SALVATION THROUGH SUFFERING:
IMAGINATIVE PILGRIMAGE IN SCHONGAUER’S
CHRIST CARRYING THE CROSS

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by

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Martin Schongauer’s most ambitious engraving, *Christ Carrying the Cross* (ca. 1480) (fig 1), displays a complex composition that surpasses the typically small scale, intimate medium of printmaking to resemble panel painting in its scope. The significance of its size (11 3/8 x 16 7/8 in.) and complexity has been largely ignored by modern scholars. Most surviving prints of the mid to late fifteenth-century were small, simple, and meant primarily to accompany text in manuscripts. Other prints receiving widespread circulation consisted of pilgrimage prints sold at local pilgrimage shrines or as in the case of some engravings, impressions of a goldsmith’s designs. Some are devotional in nature, but none are on the scale of Schongauer’s print of 1480. This thesis explores the idea that *Christ Carrying the Cross* was among the first of its kind as a private devotional image, similar to a *Simultanbild*, or illustrated narrative with simultaneous images, as a means to meditate on the scenes of Christ’s Passion.¹ I will argue that Schongauer’s *Christ Carrying the Cross* is in fact an *Austauschbild*, a term that I have created to describe Schongauer’s use of single images which can be simultaneously exchanged or commuted to have multiple meanings within one work.² The notion of commutation is repeated in the overall meaning of Schongauer’s print in that it represents a pilgrimage to Rome and to the Holy Land simultaneously.


² *Austausch* is translated; reciprocate, exchange, swap, or commute.
Little is known about Schongauer’s life. His technique of line engraving remained virtually unsurpassed in the late fifteenth century. He lived and worked in a time of rapidly developing technology, which saw the publication of printed books and the increasingly widespread distribution of prints. Schongauer was born between 1445 and 1450, and died in 1491. Schongauer died young, and much of his work has been lost or destroyed. Charles I. Minnott calls Schongauer the “German Raphael” and laments on his untimely death, “Speculation on what could have happened is useless.”³ Left to our imagination are the works he could have completed had he lived into the sixteenth century. Aside from 116 engraved prints and a few surviving painted works, all the remains of Schongauer’s oeuvre are eloquent descriptions. Gebhard Klein speaks of a double wing, now lost, of “deliciously beautiful panels” in eight fields painted in 1490 for the choir of St. Martin in Biberach, approximately 131 miles (211 km) east of Breisach, Germany.⁴

In spite of his innovations, Martin Schongauer was a product of his time. His works have a characteristic late Gothic sweetness in an era when individuals sought for the presence of God in art. There is no reason to believe that he ever engaged in any aspect of Humanist theory.⁵ His influential prints immediately preceded an era when artists such as Albrecht Dürer were venerated and collected largely because of their talent and name recognition. It is ironic that Schongauer died without ever having known of Dürer’s admiration for his work. Scholars have

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³ Charles I. Minnott, “Narrative in the Art of Martin Schongauer,” in *le beau Martin: Etudes et Muses au Point: Actes du Colloque* (Colmar: Unterlinden Museum, 1991), 97. There has been much debate as to Schongauer’s actual birth year. He was deceased by the time Albrecht Dürer arrived to meet him in 1491.

⁴ Gebhard Klein, *Martin Schongauer und das „Jüngste Gericht im Brisacher St. Stephansmünster* (Breisach: Münsterbauvereins e. V., 2006-7), 10-11. This altarpiece has since been attributed to Martin Schongauer’s brother, Ludwig.

⁵ Ibid.
made exhaustive efforts to establish a comprehensive biography for Martin Schongauer. A portrait in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich identifies the sitter as Martin Schongauer and bears an inscription that can neither be verified nor refuted with any degree of certainty (fig 2). The *Virgin in a Rose Arbor* (1473) (fig. 3), his only dated painting, stands in the former Dominican church in Colmar, raising questions about his ties to the Dominican order. Art historians have engaged in a circuitous, if not obsessive, pursuit of an acceptable Schongauer timeline.

According to Keith Moxey, little attention has been given to the reception of Schongauer’s works.⁶ Scholars have focused on trying to fill the obvious gaps in his history, such as why he matriculated at Leipzig for only one year, and where, or if, he participated in a *Wanderjahr*. In doing so, they have neglected to study how his works functioned in the fifteenth century. Schongauer’s work, *Christ Carrying the Cross* in particular, likely served to assist individuals in their devotional Christian practices. By immersing oneself in Schongauer’s *Christ Carrying the Cross*, one could become actively engaged with it and meaning materialized from this interaction. It is not necessary to completely understand or to document the life of the artist in order to find meaning in the work he produced, as meaning can be derived directly from the image itself; in the past as well as in the present. In considering the question of the work’s reception over the artist’s intention, Moxey suggests that:

> Forms of interpretations based on the notions of the artist as an autonomous subject and artistic representation as limited to mimesis have unnecessarily restricted our understanding of the work of Martin Schongauer. An approach that views the work of art as a cultural artifact designed to perform particular social functions empowers us to move away from considerations of intention toward considerations of reception.⁷

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⁷ Ibid., 110.
With the above in mind, I will explore with this thesis the reception of the *Christ Carrying the Cross* and how the print may have functioned as an aid to performing solitary acts of devotion. I will first describe Schongauer’s origins within the context of the late Middle Ages. As Moxey mentioned, there has been much discussion about Schongauer’s history, while almost completely overlooking the reception of his works. To fully comprehend Schongauer’s paintings and engravings, it is essential to understand the era in which he lived and worked. Devotional practices of the late medieval age consisted of going on pilgrimages to the Holy Land in Jerusalem. If making the journey to Jerusalem was not possible, a number of other methods of making a pilgrimage were available to devotees in the late fifteenth century. One method used meditation, memory, and the knowledge of an actual pilgrimage, to perform a substitute pilgrimage to gain all of the same indulgences as if travelling to the Holy Land in person. An imaginative, or spiritual, pilgrimage could be performed *ad infinitum* without leaving the safety of one’s home, or one’s cloister, thus eliminating the need to make the arduous and sometimes deadly voyage. I assert that Schongauer’s *Christ Carrying the Cross* functioned to facilitate a pilgrimage in this way.

In Chapter II, I examine the ways in which Christians sought to recreate Jerusalem for the purpose of pilgrimage. Physical recreations of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, Roman Stations, and the Stations of the Cross, all enabled them to metaphorically trace Christ’s footsteps during his earthly life as a way to identify with and imitate his human suffering. A virtual or imaginative pilgrimage was practiced by cloistered women because they were unable to travel in the outside world. Imitating and identifying with Christ’s human suffering was thought to bring one closer to God. I also explore the tenets of mysticism that pervaded the Rhineland and the Low Countries throughout the Middle Ages, which influenced the devotional practices of the era.
Chapter III begins with a discussion of medieval memory, and the role of memory when using an image as a devotional tool. The formal elements of Schongauer’s *Christ Carrying the Cross* will be examined, as well as how the print relates to the scripturally-based and implied Stations of the Cross as they were known in the fifteenth century. I conclude with a discussion of Schongauer’s *Christ Carrying the Cross* as an Austauschbild; an image layered with multiple meanings that can be understood simultaneously. I will capitalize *Passion* when referring to the event experienced by Jesus and Mary, and *Stations of the Cross* when referencing the traditional halting points along the Via Dolorosa that are designated in Christian devotional practice, and use lowercase when referring the terms in a more general sense.
CHAPTER II

LATE MEDIEVAL DEVOTION

Schongauer’s Origins

Schongauer was born in Colmar, in the Upper Rhine Valley south of Strasbourg, between 1445 and 1450, and died in 1491 in Baden at Breisach. He was recognized in his lifetime as a talented artist, his mentorship having been sought by the young Albrecht Dürer. He was the first engraver to regularly sign his name with his monogram, “M + S” (fig. 4), which effectively preserved his printed oeuvre consisting of 116 known engravings. Renowned in his day for being a painter and goldsmith, he is most known to us today from his engraved prints. He was called “pictorium gloria” and “Hübsch Martin,” meaning “beautiful Martin.”

His family was one of privilege, described as “patrician” with their own coat of arms. They were involved in city government as far back as the mid-thirteenth century. His father was Caspar Schongauer, a goldsmith from Bavaria who became a citizen of Colmar in 1445, and was most likely young Martin’s first master when he studied as an apprentice in his father’s goldsmith shop. Caspar was married to Gertrud, mentioned in the Stadtbibliothek Anniversarienbuch des St. Martininstiftes only once when Caspar made his yearly donation.

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8 Most scholars agree to these dates, however, in his article, “Martin Schongauer as a Draftsman: A Reassessment,” Fritz Koreny states that “there is no proof that he was born in Colmar, nor any that would show that he died there rather than in neighboring Breisach, which by 1489 had granted him citizenship,” 123.

9 Fritz Koreny, “Martin Schongauer as a Draftsman: A Reassessment,” Master Drawings 34, no. 2 (Summer 1996), 123.

10 N.G. Stodgon, Martin Schongauer, Catalogue 10 (Middle Chinnock: The Old Refectory), intro. See also Moxey, The Practice of Theory, 100.

11 John Henry Flak, The Iconographical and Stylistic Sources of the Prints of Martin Schongauer (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1960), 8. Nothing is known about Gertrud’s
Martin is said to have had three brothers, possibly four; Ludwig, a painter, Georg (Jörg), and Paul, also goldsmiths. Depending on the account, Martin was either the youngest or the eldest of the family; however, reliable sources allow us to determine that he was most likely the eldest brother.  

Records show that Schongauer matriculated at Leipzig in 1465. His name appears among members of the Nation of Bavaria in the matriculation book of the University of Leipzig for the winter semester of that year, but not in subsequent years (fig. 5). Alongside his name is an “x”, indicating that he paid ten grossi with his registration. It remains unclear precisely why he attended the university or why he chose not to return. Two plausible explanations could include that he enrolled because he or his father wished for him to join the clergy, or that university life was not compatible with his desire to become an accomplished painter and master of his own workshop. The general assumption is that he returned home to Colmar, and from 1466 to 1469 became an apprentice to Caspar Isenmann (d. ca. 1480), who, in addition to being a neighbor of the Schongauers, was an active painter in Colmar from the mid fifteenth century.  

12 Stogdon, Martin Schongauer, intro


14 Klein, Martin Schongauer und das “Jüngste Gericht im Breisach, 8.

15 Shestack, The Complete Engravings, 9. Shestack places Isenmann active from 1435 to 1472. The Unterlinden Museum in Colmar states on their didactic panel that Isenmann was active from 1420 to 1485. See Klein, Martin Schongauer und das “Jüngste Gericht im Breisach, 8. In 1469, Schongauer paid eight solidos to the heirs of Werlin von Limperg for a house on Schedelgasse, the same street on which Isenmann lived, with an additional 8 solidos to be paid with interest.
the Upper Rhenish painters of his time, Isenmann most likely studied in the Netherlands. His masterpiece, the high altar at Martinskirche (1465), now stands in the Unterlinden Museum in Colmar. Proximity aside, there is little stylistic or documentary evidence to support the claim that Schongauer apprenticed under Isenmann. There is a hint of stylistic similarity in the ornate cruciform halos evident in the altarpiece by Caspar Isenmann (1465) (fig. 6) and the panels painted by Schongauer’s workshop or followers in the Altarpiece of the Dominicans (last quarter of the fifteenth century) (fig. 7). The cruciform halo appears to be a northern iconographic feature, but the figure types are quite different. Isenmann’s figures appear stiff and programmatic whereas Schongauer’s figures and those of his followers are delicate and fluid.

