

THE MYSTERY OF THE MONOGRAM AC  
AT THE MARGINS OF EARLY PRINTMAKING

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**ABSTRACT****THE MYSTERY OF THE MONOGRAM AC  
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Brooks H. Rich

Larry Silver

Engravings attributed to the anonymous early sixteenth-century Netherlandish printmaker known as Monogrammist AC survive in collections worldwide, leading to their inclusion in seminal publications devoted to the history of European prints. Nevertheless, these rare prints remain understudied, due in large part to their frequently diminutive scale and relative invisibility. Extant impressions are often bound in collector's albums or early modern manuscripts that lack adequate photography. Many are classified as ornament prints, a category of primarily decorative compositions that often lack the figurative or functional specificity that sustains extended inquiry. Other AC-monogrammed prints have been dismissed as derivative due to their reliance on models by other prominent early printmakers. Furthermore, many AC-attributed engravings are markedly dissimilar to one another, due to the variant appearances of their signatures (or lack thereof) and the uneven technical approach and proficiency of the printmaker(s) responsible for them. Over the centuries, the AC monogram has become a catchall for many sixteenth-century prints without another home.

This dissertation, the first comprehensive reassessment of the AC corpus, interrogates the validity of long-accepted attributions and introduces previously undescribed impressions to clarify our view of the monogram and its place in the history of early printmaking. In the process, it contends that a careful study of these sometimes



small, disparate, and seemingly marginal prints offers fresh perspectives on bigger issues at the core of early modern print scholarship: such as the nature and function of copying in the sixteenth-century; the relationship between prints and other crafts, like metalwork; the tactics printmakers employed to appeal to specific markets and the business strategies necessary to keep those markets supplied; the activities of print workshops before the rise of professional print publishers; and the practices of early print collectors, to name a few large, interrelated themes. In excavating and examining the prints attributed to one anonymous monogrammist, it demonstrates how the activity of print collecting and the methods of print scholarship have limited the scope of inquiry to select, named figures. For this reason, the project also serves as a methodological case study in the challenges and rewards of an archaeological print research.

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## Conclusion

- Fig. 5.1: Monogrammist AC, after Albrecht Dürer, *The Desperate Man*, engraving. Rijksmuseum (RP-P-OB-2134); and detail to show altered monogram



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## INTRODUCTION

A nameless artist, a construct of connoisseurship, whose intellectual and social origins cannot be investigated, who cannot be addressed in terms of politics or gender – he may just conceivably have been a woman – is, for modern art history, dominated as it is by the availability of written sources, little short of a catastrophe.<sup>1</sup>

Neil MacGregor, *A Victim of Anonymity: The Master of the Saint Bartholomew Altarpiece*

A small engraving in the collection of the British Museum depicts the mythological hero Hercules standing in a decorative niche at the left side of the print, his head crowned with the laurel of victory and at his feet the carcass of a conquered beast [H.233; Fig. 0.1].<sup>2</sup> With his Labors on hold, Hercules rests on his club and directs his attention toward the nude goddess Venus, who twists away from him in her own alcove at the right. The strongman's left hand covers his heart in a gesture that amplifies his amorous gaze. Hercules, after all, is half mortal and vulnerable to lust. Here the hero is in danger of falling prey to the power of women once again. His instability is emphasized by the placement of an orb beneath his right foot.

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<sup>1</sup> Neil MacGregor, *A Victim of Anonymity: The Master of the Saint Bartholomew Altarpiece* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 32.

<sup>2</sup> For all prints attributed to the Monogrammist AC (sometimes also known as Allaert Claesz.), I will provide an in-text Hollstein reference number (i.e. H.#), a citation to the standard catalogue raisonné of the printmaker's engravings: F.W.H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts*, vol. IV (Amsterdam: Menno Hertzberger, 1951), 101-168. Previously undescribed prints that I believe should be added to a future revision of the Hollstein catalogue for the AC monogram are listed in Appendix II to this dissertation and identified in the text with a corresponding number (i.e. App.#). For prints by related artists, I will provide a footnoted reference to the relevant catalogue raisonné; see Bibliography for a key to the abbreviations for these catalogues.

NB: For ease of reference, I may refer to the printmaker(s) that are the subject of this dissertation with the terms "Monogrammist AC" or "AC." Use of the singular form should not be construed as acceptance of a singular identity for the printmaker(s) being discussed.

The print is signed near the bottom edge with a printmaker's monogram that forms the crux of my dissertation project: a capital "A" with a lower case "c" nestled under its arch. Modelled on the famous *AD* of the German artist Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), this mark conforms to a tradition in early printmaking, whereby artists signed their compositions, not with their full names but with a monogram or symbol. The AC monogram has long been linked to a Netherlandish artist named Allaert Claesz., thought to have been active in Amsterdam and Utrecht during the second quarter of the sixteenth century. The British Museum collection alone includes more than 80 prints signed with an AC monogram and another 35 prints attributed to the same hand based on perceived stylistic similarities. A search for the name Allaert Claesz. on the British Museum website retrieves a wide variety of prints: ornamental subjects and battle scenes; devotional prints, genre scenes, and mythological images; large and enigmatic original compositions and small copies after other early sixteenth-century printmakers. Allaert Claesz. was apparently prolific and ambitious, creating engravings for many sectors of the early modern print market.

Yet, clicking through to the biographical details about Allaert Claesz. provided for the Hercules print on the Museum's website reveals an unsettling detail: the print's attribution, like its protagonist, stands on shaky ground.<sup>3</sup> Allaert Claesz. is a straw man. No archival or material evidence exists to fix the AC monogram definitively to an "Allaert Claesz." or to any other named producer. The monogram might not even be the mark of a specific printmaker at all, but rather that of a publisher or a workshop of

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<sup>3</sup> "Allaert Claesz. (Biographical details)," *British Museum*, accessed June 22, 2018, [http://britishmuseum.org/research/search\\_the\\_collection\\_database/term\\_details.aspx?bioId=129186](http://britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database/term_details.aspx?bioId=129186).

engravers working under a common mark. In fact, a survey of the Allaert Claesz. prints at the British Museum alone includes a variety of disparate AC monograms and a wide range of engraving styles, suggesting that these prints were likely the products of multiple printmaking hands. Almost half of the engravings attributed to the monogram also bear no monogram at all. Thus, the AC monogram has become a catchall for many anonymous sixteenth-century prints without any other home.

My dissertation began as a project about the enigmatic engraver Allaert Claesz., but it has evolved into a monograph about a monogram and the morass of prints that have been gathered and misplaced under its umbrella. These exceedingly rare and small prints are understudied and marginalized, due in large part to their frequently diminutive scale and relative invisibility. They often remain bound in collector's albums or pasted into early modern manuscripts that have not been adequately photographed and catalogued. Many of the engravings are classified as ornament prints, a category of primarily decorative compositions that often lack the figurative or functional specificity that sustains extended inquiry. And, quite honestly, some of these AC-attributed prints are the work of second-tier printmakers who have been overlooked due to their derivative or awkward designs.

My dissertation contends, however, that a careful study of these sometimes small, disparate, and seemingly marginal prints offers fresh perspectives on the bigger issues at the core of early modern print scholarship, including such concerns as: the nature and function of copying in the sixteenth-century; the relationship between prints and other crafts, such as metalwork; the activities of print workshops before the rise of professional print publishers; the tactics employed by printmakers to appeal to specific markets and

the business strategies necessary to keep those markets supplied; how later publishers altered earlier matrices and then reissued prints; and the practices of early print collectors, to name just a few large, interrelated themes.

Many engravings attributed to the AC monogram survive in forgotten corners of libraries and print collections. In excavating and examining the prints attributed to one anonymous monogrammist, my dissertation explores how the activity of print collecting and the interconnected methods of print scholarship have served simultaneously to preserve these specimens and limit the scope of our inquiry. For this reason, my dissertation also serves as a methodological case study in the challenges and rewards of an archaeological print research. It demonstrates both the excitement and the consternation inherent in the pursuit of a printmaker (or printmakers) whose work is divorced from reliable biography.

### ***The paradox of the anonymous monogram***

The print producers who signed their engravings with variations on the AC monogram wanted to be remembered. They employed the device as a sign of their authorship and entrepreneurship, intentionally aligning themselves with Albrecht Dürer and other printmakers whose monograms were marketing tools and symbols of their fame. Drawing on the goldsmith's tradition of marking compositions with a stamp to affirm the quality of their metal and to identify the authorship of the master smith, engravers had been issuing prints monogrammed with initials since at least the late 1460s when a German engraver signed his compositions on the plate with the letters *ES*.<sup>4</sup> Other

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<sup>4</sup> David Landau and Peter W. Parshall, *The Renaissance Print, 1470-1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 46-50. For the Master E.S., see Alan Shestack, *Master E.S.: Five*

pioneering late fifteenth-century printmakers, such as Martin Schongauer (c.1440/53-1491) and Israhel van Meckenem (c.1440/45-1503), who were also trained as goldsmiths, followed suit. Schongauer even used a prefabricated goldsmith's punch to produce the tricky curves of the letter S in the monograms on his earliest prints.<sup>5</sup> By the second quarter of the sixteenth century, monograms were common signatures on prints throughout Europe.

The prevalence of these marks led early modern print collectors and connoisseurs to recognize individual monograms as vital indices of identity. The earliest published writing about printmaking, a short history of engraving couched in the biography of the Italian engraver Marcantonio Raimondi (c.1480-before 1534) in the 1568 expanded second edition of Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Artists*, includes references to several monograms by which specific printmakers could be identified.<sup>6</sup> Vasari notes the *MF* device used by Marcantonio and Dürer's *AD* in order to link mark and man in his reader's mind. Near the end of his aside on printmaking, Vasari even cites a few of Dürer's northern imitators by monogram alone, listing notable engravings signed with the letters *GP*, *IB*, and *M*, respectively.<sup>7</sup> Without biographies within which to situate these prints, however, these nameless printmakers are glossed over as an afterthought in a single paragraph. They are part of Vasari's narrative but are designated as less important than

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*Hundredth Anniversary Exhibition, Philadelphia Museum of Art*. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1967).

<sup>5</sup> Koreny, Fritz. "Notes on Martin Schongauer." *Print Quarterly* 10, no. 4 (1993): 385-391.

<sup>6</sup> Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, trans. of the 1568 edition by A.B. Hinds, vol. 3 (London: J. M. Dent, Everyman's Library, 1927), 71-86. For more on Vasari's engagement with printmaking, see Sharon Gregory, *Vasari and the Renaissance Print* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), especially 7-61.

<sup>7</sup> Vasari, *The Lives of the Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, vol. 3, 85-86. Of these monograms, only the GP mark can definitively be connected to a named individual: the German "Kleinmeister" Georg Pencz (c.1500-1550).

named northern masters like Dürer, Schongauer, and the Netherlandish engraver Lucas van Leyden (1494-1533), all of whom were already well known to the artists and collectors to whom Vasari directed his text.

The biographical framework of Vasari's history of engraving and its inherent privileging of named printmaker over anonymous monogrammist reflects a fundamental, perhaps self-evident, aspect of art historical inquiry: the identity of the artist is paramount. Naming a maker allows us to fix his or her works in a cultural and historical context and empowers us to flesh out its connections to the world. In his essay *On Art and Connoisseurship*, Max Friedländer describes a "yearning for biography" that guides and structures our approach to the analysis of objects by unknown makers: "In this endeavor we must take as our starting-points the well-known masters, whose historical position is firmly established and who, like milestones, make it possible to assign places to the anonymous in their vicinity and between them."<sup>8</sup> Friedländer refers to this framework as "biographical scaffolding," a cultural and historical apparatus by which we can understand and assess the products of lesser masters by relating them to fixed points in the history of art.

The AC monogram—visible on surviving prints in prominent collections but separated by accidental circumstances from the personalities and biographies of its makers—fits uneasily into this framework. Without a written biography to link the mark to a name, the monogram gestures to no one; it becomes an anchor rather than an index, dragging its maker into the empty space between the famous pillars of the medium.

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<sup>8</sup> Max J. Friedländer, *On Art and Connoisseurship* (London: B. Cassirer, 1943), 214-215.

### *The survival of the AC monogram*

An introduction to the AC monogram should begin with a consideration of the physical and historiographic systems that have both shaped and limited any understanding of the mark. The fundamental tools used by generations of print collectors to organize and identify their holdings—including both storage structures and published resources, such as biographical encyclopedias and catalogue raisonné publications—are essentially the same apparatuses employed today by museum curators and scholars of early modern graphics. Although these tools offer useful starting points for research on prints attributed to the AC monogram and confirm the longstanding presence of the mark in the written history of early modern printmaking, they often prevent close looking, reinforce historical biases, and reiterate misinformation.

Chief among the challenges facing any study of early modern printmaking is the rarity of surviving impressions.<sup>9</sup> Many early prints—including the small devotional and ornamental images attributed to the AC monogram—were cheap and ephemeral objects, intended for a variety of practical uses. Inherently fragile and disposable, these sheets were typically consumed and manipulated, not actively preserved.<sup>10</sup> Even fine prints aimed at the burgeoning class of collectors in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries survive in small numbers, with only the rarest and most valuable prints consistently safeguarded for future generations. Only due to the deliberate protective and organizational impulses

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<sup>9</sup> On the factors that contributed to the low rate of survival for early modern printed images, see Antony Griffiths, “The survival and loss of prints,” in *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking, 1550-1820* (London: British Museum Press, 2016), 195-213.

<sup>10</sup> For the practical functions (and even literal consumption) of early modern prints, see Suzanne Kathleen Karr Schmidt, *Altered and Adorned: Using Renaissance Prints in Daily Life* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 2011).



of collectors—both individual and institutional—have impressions of early prints survived to this day.

Although the AC monogram is now unfamiliar to all but the nerdiest Netherlandish print scholars, material evidence suggests that prints bearing this mark circulated widely in the sixteenth century and were actively preserved in books and albums. Examples survive as modest extra-illustrations in Flemish monastic prayer books from the period and in the print cabinets of prominent early German and French collectors. They even entered some of the period's most prestigious princely collections. For example, an engraved *Vignette with a Sphinx and a Satyr* [H.191; Fig. 2.19], signed with an AC, appears in a rare, intact album of ornament prints assembled in the second half of the sixteenth century for Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol [Fig. 0.2].<sup>11</sup> Now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, the album's AC print is pasted at the lower left of the sheet alongside works by more famous early modern masters, such as the German printmakers Israhel van Meckenem and Heinrich Aldegrever (1502-c.1555/61). At least two AC-monogrammed prints also survive in the only other substantial, relatively intact, print collection of the later sixteenth-century: that of Ferdinand's cousin Philip II, now housed at the Escorial.<sup>12</sup> One unsigned print attributed to AC [App.46; Fig. 0.3] even

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<sup>11</sup> The engraving is located in an album labelled *Grodesche et Arabesche* (inv.6640, folio 231r, no.742). For an overview of Ferdinand's print collection and a description of the 34 surviving albums that house it, see Peter W. Parshall, "The Print Collection of Ferdinand, Archduke of Tyrol," *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 78 (1982), 139-184. The album containing the AC-monogrammed *Vignette with a Sphinx and a Satyr* is described on pp.171-172 (no.32). While inventory of the collection's approximately 5,000 surviving prints is viewable on iPad tablets in the Kunstkammer of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, there are no ways to remotely search or access images of the volumes. I was unable to visit the Kunstkammer myself to search for any additional AC impressions that might lie within the bound albums. I am indebted to Jeroen Luyckx for visiting in my stead and providing me with an image of this page.

<sup>12</sup> Jesús María González de Zárate, *Real Colección de Estampas de San Lorenzo de El Escorial*, vol. II (Vitoria-Gasteiz: Instituto Municipal de Estudios Iconográficos Ephialte, 1992), 133-135. While the volume illustrates two AC monogrammed prints—*David Beheading Goliath* (H.10)

appears as part of a decorative border in the Muraqqa Gulshan, an album of western prints and Mughal paintings, assembled in the early seventeenth century for the Mughal Emperor Jahangir [Fig. 0.4].<sup>13</sup>

While early modern prints were usually purchased as loose leaves and frequently kept in bundles, chests, or drawers, the survival of most sixteenth-century prints depended upon this type of safeguarding between the covers of a book or album.<sup>14</sup> Until the mid-eighteenth century, albums served as the collector's standard means of storage for all but the largest prints. An album's sturdy boards and bindings offered protection from the damaging effects of moisture and light. Its leaves provided a blank canvas upon which collectors could arrange their impressions according to systems of personal significance. The album facilitated the compact, vertical housing of prints on library bookshelves, where they could be safely stored and easily accessed. Bound albums assembled for wealthy collectors would eventually form the foundation of large European print room collections. As a result, AC-monogrammed prints still pasted into historic collectors' albums have also survived in such repositories as the Louvre Museum's Rothschild collection and the Reserve collection of the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris.

Albums and manuscripts containing prints were increasingly disassembled in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries for the resale of individual impressions by art dealers

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and the *Allegory of the Christian Church* (H.144)—it also erroneously attributes to AC a third engraving: a *Holy Family* published by Hieronymus Cock supposedly after a design by Lucas van Leyden (NHD.4; after Lucas van Leyden). For an overview of the Escorial print collection and its organization, see Mark P. McDonald, "The Print Collection of Philip II at the Escorial," *Print Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (March 1998): 15–35.

