replica, forgery, etc.
 54. See Koreny's review of Bevers, *Meister E.S.*, in *Print Quarterly* 4 (1987), pp. 304-08, for illustrations.
 55. Bevers, *Meister E.S.*, *passim*, in general takes this view of the Master ES. He does, however, regard certain works as very much closer to reproductive prints than seems plausible. Bevers's opinion is cogently challenged by Koreny (review, *Print Quarterly*, pp. 304-08), who regards the Master ES as more independent than his contemporaries and not properly classified as a reproductive

- engraver. For example, in his relation to the Master of the Karlsruhe Passion — first analyzed by Fischel and again by Bevers — Koreny sees the Master ES as working within a trend and “not reinterpreting consciously selected prototypes.” It should be clear that we fully agree with the latter opinion.
56. See Bevers, *Meister E.S.*, cat. nos. 30–32, pp. 43–46.
 57. Horst Appuhn, *Meister E.S. — Alle 320 Kupferstiche* (Dortmund, 1989), pp. 373–77, points to several possible readings for the E and ES monograms as a reference to the establishment or some devotional formula issued by it. None of these is entirely convincing, and in the absence of identifiable abbreviations one is further compelled to question the adequacy of this explanation. See also *St. Philip and St. James the Minor* (Lehrs II.96), an example in which the date appears to have been awkwardly fitted around elements in the print. For the most part the subjects portrayed in signed and dated prints are arguably suited to the monastery's interests. However, see the exception taken by Fedja Anzelewsky, “Le Maître des Cartes à Jouer, le Maître E.S. et les débuts de la gravure sur cuivre,” in *Le beau Martin: Gravures et dessins de Martin Schongauer*, exh. cat. (Colmar, 1991), p. 118.
 58. Impressions (British Museum, London) exhibiting this feature are: Dated 1466: Lehrs. II.149 (St. I). Dated 1467: Lehrs II.61, 76, 96, 150.
 59. See Koreny, “Reproduktionsgraphik,” pp. 80–88.
 60. Alan Shestack, *Fifteenth Century Engravings of Northern Europe from the National Gallery of Art*, exh. cat. (Washington, D.C., 1967), see entries on these masters.
 61. Bevers, *Meister E.S.*, p. 7.
 62. “Dise figur ist meiner jugent vor das beste kunststück geacht worden das im theutschen land is aus gangen, deshalben ich es auch in meine bibel han geleimt nit von wegen der hystorien, sie kan war vnd auch nit sein. Aber do der Dürer von nürnberg seine kunst liess auss geen, do galt dise nit mer welche auch alle kunststhdcker vberthrift. Diser Kunststhdcker hat der Hübsch martin geheissen von wegen seiner kunst.” On the contents of the *Plock Bible* (Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett), see Werner Timm, “Die Einklebungen der Lutherbibel mit den Grünewaldzeichnungen,” in *Forschungen und Berichte: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin* (Berlin, 1957), pp. 105–21. Timm transcribes the text of Plock's remark on p. 118.
 63. It is telling that the largest sixteenth-century print collection we know of, that of Ferdinand of Tyrol begun not too long after Plock must have written this comment, includes not one single work by Schongauer (Peter W. Parshall, “The Print Collection of Ferdinand, Archduke of Tyrol,” *JKSW* 78 (1982), p. 182), though it does include a rare work by a close imitator shortly to be discussed, the Master PM.
 64. The chronology of Schongauer's work is difficult to plot precisely because of the absence of dated works. However, the main outlines of his development are generally agreed upon. See the detailed study by Eduard Flechzig, *Martin Schongauer* (Strasbourg, 1951), pp. 188–249; and the concordance of opinions on chronology in *Le beau Martin*, pp. 242–45.
 65. Lehrs, VI, includes most of the Schongauer followers.
 66. Lehrs, VI, pp. 180–81.
 67. Koreny, “Reproduktionsgraphik,” p. 70, note 1.
 68. Lehrs, VI, pp. 178–280.
 69. Lehrs, VI, pp. 281–90, suggests Master PM was active in the lower Rhine region, perhaps in Cologne.
 70. Max Lehrs, “Der Meister PM,” *Jahrbuch der königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 19 (1898), pp. 135–38. Max Geisberg, *Geschichte der deutschen Graphik vor Dürer* (Berlin, 1939), pp. 195–96, dismisses the idea that these are preparatory studies for a *Fall of Man*. Two impressions are recorded by Lehrs (VI, p. 285), both of high quality (S. Spencer Churchill collection, Northwick Park, now in the British Museum; and Paris, Dutuit collection).