According to Klein, Schongauer lived in Switzerland in 1477. Based on a letter received by the abbess Clara Riethem of the Poor Clares in Söflingen, he may have worked on panels in Ulm in 1490. Ulm is less than 30 miles (47 km) northeast of Biberach where Schongauer reportedly painted panels at St. Martin in 1490. By 1489, Martin Schongauer became a citizen of Breisach, and it is believed that Schongauer died before May 19, 1491, in Breisach while working on the fresco in St. Stephansmünster. Schongauer was deceased by 1492 when Albrecht Dürer arrived in Colmar in the hopes of meeting him.

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17 Klein, Martin Schongauer und das “Jüngste Gericht” im Breisach, 8. Schongauer acquired the “Schwanen” house in Augustinergasse in Zurich, Switzerland for 160 guilders

18 Ibid. An extensive letter dated November 16, 1482, from the Provincial of the Franciscans, Dr. Konrat von Bondorf, to the abbess Clara Riethem of the Poor Clares in Söflingen near Ulm, was to inform her that Martin Schongauer himself had promised to come to Ulm to design the “Heiligen.”

19 Ibid., 11. Schongauer granted power of attorney for representation in business matters
It is likely that Schongauer studied the earlier Netherlandish masters. He may have traveled to Cologne and on to the Netherlands.\textsuperscript{21} His overall style drew upon Netherlandish figure types, motifs, and compositions, lending credence to the argument that his influences included Rogier van der Weyden, Robert Campin, Dieric Bouts, and Hugo van der Goes.\textsuperscript{22} Obvious similarities exist between the Rogier’s Beaune Altarpiece and the fresco in Breisach by Schongauer. The Netherlandish influences in the work of Isenmann and Schongauer imply that there was some communication between them. It is perhaps through Isenmann that Schongauer was exposed to van der Weyden, and that after the completion of an apprenticeship he was encouraged by Isenmann to go to Burgundy to see first-hand the influential monumental *Beaune Altarpiece* (1445), which van der Weyden painted for the Hôtel-Dieu at the behest of Nicolas Rolin, chancellor to the Duke of Burgundy Philip the Good.\textsuperscript{23} The influence of Rogier’s altarpiece is clear in Schongauer’s *Last Judgment* wall painting in Breisach. Schongauer’s slender and elegant figure types hint at a Burgundian influence, thus strengthening the argument for his travel to Beaune.

Schongauer’s sensuous engravings undoubtedly caught the eye of his contemporaries. His meticulous craftsmanship and delicately carved lines captured the beauty and sweetness of the International Gothic style, and garnered the recognition of his peers. His work became well in Gersbach, southeast of Breisach, to his brother Paul. In 1490, he paid the heirs of Werlin von Limperg half the amount of 32 *solidos* for his house on Schedelgasse, and was working in Biberach during that year.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.

known and often imitated throughout Europe. His drawings were used as models by other artisans for compositional ideas and motifs. A print entitled *A Censer* (ca. 1480-90) (fig. 8) is a finely engraved image of an actual censer crafted by a goldsmith. Schongauer’s original intention for the work is uncertain, but it is believed that it and others like it were used as “how-to” illustrations. An instructional model was likely not Schongauer’s original intention, but because his engravings were so elegantly executed they enjoyed widespread distribution. The subjects were often copied in many different media. His compositions appeared on the wings of carved altarpieces by the master sculptors, Veit Stoss and Tilmann Riemenscheider. *The Baptism of Christ* (fig. 9), a wing from a carved wooden altarpiece attributed to a Polish follower of Veit Stoss, demonstrates the influence of Schongauer’s *The Baptism of Christ* (fig. 10). According to Alan Shestack, hundreds of examples exist in German sculptures demonstrating obvious references to Schongauer’s compositions years after his death.

Albrecht Dürer set out for Colmar to meet Schongauer with the intention of working with him, but arrived after his death in 1492. He was given two of Martin Schongauer’s pen drawings by the deceased artist’s brothers; *Young Woman Fanning a Fire with a Bird’s Wing* (1469) (fig. 11), with the initials M + S, and another resembling the *Weltenrichter* after van der Weyden’s altarpiece in Beaune. Atop the Saviour’s blessing, Dürer added in his own hand, “*Das hat Hübsch Martin gemalt im Jahre 1469,*” indicating that “pretty” Martin made the drawing in 1469. On the back of the other drawing he wrote that it was done by Martin in 1470 while he was still

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24 Ibid., 34.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.
an apprentice. These attributions written in Dürer’s own hand allow us to confidently place Schongauer as an active artist by the late 1460s.

Available documentation from Colmar supports the fact that he spent the 1470s and 1480s in Colmar working on a burgeoning career as a painter. His subsequent burgher status in Breisach reflects his recognition in Colmar. Two painted wings (ca. 1470) are all that remain from an altarpiece commissioned by Jean d’Orlier, preceptor of the Antonite monastery of Isenheim, which originally stood in the commandery. The sculpted central section no longer exists. Featured on the exterior is an Annunciation (fig. 12). On the interior is a Nativity, and a portrait of St. Anthony with Jean d’Orlier as donor (fig. 13). Jean d’Orlier was superior of the convent from 1459-1460; however, the altarpiece is dated at 1470. Schongauer’s painted masterpiece, Virgin in the Rose Arbor was completed in 1473 (dated on the reverse) and remains in situ in the Church of St. Martin in Colmar. None of his paintings are signed, and this panel, being the only dated work attributed to him, is therefore typically used to establish Schongauer’s chronology. The influence of the Netherlandish style of painting is evidenced here by the

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27 Ibid., 6. See also Klein, Martin Schongauer und das “Jüngste Gericht” im Breisach, 8


29 Flak, Iconographical and Stylistic Sources, 12.


31 Ibid., 48. Schongauer often depicted the Virgin and Child. At the end of the fifteenth century, the cult of the Virgin Mary was growing. In his numerous engravings and extant painted works, he mastered depicting the tenderness and sweetness of the maternal Mary and her infant child.

32 Ibid.

33 Jeep, Medieval Germany, 706.
naturalistic rendering of the plants and birds, and by the delicate, gentle expression of the Virgin so often seen in Rogier’s work.

Schongauer traveled to Breisach, on the opposite bank of the Rhine, in 1488, approximately twenty miles from his home in Colmar. He was commissioned to paint a Last Judgment wall painting on the interior walls of St. Stephan’s, which he based on Rogier van der Weyden’s Beaune altarpiece. Schongauer died in Breisach before its completion in 1491, probably succumbing to the plague that devastated the Upper Rhine area that year. His frescoes were later covered with plaster, not to be discovered again until 1931.34 They exist today in poor condition in the Breisach Münster. Ironically, Schongauer was unarguably an accomplished painter, but it is upon his corpus of 116 engraved prints that his reputation now stands.

The significance of prints and printmaking to the late fifteenth century cannot be overstated. Francis Bacon (late 16th c.) proclaimed printmaking to be one of humanity’s greatest inventions, along with gunpowder and the printing press.35 Peter Parshall called the invention of the print a “watershed in the history of art and the history of belief.”36 According to Parshall, the significance given to European printmaking of the late Middle Ages is perhaps diminished due to the artistic developments of the Renaissance.37 The reawakening of the study of the liberal and fine arts in the age of rebirth may have inadvertently relegated prints to being regarded as items of utility. Juxtaposed against the glorious, monumental works of Raphael and the atmospheric panels by Leonardo, the seemingly prosaic and often monochromatic prints may have seemed

34 Shestack, The Complete Engravings, 5.
36 Parshall, et al., The Woodcut in Fifteenth-Century Europe, 10.
37 Ibid., 9.
pale in comparison, but the contribution of prints to society in the 1400s is indisputable. The importance of the newfound ability to spread information with printed works is perhaps overlooked due to the advances of the early sixteenth century; however, the portability and reproducibility of the prints accounted for their widespread popularity, with the ability to replicate and distribute images as aids to devotion and to disseminate information across Europe as never before. Prints could travel with relative ease; a nearly impossible feat for a large-scale panel painting or altarpiece.

The Latin-derived French term *impremere* means, “to apply pressure.” Modern scholarship uses the term “print” to describe images transferred onto paper by use of applying pressure such as woodcuts and engraving, and also in reference to the printed book and the use of the typographic process. The term “print” is commonly used in reference to pictorial images on paper that have been or can be reproduced multiple times through a variety of processes. The subsequent copies on paper are referred to as impressions.

The availability of paper had a direct result on the development of the utilitarian print. Paper became more readily available in Europe in the twelfth century, eventually replacing parchment and vellum in the fifteenth century as a medium for writing. The type of paper used imparts its character on the print. The paper’s finish and how much ink it will hold affects the final product. An understanding of the type of paper used and where and when it was made helps to date the work in the absence of other identifying information.

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39 Ibid.

40 Ibid., 17.
Fifteenth-century printmaking typically involved both relief and intaglio processes. In relief printing the surface that is to appear as a positive is left as all other material is carved away so as not to make an impression. In intaglio printing, the surface is incised to create the image. Metal sheets such as iron, steel, brass, bronze, zinc and copper were incised with a burin to create the positive image. Ink was applied to the surface and collected in the grooves created by the burin, and excess was wiped off with a cloth. A process referred to as *retroussage* was used in which a muslin cloth was used to pull some of the ink out of the grooves to prevent thick, sloppy lines.\(^4\) An etching by Abraham Bosse (1642) (fig. 14) illustrates the intaglio printer’s workshop. The process of intaglio printing has changed little since its inception. The man in the back is applying ink to a metal plate. The plate is warmed on a grate to soften the ink and expand the cuts into the plate to ensure that the ink fills the grooves. The man on the left is using the muslin cloth to wipe the excess ink from the metal surface. In the center of the image is the double roller printing press midway through printing an image. The dampened paper and the plate are covered by a cushion of blankets and fed through the press. Pressure is applied from above and below to squeeze the ink out of the grooves and into the paper. The final result is shown hanging in the background.

Within the next several decades, metal workers, particularly goldsmiths, began using metal plates to engrave their intricate patterns. Goldsmith artists took to proofing their designs by engraving them onto copper plates to produce raised, ink-filled patterns on paper that could be employed later as templates for future metalwork on vessels or armor. Schongauer’s *A Censer*

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\(^{4}\) Ibid., 38.
may be an example of such a template. The use of templates saved valuable time and resources on finished pieces.\textsuperscript{42}

The finely engraved lines and attention to detail inherent in the work of the goldsmith lent itself well to intaglio printing. Goldsmiths worked with precious metals and enjoyed the importance of belonging to the wealthiest guilds in Europe. Goldsmiths such as Schongauer, therefore, could market their engravings to a more elite consumer. Religious prints sold at shrines, the introduction of playing cards into Europe, and the growing number of “collectors” in the latter part of the fifteenth century likely incentivized the goldsmiths to begin producing and replicating their images.\textsuperscript{43} The Frankfurt Book Fair, as it came to be called as early as 1150, supported the sale of these replicated works to individual consumers directly from the printers. The burgeoning book market also ensured that ideas and iconography traveled throughout Europe.\textsuperscript{44}

According to Max Lehrs, over three thousand pre-Dürer engravings currently survive.\textsuperscript{45} Very few are signed. The works are attributed according to style to at least 70 different artists; all but a handful seem to be of average craftsmanship.\textsuperscript{46} Workshops were small given that the

\textsuperscript{42} James Snyder, \textit{Northern Renaissance Art: Painting, Sculpture, the Graphic Arts from 1350 to 1575} (Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, NJ), 248.