<sup>13</sup> Milo Cleveland Beach, "The Gulshan Album and Its European Sources," *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* 63, no. 332 (1965): 65 and 67 (no.2).

<sup>14</sup> Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, 422–425.

or for the purpose of framing prints for public display by museums and libraries. As a result, the vast majority of AC-monogrammed prints in institutional collections are now stored in portfolios and Solander boxes. These standardized archival containers house prints either in folders or hinged on mat board mounts that both protect the impressions and preserve them in a format ready for quick framing or display on a stand or rail in a study room. While some prints attributed to the Monogrammist AC remain in private hands and continue occasionally to enter the market through dealers and auction houses, the majority of extant impressions are protected by bindings and boxes in public collections.

Albums and storage boxes—the arks that have shielded early modern prints from the ravages of time—also paradoxically act as primary obstacles to the examination and comprehensive analysis of the impressions today. While the practice of adhering prints to album leaves or mat boards preserved the printed image, it also concealed and damaged information that might have existed on the sheet's verso. Stamps or inscriptions indicating the impression's provenance as well as paper watermarks that could help to date the production of the sheet were covered and sometimes permanently damaged when the print was pasted down. In order to save space in albums, collectors would often trim prints to the edge of the composition before pasting multiple impressions onto a single album leaf. Lost as a result of this trimming, however, is material information, such as the overall size of the print's matrix and any watermarks that extended beyond the image. In some cases, overzealous trimming has led to the loss of the monogram itself, condemning the remainder of the impression to anonymity. AC-monogrammed engravings that were pasted into prayer books or other period manuscripts have

frequently entered private collections, where they are inaccessible or unknown to print scholars, or they have been housed in library special collections rather than print departments. The practices of collecting have therefore contributed to the fracturing of the AC corpus and its relative obscurity.

Even the systematic organization of print collections has unexpectedly impeded the study of early modern prints by privileging the work of named printmakers over those by anonymous artists like Monogrammist AC. Although many Renaissance collectors arranged their prints by scale or subject matter (e.g. religious subjects, portraits, ornament, etc.), the desire to accumulate works by a few famous printmakers often superseded other systems of organization. Early modern printmakers, such as Albrecht Dürer, Marcantonio Raimondi, and Lucas van Leyden, were so admired in their own time that their prints were prominently preserved in separate albums. Many major collections were assembled around these and other artist's oeuvres, with albums devoted to a single name. As Antony Griffiths tells us, "when there were too few prints to do this, two or three artists of the same school and period were put together; the residue was placed in a single album, arranged in alphabetical order."<sup>15</sup> By the seventeenth-century, a biographical mode of organization prevailed, with whole collections arranged first by regional school and period, then alphabetically by artist's name.<sup>16</sup> It is by this system that most international print collections are organized today. According to this hierarchical

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<sup>15</sup> Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, 437. Griffiths provides a useful overview of the history of print collecting and the organization of early print collections in Chapter 27 of his expansive study; *Ibid.*, 427-445.

<sup>16</sup> For a more focused look at print collecting in the seventeenth-century, see William W. Robinson, "'This Passion for Prints': Collecting and Connoisseurship in Northern Europe during the Seventeenth Century," in Clifford S. Ackley, *Printmaking in the Age of Rembrandt* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1981), xxvii- xlviii.

system, unsigned prints, including many now attributed to the Monogrammist AC, are easily marginalized—grouped into albums or boxes containing works by other anonymous printmakers and subsequently overlooked.

***The print catalogue raisonné and the desire for names and biography***

Although they survive in exceedingly rare numbers, prints attributed to Monogrammist AC or, the Pseudo-Allaert Claesz., reside in print collections and libraries around the world, from Philadelphia to Tehran. Their preservation in prominent European collections and museum print rooms has ensured that these engravings were known to the scholars who compiled the first publications that systematically listed and described all known prints by the masters of early modern printmaking. The AC monogram was thus inscribed into the initial core of European print scholarship almost from its inception. In 1672 the French ecclesiastic, translator, and print collector Michel de Marolles (1600-1681) reproduced three distinct AC monograms in the description of his personal holdings, one of the first published catalogues of a print collection, prefiguring its inclusion in numerous eighteenth-century biographical dictionaries.<sup>17</sup> In 1808, 59 prints bearing the AC monogram or deemed stylistically related were included in Austrian printmaker, scholar, and curator Adam von Bartsch's (1757-1821) seminal *Le peintre graveur*, in which he promoted an appreciation for the medium through the work of printmakers who designed and engraved their own images.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Michel de Marolles, *Catalogue de livres d'estampes et de figures en taille-douce: avec un denombrement des pieces qui y sont contenuës* (Paris: Jacques Langlois, 1672), 30 (no.12), 34 (no.56), and 35 (no.73).

<sup>18</sup> Adam von Bartsch, *Le peintre graveur*, vol. 9 (Vienna: J. V. Degen, 1808), 117-143.

Bartsch's multi-volume publication was an ambitious extension of eighteenth-century print scholarship that aimed to meet the needs of an already established class of collectors eager to identify the prints they owned and to seek out impressions that would complete their collections. The practice of compiling and consistently organizing the entire known work of a single artist into a publication—what we now refer to as a *catalogue raisonné*—began in the French print trade. The detailed descriptions of auction lots written by Edme François Gersaint (1694-1750) made his catalogues useful guides to the collector even after the conclusion of the sale.<sup>19</sup> His 1744 catalogue of the collection of Quentin de Lorangère, for instance, included descriptions not only of the prints by Jacques Callot for sale but also the Callot prints in other collections.<sup>20</sup> Gersaint's unfinished catalogue of Rembrandt van Rijn's prints—which was edited, completed, and issued posthumously in 1751 by the dealers Helle and Glomy—set the standard for future cataloguers, organizing the prints iconographically and assigning them consecutive reference numbers.<sup>21</sup> The catalogue raisonné was thus grounded in the economics of the print trade and a biographical history of art.

Bartsch's catalogue would follow this essential model, but it went beyond a single-artist or single-collection focus in order to provide descriptions of all known prints

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<sup>19</sup> Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, 446-456. Griffith's chapter on "The knowledge and literature of prints," offers a fine overview of the origins of print scholarship, beginning with Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Artist* and continuing through the rise of the library and museum exhibition catalogues in the early nineteenth century.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 450. On Callot's prints as the focus of the first catalogue raisonné and more on the practices and motivations of early catalogue compilers, see Graham Larkin, *The Elusive Oeuvre of Jacques Callot*, PhD. Dissertation, Harvard University 2003.

<sup>21</sup> E. F. Gersaint, Jean-Baptiste Glomy, and P.C.A. Helle, *Catalogue raisonné de toutes les pieces qui forment l'œuvre de Rembrandt* (Paris: Chez Hochereau, 1751). Gersaint's catalogue was translated into English and Dutch in the 1750s and supplemented with additions to the publication by Pieter Yver in 1756; see Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, 450.

by the most famous historic Netherlandish, German, French, and Italian artist-printmakers. Working in the Imperial Library in Vienna, Bartsch's primary resource was the encyclopedic print collection compiled in the early eighteenth-century for Prince Eugene of Saxony.<sup>22</sup> Bartsch based his catalogue on the descriptive lists provided by French dealer Pierre-Jean Mariette (1694-1774), who had systematically organized Eugene's collection in albums according to national school and period and then alphabetically by artist.<sup>23</sup> Bartsch would supplement this information with his personal observations from visits to other European collections and would provide measurements and detailed descriptions, intended to aid scholars in the identification of their prints.

Subsequent European print scholars built on Bartsch's core catalogue throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, adding previously unknown impressions and clarifying details in an effort to list and describe every extant Old Master print. These multivolume catalogues raisonnés became the fundamental resources of print scholarship: fixtures of every print room, print seller's shop, and serious collector's library. The Bartsch numbers assigned to prints in standard catalogues raisonnés still serve as the shorthand identifiers for those objects. They remain the primary reference for a print's dimensions and quick indicators of rarity for specific states and variations. The experts who compiled these published volumes, beginning with Bartsch, were trusted as authorities on the iconic early modern printmakers, having presumably honed their

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<sup>22</sup> Walter Koschatzky, "Adam von Bartsch: An Introduction to his Life and Work," in *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. 1 (Netherlandish Artists), edited by Leonard J. Slatkes (New York: Abaris Books, 1978), vii-xvii.

<sup>23</sup> On Mariette, see Kristel Smentek, *Mariette and the Science of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Farnham, Surrey; Burlington: Ashgate, 2014).

connoisseurial eyes by comparing the largest groups of extant impressions in both private and public collections.

These historic print catalogues raisonnés, however, are also fundamentally flawed as tools for print scholarship. Their utility relies upon the presumed accuracy and comprehensiveness of the information that they contain. These nineteenth- and early twentieth-century catalogues, however, were frequently uncritical compilations of previously published attributions, expanded without returning to the objects themselves to reassess previously established designations. In the case of the AC monogram, the difficulty of locating the prints cited by previous authors and a lack of analytical review led to the unknowing conflation of disparate marks. The catalogue raisonné reinforces the connoisseur's impulse to identify a print's author and connect it to other works within an artist's biography.

The desire to attach prints to a named artist with a written biography also has led to the questionable attribution of unsigned or dubiously-monogrammed prints, a practice which is partially grounded in the economic origins of the catalogue raisonné. In the words of Catherine Soussloff, "the dominance of the (mythic) reality of the artist in narrative contexts, such as biographies, plays into the needs of the marketplace to authenticate works of art and establish attributions to named artists, thereby increasing the value of 'art objects' or commodities."<sup>24</sup> By linking a previously anonymous engraving to a name, the connoisseur inserts the print into the context of that printmaker's narrative and allows it to accrue value as a meaningful piece in a larger

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<sup>24</sup> Catherine M. Soussloff, *The Absolute Artist: The Historiography of a Concept* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 144.



puzzle. Max Friedländer summed up the danger of this attributional impulse in *On Art and Connoisseurship*:

In itself the “attributing” of the insignificant works of art does not appear too important; what mainly gets the sublime sport going, and indeed may turn it into a profitable profession, is the insatiable hunger for names on the part of the collectors and dealers. You may do your best by talking to these people and pointing out to them that every work of art, even the poorest one, is due to one human being who has borne a name; and that it depends on accidental circumstances whether the name is known or not. The delusion that something notable clings to each name is ineradicable. Whoever pays a lot of money for a Rembrandt demands to be covered by authoritative judgment. The unconditional respect for names, even obscure ones, is at all events a bad symptom so far as taste and feeling for quality are concerned.<sup>25</sup>

It is, in part, this “unconditional respect” for the name Allaert Claesz. and its supposed historical (and monetary) value that propagated its connection to the AC monogram. The still-unsubstantiated link between Claesz. and the monogram will be discussed at length in Chapter One of this dissertation, which summarizes efforts by previous scholars to identify the AC printmaker and offers alternative avenues for further inquiry.

### ***The AC catalogue raisonné and its limitations***

My investigation of the AC monogram began with the standard catalogue raisonné for Netherlandish prints: F.W.H. Hollstein’s catalogue of *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts*.<sup>26</sup> The fourth volume of Hollstein’s catalogue, published in 1951, lists 234 numbered entries for prints attributed to Allaert Claesz., about half of which feature photographic illustrations.<sup>27</sup> Over 65 years later, this 72-

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<sup>25</sup> Friedländer, *On Art and Connoisseurship*, 216.

<sup>26</sup> F.W.H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts*, vol. IV (Amsterdam: Menno Hertzberger, 1951), 101-168.

<sup>27</sup> While Hollstein’s numbered entries run to 236, he accidentally skipped numbers H.7 and H.25.

volume publication remains the standard reference for scholars of Netherlandish printmaking in libraries and print rooms around the world. Although a new publisher began producing updated and expanded volumes for key artists with published biographies, such as Lucas van Leyden and Rembrandt, starting in 1995, the tome containing AC's prints has not been revisited or amended. Moreover, the content of this core publication was necessarily flawed by its limitations, including mid-century photography and travel restrictions imposed by war. Hollstein, a former print dealer from Berlin, compiled the catalogue in the refuge of the Amsterdam print room.<sup>28</sup> His entries are therefore based on his own notes and memories as a dealer along with the received wisdom provided by the previous century's worth of published catalogues raisonn   and within the limitations of a particular collection.

The catalogue entry for AC's engraving of *Hercules and Venus* (H.233) epitomizes both the value and the inherent inadequacies of Hollstein's publication. Although the British Museum's print was acquired in 1837 and described in printed catalogues as early as 1862, it was first illustrated in Hollstein's 1951 publication.<sup>29</sup> The entry consists only of a descriptive title, dimensions, and shorthand references to two previous, equally deficient nineteenth-century catalogues raisonn  s. Prior to my own recently published study on the engraving, this meager entry represented the sum of published scholarship on the fine little print.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> For additional background on Hollstein's project and the ongoing revision and expansion of the series (including both Dutch & Flemish and German prints) see Sound and Vision Publishers, "Friedrich Wilhelm Hollstein (1888-1957)," accessed June 22, 2018, <https://www.hollstein.com/friedrich-wilhelm-hollstein-1888-1957.html>.

<sup>29</sup> For the print's earliest appearance in a catalogue raisonn  , see J.D. Passavant, *Le Peintre-Graveur*, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Rudolph Weigel, 1862), 41 (no.105).

<sup>30</sup> Brooks Rich, "The Burin, the Blade, and the Paper's Edge: Early Sixteenth-Century Engraved Scabbard Designs by Monogrammist AC," in *The Primacy of the Image in Northern European*

This engraving might serve as a case study to illustrate the limits of the catalogue raisonné in general and how it constrains our understanding of the print's facture, function, and exemplary value for early modern print culture. Smaller in scale than a standard business card and engraved with an impressive variety of hatched shading and stipple marks, the print attends to minute detail with imaginative burin-work commonly seen in AC-monogrammed prints. Here the printmaker embellishes the space above the mythological figures with a canopy of engraved scrollwork, containing pairs of monstrous dolphins bound together at their leafy tails, decorative flourishes typical of dozens of other ornament prints signed by the printmaker. Grotesque prints like these entered a broad European market for ornamental prints that began in Rome around 1500 with the discovery of similar fantasies painted on the walls unearthed at Nero's Domus Aurea (see Chapter Three for more on the origins of the ornamental grotesque and AC's engagement with these forms).<sup>31</sup>

Although Hollstein's catalogue frequently includes references to printed prototypes by other artists, his entry for AC's *Hercules and Venus* does not acknowledge the printmaker's debt to previous models. Early modern printmakers reproduced works by other artists, not only by directly replicating previous models but also by combining disparate forms of printed inspiration into new and unique conceptions. The scabbard

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*Art, 1400-1700: Essays in Honor of Larry Silver*, edited by Debra Cashion, Henry Luttikhuizen, and Ashley West (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 347-361.

<sup>31</sup> The term *grotesque* derives from the location of these strange and monstrous forms painted on the walls of the Golden House of Nero's underground rooms (*grotte*, in Italian). For an account of the rediscovery of these decorations and their influence on Renaissance forms in the sixteenth-century, see Nicole Dacos, *La Découverte de la Domus Aurea et la Formation des Grotesques à la Renaissance* (London; Leiden: The Warburg Institute; E.J. Brill, 1969); and Michael Squire, "'Fantasies so Varied and Bizarre': The Domus Aurea, the Renaissance, and the 'Grotesque,'" in *A Companion to the Neronian Age*, ed. Emma Buckley and Martin T. Dinter (Hoboken, NJ: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2013), 444-64.

design with *Hercules and Venus* is one such eclectic copy. Hercules's exaggerated stance is based on Marcantonio Raimondi's print of *Apollo* [Fig. 0.5], and Venus's twisting form draws upon a separate engraving of the goddess [Fig. 0.6], both engraved in the 1510s after designs by Raphael.<sup>32</sup> AC adapted the basic forms from those engravings but made them his own, adding details that change the iconography and putting the figures into conversation, allowing the curves of their two bodies to mirror each other and aligning their gazes. While Marcantonio's Venus turns with Cupid in her niche, AC's goddess appears to be led away by her child, adding a narrative of lost love to what might otherwise be a static composition. AC's oeuvre is filled with similarly complex examples of creative copying after prints by Italian, German, and Netherlandish artists of the early sixteenth century. Presumably these quotations would have appealed to more sophisticated early modern collectors, rewarding their close looking and connoisseurship. In Chapter Two of this dissertation, I will explore the variety of attitudes toward copying evident in the AC corpus.

Although Hollstein did provide basic details about the *Hercules and Venus* print in his publication, he was unaware of a unique impression in the collection of the Louvre Museum that unmask the British Museum's print as a mere fragment of a larger engraving. Still bound in an album with lesser-known works on paper acquired from Baron Edmond de Rothschild in 1935, the print [Fig. 0.7] only appeared on the Louvre's website in recent years.<sup>33</sup> The bottom half of the engraving is populated with putti, hybrid

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<sup>32</sup> Marcantonio, B.335 and B.311, respectively.