 71. For a summary of what is known about Israhel's career with further bibliography, see Shestack, *Fifteenth-Century Engravings*. More recently, see *Israhel van Meckenem und der deutsche Kupferstich des 15. Jahrhunderts*, with several articles appearing as a special issue of: *Monatsschrift Unser Bocholt* 3/4 (1972). Fritz Koreny, *Hollstein's German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts, 1400–1700* (Blaricum, 1986), vol. XXIV; and Adam Bartsch, *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. IX, compiled by Fritz Koreny (the commentary volume forthcoming).
 72. Jacob Wimpfeling, *Epithoma Germanorum iacobi wympfelingii* (Strasbourg: Johannes Prüss, 1505), ch. 68: “Icones Israhelis Alemani p[er] uniuersam Europa[m] desiderant habenturq[ue] a pictoribus in summo p[re]i[c]t[i]o.” Confirmation of Israhel's date of death is given by a drawn copy of his (now lost) mortuary tablet. See Antony Griffiths, “The Rogers Collection in the Cottonian Library, Plymouth,” *Print Quarterly* 10 (1993), pp. 19–36.
 73. We are indebted to Lynette M. F. Bosch's work on Spanish manuscript illumination and its dependence on prints for information about Israhel's influence in those parts.
 74. Koreny, “Reproduktionsgraphik,” pp. 112–42; and Fritz Koreny, “Aux origines de la gravure sur cuivre allemande: reproductions, cartes à jouer, livres de modèles,” *Nouvelles de l'estampe* nos. 64–65 (July–October 1982), pp. 9–10. *Hans Holbein der Ältere und die Kunst der Spätgotik*, exh. cat. (Augsburg: Rathaus, 1965), pp. 162–68, cat. nos. 193–204. The engravings are closely related to scenes in Holbein's *Weingartner Altar* of 1493 (Augsburg, Dom).
 75. Shestack, *Fifteenth-Century Engravings*, nos. 214–15.
 76. Carlo Bertelli, “The ‘Image of Pity’ in Santa Croce in Gerusalemme,” in *Essays in the History of Art Presented to Rudolf Wittkower*, ed. Douglas Fraser, et al. (London, 1967), pp. 40–55, gives the fullest history of the icon. Scholars have always given priority to the larger of the two engravings of the icon which also mentions Santa Croce in the inscription. However, the smaller of them (Lehrs IX.167) is in fact a closer copy of the actual icon. On Israhel's engravings and their reproductive function, see Peter Parshall, “*Imago contrafacta*: Images and Facts in the Northern Renaissance,” forthcoming in *Art History* 16 (1993).
 77. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, Cim. 30/286, 8°, 17 paper folios with a handwritten text in Latin.
 78. The Master ES's series (Lehrs II.100–11), was loosely copied by Israhel (Lehrs IX.237–47), and copied in reverse by the Master of the Banderoles (Lehrs IV.49–54).
 79. There are other similar cases. The connection between these particular saints (including one Evangelist) is obscure, save that Theophista was the wife of Eustace. The signature is placed between these two as though they were meant as a pair and the others meant to be cut apart. See also Lehrs IX.305, 306, 450.
 80. Anni Warburg, *Israhel van Meckenem* (Bonn, 1930), pp. 24–29; and Henry Meier, “Some Israhel van Meckenem Problems,” *Print Collector's Quarterly* 27 (1940), pp. 41–46. A depiction of the siege also occurs in the *Housebook*. See Filedt Kok, et al., *Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet*, pp. 218–19, cat. no. 117.
 81. Meier, “Some Israhel van Meckenem Problems,” pp. 28–31.
 82. The laced bodice of Salome's costume is close to that of the lady shown in the midst of a jaunty turn just to the right of the musicians' platform, but the band of her headdress is folded up and she wears an elaborate necklace. On the question of the inverted composition and its narrative implication in prints and other works of art in the Renaissance, see Peter W. Parshall, “Lucas van Leyden's Narrative Style,” *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 29 (1978), pp. 213–31, *passim*.