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 20; See also Snyder, \textit{Northern Renaissance Art}, 248.


\textsuperscript{45} Alan Shestack, \textit{Fifteenth Century Engravings} (Washington DC: National Gallery of Art, 1968), preface. Shestack cites Max Lehrs’s \textit{Geschichte und Kritischer Katalog des deutschen, niederländischen, und französischen Kupferstischer im XV}.

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., preface.
guild limited the number of novices and journeymen to two per year per master.47 Because so few plates are signed, the majority of engravers remain unidentified. Those whose work is notable are given titles based on the characteristics of their work or its location, such as the Master of the Nuremberg Passion or the Master with the Banderoles. Very early prints of the Passion were meant as souvenirs or as small devotional images, capable of traveling easily with the devout pilgrim. Some were commissioned directly by the Church to serve as indulgence prints.48

The earliest dated engraving is the Flagellation of Christ (fig. 15) from a Passion series now preserved in the Berlin Print Room.49 The finesse with which the Master of 1446 handles the burin points to his training as a goldsmith. The date of 1446 is evident in Roman numerals above the vaulted ceiling and pillar to which Christ’s hands are tied. Due to the discernible date, the author is referred to as the Master of 1446. The artist employs the ornamentalization of form typical of Northern engravers. The outer contours of the figures are prominently incised while the interior is modeled using tiny, shallower strokes.

Connoisseurs typically start their study of prints with Master E.S. and Martin Schongauer because there is some, albeit limited, written history upon which to ground the discussion, as

47 Ibid.


49 Hind, A History of Engraving and Etching, 20.
well as signed engravings to draw from. The Master E.S., an Upper Rhenish goldsmith active from about 1450 to 1467, most likely apprenticed in Basel.\textsuperscript{50} He was the first to use a system of angled cross-hatched strokes (fig. 16) to model figures and drapery; a technique that Schongauer later perfected (fig. 17).\textsuperscript{51} Schongauer also used lengthened strokes interspersed with shorter and deeper incised lines to produce a greater depth of movement and a crisper drapery fold. Schongauer’s cross-hatching with the deeper abbreviated incised lines resulted in a plate from which numerous good impressions could be made as opposed to the lighter, more shallow cross-hatching and modeling of his predecessors, which could not yield as many high quality impressions.\textsuperscript{52}

It was common in the Rhine-Maas region for engravings and metal cuts, as opposed to woodcuts, to be used as additional insertions into manuscripts.\textsuperscript{53} Artists such as Master of the Berlin Passion, the St. Erasmus Master, and the Master of the Church Father Borders were active from approximately 1450 to 1470. These early engravers, whose actual names are unknown, with the exception of the Master of the Berlin Passion, who is generally considered to be Israhel van Meckenem the Elder, were active during the important transitional period of the second half of the fifteenth century, at a time when book production was shifting from manuscript to printed books.\textsuperscript{54} The book market in the Rhine-Maas region used engravings for insertion into

\textsuperscript{50} Hind, \textit{A History of Engraving & Etching}, 25.

\textsuperscript{51} Shestack, \textit{Fifteenth Century Engravings}, preface.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.

The engravings made specifically for insertion into manuscripts were often small (2 x 1 3/8 in., and 3 1/8 x 2 1/3 in.) religious images, suggesting that they were meant to be tipped in to the manuscript to illustrate the text, or perhaps mass produced onto a blank page to which text was added at a later date.\textsuperscript{55} The Life of Christ and The Passion were popular iconographic themes in these small prints. In the Crowning with Thorns by the Master of the Berlin Passion (fig. 18) we see an image of Christ being crowned with thorns. It is a simple and crude depiction of the four figures in the composition with Christ as the central figure. Around the image is a small lattice frame, which emulates the meticulous framing typical of manuscript illumination. The size is also indicative of its placement into an octavo or quarto-sized book.\textsuperscript{56} The iconography of the engraved cycles of Christ’s life and images of the Passion appealed to these artists as they could pull from earlier prototypes abundant in the Rhine-Maas region and adapt them to small prints to be mass produced for use in manuscripts. The Carrying of the Cross is an engraved print by the Master of the Berlin Passion (fig. 19), Carrying of the Cross, a metal cut by the Master of the Church Father Borders (fig. 20), and the Carrying of the Cross, a metal cut by the Master of St. Erasmus (fig. 21). There is little variation of the composition from one

\textsuperscript{54} Shestack, The Complete Engravings, 18-20. The name of the master was established by Max Lehre in 1889. He gave him the name because seven of his prints were discovered in a Lower Rhenish prayer book found in the Berlin print room. He compared his style to Israhel van Meckenem, and not only did he determine that the styles were similar, but that the dialect which appears on at least two of the master’s prints is Netherlandish. In 1903, Max Geisberg further established the connection between Israhel van Meckenem and the Master of the Berlin Passion indicating that the former was indeed the son of the latter and that both were goldsmiths. See also Weekes, 81.

\textsuperscript{55} Weekes, Early Engravers and Their Public, 15.

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 82. Some of these engravings were printed until the plate broke apart (D. Scillia, personal communication, 2015).
to the next and all three contain some type of border from highly decorative to a single solid line. All share similar size and composition, and appear to be following the same prototype.\footnote{Carrying the Cross by the Master of St. Erasmus bears a stylistic resemblance to works from Cologne.}

Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage was an institution of European society well before the 1400s. It commonly took the form of physical travel to important, sacred destinations. Variations on actual pilgrimage expanded to include a type of kinesthetic pilgrimage, such as the Stations of the Cross, and the so-called virtual, or imaginative, pilgrimage, in which memory and meditation played a key role in spiritually transporting the devotee to the holy sites.\footnote{Gelfand, “Illusionism and Interactivity,” 88-89. In general, Pilgrimage is divided into two modes; active and virtual. Physical travel to sacred destinations is the aim of active pilgrimage. It makes for clearer discussion to divide virtual pilgrimage into two different types; performative and imaginative. The performative method requires motion; hence, the term “kinesthetic,” and includes activities such as walking or dancing a labyrinth, or counting paces to simulate the Via Crucis. In imaginative pilgrimage, devotees meditated with the aid of a text or image.} This last type of pilgrimage took place solely within the imagination and was often aided by the use of images. Going on a pilgrimage could gain indulgences for medieval devotees in order to reduce their punishments in Purgatory. The obsession with earning or acquiring indulgences grew from the twelfth century. The recipients of an indulgence were ensured a reduction in time spent in torment by calling upon the merits of the saints for remission of punishment.\footnote{Ibid., 89.}

The Empress Helena’s journey to the Holy Land in 326-7 became the model for Christian pilgrims throughout history.\footnote{Ibid., 89.} She traveled to the Holy Land, the geographical location of
Christ’s passion and death, in search of the sites of Christ’s holy deeds. She set out on this expedition after the Council of Nicaea in 325 when the bishop of Jerusalem told her that not enough was being done to preserve the sacred sites of the Holy Land.\textsuperscript{61} While there, Helena uncovered remnants of the True Cross, said to be cross that Christ was crucified upon. For the faithful, the Cross of Christ is associated with Jesus’s suffering and sacrifice and is symbolic of the Passion.\textsuperscript{62} Fragments of wood believed to be pieces of the True Cross appeared as venerated relics all throughout Christendom.\textsuperscript{63} An inscription at Sétif in Mauretania from AD 359 lists a fragment of the True Cross in an inventory of relics.\textsuperscript{64}

Pilgrimages to Palestine grew in popularity after Constantine’s conversion to Christianity in AD 313, and his subsequent defeat of Licinius in AD 324.\textsuperscript{65} Christianity was imperially sanctioned in the eastern and western Mediterranean under Constantine’s rule, thus the era saw the proliferation of basilicas built for Christian worship with relics housed therein, and the ritual of pilgrimage for sacred purposes. The early pilgrims looked to the landscape of Palestine as a physical personification of the Biblical text.\textsuperscript{66} They went to the holy places attempting to retrace


\textsuperscript{63} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{65} Coleman and Elsner, \textit{Pilgrimage: Past and Present}, 80.

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., 83.
Helena’s and Christ’s steps. In doing so, the early pilgrims identified holy sites in Palestine as they corresponded to the writings of the New Testament, regardless of accuracy. For the purposes of the early Christians, Jerusalem of the fourth century became the Jerusalem of the New Testament. Egeria, a pilgrim from Spain who traveled to the Holy Land in the late fourth century, documented her journey by writing a long narrative to lay women at home. By the time of her journey to Jerusalem in the 380s, the holy sites were reconfigured to align with the sites in the Bible, and were authenticated by the pilgrims as they visited each one. For the pilgrims, historical accuracy was not so important as long as the sites could be validated in the Biblical text. According to Coleman and Elsner, “The holy places, some of whose association with biblical events had been invented so as to map scripture onto the landscape, now became the testimony and witness for the truth of scripture.” The fourth century pilgrim needed only the Bible as a guidebook; hence, Pilgrimage made walking in Christ’s footsteps and focusing on his human suffering a literal possibility.

In the late fifteenth century, the number of devotees making the journey to Jerusalem waned despite a growing interest in Holy Land pilgrimage. The interest in gaining indulgences increased; however, the danger and expense of making the physical pilgrimage was often prohibitive. The pious turned toward other methods of gaining indulgences by visiting sites throughout Europe. The numbers of pilgrims flocking to shrines throughout Europe were

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68 Coleman and Elsner, Pilgrimage: Past and Present, 85.

69 Ibid.


71 Ibid.
astounding even by today’s standards. The city of Munich had pilgrims drop peas into a jug in order to count how many visited in just one day. In 1392, 60,000 visitors were counted in a week’s time. Rome recorded 40,000 pilgrims in one day, and one day in Aachen in 1496 recorded 142,000 pilgrims. Nobility and commoners alike undertook pilgrimages. Philip the Good, John the Good, King Louis VII, and Louis XI, were among the nobility who journeyed to the holy sites. Rogier van der Weyden and Robert Campin both made pilgrimages to sacred shrines in the fifteenth century. Van der Weyden went to Rome in 1450 and Campin was sent on an enforced pilgrimage to St-Gilles in Provence in 1432. What of those who were unable or unwilling to travel to the holy sites? The idea of a mystical pilgrimage became a way to walk in Christ’s footsteps without travelling to the actual shrines or sites.