<sup>33</sup> "Les deux côtés d'une gaîne (Hercule et Vénus)," *Inventaire du département des Arts graphiques*, Musée du Louvre, accessed June 22, 2018, <http://arts-graphiques.louvre.fr/detail/oeuvres/31/517682-Les-deux-cotes-dune-gaine-Hercule-et-Venus>.

creatures, a medallion, and disembodied heads, connected by foliate tendrils into strange and busy columns—the kinds of details common in AC-monogrammed ornament prints. The impression's long, trapezoidal shape confirms a suspicion that the composition might have served as a model for the decoration of a scabbard or sheath for a sword or dagger. In this context, the temptation of Hercules teaches a man necessary restraint, including the responsible use of a blade, as it warns about the danger of impetuous behavior as well as about the emasculating power of desire. Yet it might also form part of a bawdy joke regarding the use of a sheath as protective covering for the phallic sword. The print is one of more than a dozen scabbard designs attributed to the AC monogram. While little evidence survives to prove that such printed designs were routinely translated into metalwork objects, the playful prints demonstrate the engraver's desire to appeal to fellow craftsmen, one of the key audiences for early sixteenth-century graphics. The third chapter of this dissertation will look more closely at AC's innovative scabbard designs and their potential appeal to early modern craftsmen and collectors.

Several additional previously unrecorded impressions of the *Hercules and Venus* print show how print consumers could physically engage with the printed image, even employing their own blades to permanently alter the sheet. One impression, now in collection of the Albertina Museum in Vienna [Fig. 0.8], was cut by a previous owner, leaving only the monogrammed section of the print depicting Venus and Cupid, while sending Hercules to the proverbial dustbin. The Rijksmuseum currently attributes an unsigned fragment of the print, detached from the bottom left of the composition, to an anonymous Netherlandish engraver known as Monogrammist R [Fig. 0.9]. The British Museum, in fact, acquired both halves of the print at the same sale in 1837, but the

unmonogrammed portion [Fig. 0.10] is now catalogued as an undescribed ornament print and is only tentatively attributed to “Allaert Claesz.”

A further unrecorded impression of the print [Fig. 0.11] in the private collection at Schloss Wolfegg in southern Germany, provides material evidence that even the copper matrix from which the engraving was printed was later subjected to permanent alteration. While all other extant impressions of the engraving are trimmed to the edge of the print, this later impression retains a generous margin of paper around the image, and its plate mark clearly shows that the copper plate itself was cut. Perhaps the bottom half of the plate was damaged and trimmed away. Alternatively, a later owner of the matrix may have valued the upper, figurative section more than the ornamental foot or else divided the plate to print as two separate compositions, thus adding an extra print to his stock list. Once again, this unique surviving impression contributes new layers of history and fresh questions to a printed object that we typically expect to be identical in its multiplicity. Throughout the dissertation I will contend with the accidental consequences of consumers’ decisions to trim, paste, and hand-color AC-monogrammed prints. In the final chapter, however, I will focus more directly on the intentional alterations to AC impressions and plates. By studying the afterlives of AC-monogrammed prints we can learn about the practices of later publishers and the mutable value of an anonymous monogram.

The scabbard design with *Hercules and Venus* helps to illustrate some challenges at the heart of this project. While a gradual increase in the online accessibility of images from large museum and library collections has now made it possible to view many prints from a distance, their physical rarity has made it difficult to compare impressions

comprehensively, including their material qualities. Some engravings have only been published as blurry thumbnails in outdated print inventories.<sup>34</sup> Others exist solely in a single impression or have been trimmed or altered by collectors and later publishers, masking their original, complete appearance.

As a result, the few scholarly analyses of these prints have been hampered by incomplete (and often inaccurate) information provided in the standard reference works for the engraver's oeuvre and replicated in subsequent publications and online museum catalogues. Fewer than half of the 234 prints listed in Hollstein's catalogue were accompanied by an image, and many unillustrated entries fail to provide any location for known impressions or the source of their dimensions. Subsequent scholarship on the monogrammist has generally been limited to short entries in exhibition catalogues that merely summarize previous spurious hypotheses about the artist's identity or discuss a few select prints without fully understanding their relationship to the larger AC corpus. Priority has been given to prints deemed to be original compositions, ignoring those that exhibit distinctive, even wildly creative repurposing of previously printed models. Anxiety about the authorship and originality of these prints, their small scale, and the conditions of their preservation in albums have led to their literal marginalization.

My comprehensive study of the AC monogram has required not just a review of previous literature but also a much more active and focused looking: digging through boxes and albums of anonymous prints; visits to private collections and less thoroughly catalogued museums; careful line-by-line comparisons of both known and new impressions alike; consideration of the sources of AC copies as well as how they diverge

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<sup>34</sup> See, for example, Michèle Hébert, *Inventaire des gravures des écoles du Nord: 1440-1550*, vol. 2 (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1983), 315-332.

from their models. But the sometimes-tedious work of searching for AC prints in outlying collections has led to me to discover unexpected impressions, undocumented prints, and new material contexts that help to bring the variations on the monogram into sharper focus. Literally looking to the edges of the prints themselves—to the plate mark, the margin, the background—has revealed new states and wider new insights into the business of printmaking in the period.



## CHAPTER ONE: The Many Hands Behind the AC Monogram

Engravings attributed to the anonymous early sixteenth-century printmaker known as Allaert Claesz. (and, alternatively, as the Monogrammist AC) have been listed in written records of print collections since at least the late seventeenth century; they have also been included in seminal catalogue raisonné projects devoted to European printmakers since Adam Bartsch's 1808 *Le peintre graveur*.<sup>35</sup> Nearly 200 different known sixteenth-century prints in European and American print collections bear some related variation on this monogram: a capitalized letter "A" with a smaller letter "c" nestled under its arch. In excess of 150 additional unsigned prints have also been folded under the AC umbrella in various catalogues raisonnés and collections, based on perceived stylistic similarities to monogrammed compositions.<sup>36</sup>

Yet many of the prints attributed to this monogrammist are markedly dissimilar to one another, in part due to the variant appearances of their signatures (or lack thereof); they also vary widely in terms of compositional style, scale, and range of subject matter, as well as the technical approach and proficiency of the printmaker responsible for the engraved lines. Some of this variation may relate to the fact that many of these prints are direct copies after prints by other artists and aim to capture the characteristic lines of those sources. Other differentiation between the various AC monograms and the stylistic character of the prints may be attributed to the technical maturation of the printmaker or a

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<sup>35</sup> Adam von Bartsch, *Le peintre graveur*, vol. 9 (Vienna: J. V. Degen, 1808), 117-143.

<sup>36</sup> These tallies of monogrammed prints and works variously attributed to the Monogrammist AC are derived from my personal research in museum and library print collections and Hollstein's catalogue. Although it is in need of update, this publication remains the most comprehensive (and extensively illustrated) catalogue of prints attributed to the artist.

shift in his focus over time. Moreover, a large number of the prints attributed to this singular hand are likely the work of several different printmakers. The space under the AC monogram has become a kind of catchall for many sixteenth-century prints without another home.

The partial and contradictory biographical information that authors have historically offered about the presumed maker (or makers) of prints marked with an AC monogram has further limited scholarly understanding of those characteristics that should either tie these prints together or lead to their reattribution to a variety of hands. Mired in a mess of biographical speculation that is often divorced from the evidence present in the prints themselves, scholars have tried to identify AC without first seeking out a full picture of the prints that have been attributed to the mark. In order to establish the true bounds of the corpus and to understand its place in the history of printmaking, it will be necessary both to examine the expanded corpus of prints bearing the AC monogram and to review the biographical historiography and print scholarship that led to the inclusion of 234 prints by Allaert Claesz. in Hollstein's catalogue raisonné.

### ***Biography: Allaert Claesz. and the Monogrammist AC***

The name Allaert Claesz. was first associated with the AC monogram in Jacob de Jonghe's 1764 expanded and revised third edition of Karel van Mander's *Schilder-boek*.<sup>37</sup> Van Mander briefly mentioned an Alart Claessen of Amsterdam in the first edition of his publication in 1604, noting only that Pieter Aertsen (1508-1575) apprenticed under this painter, who was famous in his own time and whose portraits still hung in the Doelen in

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<sup>37</sup> Jacobus de Jonghe, *Het leven der doorluchtige Nederlandsche en eenige Hoogduitsche schilders*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam: Steven van Esveldt, 1764), 236.

Amsterdam.<sup>38</sup> De Jonghe's publication left Van Mander's reference to Claesz. unchanged but added a footnote asserting that the same "Allard Klaaszen" was the printmaker responsible for copper engravings "cut with a Gothic taste" and emblazoned with a monogram consisting of a gothic letter A with a smaller letter c beneath it.<sup>39</sup> His note also makes specific reference to a print depicting the baptism of a Moor by Saint Philip, dated 1524, and a series of the *Dance of Death*—descriptions that correspond with prints bearing AC monograms known today.<sup>40</sup>

As part of his effort to visualize the Netherlandish canon outlined by Van Mander, De Jonghe even included an etched portrait of Claesz. [Fig. 1.1] by the Amsterdam printmaker Jan l' Admiral as one of the series of prints that serve to illustrate the publication.<sup>41</sup> The print (plate V in the publication) depicts Claesz. and the Amsterdam painter Barend Dircksz. (1500-1577), father of the more famous Dirck Barendsz. (1534-1592), as the subjects of bust-length portrait prints or drawings on paper sheets pinned to a curtain in an otherwise empty space. Claesz. holds a paintbrush in his right hand, making no reference to his proposed work as an engraver. The source and accuracy of this etched visage remain unknown, however, and the effigy's relationship to the Allaert Claesz. mentioned by Van Mander is left unproven.

In fact, no documentary evidence survives to confirm the biographical information about Allaert Claesz. provided by either Van Mander or De Jonghe. Archival

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<sup>38</sup> Hessel Miedema, ed., *Karel van Mander: the lives of the illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters* (Doornspijk: Davos, 1994), 233 (Fol. 243v).

<sup>39</sup> De Jonghe, *Het leven*, vol. 1, 236.

<sup>40</sup> See *The Baptism of the Eunuch* (H.77) and the *Dance of Death* series (H.167-173).

<sup>41</sup> The publication included 51 portraits by l' Admiral on 32 plates; for further bibliography, see F.W. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts*, vol. 10 (Amsterdam: Menno Hertzberger, 1953), 2.

records in Amsterdam have yet to substantiate Van Mander's claim about Pieter Aertsen's training with such a master.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, according to Johannes ter Gouw, there was no proof of the existence of paintings by an Allaert Claesz. at the Doelen by the middle of the seventeenth century.<sup>43</sup>

In spite of the early association between the AC monogram and Allaert Claesz., Adam von Bartsch remained relatively cautious in attributing the prints to a specific person. In the ninth volume of his ambitious *Le peintre graveur*, published in 1808, Bartsch listed and described 59 prints by an anonymous Monogrammist AC, whom he identified only as a Netherlandish engraver.<sup>44</sup> His short introduction to the print entries notes the casual nature of the references to the name "Alaert Claas" in Dutch sale catalogues offering prints bearing the AC monogram. He adds, however, that this attribution has no known documentary basis, implying that he either did not know of De Jonghe's commentary on Van Mander or else did not consider it trustworthy.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> This lack of proof did not stop some authors from continuing to describe Claesz. as Aertsen's teacher in texts about each of them; see, for instance, N. de Roever, "Pieter Aertsz: gezegd Lange Pier, vermaard schilder," *Oud Holland*, vol. 7 (1889), 3-4; and Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish*, vol. 4, 101.

<sup>43</sup> Johannes ter Gouw, *Geschiedenis van Amsterdam*, vol. 5 (Amsterdam: Scheltema & Holkema, 1891), 454. There is, however, a group portrait depicting eighteen members of the Schuttersgilde der Kloveniers dated 1534, which is attributed to the painter Allaert Claesz. The unsigned painting, now held by the Amsterdam Museum (inv SA 7300), is recorded as having once hung at the Kloveniersdoelen and later in the small hall of the Court Martial in the old Amsterdam Town Hall. Further research is required to understand the specific attribution of this painting, which was once given to Jan van Scorel. It is listed in B.W.F van Riemsdijk, *Catalogus der Schilderijen, Miniaturen, Pastels, Omlijste Teekeningen, Enz. In het Rijks-Museum te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Roeloffzen-Hübner en Van Santen, 1903), cat. no.691, 71-72. See also an entry and image of the painting on the Amsterdam Museum online collection catalogue, accessed June 22, 2018, <http://am.adlibhosting.com/Details/collect/38445>.

<sup>44</sup> All but three of prints described by Bartsch bear a variation on the AC monogram; for the exceptions, see *Amnon Violating Thamar* (B.3; H.4); *Joseph and Potiphar's Wife* (B.6; H.19); and *Brawl Between a Foot-Soldier and a Peasant* (B.35; H.157).

<sup>45</sup> Bartsch, *Le peintre graveur*, vol. 9, 117. Bartsch's full introduction reads as follows: "On apprend par quelques estampes de ce maître qu'il a travaillé à Utrecht, entre les années 1520 et 1555. Nous ignorons, avec quell fondement quelques catalogues de vente hollandois l'appellent

Rather than relying on the biographical assertions of earlier scholars, Bartsch aimed to ground his assumptions about the identity of Monogrammist AC in the evidence provided by the inscriptions found on the prints themselves. Based on his reading of the text “VTRICH” engraved at the bottom left of a monogrammed print depicting *A Naked Queen on a Throne, Threatened by a Dragon* [H.145; Fig. 1.2], Bartsch became the first scholar to assert that the Monogrammist AC was active in the Dutch city of Utrecht instead of Amsterdam.<sup>46</sup>

Two additional prints bearing both the AC monogram and similar inscriptions subsequently became part of the standard Monogrammist AC corpus, helping to reinforce the possibility that the printmaker was born or worked in Utrecht. An impression of an engraved *Nativity* [H.24; Fig. 1.3] includes the letters “VTRICHT” or “VLRICHT” on a stone block at the bottom center of the print, and an image of *Hercules, Venus, and Cupid* [H.118; Fig. 1.4] contains the letters “VTRIC / HT” on a tablet at the upper left corner of the composition.<sup>47</sup> Lacking evidence that Monogrammist AC worked in Utrecht, Arthur E. Popham, a curator of works on paper at the British Museum, suggested that the inscription could refer to the location of a prototype for the prints.<sup>48</sup> In fact, although

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*Alaert Claas*.” I have yet to encounter any of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century Dutch print sale catalogues to which Bartsch alluded.

<sup>46</sup> Three states of this print survive. Most common is this second state, which includes the inscription, monogram, and a date. The first state includes only the inscription and the third state lacks inscription, date, or monogram, but exhibits evidence of their burnishing out. The implications of these changes to the plate will be considered later in this chapter in a section on the possibility of AC’s role as a publisher, and in Chapter Five on the afterlives of AC’s prints.

<sup>47</sup> Like the engraving of *A Naked Queen on a Throne, Threatened by a Dragon*, each of these prints exists in rare first state impressions with the enigmatic inscription but before the addition of the AC monogram. See note 126 in this chapter for additional information about these first state impressions.

<sup>48</sup> A. E. Popham, “The Engravings of Frans Crabbe van Espleghem,” *The Print Collector’s Quarterly*, vol. 22 (April 1935), 102. Popham cites as precedent the inscription “*bosche*” on prints designed by Alart du Hamel in the late fifteenth century, which he reads as a reference to their production in the city of s-Hertogenbosch. Scholars still suggest, however, that Du Hamel’s

models for the *Naked Queen* and *Nativity* engravings remain elusive, I have located a source for the figures of Venus and Cupid in a 1521 painting of *Venus and Cupid* [Fig. 1.5] by the Netherlandish artist Jan Gossart (ca.1478-1532).<sup>49</sup> Gossart served as court painter to Philip of Burgundy during his term as Bishop of Utrecht (from around 1516-1521) and helped to decorate Philip's residence at Duurstede Castle, just outside of the city. The painting of *Venus and Cupid* was likely commissioned by Philip and installed, due to its erotic content, behind a curtain in his private study at Duurstede.<sup>50</sup> In line with Popham's theory, the inscription on the print could therefore refer to the location of the painted source for these figures. Alternatively, the Belgian collector and scholar Dr. J.C.J. Bierens de Haan later opined that the lettering might be read as a reference to the town of

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inscriptions aim to connect his prints to the fame of Hieronymus Bosch, not the place of their production; see Joris van Grieken et al., eds., *Hieronymus Cock: The Renaissance in Print* (Brussels: Mercatorfonds, 2013), 246.

<sup>49</sup> The engraving of *Hercules, Venus, and Cupid* has been catalogued in all previous publications as an image of Hercules and Omphale, the Lydian queen who enslaved the hero. Depictions of Omphale generally promote her dominance over Hercules by showing her holding his club and wearing his lion's skin. Given the AC print's relationship to Gossart's painting and its possible connection to an early sixteenth-century humanist dialogue written by Martin Dorp about Hercules and Venus at the crossroads, I believe that the print's female protagonist is Venus. The likely influence of Dorp's text on Gossart's painting, is argued in an essay by Stephanie Schrader, "Gossart's Mythological Nudes and the Shaping of Philip of Burgundy's Erotic Identity," in Maryan Wynn Ainsworth et al., *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossart's Renaissance: The Complete Works* (New York: New Haven: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press, 2010), 64. For Dorp's Latin text, along with commentary, see Jozef Ijsewijn, "Martinus Dorpius: *Dialogus* (ca. 1508?)," in *Charisterium H. de Vocht, 1878-1978*, edited by Jozef Ijsewijn and Jan Roegier (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1979), 74-101. The reliance of AC's engraving on Gossart's prototype was also observed in a footnote to J. Sterk's printed inventory of Duurstede's holdings; see J. Sterk, *Philips van Bourgondië (1465-1524): Bisschop van Utrecht als Protagonist van de Renaissance, zijn Leven en Maecenaat* (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1980), 315no11.