 83. Devotional images also often carry blank banderoles. One wonders, for example, about Israhel's engraving of the *Virgin and Child with St. Andrew and the Marriage of St. Catherine* [Lehrs IX.214] set in a small gothic chapel. St. Andrew intercedes for a male suppliant. A banderole stretches from his hands through those of his patron to the Virgin. Was it intended for the names of individual purchasers of the print? Dürer's drawing of the *Angels' Mass* (Rennes, Musée) includes a blank panel in which the artist himself apparently has inscribed “Do schreibt hrein was jr wollt” (You

- can write here what you will). Erwin Panofsky, *Albrecht Dürer* (Princeton, 1948), vol. II, p. 92, no. 891.
84. This purpose for the empty banderole is suggested by Adolf Spamer, *Das kleine Andachtsbild vom XIV. bis zum XX. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1930), p. 47. For a complex argument suggesting ways in which a fifteenth-century Italian might have sought to create a text out of an image, see Patricia Emison, "The Word Made Naked in Pollaiuolo's *Battle of the Nudes*," *Art History* 13 (1990), pp. 261-75.
85. Given that its style reflects the influence of the Master ES, a date in the 1470s was proposed by Max Geisberg, *Der Meister der Berliner Passion und Israhel van Meckenem* (Strasbourg, 1903), p. 110. Geisberg suggests that the unsigned print, though unmistakably done in Israhel's hand, reflects a lost original, perhaps by the Master ES. See Lehrs IX.487, citing the opinion of Geisberg (with which he disagrees). This possibility cannot be excluded; however, nothing in the Master ES's repertoire substantiates it, and furthermore the costumes of the contemporary characters (specifically the co-existence of pointed and round-toed shoes and several other details reflecting the archly fashion-conscious climate of the time) very strongly suggests a date in the late 1480s. We would like to thank Anne H. van Buren for her conclusions about the costumes (personal communication).
86. The texts are transcribed and the Psalms identified by Max Geisberg, *Verzeichnis der Kupferstiche Israhels van Meckenem* (Strasbourg, 1905), p. 182, no. 384. The remaining passages from Psalms are 37:26; 52:4; 28:3.
87. On the constitution of Schedel's collection, see Béatrice Hernad, *Die Graphiksammlung des Humanisten Hartmann Schedel*, exh. cat. (Munich, 1990).
88. *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.
89. For a discussion of this subject and additional and more modest examples, see Richard S. Field, "A Passion for the Art Institute," *Print Quarterly* 3 (1986), pp. 191-216.
90. Hernad, *Hartmann Schedel*, p. 53, has looked unsuccessfully for traces of a separate collection.
91. Wimpfeling, *Epithoma*, ch. 68.
92. See Francis Ames-Lewis, "A Northern Source for Mantegna's *Adoration of the Shepherds*," *Print Quarterly* 9 (1992), pp. 268-71.
93. See *Andrea Mantegna*, exh. cat. (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1992), *passim*.
94. For the most recent survey on these workshops, see Jay A. Levenson, Konrad Oberhuber and Jacquelyn L. Sheehan, *Early Italian Engravings from the National Gallery of Art*, exh. cat. (Washington, D.C., 1973), pp. 1-9, 13-21. For the Master of the Vienna Passion, see Mark J. Zucker, "The Madonna of Loreto: A Newly Discovered Work by the Master of the Vienna Passion," *Print Quarterly* 6 (1989), pp. 149-60.
95. Levenson, et al., *Early Italian Engravings*, p. xvii.
96. To our knowledge, there are no drawings from that school that employ parallel hatching before ca. 1475. See Annamaria Petrioli Tofani, *Il disegno fiorentino del tempo di Lorenzo il Magnifico*, exh. cat. (Florence: Uffizi, 1992). Parallel hatching appears first in Pollaiuolo's drawings of the mid-1470s, such as the sheet with *Three Nudes* in the Louvre (cat. no. 9.1) or the study for a *St. John the Baptist* in the Uffizi (cat. no. 6.4), and, slightly later, in Ghirlandaio's works, such as the *Portrait of a Woman* from Chatsworth (cat. no. 4.6). Some of Leonardo's silverpoint drawings, in which he made use of parallel hatching, have been dated to the late 1470s and early 1480s: see J. Levenson, ed., *Circa 1492*, exh. cat. (Washington D.C., 1991), pp. 272-73, cat. nos. 171-71a.
97. See U. Dorini, *Statuti per l'Arte di Por Santa Maria del tempo della Repubblica* (Florence, 1934), pp. 400-01.
98. See Maria Grazia Ciardi Duprè, *L'oreficeria nella Firenze del Quattrocento*, exh. cat. (Florence, 1977), p. 208.
99. See pp. 106-07.
100. *Virgin and Child*, Vienna; *Sea Gods*, Chatsworth.