Pilgrimage by imagination made travel unnecessary. Between the twelfth and the sixteenth century, more than 526 books were written discussing pilgrimage. Many of these works described ways in which the pilgrim could witness sacred history by imagining himself being transported to the holy sites in lieu of physically traveling there. Required of the viewer was a memory of the scenes and his or her knowledge of the significance of the events represented by the images. Viewers in the fifteenth century would have been exposed to these

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73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

75 Ibid., 4.

76 Ibid.

77 Ibid.
handbooks and “how-to” manuals instructing them on ways to perform a mental pilgrimage to reap all of the benefits of an actual pilgrimage. They were in widespread circulation throughout Northern Europe at this time.⁷⁹ According to Sumption, for anyone unable to travel to Rome for the Jubilee of 1423, a written manuscript text, likely from Oxford, instructed the pilgrim to say the *Pater Noster* ten times a day to stand in for the ten leagues that he would have covered had he or she made the physical journey.⁸⁰ Upon hypothetical arrival in the city, the “pilgrim” was to deliver alms equal to the would-be offerings at the Jubilee in Rome.⁸¹ According to Matthew Botvinick, a Franciscan manuscript from St-Trond from the first half of the fifteenth century instructs the reader to say thirty-three *Pater Nosters* each time Christ stopped on his way to Calvary.⁸² By doing this, he would receive all of the indulgences as if he traveled to the Holy Land in person with the caveat that he must be prepared to walk with Christ in spirit through each stage of his final earthly journey.⁸³ The books would have “help[ed] to establish a tradition for the simulation of pilgrimage through thinking about, praying in front of, and performing certain gestures at each mental station prompted by a familiar image.”⁸⁴ These types of mental pilgrimages were, for all purposes, a type of mental “stations of the cross.”⁸⁵

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⁷⁹ Botvinick, “Painting as Pilgrimage,” 8.

⁸⁰ Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, 301.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Botvinick, “Painting as Pilgrimage,” 8.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, 300-1.
The exercise of contemplating the events of Christ’s Passion by navigating through a painted work is illustrated in Hans Memling’s *Scenes from the Passion of Christ* in Turin (1470-1471) (fig. 22). The multi-episodic painting contains scenes from Christ’s Passion in one unifying landscape. One is presented with a series of vignettes that meander through the city as if in a procession, facilitated by Memling’s use of doorways and portals situated in a winding landscape that culminates at Golgotha.

Cloistered women physically unable to travel to the Holy Land devised ways to obtain indulgences (the temporal remission of sin) “by proxy” by performing the pilgrimage in their imaginations. They used embroidery and needlework as a device to help recreate the experience of moving through the sites. The act of sewing or stitching was associated with religious devotion, and served a particular purpose among women in a cloistered setting. Imagination, therefore, played an important role in the personal devotion of nuns. The act of stitching provided a vehicle for meditation in which she could be transported virtually to a place outside of the convent.

The practice of stitching pilgrim badges into manuscripts became a popular practice in the Southern Netherlands and in the north of France around 1460, and peaked in the years between 1480 and 1490. It is possible that by stitching the pilgrim badge to the manuscript a

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86 Botvinick, “Painting as Pilgrimage,” 15; See also Laura D. Gelfand, “Illusionism and Interactivity,” 89.

87 Rudy, “Northern European Visual Responses,” abstract.


89 Weekes, *Early Engravers and Their Public*, 182.
similar type of pilgrimage by proxy could be performed.\textsuperscript{90} There is strong evidence to suggest that this was precisely the case. Text in the back of a Book of Hours made for use in the monastery in Windesheim Congregation in Brussels (Middle Dutch [Brabant], \textit{Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Series nova} 12715, ca. 1470), issues an invitation to embark upon an imaginative pilgrimage. In effect, the indulgence was earned by imagining the pilgrimage to Rome in one’s heart. It reads:

\begin{quote}
Here follows the indulgence which can be earned in the city of Rome, which is offered to every person belonging to the chapter of Windesheim by Pope Eugenius with the conditions that those who want to earn this indulgence should bear in the heart those places in Rome in which the station is held. Moreover, the person should remain steadfast and make himself like the others of his status, following the regulations and rules of the chapter.\textsuperscript{91}

Visiting Rome instead of Jerusalem may have resulted in the earning or acquiring of the same number of indulgences\textsuperscript{92} The idea of \textit{commutatio} was such that a person who could not go to Jerusalem for whatever reason could make the pilgrimage to Rome and receive all of the same benefits. Nina Miedema discusses the pilgrim’s exchange of Rome for Jerusalem, “Those who went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in order to follow Christ could obtain forgiveness of all sins, while those who could not afford such a journey or were impeded by illness could go to Rome and visit the seven principal churches instead.”\textsuperscript{93}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{90} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{91} Ibid., 183.


\textsuperscript{93} Ibid. The seven principal churches of Rome are St. Peter, St. John, St. Mary, St. Paul, St. Sebastian, St. Lawrence, and the church of the Holy Cross. Additionally, if one could not make it to the seven principal churches, the seven altars at St. Peter’s could be substituted.
An object such as a pilgrim badge was used as a conduit for achieving spiritual bliss. A tract from the convent of St. Walburga in Eichstätt (St. Walburga, Ms. germ. 4) promised the cloistered nuns heavenly rewards:94

And my cross should also be your pilgrim badge here in this vale of tears, from which you shall wander to the fatherland, and then I will be your crucified lover, your betrothed and little bed in which you shall rest eternally with great joys, and love me, you love, without intermediary.95

By carefully stitching the badges into the manuscript and meditating upon them in prayer, the cloistered nuns could essentially perform this pilgrimage over and over again without leaving the convent.

The stay-at-home pilgrimage was the method recommended by popular preachers in the 1500s.96 They promoted it as a less “irksome” form of pilgrimage.97 It became such a topic of discussion that the non-traveling pilgrims garnered caustic commentary from Erasmus (b. 1466 – d. 1536), “I walk about my house. I go to my study. I check on my daughter’s chastity. Then I go to my shop and see what my servants are doing. Then into the kitchen to make sure that nothing is amiss there. And so from one place to another to see that my wife and children are all right and every one is at his business. These are my Roman stations.”98

Even after the zeal for actual pilgrimage waned, imaginary pilgrimages continued in popularity. Carmelite, Jan Pascha (d. 1532), wrote a devotional prayer paralleling a pilgrimage

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94 Weekes, Early Engravers and Their Public, 184.
95 Ibid.
96 Sumption, Pilgrimage, 301.
97 Ibid.
98 Ibid.
to the Holy Land that would take place over 365 days. It was published posthumously in 1563 at Louvain, later translated into French and printed in English c. 1605.  

Mysticism

In exploring how pilgrimage can facilitate the imitation of Christ, Victor and Edith Turner point out: “Pilgrimage may be thought of as extroverted mysticism, just as mysticism is introverted pilgrimage. The pilgrim physically traverses a mystical way; the mystic sets forth on an interior spiritual pilgrimage” The idea of “salvation through suffering” as a way of imitating Christ’s earthly suffering pervaded the Middle Ages. The life and writings of Heinrich Suso, Dominican mystic of the fourteenth century, exemplified the ways in which the pious, through meditating and identifying with Christ’s intense human suffering, could experience the ecstasy of Christ’s love. In other words, in order to meet him in eternity, one should accept adversity and suffering with humility just as Jesus did on the road to Golgotha. Of the small number of extant paintings by Schongauer, at least three works are Dominican commissions. Schongauer’s ties to the Dominican order may provide insight into this large, multifaceted engraving in which Christ’s human suffering is depicted.

Christ’s appeal for man to “take up the cross and follow [him]” (Matthew 16:24) inspired medieval Christians to emulate his suffering. Suso undertook this suggestion quite literally.

99 Ibid.


102 Ibid., 85.
He fashioned a wooden cross “as long as the breadth of a man’s outstretched hand and proportionately wide,” and to this cross he hammered iron nails. He pressed it into the flesh between his shoulder blades and wore it for eight years. At one point, the sharpened nails became too painful and the mystic dulled them by grinding them on a stone. Immediately upset by his cowardice, he sharpened them with a file, and once again pressed it into his back.

Suso devoted a large portion of his writings to the discussion of the Lord’s Passion and how one must perpetually contemplate it. One must “live inwardly [and] die in blessedness.” In his dialogue with Divine Wisdom, Suso is told of the advantages of constantly remembering the Passion. He was instructed that “frequent meditation on my Passion will promote for you two chief consolations among others which cannot be numbered; that is, it drives off inordinate sorrow, and lessens the punishment in purgatory.” This passage from *Wisdom’s Watch Upon the Hours* clearly describes how Schongauer’s sizeable print may have functioned as an indulgence image. By imaginatively taking up the cross and walking with Christ on the road to Golgotha, a pious viewer could perform a private pilgrimage as means of lessening one’s suffering and ultimately as a means of earning indulgences.

*The Little Book of Love*, attributed to Suso, offers in great detail how to become intimately close to Christ by reciting a series of prayers and meditations found in the booklet. The tiny booklet contains three chapters; an opening invocation to Jesus and also to Mary,

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104 Ibid., 89.

105 Ibid., 57.

Christ’s Passion and Mary’s reciprocal sorrow and grief in which Suso focuses on the pain Mary felt at the hour of Christ’s death contrasted with the joy of experiencing Jesus a young boy, and finally, a third chapter entitled, “A loving cuddling of the soul under the cross with its spouse, the resurrected Christ.”

The Rhineland, where both Suso and Schongauer resided for most of their lives, was a center for the production of many images of Christ’s passion. For Suso, the images were a means of experiential devotion, and aid to his rigorous asceticism. Schongauer would have also been exposed to Suso’s writings and to the religious art of the Rhineland, which reflected much of the mystic’s philosophical ideology. The cross is the subject of numerous medieval and fifteenth century devotional works in the Rhineland. One example, a late fifteenth-century ivory from the Lower Rhine from the Cleveland Museum of Art (fig. 23) depicts the brutality of the moments immediately preceding the Crucifixion. Centrally placed in this scene are the cross and the head of Christ. Christ is falling under the cross as his tormentors move savagely about, appearing to step over one another, anxious to exact their punishment. The serenity of his expression is juxtaposed against the contorted faces of his antagonists. The cross dominates the scene, much like an earlier print from Master E.S. (fig. 24). E.S’s print was executed sometime between 1450 and 1467 and illustrates a similar scenario. The two have much in common, such as the hooded cape of Simon of Cyrene, and the posture of the soldier on the far left of the scene. The most striking similarity, and the one most relevant to this discussion, is the central

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placement of the cross and the head of Christ.\textsuperscript{109} The relationship between the ivory and the Schongauer’s engraving is unclear; however, the similarities suggest a pervasiveness of this imagery in the Rhineland in the late fifteenth century. What was the reason for the widespread popularity of this theme during the late Middle Ages, particularly in the Rhine Valley?

Mystical participation in the Passion grew as a popular form of religious expression during the Late Middle Ages. It was facilitated by the increase in printed images and texts and their vernacular translations, as well as the increased ability for a growing number of people to purchase and read them.\textsuperscript{110} The notion of taking up the cross is a form of *imitation Christi*, or imitating Christ. The concept of imitating Christ is addressed by Thomas à Kempis (1379-1471) in *The Imitation of Christ*, written in 1418, and purported to be “undoubtedly…the most influential devotional book in Western Christian history.”\textsuperscript{111} The tenets of the *Imitation* are interconnected with the concept of *devotio moderna*, or modern devotion, which developed late in the fourteenth century. Emphasis was placed on striving to emulate Christ’s humility while simultaneously contemplating his divinity.\textsuperscript{112} The movement whose followers were known as the New Devout, also called the brothers and sisters of the Modern Devotion, started with Geert Grote (b. 1384) of Deventer. In the late medieval Lowlands and Lower Rhineland, groups of devout gathered in their respective communities and vowed to adhere to four tenets; “contempt

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., 106a.