<sup>50</sup> For a full consideration of Gossart's painting as a demonstration of Philip's "political and sexual prowess," see Schrader, "Gossart's Mythological Nudes," 57-67. See also cat. no. 33, 227-229.

Utrecht, near Lübeck, Germany.<sup>51</sup> Archival support for a Monogrammist AC's activity in either city has yet to surface.<sup>52</sup>

Other seventeenth- and eighteenth-century print scholars suggested alternative identities for the printmaker responsible for the AC monogram, often a result of the desire to connect the mark to a printmaker with a more robust written biography. The French ecclesiastic, translator, and print collector Michel de Marolles confused the nested AC monogram with a side-by-side AC mark then attributed to the Flemish engraver Adriaen Collaert (c.1560-1618) as he described the prints in his collection.<sup>53</sup> This same erroneous attribution would be repeated in subsequent biographical compilations and the dictionaries of artists' monograms.<sup>54</sup> Drawing on Jacob de Jonghe's 1764 update to Van Mander, Carl Heinrich von Heineken, curator of the Dresden print cabinet, would refute the attribution to Collaert in his ambitious *Dictionnaire des Artistes* in 1790.<sup>55</sup> And yet

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<sup>51</sup> Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, *Lucas van Leyden en tijdgenoten* [exh. cat., Prentenkabinet Museum Boijmans] (Rotterdam, 1952), 56.

<sup>52</sup> In his MA thesis on the work of Frans Crabbe, Maarten Bassens proposes that the inscription might represent a variation on the Dutch verb *verrichten*: to make, do, or execute. See Maarten Bassens, *Frans Crabbe van Espleghem (ca.1480-1553)*, MA Thesis, KU Leuven, 2016, 43. This interesting hypothesis presumably relies on the presence of the monogram directly next to the inscription so that it can function as a colloquial version of the Latin term *fecit*. The monogrammed second state of the *Hercules, Venus, and Cupid* engraving, however, is signed on a rock at the bottom of the print, far removed from the letters "VTRIC / HT" on the tablet at the upper left, making it unlikely that the inscription should be read as directly complementary to the monogram. Alternatively, the inscription might be a variation on the Germanic name Ulrich, perhaps the printmaker, designer, or patron of these prints.

<sup>53</sup> Marolles, *Catalogue de livres d'estampes*, 44. Marolles refers to the printmaker as "Adrian Colart d'Vtrek," apparently conflating the inscription on the print with his misreading of the monogram.

<sup>54</sup> See P.A. Orlandi, *Abecedario pittorico* (Bologna: Costantino Pisarri, 1704), 409 & 411 (no.22); J.F.Christ, *Dictionnaire des monogrammes, chiffres, lettres initiales, logogryphes, rébus, &c.* (Paris: Chez Sebastien Jorry, 1750), 16-17; and Joseph Strutt, *A Biographical Dictionary; Containing an Historical Account of All the Engravers, from the Earliest Period of the Art of Engraving to the Present Time, Etc.* (London: Printed by J. Davis, for Robert Faulder, New Bond Street, 1785), 211-212 (monograms under no.81 in Table I).

<sup>55</sup> Carl Heinrich von Heineken, *Dictionnaire des Artistes, dont nous avons des estampes: avec une notice détaillée de leurs ouvrages gravés.*, vol. 4 (Leipzig: Chez Jean-Gottlob-Immanuel

the confusion lingered into the nineteenth-century. François Brulliot, the print curator to the King of Bavaria, would later note that Michel Huber and other cataloguers from Besançon made the same mistake.<sup>56</sup> In his 1817 dictionary of artist's marks, Brulliot rightly noted that the dates on prints with this AC monogram are too early for Collaert to have executed them and that the overall style of the prints attributed to the Monogrammist AC were otherwise already out of fashion by Collaert's day.<sup>57</sup>

The numerous alternate spellings of Allaert Claesz.'s name (especially when translated into different languages) and their similarities to the names of other sixteenth-century northern artists also may have contributed to confusion over the Monogrammist AC's identity, leading to the conflation of biographical details from multiple sources.<sup>58</sup> In

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Breitkopf, 1790), 251. Heineken died in 1791 and never published a volume that might have included his catalogue of prints attributed to the printmaker he knew as Klassen.

<sup>56</sup> François Brulliot, *Dictionnaire de monogrammes, chiffres, lettres initiales et marques figurées sous lesquels les plus célèbres peintres, dessinateurs, et graveurs ont désigné leurs noms* (Munich: J.G. Zeller, 1817), 17, no.28. The citation to Michael Huber comes from a handbook for art lovers and collectors in which the author appears to commingle biographical details for the Monogrammist AC and Adriaen Collaert and confuse their prints. He incorrectly reproduces a crossbar AC monogram as the mark of "Adrian Collaert the Elder," who he describes as a draughtsman, printmaker, and print publisher active in Antwerp from around 1520. See M. Huber and C. C. H. Rost, *Handbuch für Kunstliebhaber und Sammler über die vornehmsten Kupferstecher und ihre Werke*, vol. 5 (Zürich: Orell, Füssli and Company, 1801), 93-96. For the Besançon dictionary, which also includes descriptions of a few Monogrammist AC prints in the section on Collaert, see François Malpé and Jean-Pierre Baverel, *Notices sur les graveurs qui nous ont laissé des estampes marquées de monogrammes, chiffres, rébus, lettres initiales, etc.*, vol. 1 (Besançon: Impr. de Taulin-Dessirier, 1807), 191-192.

<sup>57</sup> While Brulliot was correct to discredit an attribution of these prints to Adriaen Collaert, he still published incorrect information about the printmaker, asserting that he was born in 1519, while we now know that he was born around 1560. Brulliot also confuses the two AC monograms again later in this same study. He includes a different AC mark attributed to Collaert in the second part of his study as no. 49 (pp.357-358; this monogram is reproduced on page 36 of the supplement) claiming that other scholars have attributed the mark to Collaert without grounds but that the monogram can be found on copies after Albrecht Dürer. Since Collaert did not copy Dürer, one might assume that he is referring again to our AC monogram, which is found on numerous copies after Dürer.

<sup>58</sup> While Allaert Claesz. is now the most common spelling of the name, other published iterations and translations have offered variations on the forename including Alart, Alaert, Albert, and Allard; variations on the figure's surname include Claas, Claaszen, Claaszon, Claessen, Claeszen, Claeszon, Classen, and Klaaszen,



1850, for instance, Joseph Heller suggested that the monogram might be associated with the artist now known as Aertgen Claesz. van Leyden (1498-1564), a painter who worked alongside Lucas van Leyden as a pupil of Cornelis Engebrechtsz (c.1460-1527).<sup>59</sup>

Heller's entry on the artist in his *Praktisches Handbüch für Kupferstichsammler oder Lexicon*, begins by claiming that "Claas or Claes, Alaert, also known as Claaszoon, was actually called Aertgen Claessen the younger, i.e the son of Nicolaus, painter and printmaker of Utrecht from 1520-62. Student of Cornelis Engelbrechtsz."<sup>60</sup> Just four years later, Heller would omit any references to Engebrechtsz from his *Zusätze zu Adam Bartsch's Le Peintre Graveur*, noting only that "Alaert Claas (or Claessen or Claaszon)" was an Utrecht printmaker, and leaving out the possibility that his true name was Aertgen.<sup>61</sup> Yet authors such as Charles Le Blanc and Jules Renouvier would reiterate the incorrect conflation of Aertgen Claesz. van Leyden and Allaert Claesz., either suggesting that the two names were synonymous or else presenting as fact that Claesz. was trained by Engebrechtsz.<sup>62</sup> The confusion was such that Henri Hymans, in his 1884 French

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<sup>59</sup> For Van Mander's biography of Aertgen van Leyden, see Hessel Miedema, ed., *Karel van Mander: the lives of the illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters*, vol. 1 (Doornspijk: Davos, 1994), 205-211 (Fols. 236v-238r); for Miedema's commentary, see vol. 4, 1-10. For an overview of scholarship on this painter, see also J. P. Filedt Kok. "Aertgen van Leyden." *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed June 22, 2018, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T000556>. Now see Christiaan Vogelaar, et. al., *Lucas van Leyden en de Renaissance*, exh. cat. (Leiden: Lakenhal, 2011), 200-01, 325-38, nos.118-133.

<sup>60</sup> Joseph Heller, *Praktisches handbüch für Kupferstichsammler oder Lexicon* (Leipzig: T.O. Weigel, 1850), 128. This connection to the painter Aertgen Claesz. van Leyden had already been refuted, however, by Heller's publisher, the print-delaer Rudolph Weigel, in the 1845 volume of his *Kunstlager-Catalog*, vol. 17 (Leipzig: Rudolph Weigel, 1845), 42.

<sup>61</sup> Joseph Heller, *Zusätze zu Adam Bartsch's Le Peintre Graveur* (Nuremberg: J.L. Lotzbeck, 1854), 41.

<sup>62</sup> Charles LeBlanc, *Manuel de L'Amateur d'Estampes*, vol 2 (Paris: Guiraudet et Jouaust, 1856), 17; and Jules Renouvier, *Des types et des manières des maîtres graveurs*, vol. 2 (Montpellier: Boehm, 1854), 118-120.

translation of Van Mander, added a note to the biography of Aertgen Claesz. van Leyden to explain why this artist was unlikely to have been responsible for the prints with the AC monogram.<sup>63</sup>

Another hypothesis for the identity of the Monogrammist AC was presented by Alfred von Wurzbach in 1906, when he suggested that the mark might belong to a specific Netherlandish goldsmith.<sup>64</sup> Wurzbach cited a letter, dated 26 May 1524, from the painter Jan van Scorel, then working in Rome, to Adriaen van Marselaer in Antwerp. The letter accompanied a painting of Pope Adrian VI commissioned from Van Scorel by Van Marselaer. It requests that the patron make his payment of 22 guilders for the painting to “Alaert the Goldsmith.”<sup>65</sup> Van Scorel does not specify in which city this goldsmith was active, but one might assume that he was either in Utrecht, the city in which Van Scorel settled upon his return from Rome, or in Antwerp, where Van Marselaer was located. But Von Wurzbach, in an effort to connect Allaert Claesz. to the goldsmith, proposes that Jan van Scorel’s intermediary may have been a painter and goldsmith in Amsterdam. Once

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<sup>63</sup> Henri Hymans, *Le Livre des Peintres de Carel van Mander*, vol. 1 (Paris: J. Rouam, 1884), 327. Hymans argues that Aertgen Claesz. van Leyden could not be responsible for the large group of prints with the AC monogram, noting that the Italian influence seen in the prints is not present in the painted work attributed to the artist. He adds that the usually well-informed Van Mander would not have avoided mentioning the artist’s side talent as a printmaker in his substantial biography. At the same time, in the context of his revision of the Aertsen biography, Hymans reiterates that Alart Claeszoon de Leyde certainly cannot be Aertsen’s teacher, because he never lived in Amsterdam. See 353no3.

<sup>64</sup> Alfred von Wurzbach, *Niederländisches Künstler-Lexikon*, vol. 1 (Liepzig: Goldmann, 1906), 279. In his entry on Claesz., Von Wurzbach also offers an aside that a painter named “Alard Claeyss” was documented in Bruges in 1510.

<sup>65</sup> The letter, which is currently held by the Royal Library in Brussels, is transcribed and discussed in G.J. Hoogewerff, *De Noord-Nederlandsche Schilderkunst*, vol. 4 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1941-42), 62-63. For a French translation of the old Dutch, see also G.J. Hoogewerff, *Jan van Scorel: Peintre de la Renaissance Hollandaise* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1923), 38-39.

again, however, this supposition lacks the archival support to consider it as a real lead in the search for the monogrammist's true identity.

A final related suggestion for the attribution of the AC monogram came from Max Friedländer in his 1912 entry on Claesz. for Ulrich Thieme's *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*.<sup>66</sup> Friedländer attempted to explain away the apparently disparate stylistic qualities of the prints bearing the AC mark by proposing that the initials were the mark of a goldsmith's workshop. The monogram, he suggested, could therefore be consistent, while the technical and formal qualities of the prints varied, because the monogram stood not for an individual hand but rather for a collective group of engravers working under the auspices of a singular workshop manager. This opinion would be reiterated in a 1952 exhibition catalogue published by the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam, which added that the style of some AC-attributed prints suggested that they might have been executed in a single goldsmith's shop by German engravers trained in the realm of the so-called Little Masters.<sup>67</sup> While the small scale of many prints, the abundance of ornamental motifs, and the presence of several scabbard designs all point to an engraver or engravers with knowledge of metalsmith techniques and the function of prints as sources for metalwork decoration, this suggestion of a collective mark shared by many printmakers also has no grounding in documentary evidence or, to my knowledge, precedent in the history of printmaking. More critically, as I will discuss more fully below, this theory does not fully account for the diversity of monogram types present on prints in the AC corpus.

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<sup>66</sup> Max Friedländer, "Claesz., Allaert," in Ulrich Thieme, *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, vol. 7 (Leipzig: E.A. Seemann, 1912), 36.

<sup>67</sup> Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, *Lucas van Leyden en tijdgenoten*, 56.

In spite of the various biographical possibilities that have been offered and the uncertainty that still surrounds the mark, the AC monogram and the name Allaert Claesz. have remained linked over the intervening 350 years, appearing more often than not as the heading in biographical dictionaries and collection catalogues alike. Hollstein's catalogue raisonné not only ascribes the monogram without caveat to Allaert Claesz. but goes on to assert that he was "born in 1508 at Amsterdam," and was the master of Pieter Aertsen around 1530.<sup>68</sup> Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, even scholars who acknowledged in their text the tenuous link between Claesz. and the monogram continued to refer to prints with the AC monogram as attributed to Allaert Claesz.<sup>69</sup> Only in recent years have print curators and scholars returned to the cautious cataloguing of AC prints that Bartsch initiated in his pioneering study of 1808.<sup>70</sup> By including the Allaert Claesz. attribution as just one of many historiographical place holders, these scholars draw our attention back to how little we still know about the hand (or hands) behind the AC monogram.

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<sup>68</sup> Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts*, vol. 4, 101

<sup>69</sup> See, for example, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, *Lucas van Leyden en tijdgenoten*, 56; Ellen S. Jacobowitz and Stephanie Loeb Stepanek, *The Prints of Lucas van Leyden & His Contemporaries* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1982], 252-258; and Suzanne Boorsch and Nadine M. Orenstein, "The Print in the North: The Age of Albrecht Dürer and Lucas van Leyden," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, New Series, vol. 54, no. 4 (Spring, 1997), 44.

<sup>70</sup> See, for example, Michael Matile, ed. *Die Druckgraphik Lucas van Leydens und seiner Zeitgenossen: Bestandeskatalog der Graphischen Sammlung der ETH Zürich* (Basel: Schwabe & Co. AG, 2000), 186-193; and Tobias Pfeifer-Helke, ed. *Mit den Gezeiten: Frühe Druckgraphik der Niederlande: Katalog der niederländischen Druckgraphik von den Anfängen bis um 1540/50 in der Sammlung des Dresdener Kupferstich-Kabinetts* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2013), 245-274.

### *Catalogues of prints bearing the AC Monogram*

In order to understand and parse the contents of Hollstein's catalogue raisonné it is vital to trace the history of the Monogrammist AC's oeuvre and its changing contours, beginning with Bartsch's initial catalogue. Bartsch's list of 59 prints attributed to AC would serve as the foundation for a slew of nineteenth-century scholars who included this printmaker (listed either as an anonymous Netherlandish artist or as a named variation on Allaert Claesz.) in new dictionaries of printmakers and monogrammists and in updated catalogue raisonné projects. Although these publications frequently reiterated unsubstantiated biographical information about the monogrammist, they often helped to clarify the details that Bartsch overlooked or simplified in his publication. In his section on AC, for instance, Bartsch reproduced only one monogram, consisting of a capital letter "A" with a smaller "c" beneath it.<sup>71</sup> Rather than the "gothic A" described by De Jonghe, however, the large letter in Bartsch's monogram has a flat top and no crossbar [see, for example, Fig. 1.6: detail from H.1]. Yet when one identifies the prints that he described in the entries for this printmaker, it becomes clear that they bear at least three additional variations on the AC monogram. A number of these prints are signed with an AC monogram that includes the crossbar in the A [see Fig. 1.7: detail from H.6] while other prints bear monograms with pointed tops, both with and without the crossbar [see Fig. 1.8: detail from H.128; and Fig. 1.9: detail from H.143]. The fact that multiple AC monograms were folded into Bartsch's entries for a single monogrammist does not, in itself, preclude the possibility that the prints could still be executed by a single printmaker. But casual readers of such an unillustrated catalogue may be led to believe

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<sup>71</sup> Bartsch, *Le peintre graveur*, vol. 9, 117.

that all of the subsequent entries were signed in an identical manner, a fact that simply is not true.