101. See Levenson, et al., *Early Italian Engravings*, pp. 81-157; also Laure Beaumont-Maillet, Gisèle Lambert and François Trojani, *Suite d'estampes de la Renaissance italienne dite Tarots de Mantegna* (Paris, 1986), with further literature, and the review by Kristen Lippincott, "'Mantegna's Tarocchi,'" *Print Quarterly* 3 (1986), pp. 357-60. For a recent survey on the subject of the *Tarocchi*, see the entry by Marzia Faietti in Alessandra Mottola Molino and Mauro Natale, *Le Muse e il Principe*, exh. cat. (Modena, 1991), pp. 431-37.
102. See Sidney Colvin, *A Florentine Picture-Chronicle* (London, 1898), pp. 34-36. See also John Goldsmith Phillips, *Early Florentine Designers and Engravers* (Cambridge, Mass., 1955), *passim*.
103. "Francesco Rosselli," in Levenson, et al., *Early Italian Engravings*, pp. 47-59.
104. Hind, *Early Italian Engraving*, I, App. I, p. 307, inv. nos. 37, 39.
105. Our chronology, in accordance with received wisdom, presupposes that the first state of this series was engraved before Francesco left for Hungary. Madeline Cirillo Archer has recently suggested that this form of Rosary was not introduced to Florence before 1481 or even the mid-1480s, though this obviously clashes with all the stylistic and technical evidence; see her article "The Dating of a Florentine *Life of the Virgin and Christ*," *Print Quarterly* 5 (1988), pp. 395-402. More research is needed on the subject.
106. Louise Richards, "Antonio Pollaiuolo: *Battle of the Naked Men*," *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 55 (1968), pp. 63-70. On the other hand, we know that Mantegna used the same batch of paper for printing his plates (and for two drawings) over a number of years. See *Andrea Mantegna*, pp. 199, 473.
107. See L. A. Armstrong, "Copies of Pollaiuolo's *Battling Nudes*," *Art Quarterly* 31 (1968), pp. 155-67. Laurie Fusco has recently suggested that the *Battle's* date may have to be moved to the late 1480s, but her arguments, based on the dependence on a statue excavated in Rome in 1488, are not at all convincing. See Laurie Fusco, "Pollaiuolo's *Battle of Nudes*: A Suggestion for an Ancient Source and a New Dating," in Mauro Natale, ed., *Scritti di Storia dell'Arte in onore di Federico Zeri* (Milan, 1984), pp. 196-99.
108. Alan Shestack, *Master E.S.: Five Hundredth Anniversary Exhibition*, exh. cat. (Philadelphia, 1967), no. 66, agrees with the generally held view that this was printed as a white line engraving by inking the surface of the plate as if it were a woodblock. According to Nicholas Stogdon, all known impressions have in fact been printed with white ink onto paper prepared with black pigment brushed on its surface; see N. G. Stogdon, *German and Netherlandish Woodcuts*, sale cat. (Berlin and London, 1991-92), no. 17. For two examples of white line woodcuts, see the 1491 edict printed by Mathias van der Goes in Antwerp (see *Le cinquième centenaire*, p. 373, no. 169, pls. 87-88), and the *Virgin in Glory Crowned by Two Angels*, Augsburg 1502 (Schreiber 2869; see Campbell Dodgson, *Catalogue of Early German and Flemish Woodcuts Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum* (London, 1911), vol. II, p. 202).
109. As has recently been made clear by Oberhuber and Faietti who reconstructed the body of his drawn oeuvre: see M. Faietti and K. Oberhuber, *Bologna e l'Umanesimo, 1490-1510*, exh. cat. (Bologna, 1988).
110. An impression of Mantegna's *Bacchanal with Wine Vat* in Caen is said to be on colored paper but has not been seen by the authors. See *Exposition des gravures italiennes des XVe et XVIe siècles*, exh. cat. (Caen, 1976), cat. no. 30.
111. An incomplete burning of the char or a reaction between paper and ink can produce such effect. See Chapter II, p. 21.
112. The same explanation applies to the contemporary but very distant workshop of the so-called Master of the Dutuit Mount of Olives, whose small engravings are often printed in similar variations of brown.
113. For examples of impressions in red, see Mantegna's *Flagellation* in the Berlin Kupferstichkabinett and Giovanni Antonio da Brescia's