\textsuperscript{111} John Van Engen, trans., *Devotio Moderna: Basic Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 8. Attribution of authorship of the *Imitation* is still tentatively given to Thomas à Kempis. It was originally circulated anonymously and the list of ostensible authors was more than forty, including an early attribution to Jean Gerson (d. 1429), a prolific and influential theologian. Since 1472 it has appeared in over 3,000 editions, the majority before the sixteenth century.

for the vanities of this world,” a “call to the inner life,” “inner consolation,” and a genuine “approach to holy communion.” 113 Their ideology, derived from the Cistercians and Franciscans, placed Jesus Christ the person and the events of his life, namely the Passion, at the core. The “Christocentric” devotion was an intentional form of piety on the part of the New Devout. 114 “Their emphasis fell neither on imitation in a strict sense, as in works of mercy, nor on ‘mystic union,’ as in the teachings of many late medieval authors, but rather on an individual and affective identification with particular moments in Christ’s life, chiefly his Passion.” They were instructed to meditate daily on three particular aspects; first on Christ’s early life, second on his passion, and third on the holy angels and their divine ordination. 115

The idea of melding the human with the divine was a syncretic blend of German mysticism and Christian Humanism that was especially embraced in the Low Countries and allowed for a more personal relationship with God. 116 In chapter twelve of The Imitation of Christ, à Kempis discusses “The Royal Way of the Cross,” asserting the only way for one to reach the Kingdom of Heaven is to take up the cross and follow Jesus:

In the cross is salvation; in the cross is life; in the cross is defense against our enemies; in the cross is infusion of heavenly sweetness; in the cross is strength of mind; in the cross is joy of spirit; in the cross is the height of virtue; in the cross is the perfection of holiness. There is no health of the soul or hope of eternal life, other than the cross….For if you die with him, you will also live with him. And if you share his suffering, you will also share his glory. 117

113 Van Engen, Devotio Moderna, 9.

114 Ibid., 27.

115 Ibid., 25.


Motifs illustrating the importance of the cross abound in the fifteenth century and are represented in a variety of media. A prayer attached to a small woodcut from Ulm, printed in the late 1400s embodies the ideal of the *imitatio Christi*: “Oh dear Lord Jesus as thou hast carried thy Cross, so grant me, dear Lord, that I patiently bear all adversity and sorrows, that I therewith lay low all villainy and temptations of the body and over the evil spirit.” These small woodcuts (fig. 25) from the Passion series by Ludwig of Ulm were part of a booklet that was to be hand-held and recited aloud according to the seven canonical hours of the day.\(^\text{119}\)

Walter Gibson discusses the idea of a “perpetual passion” in Bosch’s *Christ Carrying the Cross* in the Palacio Real, Madrid (fig. 26)\(^\text{120}\) His discussion centers on Christ’s face and his invitation to the viewer. Gibson suggests that Christ does not look out accusingly as in themes of the “perpetual Passion,” but rather, as if he is pleading with the viewer in a “silent dialogue” to indeed take up the cross and join him.\(^\text{121}\) In Bosch’s tightened composition, the thieves are out of sight from the viewer and the procession is reduced to no more than a handful of people. The cross is bringing Christ to his knees just as Simon of Cyrene is depicted lifting the cross from his

\(^{118}\) Gibson, “Imitatio Christi,” 86.


\(^{120}\) Gibson, “Imitatio Christi,” 83. The notion of the perpetual Passion holds mankind traitorous and responsible for Christ’s death (i.e., enemies of Christ). The concept would have been known in Bosch’s day. See Wolfgang Seiferth, *Synagogue and Church in the Middle Ages: Two Symbols in Art and Literature*, trans. Lee Chadeayne and Paul Gottwald (New York: Ungar, 1970), 76. A 15th century German hymn asserts that “It is our great sin and grievous misdeeds that nailed Jesus the true Son of god to the Cross. For this reason we must not revile you, Poor Judah, and the host of Jews. The guilt is indeed ours.”

back. Bosch is providing hope; a way to relieve oneself from the “toils of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil.”

Imagining Jerusalem

Christians strove to retrace Christ’s footsteps in Jerusalem. A typical path along the Via Dolorosa for fourth century pilgrims began at the Garden of Gethsemane, progressed through the courtyard of the high priest, passed by Pilate’s house, continued through Jerusalem and up the hill to Golgotha, the site of Christ’s crucifixion. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was built on the site believed to be Calvary, or Golgotha, around 326. The obsessive desire for those in the medieval West to venerate the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and other sacred sites in the Holy Land, resulted in replications of these sites throughout Europe. If dancing around a labyrinth on a cathedral floor could equal a voyage to Jerusalem, then visiting a structural replica of the Holy Sepulchre in Europe would surely be an adequate substitute for the Holy Land. The Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges and the Sacro Monte in Varallo in Lombardy are two examples of such monuments.

The Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges (ca. 1430) was the manifestation of the memory of a visit to the Holy Land by the Adorne brothers, Pieter II and Jacob (d. 1464 and 1465

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122 Gibson, “Imitatio Christi,” 83.


125 Wharton, Selling Jerusalem, 98; See also Gelfand, “Illusionism and Interactivity,” 88.
respectively). It would serve as their mortuary chapel and as a potent reminder of their pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Their devotion to the Holy Sepulchre and their pilgrimage to the Holy Land became something of a family tradition with Peiter’s son Anselme Adornes (1424-1483) making the voyage with his own son, Jan, who then wrote about it in a memoir upon their return. The treasured chapel was understood to be a copy, a “simulacrum,” of Jerusalem by the people of Bruges. The plan of the chapel and the sculpted mountain of Golgotha behind the altar (fig. 27) serve to transport visitors physically and emotionally to the geographical location of Christ’s Passion. Embedded into the sculpture are fragments of wood to represent the dice thrown by the soldiers gambling for Christ’s clothing, and a sculpted lance with a metal tip is made to look as if it is resting against the mountain. Relics were once visible inside the five square cut-outs above the altar itself. Between the reliquaries are sculpted bas-relief panels depicting the The Symbols of the Passion. The chapel allowed for a performative, almost theatrical reenactment of a recalled pilgrimage to the Holy Land, or offered a new experience for those in search of their own memory of Golgotha who had never physically traveled to the sacred site.

Sacro Monte, or “Holy Mountain” is an outcropping on the mountaintop just above Varallo. It is situated in the foothills of the Alps just northwest of Milan, founded in 1486 by

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126 Gelfand, “Illusionism and Interactivity,” 95.
127 Ibid.
128 Ibid., 98.
129 Ibid., 103.
130 Ibid.
131 Ibid., 109.
Bernardino Caimi.\textsuperscript{132} A Franciscan and former resident of Jerusalem, Caimi had experience with coordinating pilgrimages in the Holy Land. \textsuperscript{133} The building of facsimiles of the holy sites of the city of Jerusalem were an attempt to recreate the Holy Land sites in Italy.\textsuperscript{134} The construction of the “Holy Sepulchre” in 1490 on Sacro Monte in Varallo marked the beginning of the sanctification of the town.\textsuperscript{135} Golgotha and Christ’s tomb were later replicated to the northeast of the Sepulchre.\textsuperscript{136}

At Varallo, pilgrims would ambulate through and among the representative holy sites, each display rendered within the chapels included life-like and three-dimensionally modeled figures, complete with horsehair wigs, glass eyes, cloth draperies, and real porcupine quills!\textsuperscript{137} Fictional Jerusalem was made to look as real as possible amidst the Milanese topography. Spectacle and theatricality were at the center of the kinesthetic pilgrimage as each diorama was meant to evoke an empathetic response from the viewer. The goal of the experience was to mimic as closely as possible the actual sites of the Holy Land, a feat made possible by Caimi’s familiarity with the real Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{138}

The Sacro Monte at Varallo, and others like it, so-called \textit{sacri monte}, were a result of the inability to make actual travel to Jerusalem coupled with the escalating desire of European

\textsuperscript{132} Wharton, \textit{Selling Jerusalem}, 98.

\textsuperscript{133} Gelfand, “Illusionism and Interactivity,” 110.

\textsuperscript{134} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{135} Wharton, \textit{Selling Jerusalem}, 100.

\textsuperscript{136} Ibid., 101.

\textsuperscript{137} Gelfand, “Illusionism and Interactivity,” 113.

\textsuperscript{138} Ibid.
Christians for pilgrimage and indulgences.\textsuperscript{139} In the fifteenth century, outdoor processions along the Via Dolorosa took place throughout Europe.\textsuperscript{140} The sacred sites of the Holy Land, recreated on the streets of Europe, were accurately measured and plotted to correspond to the actual distances between the Holy Land sites.\textsuperscript{141} Travel to Jerusalem from Europe was perilous and expensive. Muslim control of the Holy Land made the journey treacherous as it became increasingly off limits to Western travelers, and exorbitant admission fees made travel impossible for all but the wealthiest individuals.\textsuperscript{142}

**Stations of the Cross**

The Stations of the Cross are scenes from Christ’s final earthly days meant to assist the faithful in a spiritual pilgrimage. They can be performed publicly or privately by walking or meditating from station to station with each station depicting an event from Christ’s suffering and death.\textsuperscript{143} The term *statio*, or “station,” comes from the military term describing a military post or sentinel.\textsuperscript{144} Later, the Christian application of the term referred to a specific point in the

\textsuperscript{139} Ibid., 111: See also Wharton, *Selling Jerusalem*, 126. Other *sacri monte* include sites at Orta, Crea, Santa Trinita di Ghiffa, Belmonte, Domodossola, Montrigone, Graglia, Andorno, Monta d’Alba, Monte Berico di Vicenza, Torricella Verzate, Cerveno, and Sasso di Locarno.

\textsuperscript{140} Butcher, “Walking the Walk,” 2.

\textsuperscript{141} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{142} Gelfand, “Illusionism and Interactivity,” 111.


\textsuperscript{144} Thurston, *The Stations of the Cross*, 45.
procession where one halts to pray and venerate while recalling specific events of Christ’s last journey.

In early Christianity, stations were designated for celebrating the major feast days and were assigned to various churches. These eventually came to be known as the Roman Stations. By the fifth century, the stations were held at Roman tituli, or parish churches, and the Constantinian basilicas that were being built in numbers. The number of stations grew as the centuries went on. Additions to the list of stations came under Popes Leo I (440-461), Gregory I (500-604), and Gregory II (715-731). By Leo III (795-816) there were ninety-four stations to take place over ninety-two days, encompassing Lent and Easter Week. An English guidebook, “Stations of Rome,” from the fourteenth-century, instructs one on how to gain indulgences by locating the prominent churches and holy sites within the city. The station church pilgrimages waned in earnest by the early fourteenth century when the papacy relocated to Avignon in 1305.