In the entry for “Alart Claas or Classen” in his 1817 *Dictionnaire* of artist’s monograms, François Brulliot addressed Bartsch’s error of omission by depicting four variations on the AC monogram: both pointed and with a flat top and with and without a crossbar on the A.<sup>72</sup> Since images of these engravings had not yet been published in an illustrated volume, this minor bit of visual clarification would undoubtedly help subsequent cataloguers to expand the group of prints attributed to AC. While he did not do the work himself, Brulliot also suggested in a footnote that a supplement to Bartsch might be produced to include a group of AC monogrammed prints in the Royal Cabinet in Munich, of which Bartsch was unaware.<sup>73</sup>

Although scholars in the following decades, such as Rudolph Weigel,<sup>74</sup> Joseph Heller,<sup>75</sup> Charles Le Blanc,<sup>76</sup> and A.E. Evans,<sup>77</sup> would each identify a few specific additional prints for the Monogrammist AC corpus, the real work of systematically

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<sup>72</sup> Brulliot, *Dictionnaire de monogrammes*, 1817, 17, no. 28 (all four monograms are reproduced on page one of the supplementary table found at the end of the text). In his 1832 second edition of the *Dictionnaire*, Brulliot adds two additional, smaller variations on the AC mark; see Brulliot, *Dictionnaire des monogrammes, marques figurées, lettres initiales, noms abrégés etc.*, part 1 (Munich: J.G. Cotta, 1832), 23, no. 168.

<sup>73</sup> Brulliot, *Dictionnaire de monogrammes*, 1817, 17.

<sup>74</sup> Rudolph Weigel, a Leipzig-based print dealer and collector, published the first of his 35 volume *Kunstlager-Catalogue* beginning in 1835, offering descriptions and prices for prints and books in his collection. A number of prints attributed to Allard Claaszoon (who he identifies as Aertgen Claessen the Younger) appear for the first time in six of the volumes; see vol. 9 (1840), 64; vol. 17 (1845), 42; vol. 18 (1846), 46; vol. 19 (1847), 39-41; vol. 22 (1850), 57; and vol. 28 (1857), 53.

<sup>75</sup> Heller, *Praktisches Handbüch für Kupferstichsammler oder Lexicon*, 128. Heller, *Zusätze zu Adam Bartsch’s Le Peintre Graveur*, 41.

<sup>76</sup> LeBlanc, vol 2, 17-19.

<sup>77</sup> A.E. Evans, *A Descriptive Catalogue of 400 Engravings: Additional Notes to Bartsch* (London: A.E. Evans, 1857), 1-5 [this appendix to a sale catalogue served as a supplement to Bartsch, adding 28 prints attributed to Alaert Claas].

expanding the catalogue raisonné would not occur until the late 1850s with the work of G.K. Nagler and J.D. Passavant. Nagler's entry on Allard Claaszen (whom he insists is "not Alaert Claas") in his *Die Monogrammisten* of 1858 represents the first true attempt to summarize and clarify the previous century of scholarship, interrogating the various identities for the monogram that had been suggested by other scholars.<sup>78</sup> In addition, he reproduced eight different monograms of various sizes associated with the printmaker, including monograms with both pointed and flat tops and marks that both included and lacked a crossbar on the letter A. Perhaps most importantly, however, Nagler's dictionary added to Bartsch's list the descriptions and dimensions for another 66 prints, bringing the oeuvre to 125 total works. Nagler also included references to the sales catalogues and collections in which many of the prints might be found. Like Brulliot before him, Nagler admitted the ongoing nature of the AC cataloguing, noting that the collection in Amsterdam alone included 150 prints that he had yet to consult.<sup>79</sup>

Johann David Passavant's *Le Peintre-Graveur*, published soon thereafter in 1862, offers an even larger supplement to Bartsch's catalogue of prints attributed to AC, adding 81 prints (making 140 total) and reproducing just five different monograms.<sup>80</sup> The author made no reference to Nagler's work, but followed a similar pattern in constructing his

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<sup>78</sup> G.K. Nagler, *Die Monogrammisten*, vol. 1 (Munich: Georg Franz, 1858), 104-111, no. 259. Nagler had previously included the same printmaker in his 1835 *Neues-Allgemeines Künstler-Lexicon* of 1835, but had called him Alaert Claas. In that earlier publication he acknowledged Brulliot's work and numbered the prints attributed to the AC monogram at 70, listing only the prints that he considered to be the best examples of the engraver's work; see Nagler, *Neues-Allgemeines Künstler-Lexicon*, vol. 2 (Munich: E.A. Fleischmann, 1835), 558-559.

<sup>79</sup> This note is particularly confusing since the collection at the Rijksmuseum now includes only approximately 70 possible prints attributed to Monogrammist AC.

<sup>80</sup> Passavant, *Le Peintre-Graveur*, 34-46. One of the marks that he reproduces, however, curiously places the c above the A, a variation on the mark that I have not yet encountered on any print attributed to Monogrammist AC. Nagler previously identified this monogram as an alternate mark of the later sixteenth-century Italian engraver Cherubino Alberti; see Nagler, 1858, 112, no.261.

list, adding to the corpus provided by Bartsch without listing those prints or challenging previous attributions. Bartsch's work was seen as incomplete but not incorrect.

Passavant's entries, attributed to the name "Alart Claessen" of Amsterdam, offer more extended descriptions and locations of impressions for a greater number of prints than any previous publication. The catalogue would join Bartsch as the core of future lists of AC prints, subsequently complemented by Andreas Andresen's *Handbuch für Kupferstichsammler* in 1870 and J.E. Wessely's 1881 *Supplemente zu den Handbüchen der Kupferstichkunde*.<sup>81</sup>

The final, most significant nineteenth-century revision of the AC catalogue would appear in 1893 with the publication of the second volume of Edouard Aumüller's *Les Petites Maîtres Allemands*.<sup>82</sup> Aumüller provided only a brief biography for the printmaker that he called "Allart Claas or Claaszen (also A. Claessen)," but he reproduced twelve total variations on the monogram, the most yet given to the artist, including several very similar monograms positioned on an angle. His list comprises 200 total prints, including descriptions of the prints attributed by Bartsch, reorganized and subdivided by subject matter: biblical subjects, saints, profane subjects, and vignettes and ornaments. The publication added sixty-nine prints not previously described by Bartsch or Passavant, and it concluded with a comparative table that listed the newly established

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<sup>81</sup> Andreas Andresen, *Handbuch für Kupferstichsammler*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: T.O. Weigel, 1870), 272; and J.E. Wessely, *Supplemente zu den Handbüchen der Kupferstichkunde* (Stuttgart: W. Spemann, 1881), 17-18. Andresen's study, which refers to the artist as a "draughtsman and printmaker from Amsterdam named Alaert Claessen," aimed to update Heller's handbook from 1850 with new information from Passavant about fifteen separate prints. Wessely's supplement listed twenty-nine entries given to the name Albert Claes, some of which were new states of prints already in Bartsch and Passavant, plus several others that were previously undescribed.

<sup>82</sup> Edouard Aumüller, *Les Petits Maîtres Allemands, II. Jacques Binck et Alaart Claas*. (Munich: M.Rieger, 1893), 31-63.



Aumüller numbers alongside the numbers provided by those previous cataloguers.

Although the publication would not question any of Bartsch's attributions, it stands as the first revision of the catalogue rather than a simple supplement.

Aumüller would remain the primary source for information about prints attributed to AC until the fourth volume of F. W. H. Hollstein's *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts* in 1951. Hollstein, a print and drawings dealer in Berlin who fled from Germany to Amsterdam in 1937 as a result of the Nazi rise to power, compiled his lists in the Rijksprentenkabinet, basing his work on prints from the museum's collection and his own extensive notes from years of art dealing. His publication would expand the catalogue to include 234 prints attributed to Allaert Claesz., including a number of seemingly unique impressions of prints exhibiting the AC monogram from the collection of Dr. Bierens de Haan (now in the collection of the Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam) and the Rijksmuseum's holdings. In many cases, Hollstein listed the location of extant impressions or the auctions at which known impressions were offered for sale. He also provided short bibliographic references and catalogue numbers for many of the previously published print lists, allowing readers to more completely trace the growth of the AC corpus over time. While he did not offer written descriptions of prints akin to those of Bartsch and Aumüller, Hollstein's volume made the most notable advance yet to the catalogue raisonné: the catalogue includes images for 112 of the prints attributed to the artist, finally representing many of the prints that had been discussed together since Bartsch's 1808 publication but that had not yet been collected as a visual compendium.

At the time of its publication, Hollstein's fourth volume was the most inclusive catalogue of prints attributed to Monogrammist AC. But in its largely uncritical reliance

on a host of previous unillustrated texts, Hollstein's volume is also the least discriminating of the various AC compendia. It concurrently provides both a limited and an overly broad view of the AC monogram. Unable to travel in order to confirm the existence of prints described by previous authors, Hollstein appears to have accidentally listed several engravings twice under separate catalogue numbers, differentiated only by slight differences in their dimensions.<sup>83</sup> While he provided cross-references to previous catalogues raisonnés and acknowledged some alternate attributions, Hollstein also did not provide any written explanation to clarify why he considered these works to be canonical. Two of the five prints that Hollstein identifies as "chief works"—presumably among the printmaker's finest engravings, selected to epitomize fundamental technical and compositional qualities found throughout the oeuvre—are not illustrated in the text. One of those prints, a large *Descent from the Cross* (H.44) remains unlocated. The other, a full-sheet print of *The Last Supper* [H.33; Fig. 1.10] that survives in a unique impression at the Louvre, does not bear the AC monogram. In fact, the faces of Christ and the Disciples and the broad handling of their hair differ greatly from similar passages in any AC monogrammed print. It is also difficult to identify immediate stylistic or formal consistencies among the three other signed engravings singled out as "chief works" and illustrated in the catalogue. *The Baptism of the Eunuch* [H.77; Fig. 1.11], one of the most

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<sup>83</sup> For instance, Hollstein lists two prints depicting *Saint George on Horseback, Killing the Dragon* in entries H.69 and H.70, with dimensions carried over from Edouard Aumüller's 1893 publication (A.52 & A.53, respectively). Hollstein confirms the existence of the first print, illustrating it with a photograph from the Albertina collection. The unillustrated entry for H.70, on the other hand, is described as "Identical" to the previous print, differentiated only by a variance in scale of 3 millimeters. I believe that these two prints are the same, with any variation between impressions likely due to trimming by previous collectors or an error in Aumüller's measurements or transcription. Entry H.70 is therefore a duplicate and should be deleted in future revisions to the catalogue.

elaborate full-sheet prints bearing the AC monogram is much larger and more refined in terms of both composition and engraving style than the Italianate devotional image of *Saint Mary Magdalene* [H.110; Fig. 1.12] or the tiny print of *Saint Catherine* [H.104; Fig. 1.13] also hailed as master works by AC. Further complicating Hollstein's view of the oeuvre are unsigned and dubiously attributed prints, such as an engraving of the *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* [H.30; Fig. 1.14], which the catalogue illustrates as accepted works by AC. Hollstein justifies his inclusion of this print by noting that it was "ascribed by [Max] Lehrs," one of the preeminent twentieth-century scholars of northern prints. But the engraving can be more convincingly attributed to an anonymous, possibly Italian, engraver who signed an image of the *Holy Family* [Fig. 1.15] with the initials GG on a tablet at the lower right-hand corner of the composition.<sup>84</sup> Executed at approximately the same scale, the two prints share a compositional format with a high horizon line and a common style of engraving, most immediately evident in the faces of the Virgin and Child and their haloes. These and other unsigned but illustrated prints offer misleading and disparate markers of an allegedly uniform AC hand.

Gathered together in an illustrated catalogue that has become the standard reference work for print cataloguers and available in print rooms and libraries around the world, these questionably attributed prints have nevertheless been considered part of the Allaert Claesz./Monogrammist AC oeuvre to this day and have been used as the standard

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<sup>84</sup> An impression of the *Holy Family* engraving at the BnF is catalogued as the work of an anonymous Netherlandish printmaker employing the monogram C.G.; see Herbert, *Inventaire des gravures des écoles du Nord*, vol. 2, 364-365 (no.3698). Passavant and Arthur Hind record the same print as the work of anonymous Italian monogrammist GG: Passavant, *Le Peintre-Graveur*, vol. 5, 226 (no.1); and Arthur M. Hind, *Early Italian Engraving*, pt. II, vol. 5 (Nendeln; Lichtenstein: Knaus Reprint, 1970), 333. Another impression of this print survives at the Art Institute of Chicago (acc. no. 1956.1027).

by which newly discovered prints have been attributed. As museum collection databases slowly come online and digital publications flourish, these outdated attributions continue to proliferate based on Hollstein's precedent. Given the large number of prints still given to a single hand—and in light of new discoveries made over the past six decades—it would be prudent to update the Hollstein catalogue with additional images and more carefully compiled data in an attempt to finally reconcile the contradictory biographical information for, and the stylistic attributes of, Monogrammist AC.

While this dissertation does not provide a fully updated catalogue raisonné for Monogrammist AC, it does aim to lay the groundwork for future cataloguing. In subsequent sections of the dissertation I will not only argue for the addition of previously undescribed prints to the standard AC corpus but will also contend that many long-attributed works should be excised from the oeuvre. My aim is to bracket the discussion of these prints in order to find common ground and cohesive groups of related works among the prints that remain.

### *Outlier AC monograms*

A more critical overview of the prints currently attributed to the AC monogram—including prints without illustrations in Hollstein and additional impressions unknown to previous cataloguers—might begin with a reconsideration of the monogram itself. As we have already seen, although scholars have long acknowledged (and sometimes reproduced) numerous variations on the AC monogram, the discrepancy between the disparate forms of the AC mark and the common attribution of the prints to a single figure or workshop have not been adequately reconciled. In order to untangle the more

complicated issues of stylistic variation and the possibility that numerous individual (and possibly unrelated) hands were responsible for these prints, we must take an objective look at the monograms themselves to begin organizing the prints and identifying outliers that might be extracted from the corpus.

Some prints included in Hollstein's catalogue raisonné are signed with monograms that are clear anomalies; the prints bearing them should no longer be considered as part of the corpus for our Monogrammist AC. An obvious outlier among these rogue monograms is a side-by-side AC, accompanied by the date 1549, that appears on a single print: a five-block woodcut frieze (measuring over 129cm in length) printed on three sheets depicting *The Righteous and the Unjust Judgement* [H.236; Fig. 1.16]. In addition to its spurious signature, the print's large scale, woodcut medium, multi-sheet format, complex allegorical subject, and figural style all set this print apart from the typically small, engraved compositions otherwise attributed to Monogrammist AC. Bartsch, Nagler, and later Wouter Nijhoff, an early twentieth-century authority on Netherlandish woodcuts, all recognized the print as the work of a separate unidentified monogrammist distinct from our engraver.<sup>85</sup> Hollstein's catalogue, however, unceremoniously folds in this AC monogram under the name Allaert Claesz., where it clearly does not belong.

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<sup>85</sup> Bartsch, *Le peintre graveur*, vol. 9, 166-167, no.1. Bartsch describes four blocks of the print but indicates that there are two additional sheets that he was unable to consult. Nagler described the same four sheets, tentatively giving the monogram to an artist named Anton Certeijs based on an unsubstantiated attribution in the manuscript inventory of sixteenth-century collector Paul Behaim's collection; see Nagler, *Die Monogrammisten*, 117-118, no.279. Wouter Nijhoff, *Nederlandsche Houtsneden, 1500-1550*. ('s-Gravenhage: M. Nijhoff, 1933). A sixth section of the print, if it exists, has not been traced.

A number of other prints added to the Allaert Claesz. catalogue raisonné by Hollstein are engravings that scholars had also actively segregated apart from the main AC monogram for the prior century-and-a-half. Among these prints are nine engravings—an image of the *Dream of Jacob* [H.8; Fig. 1.17], a *Wolf Hunt* [H.180; Fig. 1.18], and a series of six prints depicting the *Dance of Death* [H.167-173; see Figs. 1.19-1.24]—that Bartsch had given to an unidentified monogrammist AG.<sup>86</sup> Bartsch reproduced this additional monogram and made no reference to the possibility that the AC monogrammist and the AG monogrammist might be connected.

In 1817 Brulliot also included this anonymous AG monogram (reproduced in two formats, including one accompanied by the date 1562 as it appears on the *Dance of Death* series) and cautioned that it should be distinguished from other marks associated with Heinrich Aldegrever and the seventeenth-century Augsburg engraver André Gentsch.<sup>87</sup> In the 1832 revision to his text, Brulliot noted the resemblance of these engravings to works by Aldegrever but correctly added that the mark should not be read as an AG as Bartsch suggested but rather as an AC.<sup>88</sup> Brulliot even listed this alternate AC mark as a separate entry (no. 167) directly before the mark that he attributed to Allaert Claas (no. 168) in his text.<sup>89</sup> This separation of the AC monogram traditionally connected with the name Allaert Claesz. and the AC monogram associated with the date 1562 persisted throughout the

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<sup>86</sup> Bartsch, *Le peintre graveur*, vol. 9, 482-484, nos. 2-8. Bartsch contends that the series comprises seven prints, but only six distinct prints have ever been identified. Bartsch describes the seventh print as "Death leading a man and woman holding hands as they walk to the left": Ibid, 484, no.7; c.f. Hollstein 172. This is likely an accidental duplication of the final print in the series, which depicts a couple led by Death in a plumed hat: Ibid, 484, no.8.

<sup>87</sup> Brulliot, *Dictionnaire de monogrammes*, 1817, 583-585, no.22 (monogram reproduced on page 51 of supplementary table); for entries dedicated to Aldegrever and Gentsch see p.25, no. 59 and no. 60, respectively.