Attempts to identify the earliest stations, or to codify the stations observed in Schongauer’s time, have been difficult at best. It is a challenge to establish a linear history of the tradition of walking or meditating on the Stations of the Cross. Stops along the route are said to

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146 Ibid.

147 Ibid.

148 Ibid.

149 Thurston, *The Stations of the Cross*, 47.

have developed around 1342. An English pilgrim, Master William Wey, visited Jerusalem in 1458 and 1462. He meticulously described the sites and referred to those on the Via Crucis as stations. Indulgenced Stations and the practice of reproducing the sacred sites at home likely led to the Stations of the Cross as we know them today. Wey’s account documented fourteen stations, but not all are included in the present-day fourteen.

The present-day traditional fourteen Stations of the Cross are canonized as (1) Jesus is sentenced to death, (2) Jesus carries his cross, (3) Jesus falls the first time, (4) Jesus meets his mother, (5) Simon of Cyrene helps carry the cross, (6) Veronica wipes the face of Jesus, (7) Jesus falls a second time, (8) Jesus meets the daughters of Jerusalem, (9) Jesus falls a third time, (10) Jesus is stripped of his garments, (11) Jesus is nailed to the cross, (12) Jesus dies on the cross, (13) His body is taken down from the cross, and (14) His body is laid in the tomb.

A book written by a devout priest named Heer Bethlem, reported by Thurston to have been published prior to 1490, is entitled “Overwegingen op het Lijden des Heeron voor degenen, Butcher, “Walking the Walk,” 2.

Thurston, The Stations of the Cross, 46.

Thurston, The Stations of the Cross, 46. See Diane Scillia, “Robert Wilson’s 14 Stations 2000 and 2002-03” (unpublished paper, 2003). The combination of kinesthetic and spiritual pilgrimage is still being explored in the twenty-first century with regard to the Stations of the Cross. Robert Wilson approached the traditional Christian Stations conceptually in 14 Stations, originally commissioned by the Oberammergau Passion Play 2000. The idea of theatricality was not lost on Wilson when contemplating the content of each station and the deliberate use of landscape and natural lighting. He approached it more from a spiritual standpoint; however, the resulting response from viewers was said to be no less moving and memorable than the traditional Catholic Stations of the Cross.

Alston, “Way of the Cross,” 2

Ibid.

Ibid., 1.
die in den Geest de heilige Plaatsen willen bezoeken” (Considerations upon the Passion of our Lord for those who wish to visit the Holy Places in Spirit). 157 The book is a devotional tract for the Stations of the Cross. The distances between the stations are provided, along with the indulgences that would be acquired after visiting and praying at each station. 158 Jan Pascha’s 365-day spiritual pilgrimage was based on Bethlem’s “Overwegingen.” 159 According to Jan Van Herwaarden, Pascha’s discourse can be considered among the devotional how-to texts that discuss spiritual pilgrimage and meditations on the Way of the Cross. 160

157 Thurston, The Stations of the Cross, 177.

158 Ibid.

159 Ibid., vi.

CHAPTER III

CHRIST CARRYING THE CROSS AS AN AID TO DEVOTION

Image as Mnemonic

Human memory as an activity was thought to bring one closer to God. Just as a tangible pilgrim badge or a souvenir from a shrine was capable of transporting one imaginatively to the sacred sites, paintings also facilitated the viewer’s peregrination by using memory and familiarity of existing places and knowledge of sacred events to encourage movement into and through the work. Praying in front of a devotional image was no different than praying in front of the shrine. Botvinick uses Campin’s Mérode Altarpiece (fig. 28) to illustrate how a viewer could become immersed in the painting to assume the experience of the donors. The donors, situated inside the hortus conclusus, are permitted to witness the Annunciation through an open door. Beyond the enclosed garden is a contemporary Flemish landscape that would have been familiar to those who viewed the painting. The open door from the street to the garden is an invitation to the viewer to join the donors in their spiritual vision. The familiar landscape enabled the viewer to identify with the location and to perceive the couple’s vision as his or her own. In this sense, the painting is an inexhaustible devotional tool. The donors and the viewer become perpetual witnesses to the sacred event.

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162 Botvinick, “Painting as Pilgrimage,” 7-8.

163 Ibid., 7. Botvinick uses the term “geographicity” to describe the idea of linking sacred events to a geographical location. The concept forms the basis of the manifestation of pilgrimage into modern life. A new interest in Christ’s human life was the catalyst for plotting the ideal world onto real geographic sites, 15.
Substitution was understood in medieval society and formed the basis of the virtual pilgrimage. The idea of the mimetic copy validating the actual goes as far back as Plato. In the Middle Ages, highly regarded scholars used mnemotechniques to enhance memory in rhetoric and in the practice of law and theology. Memory was thought to complement self-consciousness, and therefore bring one closer to God. The activity of training one’s memory in the Middle Ages was regarded as a worthwhile activity akin to a high moral code and inherently linked to virtue. Mary Carruthers, in *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, writes, “A person without a memory, if such a thing could be, would be a person without moral character and, in a basic sense, without humanity,”

In her discussion of relics, souvenirs, and replicas, Annabel Jane Wharton distinguishes among how each works in its own distinctive way. The relic travels well, is identical to what it represents, and integrates the material and the spiritual with its magical properties. The True Cross as a relic, for example, retains its potency no matter where it goes. A replica represents displacement and is a practical copy of the prototype. Although the practicality of replicating an entire city on various sites across Europe can be argued, Wharton’s point remains salient in that

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164 Ibid., 14.


166 Noel Packard and Christopher Chen, “From Medieval Mnemonics,” 1299.

167 Ibid., 1297.


sacri monte are, for all purposes, stationary physical representations of an inaccessible town that is significant to those who desire to journey to it for spiritual purposes, thus underpinning the notion of displacement. A souvenir, on the other hand, derives its potency from traveling. It is a sign of what it represents and accommodates the spiritual and the material due to its mnemonic potential.\textsuperscript{170} A souvenir is dependent upon the memory of the event; the shrine or the pilgrimage itself. An argument can be made that a devotional print shares many of the same properties as Wharton’s souvenir. It travels well, and relies upon memory and knowledge of events to obtain its power. Without memory, the souvenir is meaningless; however, one may create a memory by meditating on an image, such as Schongauer’s \textit{Christ Carrying the Cross}, in the same way that visitors to a replica of the Holy Sepulchre can create for themselves a memory that is capable of being recalled at a later date or during a subsequent visit.\textsuperscript{171}

\begin{center}

\textbf{Christ Carrying the Cross}

\textit{If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me}

-Mt 16:24 KJV

\end{center}

A Gothic goldsmith’s work “produced an incomparable, sometimes almost finicky elegance.”\textsuperscript{172} Schongauer’s skill as goldsmith led to a preeminent “tour de force of engraving”

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\textsuperscript{170} Wharton, \textit{Selling Jerusalem} 50.

\textsuperscript{171} A souvenir brought back from a trip to be given to another person who did not travel would seem to have little meaning to the person who did not actually visit the place or experience the event first-hand.

with *Christ Carrying the Cross*.\textsuperscript{173} Theodore B. Donson explains that “no previous engraving approaches its scale, and no other Gothic print contains such a welter of figures, movements, and coloristic elements.”\textsuperscript{174} Schongauer’s skill at handling the burin enabled him to create what could be considered a transitional engraving. Schongauer’s *Christ Carrying the Cross* is a stand-alone, devotional image in a medium that had been traditionally used for much smaller or secular prints. His abilities as a goldsmith and his talent for engaging the viewer through composition are combined in this one work.

Accounts of “Christ Carrying the Cross” appear in all four canonical gospels. The number of paces from Pilate’s house to Calvary was first measured in 1422 by Marinus Polonus, underscoring the importance of the event.\textsuperscript{175} He estimated 450 paces from the Roman castra in Jerusalem to the site of the Crucifixion.\textsuperscript{176} In art, the theme of “Christ carrying the cross” is the depiction of Christ’s final earthly journey to the site of his crucifixion on Golgotha. Depictions of the procession to Calvary, reminiscent of the journey plotted by Polonus, typically differ from the traditional scenes of the Crucifixion, which Schongauer and other printmakers such as Israel van Meckenem have produced, in that it is not static, but rather illustrates a very animated procession. It is precisely the elliptical procession in Schongauer’s version of the theme that allowed for full immersion by the viewer.


\textsuperscript{174} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{175} Thurston, *The Stations of the Cross*, 45.

\textsuperscript{176} Ibid., 58. Many other travelers arrived at differing numbers of paces. Some may have used a single stride while others a double stride. The ground around Calvary was also built over throughout the years, perhaps accounting for such a wide discrepancy in the number of paces recorded as 450 to 1,321 from 1422 to 1593 respectively.
*Christ Carrying the Cross* is a large print; almost four times as large as Schongauer’s other engravings, and one of the largest formatted prints in the Rhine during the late fifteenth century, measuring 11 3/8 x 16 7/8 in. (28.9 x 42.9 cm). The scale of Schongauer’s image is such that a viewer involved in this virtual pilgrimage along the Via Crucis with Christ could do so without interruption due to its size and lack of constraining lined borders.

Here we see a large, frenetic procession of exotic figures clamoring their way to a distant Golgotha. Almost completely obscured by the horse of a Roman soldier is Simon of Cyrene, who was ordered by the Romans to help support the cross in order to expedite Christ’s journey. Surrounding Simon are four equestrian figures of Roman officers, the first of which holds a small scroll in his right hand that likely reads “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.” The two thieves to be crucified with Christ are depicted almost naked at the far left of the composition and are not bearing crosses. Hounds and children scurry excitedly about, adding to the frenzy of the unfolding spectacle. Most of the figures are depicted in contemporary dress. The figures on the right side of the print are shown in exotic, foreign clothing.

The group appears to be traveling the distance from the right, brighter side of the image. The action begins before the city walls, where the figures are small; it swells in the center at its peak, and moves away from the viewer off to the darker side of the scene as the figures seem to disappear from view. The position of the horses assists the viewer’s visual progression in an elliptical fashion around the print. A front-facing horse enters the scene on the far right. The next series of three horses are turned in a three-quarter view, and the final series of two horses, along with their riders, are turned fully away from the viewer and continue up the hill with only their hind quarters in full sight. The sequencing of horses creates a carousel effect that affords motion and direction within the image.
The procession contains several scenes from the early Stations of the Cross, also called The Way of the Cross. After Jesus is condemned to death, he takes up the cross, “And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha.” (Jn 19:17 KJV) Although it does not appear in the scriptures, Jesus meeting his mother along the Via Dolorosa is considered to be one of the early stations. In Schongauer’s *Christ Carrying the Cross*, the viewer is able to anticipate the eventual meeting of mother and son. The Virgin appears along the procession just several steps ahead of Christ (fig. 29). She looks on sorrowfully and appears to have a direct line of sight to where her son is struggling to regain his footing. The line of sight is directed by a break in the composition that separates Mary from the feverish group that surrounds Christ. Here, Schongauer uses cross-hatching, and the fine lines of the lightly engraved plate form an angular pathway that separates mother and son like a lightning bolt.