<sup>88</sup> Brulliot, *Dictionnaire de monogrammes*, 1832, part 1, 23, no.167.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

nineteenth century. Heller attributed the mark to an anonymous German printmaker and folded in a few additional prints, including a still unlocated image of *Saint Gertrude of Nivelles*.<sup>90</sup> Andresen and Nagler would similarly distinguish between this AC monogram and the monograms associated with Allaert Claesz., while attributing additional prints to the mark.<sup>91</sup>

I would contend that cataloguers working before Hollstein were correct in segregating the prints with this common monogram. These engravings, as well as several previously unconnected engravings with the same mark, should be excised from the oeuvre of our Monogrammist AC. Not only do these engravings share a distinct variation on the AC monogram—defined both by its outlined, blocky letters and also the serifs at the ends of the flat top of the A and the C—but they also share a common engraving style and formal vocabulary that differs from other prints in the Monogrammist AC corpus. The strange clouds in the engraving of *Jacob's Dream* that curl around themselves in almost intestinal folds, appear again in three prints from the *Dance of Death* series, and the figures in the prints share a flat, elongated physiognomy. The fancily dressed men and women in the six *Dance of Death* prints—who are alternately taunted, led, and entertained by Death in various guises—are loosely based on prototypes of dancing couples by Heinrich Aldegrever dated 1538 [see, for example, Fig. 1.25, which serves as the source for the final print in the series].<sup>92</sup> The *Dance of Death* suite is also particularly

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<sup>90</sup> Heller, 1850, 856 [10 print entries].

<sup>91</sup> Andresen, *Handbuch für Kupferstichsammler*, vol. 2, 775 [11 print entries]; and Nagler, G.K., 1858, 111-112, no. 260 [14 print entries].

<sup>92</sup> Passavant knew just one print from the series and did not attribute it to Allaert Claesz., in part because of the inscribed 1562 date, which was assumed to postdate this monogrammist's output; see Passavant, *Le Peintre-Graveur*, 46 (no.142). While scholars have acknowledged the printmaker's debt to Aldegrever's series of *Small Wedding Dancers* (NHG.144-151), the connection to another 1538 print series designed by Hans Holbein has not previously been

close in style to an additional print with the same monogram depicting a *Standard Bearer* [H.164; Fig. 1.26] presented full-length before a distant landscape, which is also loosely based on a model by Aldegrever [Fig. 1.27].<sup>93</sup> Bartsch was unaware of an engraved *Stag Hunt* [H.179; Fig. 1.28], which in the placement of its identical monogram, the specific dimensions of its small-scale frieze format, and its similar handling of both landscape and figures clearly serves as a companion piece to the *Wolf Hunt*. Finally, we can add an image of *God with a Tiara* [H.21; Fig. 1.29]—copied after a detail from Albrecht Dürer’s 1511 woodcut *The Holy Trinity* [Fig. 1.30]—which shares the same monogram.<sup>94</sup> Based on the style of the engraving and date of 1562 on the *Dance of Death* series, I believe that these eleven prints should be reattributed to a later, still anonymous AC working in Germany in the manner of Heinrich Aldegrever.

One additional print with an outlying monogram that entered the standard Allaert Claesz./Monogrammist AC corpus by way of Hollstein also relates to the work of Heinrich Aldegrever and should be expunged from the corpus. The full sheet engraving *The Couple with the Lute* [H.183; Fig. 1.31], which is sometimes called *The Prodigal Son* due to the shepherd kneeling by a pigsty in the background to the left, was sometimes

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recognized. The skeletal figures in this suite are copied after the jocular embodiments of Death from Holbein’s *Dance of Death* series; see F.W.H. Hollstein, *German engravings, etchings, and woodcuts ca.1400-1700*, vol. XIV (Amsterdam: Menno Hertzberger, 1989), H.99 (plates 10, 11, 12, 19, 25, and 33 serve as sources for various prints in the AC-monogrammed set). The forty-one woodcuts in Holbein’s series, designed in 1524/25 and carved for printing by Hans Lützelburger before his death in 1526, were later published with added text, beginning in 1538 in Lyons; for the Holbein set, see Giulia Bartrum, *German Renaissance Prints, 1490-1550* (London, British Museum Press, 1995), 226-231, no.232; and Frank Hieronymus, *Basler Buchillustration 1500 bis 1545* [exh. cat. Basel, 1984], no. 441.

<sup>93</sup> For Aldegrever’s model, see NHG.177. Bartsch attributed the *Standard Bearer* to his Netherlandish Monogrammist AC, which would later become commonly known as Allaert Claesz.; see Bartsch, no.40. Passavant knew just one print from the series and did not attribute it to Allaert Claesz., in part because of the late date and style. See Passavant, *Peintre-Graveur*, 46, (no.142).

<sup>94</sup> Dürer, B.122.



attributed to Aldegrevier based on the awkward AG monogram inscribed beneath the date 1540 on a tablet at the lower right-hand corner of the composition. Passavant and Julius Meyer attributed the print to Aldegrevier despite Bartsch's observation that the print was too clumsy to fit in with Aldegrevier's mature work in the early 1540s.<sup>95</sup> While Alfred von Wurzbach's *Niederländisches Künstler-Lexikon* included the engraving among those attributed to Allaert Claesz., he declined to give the print its own unique catalogue number.<sup>96</sup> Yet, in spite of its AG monogram, Hollstein included *The Couple with the Lute*, accompanied by an illustration, in his catalogue raisonné for Allaert Claesz., and the attribution has held. The print, however, has more in common with the *Standard Bearer* and the *Dance of Death* series than with the rest of the core AC corpus and should be set apart with those other prints.

### ***The core AC monogram(s)***

Even after these anomalous monograms have been separated out from the rest, a tangle of disparate AC marks remains under the singular umbrella of the Monogrammist AC. Hollstein's catalogue includes prints with at least nine additional, distinct variations on the AC monogram [Fig. 1.32]. These signatures sometimes appear within an inset box in the corner of the engraving, blend into the print's hatched background, or float in the reserve space around the design. But they are also frequently incorporated into the composition, angled as if receding into space on a tablet or engraved on a fictive stone balustrade. The exceptionally small scale of some engravings or the rarity of intact

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<sup>95</sup> Passavant, *Peintre-Graveur*, vol. 4, 105 (no.291; as Aldegrevier); Julius Meyer, *Allgemeines Künstler-Lexikon*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: W. Engelmann, 1872), 252, no.8 (as attributed to Aldegrevier); and Bartsch, *Le peintre graveur*, vol. 8, 452, no.6 (as falsely attributed to Aldegrevier).

<sup>96</sup> Von Wurzbach, *Niederländisches Künstler-Lexikon*, 282, no.149a.

impressions frequently make it difficult to identify the nuances of the signature without magnification.

The two most common AC monograms are variations that include a capital letter A with a flat top—both with and without a crossbar—variants that, for ease of further discussion, I will refer to as simply *flat top* and *crossbar* monograms. More than 100 prints bear some version of the flat top monogram that Bartsch reproduced in his 1808 publication, and in excess of 80 different extant prints are signed with a version of the crossbar mark. The corpus also includes a handful of prints with monograms in which the A is pointed rather than flat, both with and without a crossbar, as well as a single print with a diamond-shaped crossbar. Nine prints are even signed with monograms that contain a reversed letter c, suggesting that the printmaker was unprepared for (or unconcerned with) the reversal inherent in printing an engraved plate.

Further complicating the distinctions between these AC monograms is the fact that monograms within the same general category occasionally vary noticeably from one another. Some monograms are inscribed with longer or more widely spaced stems, while others feature added serifs or spurs. Shifts in scale and peculiarities of placement can alter a mark's overall appearance, as can the wearing of the plate over time. Several monograms are engraved as block letters, with double lines serving to outline the form; others are less carefully delineated, as if added later by a separate hand. The style of engraving and compositional approaches within any one subcategory of the AC monogram also vary, making it difficult to understand how multiple prints with similar monograms could possibly be executed by the same hand. Exceptions and outliers within each group abound.

Stylistic consistencies, however, can be identified between prints sharing the same distinct AC monogram. One variation on the AC crossbar monogram, for instance, appears on some of the finest signed engravings in the corpus, including a large number of ornament prints. Like the monogram itself, the prints with this mark are typically crisp and balanced, exhibiting an attention to detail and a commitment to the description of variety in surface textures. The earthy foreground of *Saint George on Horseback, Killing the Dragon* [H.69; Fig. 1.33], for example, is articulated through regular patterns of curving crosshatched lines, while the beast's scales are communicated through a pattern of short curved strokes. An identical approach to the foreground appears in other images of saints signed with the same variation on the crossbar monogram [see, for example, *Saint Agatha*, H.89; Fig. 1.34]. Figures in these prints are typically draped in fabric with voluminous folds that are carefully rendered to communicate weight and depth through crosshatched shadows. The compositions frequently include miniscule, finely-detailed cityscapes in the distant background at the edge of the composition and open skies patterned only with horizontal lines to indicate cloud formations. In spite of their small scale, prints with this monogram are engraved with the precision and variety of lines also seen in works by Albrecht Dürer and the German Little Masters. In fact, this is the AC monogram that appears most frequently on engravings modelled after specific works by German artists such as Heinrich Aldegrever and Jacob Binck (see Chapter 2 on copies). Ornament prints with this monogram typically have a rich dark background, hatched with closely-spaced intersecting diagonal and horizontal or vertical lines.

Many of these same stylistic features can be seen in prints signed with a version of the flat top AC monogram. A depiction of *Saint Peter Seated Under a Tree* [H.78; Fig.

1.35], signed with a flat top AC on a tablet hanging from a branch at the upper left corner of the print, for instance, employs the same system of foreground cross hatching that was evident in the *Saint George* and *Saint Agatha* engravings. The printmaker uses different methods of hatching for the stone ledge on which the saint sits and for the knotty tree behind him. The background includes distant buildings rendered in the same meticulous style as the cities in the fine crossbar-monogrammed prints, and the sky is punctuated at the horizon line with a few horizontal lines to establish clouds. The print's flat top AC signature is as carefully engraved as the tight curls on the saint's head. Aside from the slight variation in monograms, this small print is stylistically indistinguishable from the crossbar prints discussed above. But, in spite of these similarities, should these engravings with variations on the AC mark be attributed to a single hand?

While rare, it is not unprecedented for printmakers to employ multiple monograms or change their signature throughout their careers. The Italian engraver Giovanni Antonio da Brescia (c.1490-c.1525) employed the monogram ZA early in his career as shorthand for Zoan Antonio, but later signed his compositions with the letters IA (Ioanne Antonio) and then GAB (Giovanni Antonio Brixianus) to adapt his monogram to different regional spellings of his name.<sup>97</sup> Nicoletto da Modena (active c.1500-1512), another Roman printmaker of the early sixteenth-century, employed twelve different monograms over the course of his career.<sup>98</sup> In Germany, Martin Schongauer subtly altered the M in his monogram from a vertical format to a more splayed shape after his first few engravings and started to engrave the S rather than punching it with a

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<sup>97</sup> Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 102.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

goldsmith's stamp.<sup>99</sup> Although Albrecht Dürer's standard signature—an uppercase letter D beneath a capital letter A with a flat top and crossbar—would become his iconic marker, some of his earliest engravings bear alternate monograms. One of Dürer's earliest prints, the so-called *Holy Family with the Dragonfly* [Fig. 1.36] from c.1495, is signed with a small, lowercase letter d beneath the capital A.<sup>100</sup> Other early engravings by Dürer employ a different small monogram with more pinched "A" frame than the larger, more widerset mark of his mature signature.<sup>101</sup> Small changes such as the reversal of letters in monograms appear on prints by even the most accomplished printmakers of the period, including Albrecht Dürer and Lucas van Leyden, although these reversals have been interpreted as conscious decisions to highlight the thematic disorder of those specific works.<sup>102</sup> Slight differences between monograms alone should not, therefore, be sufficient to conclude that prints were executed by different hands.

In fact, a tantalizing piece of material evidence connecting the central flat top and crossbar AC marks comes from the princely collection of Waldburg-Wolfegg in southern Germany, in which several sheets offer the rare opportunity to see how small prints were

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<sup>99</sup> Fritz Koreny, "Notes on Martin Schongauer," 385–391. See also Alan Shestack, "Introduction," to Max Lehrs, *Martin Schongauer: The Complete Engravings: A Catalogue Raisonné*, Rev. ed. (San Francisco : Alan Wofsy Fine Arts, 2005), 15.

<sup>100</sup> Dürer, B.44.

<sup>101</sup> For example, see the monograms on Dürer's engravings *The Ill-Matched Couple* (B.93) and *The Six Warriors* (B.88), both from c.1495.

<sup>102</sup> Dürer signed his engraving *The Witch* (B.67) from c.1500 with a monogram that includes a reversed "D". Scholars have suggested that this reversal was a clever commentary on the upside-down world of witchcraft rather than an accidental oversight. See Rainer Schoch, Matthias Mende and Anna Scherbaum, *Albrecht Dürer. Das druck-graphische Werk in drei Bänden*, Vol. I (Munich: Prestel, 2001), 86-87, no. 28; and Charles Zika, "Dürer's Witch, Riding Women and Moral Order," in *Dürer and his Culture*, edited by Dagmar Eichberger and Charles Zika (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 118-40. The reversed "L" monograms on prints such as Lucas's *David Playing the Harp before Saul* (NHD.27) from c.1508 and several engravings dated 1524, including *Lamech and Cain* (NHD.14) and *The Musicians* (NHD.155), will receive focused attention in a future article by Larry Silver.

sometimes printed in the sixteenth-century. In order to save paper and consolidate the effort of printing, several plates were combined in the press so that multiple prints could be published on a single sheet. The five Wolfegg sheets, which remain uncut, include different AC engravings signed with flattop and crossbar monograms printed on the same page, as well as several unsigned prints that might otherwise have been tentatively attributed.<sup>103</sup> Two of the intact sheets [see Figs. 1.37 & 1.38] also contain a distinct and undisturbed watermark visible in the reserve between prints. This watermark of a gloved hand with a letter “s” on the cuff and a quatrefoil at the top [Fig. 1.39] has also been seen on prints dated to 1550 and published in Bruges and Tours, respectively.<sup>104</sup> While the Wolfegg sheets do not prove exactly when or where the prints were originally engraved, they do tell us that plates for engravings with both flattop and crossbar monograms were in the same place and still being printed together in the mid-sixteenth century. They help to support the standard theory that these prints with similar styles but different monograms might, in fact, come from the same hand or workshop.<sup>105</sup>

But a number of other prints in the standard AC corpus, such as an engraving of *Lot and His Daughters* [H.5; Fig. 1.40], are monogrammed with a looser, longer variation

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<sup>103</sup> One of the uncut sheets includes an unmonogrammed and previously undescribed engraving of *Lucretia Standing in a Niche* (App.42) printed alongside a canonical AC print of *Justice, Seated* (H.140). This depiction of Lucretia, a common subject in AC’s oeuvre, should join tentatively join the AC corpus.

<sup>104</sup> C.-M. Briquet, *Les Filigranes: Dictionnaire Historique des Marques du Papier dès Leur Apparition vers 1282 Jusqu’en 1600*, ed. by Allan Stevenson, vol. 2 (Amsterdam: Paper Publications Society, 1968), 578, no.11457.

<sup>105</sup> It should be noted, however, that one engraving printed on a Wolfegg sheet along with other AC-monogrammed engravings (see the print at top left of Fig.38) is signed with the monogram R. This *Ornament with Three Children Supporting a Fountain*, a reverse copy after a print by the German printmaker Barthel Beham (B.54), is catalogued as the work of Monogrammist R in Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish*, XIII.118.1. The relationship between Monogrammist AC and R requires additional attention. For instance, an AC-monogrammed *Ascending Ornament with a Candlestick and Two Naked Children* (H.199) is a loose copy after the upper section of a larger print by Monogrammist R (H.XIII.118.2).

on the flat top mark in which the A resembles a tent under which the small c rests. These compositions also reflect the style and structure of their monogram; they lack a careful organization of pictorial space, an interest in human proportion, a systematic approach to shading, or attention to the minute description of surface details. In the engraving of *Lot and His Daughters*, the printmaker ignores or misunderstands proper human proportions and foreshortening, a fact most evident in Lot's improbably twisted leg and foot. The landscape, although articulated with a variety of marks in an effort to communicate a depth of field, remains flat, confusing, and out of scale. Lacking a systematic approach to texture or shading, the print is defined by an overall clumsiness that extends from crosshatching that reaches into the margin at the right to the quickly described city of Sodom aflame in the background.

Perhaps, as Max Friedländer suggested, the prints with this less refined variation on the AC monogram are the work of inferior engravers in a larger AC workshop. While the finely executed prints (with both the flat top and crossbar AC monogram) might be the work of a master craftsman trained as a goldsmith, the less accomplished flat top prints might be the product of novices still learning to engrave or producing prints for a less-discerning market of consumers. An alternative, although less likely, theory would posit that the prints signed with this looser AC mark could be the early work of a single Monogrammist AC, whose talent as an engraver and strength as a draftsman matured over time. The finely rendered prints with the more refined and balanced monograms would therefore represent the later work of this single anonymous master.