The path of Mary’s view is accentuated by the two crossing spears that serve as a midpoint connecting Mary with Christ. I have found that a line drawn at a 120 degree angle from the upper left corner of the print through the intersection point of the two spears connects Mary and Christ at the tips of their noses, each equidistant from the point at which the two spears meet. A man to Mary’s left, in the apex created by the crossing spears, is leering at Mary as if to taunt her. The visual break in the composition with Mary and Christ at equal distances from the crossed spears serves to align Mary and Christ as equals. This attention to Mary, further emphasized by leering man to her left, and punctuated by the “lightning bolt” allude to her importance to Christians in the late Middle Ages.

The women weeping on the distant path is a station based in scripture, “And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children” (Lk 23:27-31 KJV). According to scripture, the Virgin Mary was not the only Mary present at the Crucifixion. “Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene” (Jn 19:25 KJV). Visible on the path above and to the left of the Virgin Mary appear to be two veiled women and two male attendants with two additional women further back; the only other women to appear in the composition in addition to the Virgin (fig. 30). It may be a type of continuous narrative depicting the Virgin Mary as she would have appeared later in the procession as grief-stricken and swooning. It is more likely that the women are meant to represent the women of Jerusalem given that there is no other instance where any of the key figures appear a second time in the composition; however, medieval understanding of substitution would have allowed for the exchange of the Virgin Mary for one of the women in the grouping while simultaneously understanding that the group of women also represented the women of Jerusalem who appeared on Golgotha at the hour Christ’s death, or possibly Veronica, who wiped Christ’s face with a

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Amy Neff, “The Pain of Compassio: Mary’s Labor at the Foot of the Cross,” *Art Bulletin* LXXX2 (1998): 255. Due to her exemption from the pain of labor during Christ’s birth, Mary suffered a painful spiritual childbirth at the hour of Christ’s death. Images of Mary swooning at the foot of the cross are abundant in the art and literature of the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. Through her symbolic spiritual childbirth on Calvary, she then became the mother of all mankind. As mother of mankind, she was able to intercede on man’s behalf. The idea of Mary as an intercessor was widely accepted by the twelfth century. It also serves as an analogy between the pain and joy of childbirth and the pain and joy of Christ’s death and resurrection. The scriptural basis for this analogy can be found in John 16:21, “A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man in born into the world” (KJV). In other words, both of their hours have come.
cloth; a non-scriptural event that entered into the Stations of the Cross in the early-fifteenth century. There are no accounts of Veronica in textual accounts of pilgrimages to the Holy Land prior to 1435. In the many narratives that describe the stations, examined by Thurston, all but Master Wey’s description in 1458 place the meeting between Jesus and Veronica close to Calvary.

The procession halts in the foreground until the action and the viewer’s eyes are met by Christ’s gaze. Bearing the tau cross, he falls under its weight. Christ falling under the weight of the cross does not appear in the scriptures but appears as three of the traditional fourteen stations. His faltering beneath the cross can be inferred by Simon of Cyrene’s instruction to take up the cross, “And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross” (Mt 27:32 KJV). Turned to face the viewer, his gaze is imploring. The viewer is locked in an empathetic and reciprocal dialogue of suffering and piety. The procession then leads up the hill to where Christ will be crucified. This is implied by the print and found in Mark 15:25, “And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.” (KJV).

The far right depiction of the city is lightly engraved and appears almost sketchy (fig. 31). A closer inspection reveals a walled European city with rolling hills, an assortment of cathedrals, and a boat on the water, all bear a striking resemblance to Colmar as depicted in Sebastian Münster’s Cosmographia (ca. 1544) (fig. 32). Despite the exotically clad figures in the

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179 Thurston, The Stations of the Cross, 60.

180 Ibid.

181 Ibid.

182 Alston, “The Way of the Cross,” 1. Christ falls a first, a second, and a third time are the Stations 3, 7, and 9 respectively in the traditional fourteen Stations of the Cross as are practiced today.
foreground, there is little doubt that the setting is of a European city, perhaps Colmar; thus, allowing the viewer to identify with the city and therefore see himself as present in the scene.

Schongauer gives attention to the entire surface of the plate. His use of delicately engraved lines shade and create movement in the composition. His use of deep hatching produces bold figures that stand out in contrast against the light sky. The atmospheric perspective produced by Schongauer’s use of a faint single line gives the illusion that the town is far off in the distance. The uncluttered background serves to contrast the dark and heavily shaded men on horseback that are entering the scene from the right. Alternating light and dark vignettes produced by heavier and lighter areas of cross hatching provide a spacial depth for the viewer, allowing one’s eye to move through the print in sequence from vignette to vignette.

Scholars suggest that the composition for *Christ Carrying the Cross* was based on a lost Jan van Eyck panel painting. Two copies after van Eyck show striking similarities to Schongauer’s print. A drawing, *Bearing of the Cross*, Vienna, Albertina (fig. 33), and a painted *Bearing of the Cross*, Budapest (fig. 34), each feature Christ bearing the cross, positioned centrally amid a large procession. In neither depiction does Christ look beseechingly out at the viewer, nor does the procession come as close to the foreground as in Schongauer’s print. The iconography depicting Christ bearing the cross is not unique; however, Schongauer broke new ground by using the print medium to produce a panoramic landscape serving as a stage to procession and pilgrimage.

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Print as Device

Unlike altarpieces or large painted panels, which for obvious reasons remained in place, prints are eminently portable. Prints could and did travel; in books, inside the lids of boxes, or on the person of pilgrims making their way across Europe. The cherished prints were sometimes displayed prominently in one’s home as part of a small shrine or altar, or tacked to the wall (fig. 35). Their increased availability and price meant that these devotional images were within reach of individuals of modest means, and did not have to be commissioned at an exorbitant price. In the fifteenth century, prints—both woodcuts and engravings—became an affordable solution for many people who could not afford to commission a large-scale, devotional panel painting for private viewing.

In Schongauer’s Christ Carrying the Cross (fig. 1), the head of Christ is crucial to understanding how the print enabled an imaginative pilgrimage. When viewed closely, his head sits at an impossible angle on top of his shoulders and appears much like an icon. His imploring face is just below the center of the engraving and serves as an invitation to the viewer. Inviting the viewer is not the only purpose for the centrally positioned and frontally posed head of Christ. The veiled woman at the head of the cross, while seemingly Mary, the mother of God, may also simultaneously represent Mary Magdalen and Veronica. Christ’s awkwardly

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184 Weekes, *Early Engravers and Their Public*, 11. The Annunciation attributed to Robert Campin shows a woodcut of St. Christopher tacked above the fireplace. One of the challenging aspects of print historians today is that a small percentage of the woodcuts, metalcuts, and engravings from the fifteenth century still survive. Those that have survived have done so primarily owing to their artistic merit as they were preserved and kept folded in books, attached to manuscript pages, or tacked high on the wall. Woodcuts that were pasted high up on the walls of the Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekerk (Cathedral of Our Lady) in Antwerp still remain in place today.

positioned face represents the image miraculously imprinted on Veronica’s veil during his walk to Calvary. The viewer, familiar with the story of “Veronica’s Veil,” would not have needed the veil present in the scene to comprehend the meaning of the frontal face of Christ. Memory of the story would make its presence unnecessary.

The image of the Holy Face of Christ imposed on Veronica’s *sudarium* represents the pilgrimage to Rome, and was itself an “indulgenced image.” The Veronica cloth (*sudarium*) became associated with the sufferings of the Passion around 1400, and in the late fifteenth century became ubiquitous across Europe.\(^{186}\) In 1493, over fifty thousand veronicas (as the image was known) printed on parchment were ordered from the German printmaker, Meinhard Ungut.\(^ {187}\) The material veil of Veronica remains curiously, if not purposefully, absent from Schongauer’s scene. Jeffrey Hamburger talks about an obsession with copies during the fifteenth century.\(^ {188}\) While the Eucharist is often looked to as the benchmark in discussions of medieval reproducibility and transformation, the *sudarium*, or *vera eikon*, an image literally imprinted on cloth by its creator, is a copy of a copy, with the idea that Christ himself is a bodily copy of the original, who remains “invisible” in heaven.\(^ {189}\) Further adding a layer to the idea that a copy can possess the same potency as the original, engraved prints were copies and contained all of the same spiritual powers and benefits of the prototype.

\(^{186}\) Parshall and Schoch, *Origins of European Printmaking*, 239. For discussion on the omnipresence of the image see Hamburger, 155.


\(^{188}\) Ibid.
The reciprocity of meaning and making and the relationship with the *sudarium* can be seen in objects throughout the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. The interior of a late fifteenth-century box meant to hold the corporal cloth that is placed under the chalice and paten as the Eucharist is celebrated, contains an embroidered *sudarium* (fig. 36). The embroidery displays the veil as if tacked into the lid of the box; therefore, upon opening it, the celebrant could be metaphorically transformed into one with Christ as he gazed upon the true image (*vera eikon*). In this sense, the exchange of gazes between Christ and the celebrant allowed the celebrant to identify with Christ in the same way that Christ “celebrated” at the Last Supper.190

A German woodcut from Ulm, dated 1482, shows the *sudarium* as if it is tacked onto a panel (fig. 37). The accompanying text is a German prose rendering of a Latin hymn. Translated it reads, “Be greeted Thou Holy Face of our Savior. In it shines the form of the holy gaze, pressed into a small snow-white cloth and given to Veronica as a sign of love. Be greeted Thou jewel of the world, a mirror of the saints, which heavenly spirits long to see…So many days and carenes [units of forty days] have been granted for the reciting of this prayer, that I simply cannot grasp it.”191 The text equates the act of gazing on the *vera eikon*, a venerated relic at St. Peter’s at this time, with coming face to face with God in eternal salvation.192 Pope Benedict XII heavily debated the idea of the vision of God, or the *visio beatifica*, in 1336. He concluded that the chosen ones would come face to face with God in eternity.193 Gazing upon the veronica imprinted on the cloth ensured that one would recognize Christ in the afterlife. One

190 Hamburger, “Prints as Exemplars,” 155.


192 Ibid., 241.

193 Ibid.
could look upon the image and meditate on Christ’s corporeality in the hope of meeting him face
to face in the hereafter. The xylographic text of the Ulm print is a condensed version of a hymn
that referred directly to the relic in St. Peter’s.\textsuperscript{194} The prayer was indulgenced by Pope John
XXII (1316-1334) for “10,000 years” and was only considered effective if recited in front of the
\textit{vera eikon}.\textsuperscript{195} The relics of the Passion had been brought by Helena from Jerusalem to Rome,
making a Roman pilgrimage an attractive one. Among those were a piece of the Cross, a nail
from the Cross, and Veronica’s \textit{sudarium}.\textsuperscript{196} A manuscript in The Hague specifically mentions
the \textit{sudarium} as a relic in St. Peter’s church in Rome.\textsuperscript{197}

Both the cross and the \textit{sudarium} play a crucial role in the interactivity of Schongauer’s
engraving. The theme of taking up the cross was known to the people of the Rhineland through
Suso and later through à Kempis. Spiritually taking up the cross was a way for individuals to
develop a personal relationship with God and experience his human suffering, with the added
benefit of earning indulgences from the safety of their own homes. Parshall suggests that the
replication of a holy image onto paper did not diminish its potency, but that having one in one’s
private possession may have actually added to its strength.\textsuperscript{198} The engraving could be used over
and over again to increase one’s likelihood of entering the kingdom of heaven, making the
engraving a personal stand-in for the relic—and the pilgrimage to Rome—itself.

\textsuperscript{194} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{195} Ibid. The “10,000 years” referred to the time released from Purgatory.
\textsuperscript{196} Miedema, “Following in the Footsteps of Christ,” 82.
\textsuperscript{197} Ibid.,” 82.
\textsuperscript{198} Parshall, \textit{The Woodcut in Fifteenth-Century Europe}, 10.
Due to its width, Schongauer’s image would bend in a panoramic fashion when hand held. The viewer could become fully immersed in the scene, coming face to face with Christ. The imaginative pilgrimage facilitated by Schongauer’s *Christ Carrying the Cross* has at its core the face of Christ. Victor and Edith Turner suggest that a pilgrimage cycle tends to follow an elliptical pattern around a central shrine. On the road to approaching the shrine the pilgrim is able to stop at various “way station[s]…to do penance, pay his devotion, and prepare for the holy climax at the central shrine.” In following this concept, the carousel of horses in Schongauer’s image takes the viewer around the central shrine which is the icon of Christ’s face, effectually completing a Roman pilgrimage.

The pilgrim metaphorically bore Christ’s cross and participated in the procession to Golgotha. The cross and Christ’s gaze worked together to strengthen the effectiveness of the image by double charging it with meditative power. The cross offered a means of salvation and Christ’s intense gaze invited the viewer to join in the pilgrimage in the same way that he beseeching pleads with the viewer in Bosch’s *Christ Carrying the Cross*. The journey could be performed *ad infinitum*, assisted by the fluid contours of Schongauer’s engraved lines. This type of immersion would have been impossible in the smaller prints of the same era. In this way once again, Christ’s face, the Holy Face, serves as a stand-in relic signifying the completion of the imaginative pilgrimage.

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199 Smaller scale reproductions of the print do not function in the same manner. It is the size of the print that allows for immersion.


201 Ibid.
CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSION

The Passion of Christ is the focal event for Christians and signifies their own redemption and hope for eternal life. No Christian devotional practice bestowed more indulgences than the recreation of Christ’s carrying the cross to Calvary.\textsuperscript{202} The redemption of sin by Christ’s sacrifice on the cross was the means to salvation and freedom from sin for devout Christians. The Cross, therefore, is the symbol for Christ’s sacrifice and humankind’s redemption through him. From the time of Constantine’s legal acceptance of Christianity and Helena’s first trip to the Holy Land in the fourth century, the veneration of the holy sites of Christ’s Passion have been essential to proper Christian devotion. During the Middle Ages, pilgrimage to the sacred sites became the way to earn release time from Purgatorial torment through devotions that accrued indulgences.

As Jerusalem became increasing inaccessible, medieval pilgrims adopted different forms of pilgrimage, and often combined several methods of pilgrimage to spiritually experience the sacred sites of Jerusalem. In Schongauer’s \textit{Christ Carrying the Cross}, actual and spiritual pilgrimage are joined to produce a devotional memory device. Actual pilgrimage was recalled mnemonically based on the knowledge of a physical pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Textual accounts provided a memory base for those not having made an actual pilgrimage. Performing, meditating on, or walking through, the Stations of the Cross catalyzed both a spiritual and kinesthetic experience reliant completely on memory.

Schongauer was still deeply rooted in the mystical traditions that pervaded the Rhineland and the rest of Northern Europe. These included ideas of imitation and identification with Christ’s earthly life and final days. Imitation was facilitated by an empathetic response to

\textsuperscript{202} Altson, “The Way of the Cross,” 5.
Christ’s imploring gaze, pleading with the viewer to take up the cross and follow him. Viewers could identify with the familiar landscape and imagine themselves in the scene. Schongauer expertly guided his viewer through the print by using a carousel effect; moving the horses in an elliptical path around the central iconic image of Christ’s face. The sequencing of the only women present in the scene serve to add a sense of moving with the procession.

The idea of substitution was common in medieval thought. The devout of this era could easily understand the concept of simultaneity, making possible the idea of Schongauer’s Christ Carrying the Cross as an Austaubild, a work containing images with simultaneous commutable meanings and functions. Within this one print, one could complete a spiritual pilgrimage to Jerusalem via a pilgrimage to Rome, and meditate on the Stations of the Cross. The devout laity could effortlessly substitute Jerusalem for their own European town, much like the pilgrims to sacri monti. Colmar, or another European city, could be interchanged with Rome, which in turn, could be interchanged with Jerusalem. Christ’s face was assuredly his human face, but also represented the sudarium, the Holy Face, or “Veronica’s Veil,” all one in the same, with Veronica’s Veil residing as a relic in St. Peter’s in Rome. Mary, Veronica, and the daughters of Jerusalem, could be interchanged as needed to conform to the individual stations. The Cross and the sudarium—together with the Stations of the Cross, constituted a spiritual pilgrimage to Rome, both indulgenced acts of devotion. With Christ Carrying the Cross, Schongauer took imaginative pilgrimage out of the cloisters, out of the monasteries, and into the home.

203 Catholics understand that during the Transubstantiation, the host and wine substantively become the body and blood of Christ.
Figure 1. Martin Schongauer, *Christ Carrying the Cross*, ca. 1475-1480. (11 3/8 in. X 17 15/16 in.) Engraving on laid paper, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.\textsuperscript{204}

Figure 2. Hans Burgkmair, *Portrait of Martin Schongauer*, 1483, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.\(^{205}\)

Figure 3. Martin Schongauer, *Virgin in a Rose Arbor*, 1473, Saint Martin, Colmar.\(^{206}\)

Figure 4. Schongauer’s signature (s. Abb. S. 2 u. 7).207

Figure 5. Leipzig, Codex diplomaticus Saxoniae reg., II, Bd. 16. Shows Schongauer’s signature “Martin Schongauer of Colmar,” in matriculation book.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁸ Gebhard Klein, Martin Schongauer und das “Jüngste Gericht im Breisacher St. Stephansmünster” (Breisach: Münsterbauvereins e. V., 2006-7), 8.
Figure 6. Gaspard (Caspar) Isenmann. *The Flagellation and the Crowning of Thorns*, 1465, Unterlinden Museum, Colmar.\(^{209}\)

\(^{209}\) Photo taken by Debra Lamm.
Figure 7. Followers of Martin Schongauer. *Altarpiece of the Dominicans*, last half of the fifteenth century, Unterlinden Museum, Colmar.\textsuperscript{210}

\textsuperscript{210} Photo taken by Debra Lamm.
Figure 8. Martin Schongauer, *A Censer*, ca. 1480-1490, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.  

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Figure 9. Follower of Veit Stoss, *The Baptism of Christ*, ca. fifteenth century, wood carving, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.\(^{212}\)

Figure 10. Martin Schongauer, *The Baptism of Christ*, ca. 1480s, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.\textsuperscript{213}

Figure 11. Martin Schongauer, *Young Woman Fanning a Fire with a Bird’s Wing*, ca. 1469, British Museum, London.\textsuperscript{214}

\textsuperscript{214} British Museum Board of Trustees, “Young Woman Fanning a Fire with a Bird’s Wing,” British Museum, 
Figure 12. Martin Schongauer. Exterior wing of the *Orlier Altarpiece* featuring an Annunciation. c. 1470, Unterlinden Museum, Colmar.\textsuperscript{215}

Figure 13. Martin Schongauer. Interior wing of the *Orlier Altarpiece* showing a Nativity on one side, St. Antony and Jean d’Orlier on the other. ca. 1470, Unterlinden Museum, Colmar.\footnote{Sylvie Lecoq-Ramond, *The Unterlinden Museum, Colmar* (France: Foundation BNP Paribas, Société Schongauer, 1997), 46.}
Figure 14. Abraham Bosse (1602-76), *Interior of an Intaglio Printer’s Shop*, 1642. Etching, British Museum, London.\(^{217}\)

Figure 15. Master of 1446, The Flagellation of Christ, 1446. Fifteenth Century Engravings of Northern Europe, Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin²¹⁸

Figure 16. Master E.S., detail of *The Visitation*, ca. 1450-1460, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.\(^{219}\)

Figure 17. Martin Schongauer, detail from *First Wise Virgin* from the *Wise and Foolish Virgins*, ca. 1490, The Art Institute of Chicago.\(^{220}\)

Figure 19. Master of the Berlin Passion, *Carrying the Cross*, ca. 1450-1470, Guildhall Library, Department of Prints, London, Inv. 595 WS.VI.8.\textsuperscript{222}

Figure 20. Master of the Church Father Borders, *Carrying the Cross*, ca. 1450-1470, metalcut, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.\(^{223}\)

Figure 21. Master of St. Erasmus, *Carrying the Cross*, ca. 1450-1470. Evidence of Colognese influence, British Museum, London, Department of Prints and Drawings, Inv. 1895-9-15-196.224

Figure 22. Hans Memling, *Scenes from the Passion of Christ*, ca. 1470, Galleria Sabauda, Turin.\(^{225}\)

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Figure 23. *Christ Carrying the Cross*, ca. 1500s, ivory. Cleveland Museum of Art. 226

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226 William D. Wixom, “Twelve Additions to the Medieval Treasury,” in *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* LIX, no. 4 (April 1972), Figure 48.
Figure 24. Master E.S., *Christ Carrying the Cross*, ca. 1450-1467. Engraving, Cleveland Museum of Art.\textsuperscript{227}

\textsuperscript{227} William D. Wixom, “Twelve Additions to the Medieval Treasury,” in *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* LIX, no. 4 (April 1972), Figure 50.
Figure 25. Attributed to Ludwig Maler ze Ulm, Christ Bearing the Cross, ca. 1470-1475, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.\textsuperscript{228}

Figure 26. Hieronymus Bosch, *Christ Carrying the Cross*, ca. late fifteenth century, Palacio Real, Madrid.\textsuperscript{229}

Figure 27. Altarpiece with skulls and instruments of Christ’s Passion, 15th century, Jerusalem Chapel, Bruges.\textsuperscript{230}

Figure 28. Robert Campin, *Mérode Altarpiece*, ca. 1425-1428, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.\(^{231}\)

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Figure 29. Detail of *Christ Carrying the Cross*. 
Figure 30. Detail of crying women from *Christ Carrying the Cross*. 

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A version of this thesis with images is available through Kent State University School of Art.
Figure 31. Detail of Landscape from *Christ Carrying the Cross.*
Figure 32. Map of Colmar, ca. 1544. From the *Cosmographia* by Sebastian Münster (1488-1552).\(^{232}\)

Figure 33. Free copy after Jan van Eyck. Bearing of the Cross. Vienna, Albertina.²³³

Figure 34. Free copy after Jan van Eyck. *Bearing of the Cross*. Budapest.\textsuperscript{234}

Figure 35. *Annunciation* (detail) (Brussels panel, ca. early to mid-fifteenth century) attributed to Robert Campin, depicting a woodcut of St. Christopher pinned above the fireplace, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels, Inv. 3937.²³⁵

Figure 36. Corporal case embroidered with veronica, interior, ca. late fifteenth century. Embroidery, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich.  

Figure 37. Konrad Dinckmut, ca. 1482. Colored woodcut on paper. Ulm, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg.²³⁷

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