### *Dating AC's engravings*

The longstanding uncertainty surrounding AC's identity extends to the specific timeframe of the monogrammist(s)'s activity. Based on his knowledge of a handful of dated AC-monogrammed prints, Bartsch claimed that the printmaker was active from 1520 to 1555, a span that has been reiterated by Hollstein and numerous other cataloguers.<sup>106</sup> This period of production is sometimes extended to 1562, a reference to the dates on the *Dance of Death* engravings (H.167-173). As I have already argued, however, I believe that this series of prints should be removed from the corpus. As we will see in Chapter Two, numerous AC-monogrammed copies are modelled on prototypes from the first thirty years of the sixteenth-century, with the latest dated source for an AC print being Lucas van Leyden's 1530 engraving *Lot and his Daughters*.<sup>107</sup> Although it remains a matter of debate, the actual scope of AC's production appears to be much more limited than previously assumed.

Only ten of the prints signed with the core AC monograms are dated. The earliest of these prints [App.43; Fig. 1.41], a copy after a *Winged Venus Standing on a Globe* [Fig. 1.42] by an anonymous German printmaker using the monogram *HL*, is inscribed with the date 1524 on a tablet hanging in the background at the left and signed on the globe with an AC flat top monogram.<sup>108</sup> The large and finely-engraved *Baptism of the*

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<sup>106</sup> Bartsch, *Le peintre graveur*. vol. 9, 117.

<sup>107</sup> Lucas van Leyden, NHD.16; for the Lucas prototype and its AC monogrammed copy, see Figs. 2.26 & 2.27, respectively.

<sup>108</sup> The HL monogram has historically, but inaccurately, been associated with the German sculptor Hans Leinberger (active 1510-c.1530); see Jeffrey Chipps Smith, "Master H.L. and the Challenge of Invention in Different Media," in *Invention: Northern Renaissance Studies in Honor of Molly Faries*, ed. Julien Chapuis (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 174–89. Smith proposes that Master H.L. was a printmaker and sculptor active in the region of Breisach, Colmar, Freiburg, and Strasbourg. For H.L.'s *Winged Venus Standing on a Globe*, see H.German.XXI.31 (as Leinberger); Max Lossnitzer, *Hans Leinberger, Nachbildungen seiner Kupferstiche und*



*Eunuch* [H.77; see Fig. 1.11 above] also bears the same AC monogram and date. Separate small prints depicting the Old Testament queen *Jezebel* [H.17; Fig. 4.9], the Egyptian queen *Cleopatra* [H.131; Fig. 1.43], and an allegory of *Geometry* [H.148; Fig. 1.44], all signed with different variations on the AC monogram, are dated 1526, while a copy of a Heinrich Aldegrever ornament print depicting an *Arabesque with Fighting Centaurs* [H.193; Fig. 1.45] is dated 1529.

These first six dated prints vary wildly in terms of their compositional sophistication, the quality of their engraving, and the shape of their monogram. The engravings dated 1524, with their exceptional range of burin-work and closely spaced lines, are far superior to the prints dated 1526. This undermines the theory that a single Monogrammist AC might have engraved every print in the AC corpus, his technique improving with years of practice. An engraver capable of articulating the balanced musculature and dark skin of the Eunuch and replicating the textures of the feathers and headdress of the Winged Venus would not distort Cleopatra's anatomy so severely only two years later. If the dates and monograms on these prints are original, they must have been the work of different engravers.

The dates of the other four prints, all large and finely engraved compositions signed with the AC flat top monogram, are also the subject of scholarly debate, thanks in part to the similarities between the numbers 2 and 5 in their clumsy inscriptions. The

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*Holzschritte*, Graphische Gesellschaft, vol. 18 (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1913), 15 (cat. no.19). The only previous published reference to the AC-monogrammed print is a notice of its acquisition by the British Museum; see Campbell Dodgson, "Quarterly Notes," *Print Collector's Quarterly* 17 (1930): 208–9. The note is significant in that it establishes a *terminus ante quem* of 1524 for H.L.'s original, undated print.

engraving of *A Naked Queen on a Throne* [Fig. 1.2] is dated either 1523 or 1553 in its second state while the dates on both *The Standard Bearer Walking to the Left* [H.165; Fig. 1.46] and an engraving known as *The Desperate Man* (H.175; Fig. 1.47) after Albrecht Dürer have been read as either 1524 and 1554.<sup>109</sup> A final enigmatic print, catalogued by Hollstein as *The Deploring of the Venetian General Gattamelata de Narni* [H.138; Fig. 1.48], was signed in its second state with the date 1525 or 1555.<sup>110</sup> If, as Ellen Jacobowitz and Stephanie Stepanek argued, the stylistic similarities between these prints corroborate the earlier dating, all of AC's dated prints fall into the 1520s.<sup>111</sup> Alternatively, interpreting these numbers as dates in the 1550s might suggest that these larger and more accomplished prints were not engraved by our AC at all but rather issued by him at a later time after adding a date and his monogram.

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<sup>109</sup> Hollstein catalogues *The Desperate Man* with the title *Two Naked Men and a Sleeping Woman*. Rather than adopting this title, which both overstates one man's nudity and misidentifies the satyr in the back as a human being, I have chosen to use the title most associated with Dürer's model for the print, which I will discuss at length in the next chapter.

<sup>110</sup> The subject of this engraving and its compositional relationship to an Italian source, long the topic of debate, will only be summarized briefly here. Erica Tietze-Conrat argued that the print was a direct copy after a lost fresco by the painter Andrea Mantegna (c.1431-1506) that depicted Venetian citizens mourning the loss of a famous condottiere known as Gattamelata; E. Tietze-Conrat, "Mantegna or Pollaiuolo?," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 67, no. 392 (November 1935): 216–19. Alternatively, Bernard Berenson suggested that the engraving was actually a reverse copy of a pen and wash drawing now in the Wallace collection that he attributed to the Italian artist Antonio Pollaiuolo (1429/33–1498) or his studio; Bernard Berenson, *The Drawings of the Florentine Painters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938), vol. I, 28, and vol. II, 271 (no.1945). An additional pen and ink copy of the right side of the drawing, also attributed to Pollaiuolo's studio based on Berenson's opinion, survives in the British Museum's collection; see A.E. Popham and Philip Pouncey, *Italian Drawings in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum: The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Century*, vol. I (London: British Museum, 1950), 205 (no.343). Arthur Hind explained the geographic dislocation between the ostensibly northern print and its possible Italian sources by claiming that an engraving by the Bolognese artist Jacopo Francia (before 1486–1557) served as its direct model. Even at the time of Hind's publication, however, no impressions of Francia's print could be located; see Hind, *Early Italian Engraving*, pt. II, vol. V, 234 (no.14).

<sup>111</sup> Jacobowitz and Stepanek, *The Prints of Lucas van Leyden & His Contemporaries*, 252-253.

### *Frans Crabbe and Monogrammist AC*

In fact, the somewhat illegible dates on these engravings serve as key pieces of evidence for scholars who argue that a number of AC-monogrammed prints are actually the work of the Mechelen-born engraver Frans Crabbe van Espleghem (c.1480-1553).<sup>112</sup> Active in the second quarter of the sixteenth-century, Crabbe worked as an engraver and etcher, partial to religious narrative scenes, which he executed in a highly-detailed and painterly style. Although he signed a few early prints dated 1522 with the letters FC and EC, Crabbe generally signed his prints with a small crayfish (*crabbe* in Dutch), a play on his last name. His works include intricate engravings, such as *The Death of Lucretia* [Fig. 1.49], notable for their depiction of flamboyant drapery folds and Italianate architecture inspired by Jan Gossart's prints and contemporaneous Antwerp Mannerist paintings.<sup>113</sup> Other comparably spare compositions, such as the unsigned etching *Esther Before Ahasverus* [Fig. 1.50], show lavish attention to architectural details, including the texture of cracking walls.<sup>114</sup>

In 1935, A.E. Popham suggested that several prints signed with the AC monogram were so aesthetically disparate from—and technically superior to—other works given to the monogrammist that they must belong to a different hand.<sup>115</sup> He argued that *The Baptism of the Eunuch* and the enigmatic *Naked Queen on a Throne, Threatened*

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<sup>112</sup> For the standard published catalogue raisonné of Crabbe's prints, see F.W.H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts*, vol. V (Amsterdam: Menno Hertzberger, 1951), 63-95. For the most recent scholarship on Crabbe, a summary of previous scholarship, and a revised catalogue raisonné, see Bassens, *Frans Crabbe van Espleghem (ca.1480-1553)*. While Hollstein's catalogue included 53 prints attributed to Crabbe, Bassens gives the printmaker 47 prints plus 3 possible attributions, rejecting 20 additional prints that had previously been given to Crabbe by previous scholars.

<sup>113</sup> Crabbe, H.43.

<sup>114</sup> Crabbe, H.1.

<sup>115</sup> Popham, A. E. "The Engravings of Frans Crabbe van Espleghem," 101-102.

by a Dragon, appeared to share the “delicate silvery effect” achieved by the close tonal values and fine lines of Crabbe’s early “Gossartian period” prints of the 1520s. With regard to the latter work, Popham noted that surviving first state impressions of the engraving do not exhibit a monogram. He proposed that the plates may have been acquired by AC after Crabbe’s death in 1553 and published with the AC monogram, taking credit for engraved work that was not his own. Ultimately, Popham acknowledged that minute details in the AC-monogrammed prints, such as areas of stippled patterns, did not conform with Crabbe’s output, concluding: “On the whole, reluctantly, I must abandon this charge as ‘not proven’ and leave AC’s character unblemished and his oeuvre intact.”<sup>116</sup>

While Popham conceded that he lacked the documentary evidence to confirm his hunch that AC appropriated plates engraved by Crabbe, Karel G. Boon would pick up the argument in a 1975 essay and support the theory, based on evidence that he saw in another AC-signed print: *The Standard Bearer Walking to the Left*.<sup>117</sup> Boon read the print’s date as 1554 and noted the similarity in size between this print and an etching of a *Piper and Drummer* [Fig. 1.51], also attributed to Crabbe.<sup>118</sup> He suggested that the two prints might form part of a series of mercenary soldiers, created at the end of Crabbe’s career, when his work shows inspiration from a close working relationship with Nicolaus Hogenberg (c.1500–1539). But while these formal considerations are intriguing, Boon

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 102. Popham did, however, reattribute to Frans Crabbe a separate, unsigned engraving of *The Virgin with the Child, Crowned by Two Angels* (H.63), which has been variously attributed to Monogrammist AC and other anonymous German and Netherlandish hands. While its attribution to Crabbe seems tenuous, I am also inclined to remove the print from the AC corpus.

<sup>117</sup> Karel G. Boon, “Frans Crabbe en de Monogrammist A.C.,” in *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis van de Grafische Kunst opgedragen aan Prof. Dr. Louis Lebeer ter gelegenheid van zijn tachtigste verjaardag* (Antwerp: Vereniging van de Antwerpsche Bibliophielen, 1975), 44-52.

<sup>118</sup> Crabbe, H.49.

also claimed to see traces of Crabbe's crab-shaped monogram beneath the date on the tablet at the lower right corner of the print. Upon close inspection of both known impressions of *The Standard Bearer Walking to the Left*, both in person and through high magnification of digital images, I am unable to discern this detail and wonder whether this visual evidence was a product of wishful thinking.<sup>119</sup>

Boon's essay has nevertheless been offered as proof for the reattribution of *The Standard Bearer Walking to the Left* in a number of subsequent exhibition catalogues. In his chapter on "Landsknechts, farmers, and brothels," from the 2015 Boijmans van Beuningen exhibition on the origins of Netherlandish genre scenes, Peter van der Coelen reproduces the print as a second state of a Crabbe print issued by the Monogrammist AC, citing Boon as the source of his attribution.<sup>120</sup> Michael Matile also wrote an extended consideration of the relationship between AC and Frans Crabbe in a 2000 exhibition catalogue for the ETH in Zurich in which he expanded upon Boon's argument.<sup>121</sup> Matile argued for the reattribution to Crabbe of all six engravings with suspect dates: *The Standard Bearer Walking to the Left*, the *Naked Queen on a Throne*, the *Baptism of the Eunuch*, *Hercules*, *Venus*, and *Cupid*, *The Deploring of the Venetian General Gattamelata de Narni*, and the *The Desperate Man*. In his eye, these prints are all late period works by Crabbe that exhibit the artist's interest in human anatomy and an approach to engraving hair seen in other works by the printmaker. He saw the dates of 1554 and 1555 inscribed on these so-called Crabbe prints as further evidence of AC as a

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<sup>119</sup> My skepticism about the presence of a previous monogram is shared by Maarten Bassens.

<sup>120</sup> Peter van der Coelen, "Landsknechten, boeren en bordelen: Nederlandse en Duitse genregrafiek van Sebald Beham tot Jan Vermeyen," in *De ontdekking van het dagelijks leven van Bosch tot Bruegel* (Rotterdam: Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, 2015), 118, and 139n5.

<sup>121</sup> Matile, *Die Druckgraphik Lucas van Leydens und seiner Zeitgenossen*, 186-193.

postmortem publisher of Crabbe's work. As precedent for such posthumous publishing by an unaffiliated hand in the sixteenth-century, Matile points to several Lucas van Leyden plates published after the printmaker's death by Antwerp's Maarten Peeters (c.1500-c.1566), who added his publisher's address beside Lucas's monogram.<sup>122</sup> Matile's attributions for the *Naked Queen on a Throne*, *The Baptism of the Eunuch*, and *The Desperate Man* were tentatively reiterated in the recent catalogue of the early Netherlandish prints in Dresden.<sup>123</sup>

While the delicate style of engraving and the larger scale of these prints certainly differ from the bulk of the Monogrammist AC oeuvre, I remain in Popham's camp: skeptical of reattributing these prints to Crabbe when the only signed impressions bear an AC monogram. In his recent master's thesis on Frans Crabbe, Maarten Bassens agrees that none of these contested prints bears the immediate hallmarks of Crabbe's prints. These engravings should remain within the broad corpus of AC-monogrammed prints.<sup>124</sup>

### ***The Publisher AC?***

The possibility remains, however, despite a lack of conclusive evidence, that a figure employing an AC monogram might have acted primarily as a print publisher and dealer, acquiring plates engraved by other artists and issuing impressions under his own mark. Jan Piet Filedt Kok offered this provocative interpretation of the AC mark in his recent review of Dresden's 2013 catalogue of early Netherlandish prints.<sup>125</sup> This theory

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 189. For a summary of Peeters's activities as a publisher, see Edward Wouk, "Maarten Peeters, Publisher at the Sign of the Golden Fountain," *Delineavit et Sculpsit*, 38 (2015), 2-49.

<sup>123</sup> Pfeifer-Helke, *Mit den Gezeiten*, 186-195.

<sup>124</sup> Bassens, *Frans Crabbe van Espleghem*, 38-43.

<sup>125</sup> Filedt Kok, "Early Netherlandish Prints in Dresden." Review of *Mit den Gezeiten: frühe Druckgraphik der Niederlande: Katalog der niederländischen Druckgraphik von den Anfängen*

helps to explain away some of the larger-format prints of high quality that exhibit a clear AC monogram, particularly the three engravings bearing a variation on the letters “VTRICHT” that were discussed above. All three prints—*A Naked Queen on a Throne, Threatened by a Dragon* [H.145; Fig. 1.52], *The Nativity* [H.24; Fig. 1.53], and *Hercules, Venus, and Cupid* [H.118; Fig. 1.54]—survive in rare first state impressions that include the enigmatic inscription but predate the addition of the AC monogram.<sup>126</sup> Perhaps the prints were engraved by painter-printmakers active in Utrecht during the 1520s, possibly even in the circle of the painter and printmaker Jan Gossart at the court of Philip of Burgundy, and were later acquired by AC, who added his monogram before reissuing the plate.<sup>127</sup> AC would not have been the first northern figure to surreptitiously add his monogram to plates by other artists: Israhel van Meckenem, for instance, acquired, reworked, and added his signature to numerous plates in the fifteenth-century, including some by Master E.S..<sup>128</sup>

This theory might also dovetail with Friedländer’s suggestion that the monogram represents the shared sign of a goldsmith’s shop. A master metalsmith who made his own prints with the AC monogram could have expanded his production by employing a

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*bis um 1540/50 in der Sammlung des Dresdener Kupferstich-Kabinetts*, Tobias Pfeifer-Helke, ed. *Print Quarterly* XXXII, no. 3 (Sep 2015), 351.

<sup>126</sup> A first state impression of *The Naked Queen on a Throne* survives at the British Museum (accession number E,1.257). A unicum of the first state *Nativity* before the monogram resides at the Cleveland Museum of Art (accession number 1923.755). First state impressions of *Hercules and Omphale* before the AC monogram are held in the Collection Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam (accession number BdH 9632) and at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford (accession number 1863.1971).

<sup>127</sup> For a recent overview of Gossart’s engagement with printmaking and a catalogue of his prints, see Nadine Orenstein, “Gossart and Printmaking,” in Maryan Wynn Ainsworth et al., *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossart’s Renaissance*, 105-112 and 408-425 (cat. nos. 112-121). Although no state of *The Baptism of the Eunuch* includes a possible reference to Utrecht, this rarely depicted scene from the ministry of the Apostle Philip might have also appealed to his namesake, Philip of Burgundy.

<sup>128</sup> Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 57.

workshop of engravers to execute small-scale, mass-produced devotional and hagiographic prints published with his mark. Other engravers in his services might have specialized in copies after German and Italian ornament prints. At the same time, this publisher could have acquired finely-wrought plates from more accomplished painter-printmakers to supplement his lower-end products with ‘artistic’ prints aimed at a more elite class of art collectors. The theory helps to account for the diversity in compositional style and subject matter throughout the AC corpus.

By reframing the AC mark as a printer’s symbol rather than the signature of a *peintre-graveur*, this hypothesis positions AC as an entrepreneur and proto-publisher whose efforts to diversify his stock and manage a stable of engravers anticipate the rise of professional print publishing houses in northern Europe around the middle of the sixteenth century. Although a specific period term for the profession did not exist, the origins of the occupation of print publisher can be traced back to early sixteenth-century Rome.<sup>129</sup> In 1515, Raphael entrusted a studio assistant named Baverio dei Carocci (known as Il Baviera) with the printing and sale of prints executed by Marcantonio Raimondi and other engravers after the master’s designs.<sup>130</sup> Il Baviera inherited the plates at Raphael’s death in 1520 and continued to issue new impressions, even commissioning new engravings after Raphael’s designs by 1525.<sup>131</sup> In this way, he provided a model for

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<sup>129</sup> On the anachronism of the term “publisher” in the sixteenth-century and the larger history of Italian print publishing, see Michael Bury, *The Print in Italy, 1550-1620* (London: British Museum Press, 2001), 9-10 and 68-80; and Lisa Pon, *Raphael, Dürer, and Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying and the Italian Renaissance Print* (New Haven : Yale University Press, 2004), 48-49.

<sup>130</sup> On Il Baviera as publisher, see Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 121-122 and 159; and Christopher L.C.E. Witcombe, *Print Publishing in Sixteenth-Century Rome: Growth and Expansion, Rivalry and Murder* (London; Turnhout: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2008), Chapter 1, especially 43-46 and 51-59.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.



later Roman publishers Antonio Salamanca (1478-1562) and Antoine Lafrery (1512-1577), who managed the output of large intaglio publishing houses in the 1530s and 1540s before eventually combined efforts in 1553.<sup>132</sup> Salamanca probably even acquired a large number of plates engraved by artists in Raphael's circle from Il Baviera in order to supplement his own stock of images.<sup>133</sup> These businessmen steered and stimulated the printmaking process, commissioning and coordinating the work of renowned designers and engravers, dividing the labor of production, and providing the capital for publications marketed to an international audience. As owner of the copper plate from which the image was printed, these publishers could issue new impressions at will, therefore retaining the value of the project. While Il Baviera does not appear to have marked his plates to signify his role in the process, Salamanca and Lafrery actively declared their ownership of the matrix through added inscriptions.<sup>134</sup> These plates include the publisher's name followed by a variation on the Latin term "excudit" or "excudebat," meaning to strike or to press out, in order to assert that their publishing house had issued the print.<sup>135</sup>

Little evidence survives to reconstruct a comparable history of organized intaglio print publishing in northern Europe until the years around 1550 when Hieronymus Cock (1518-1570) and other prolific Antwerp publishers began to dominate the international

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<sup>132</sup> Witcombe's study of sixteenth-century Roman printmaking provides a thorough overview of the publishing houses managed by Salamanca and Lafrery; *Ibid.*, especially Chapters 2 and 3, 61-221.

<sup>133</sup> Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 302-304 and 307-308.

<sup>134</sup> Lisa Pon proposes as mere speculation that the blank tablet often present on prints from Raphael's circle might represent his publisher's device. Pon, *Raphael, Dürer, and Marcantonio Raimondi*, 72-73.

<sup>135</sup> Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, 84.

market.<sup>136</sup> Timothy Riggs's seminal 1971 dissertation on Cock and his publishing house, *Aux Quatre Vents* (At the Sign of the Four Winds), demonstrated the sophisticated strategies employed by an ambitious northern publisher looking to mimic and compete with the success of his Roman counterparts.<sup>137</sup> Beginning in the late 1540s, Cock hired leading designers and printmakers to collaborate on ambitious intaglio projects bearing his name as publisher. His output, which was largely aimed at a learned section of the public and frequently inscribed with Latin text, spanned a wide range of subjects: Roman ruins and architecture, ornament prints, maps, local northern landscapes, moralizing themes, and copies after famous religious paintings, among other categories.<sup>138</sup> Riggs and subsequent scholars have observed that Antwerp printmaker-publishers Hans Liefvrick (c.1518-1573) and Cornelis Bos (c.1510-c.1566) began their own forays into professional publishing in the late 1530s and early 1540s, respectively, preceding Cock by a few years.<sup>139</sup> Liefvrick, whose corner press began by producing woodcuts but eventually expanded to intaglio publishing, is currently the subject of an ongoing and long-overdue

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<sup>136</sup> An important study by Jan van der Stock, based largely on surviving sixteenth century legal records and guild archives, offers many insights into print production in Antwerp before 1550. The study, however, focuses primarily on woodcut print production and marketing. See Van der Stock, *Printing Images in Antwerp: The Introduction of Printmaking in a City, Fifteenth Century to 1585* (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision Interactive, 1998).

<sup>137</sup> Timothy A. Riggs, *Hieronymus Cock, Printmaker and Publisher* (New York: Garland Pub., 1977).

<sup>138</sup> For a comprehensive and beautifully illustrated overview of Cock's output, the first major study since Cock's dissertation, see Grieken, et al., *Hieronymus Cock: The Renaissance in Print*, passim.

<sup>139</sup> Riggs, *Hieronymus Cock*, 6-26 and 216-219; Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 219-223; Jan van der Stock, "Hieronymus Cock and Volcxken Diericx, Print Publishers in Antwerp," in Grieken, et al. *Hieronymus Cock: The Renaissance in Print*, 15. For Bos, see Sune Schéle, *Cornelis Bos: A Study of the Origins of the Netherland Grottesque* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1965); and Larry Silver, "Graven Images: Reproductive Engravings as Visual Models," in *Graven Images: The Rise of Professional Printmakers in Antwerp and Haarlem, 1540-1640*, eds. Larry Silver and Timothy Riggs (Evanston: Mary and Leigh Block Gallery, Northwestern University, 1993), 3-8.

study.<sup>140</sup> Northern intaglio publishers in the second quarter of the sixteenth century have otherwise received less attention than Cock's successors.<sup>141</sup>

AC's hypothetical output as a publisher beginning in the late 1520s and 1530s would fall into the period just before the flourishing of commercial publishing houses in Northern Europe. The monogram could therefore stand in as a bridge between the mark of the medieval goldsmith-publisher and the inscribed address of the ambitious commercial print publisher. Unlike the inscriptions added by organized publishing houses later in the century that include the "excudit" qualifier, however, this unorthodox monogram fails to specify AC's role as publisher. If it was intended as a proto-publisher's symbol, the mark has ultimately proven ineffectual as a form of advertisement and has only contributed to the confusion surrounding the monogram. The tantalizing possibility of AC as a printer and publisher of plates by other artists must remain speculative.

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<sup>140</sup> A forthcoming PhD dissertation by Jeroen Luyckx at Illuminare, the Centre for the Study of Medieval Art at KU Leuven, Belgium, will trace and contextualize the output of not only Hans Liefrinck, but the entire dynasty of Liefrinck family printmakers and publishers.

<sup>141</sup> Riggs's groundbreaking work on Cock stimulated a stream of scholarship focused on the activities of other important Netherlandish publishers. Over the past twenty years major studies have considered the stock lists and strategies employed by the publishing houses of Cock's Netherlandish successors, including Philips Galle (1537-1612), Hendrick Hondius (1573-1620), Crispijn van de Passe (c.1564-1637) and his children. See Manfred Sellink, "Philips Galle (1537-1612): Engraver and Print Publisher in Haarlem and Antwerp" (Vrije Universiteit, 1997); Nadine Orenstein, *Hendrick Hondius and the Business of Prints in Seventeenth-Century Holland* (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision Interactive, 1996); Ilja M Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny (1564-1670): A Century of Print Production* (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision, 2001). More recently, Edward Wouk published a study of Maarten Peeters (c.1500-c.1566), one of Cock's main competitors in the 1550s and 1560s; see Edward Wouk, "Maarten Peeters, Publisher at the Sign of the Golden Fountain," *Delineavit et Sculpsit* 38 (May 2015): 2-49.

*Monogrammist AC and other anonymous Netherlandish engravers*

Efforts to further clarify the boundaries of the AC corpus also require sifting through past attributions and reckoning with differences of opinion about the authorship of unsigned prints. Perceived formal similarities between engravings bearing the AC monogram and prints by other anonymous and understudied early sixteenth-century Netherlandish and German printmakers have led to alternate, sometime conflicting, attributions for individual prints. Hollstein, for instance, ascribed two unsigned ornament prints to both AC and an anonymous Netherlandish ornament printmaker now known as the Master of the Horse Heads (likely active 1520s and 30s).<sup>142</sup> The first of these prints, an *Ascending Ornament with Two Satyr Women* [H.209; Fig. 1.55], fits more readily into the latter master's oeuvre.<sup>143</sup> The long, graceful curves and bilateral symmetry of the interlacing acanthus leaves in this print recall similar forms in ornament prints commonly attributed to the Master of the Horse Heads, particularly an *Ornament with a Female Half-Length Figure Between Two Fantastic Animals with Lion's Heads* [Fig. 1.56] and an *Ornament with Two Cupids Riding on Dolphins* [Fig. 1.57].<sup>144</sup> The other dually attributed print, an *Ascending Ornament with Two Sea Horses and Two Dolphins* [H.221; Fig. 1.58] is too uneven its execution to remain attributed to either printmaker.<sup>145</sup> Both the irregular

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<sup>142</sup> Hollstein's catalogue of this the Master of the Horse Heads includes 20 total prints; *Dutch and Flemish*, XIII (1956), 54-60. For the most extensive consideration of this ornamental engraver, whose sobriquet derives from the prevalence of equine heads and skulls in his engravings, see Alfred Lichtwark, *Der Ornamentstich der deutschen Frührenaissance* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1888). See also Jacobowitz and Stepanek, *The Prints of Lucas van Leyden & His Contemporaries*, 302-303; and Matile, *Die Druckgraphik Lucas van Leydens und seiner Zeitgenossen*, 218-219.

<sup>143</sup> Catalogued as H.4 in Hollstein for Master of the Horse Heads.

<sup>144</sup> H.XIII.55.6 & H.XIII.55.7 (as Master of the Horse Heads).

<sup>145</sup> H.XIII.54.5 (as Master of the Horse Heads).

background hatching and the awkwardly-rendered head of a putto at the apex of the print lack the finish of either AC or the Horse Head Master. Of course, a cataloguer confident in the attribution of any one of these unsigned prints to a particular hand might add all of the prints to the same catalogue.

Perhaps the greatest parallels between AC and a contemporary sixteenth-century print producer lie in the engravings attributed to the equally enigmatic Master S. Biographical information about this anonymous artist is also extremely speculative, making it difficult to determine the relative temporal and geographic proximity or locations of their production. Although this dissertation specifically aims to address lacunas in the scholarship on the Monogrammist AC, the connections between AC's engraved corpus and the abundant prints attributed to Master S are consequential and worthy of extended exploration here. While works associated with the two anonymous monograms frequently appear together in exhibition catalogues dedicated to Netherlandish prints of the sixteenth century, the extent of their interrelationship has not been adequately explored. A greater understanding of the pictorial and business strategies employed by Master S and his followers may, in fact, help to clarify AC's practices and further challenge long-standing assertions about the location where AC's prints were produced. As I will demonstrate, the co-survival of AC and S prints pasted into sixteenth-century prayer books assembled in vicinity of Liège in the Rhine-Maas valley suggests that these printmakers were either active in this region or found a common market for their small prints in the territory's monastic communities. Moreover, closer scrutiny of the prints attributed to both artists can also lead to revised attributions that help to further clarify the AC oeuvre.

The scholarship on Master S has followed a pattern similar to the studies on AC, with an ever-expanding corpus of engravings attributed to a single monogram serving as the primary source of information about the anonymous printmaker.<sup>146</sup> In the eighth volume of *Le peintre graveur*, Adam von Bartsch attributed just 11 engravings to an anonymous German engraver who employed an *S* monogram, but the size of the oeuvre given to the printmaker expanded exponentially over the subsequent century.<sup>147</sup> By the time of Passavant's third volume in 1862 more than 300 prints were attributed to the anonymous artist and his "school".<sup>148</sup> Hollstein's catalogue for Master S would eventually include entries for 459 engravings, with about three quarters of the prints represented by photographic reproductions.<sup>149</sup> Unsurprisingly, as with AC, many of the prints gathered under the Master S heading are unsigned and attributed based on stylistic similarities to monogrammed prints. As we have also seen with the prints of AC, dozens of engravings unknown to Hollstein survive in collections throughout Europe and should be included in an updated catalogue raisonné.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> For recent summaries of the literature on Master S and his followers, see Pfeifer-Helke, *Mit den Gezeiten*, 234-235; and Jan Jansen, "Nederlandse monogrammisten en anoniemen van de 16e eeuw in het Prentenkabinet van de Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België" (MA Thesis, KU Leuven, 2014), especially 16-31.

<sup>147</sup> Adam von Bartsch, *Le peintre graveur*, vol. 8 (Vienna: J.V. Degen, 1808), 13-18. François Brulliot, for instance, identified two additional *S* prints in his 1817 biographical dictionary of artist's monograms and expanded the list to 58 prints bearing the monogram in 1832, while also indicating that there must be additional unknown prints left to be found; see Brulliot, *Dictionnaire de Monogrammes*, 1817, 729-732, no.494 (with three variations on the *S* monogram illustrated on p.65 of the final appendix); and Brulliot, *Dictionnaire des Monogrammes*, vol. 2, 1833, 339, no.2460a. In the updated edition of 1833 Brulliot was careful to distinguish the mark of Master S from a similar monogram that he argued was too early to be by the same artist; see p.340, no.2460b.

<sup>148</sup> Passavant, *Le Peintre-Graveur*, vol. 3, 1862, 47-84.

<sup>149</sup> Hollstein, F. W. H. *Dutch and Flemish etchings, engravings, and woodcuts, ca. 1450-1700* (Amsterdam: Menno Hertzberger, 1956) vol. XIII (Master S), 121-223.

<sup>150</sup> The collection of the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris, for instance, includes at least 40 prints in the style of Master S (many of them monogrammed), which do not appear in

In spite of the large number of prints attributed to Master S and his followers, however, the identity of the print producer has been contested over time. Friedrich Sotzmann offered an early suggestion that Master S was a Cologne goldsmith, based on a coat of arms depicted in a print of the *Martyrdom of Saint Stephen* in Berlin, but Passavant challenged this assertion, noting that the print's inferior quality (and its *ES* monogram) indicate that it was likely executed by a follower of Master S.<sup>151</sup> More convincingly, Passavant pointed to the localized Flemish dialect seen in the inscriptions on several prints as evidence that Master S was a Netherlandish artist active in Brussels.<sup>152</sup>

Twentieth-century writers attempted to identify the monogram with a specific individual active in the southern Netherlands. Gustav Glück first identified Master S as the Antwerp goldsmith Alexander van Brugsal in 1926, suggesting that the "S" in the monogram derived from the abbreviated form of his first name: Sander or Sandres.<sup>153</sup> Glück, and later A.J.J. Delen, contended that the goldsmith's surname was actually a misspelled reference to his hometown of Brussels and asserted based on city records that this Alexander obtained Antwerp citizenship in 1505 or 1506, became a master in the Antwerp Guild of Saint Luke by 1516, and must have died before 1545, when his widow

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Hollstein; see Michèle Hébert. *Inventaire des gravures des écoles du Nord: 1440-1550*. Vol. 2 (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1983), nos. 3273-3382.

<sup>151</sup> Friedrich Sotzmann, "Der altdeutsche Zeichner und Kupferstecher mit dem Monogramm S. auch oder E.S.," *Archiv für die zeichnenden Künste* 3 (1957): 25 and 28-29; and Passavant, *Le Peintre-Graveur*, vol. 3, 1862, 48-49 and 84-85.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 49. Passavant points in particular to the text at the bottom of an image of *Caiphaz* (H.181), which reads "dit is daar woe JHS vor gericht stont". In a footnote, he thanks a Mr. Woutersz. for his insight into the linguistic specifics that would identify this Dutch idiom with Brussels; 49n4.

<sup>153</sup> Gustav Glück, "Eine Vermutung über den Meister S.," *Festschrift der National Bibliothek in Wien* (Vienna, 1926), 401-06. Glück notes that archival documents also refer to van Brugsal variously as Brouxal, Brouchssal, Bruchselles, Bruessele, and Brouschal; 404.

is mentioned.<sup>154</sup> Albrecht Dürer noted in his diary that he attended several dinners with an “Alexander the goldsmith” during his stay in Antwerp from July 1520 to 1521, giving him gifts of four new engravings.<sup>155</sup> Authors, including Glück and Delen, have offered this reference as proof that several Master S copies after Dürer prints confirm a personal familiarity between the two individuals, a contention that has subsequently been properly contradicted by Robert A. Koch and subsequent authors.<sup>156</sup> Dürer’s prints, which travelled to many corners of Europe that the artist himself never visited, were widely copied in the period (see Chapter Two on sixteenth-century copies). Ultimately, no proof exists that Master S and Alexander van Brugsal are one and the same person, and the specific location of S’s production remains a mystery.<sup>157</sup> Even the proposed chronological range of the artist’s production in the first third of the sixteenth century is not definitive; only a handful of dated prints from 1519 and 1520 and a copy after a 1524 print by Dirk Vellert (c.1480-85 – c.1548) serve as fixed points of production by which to date his work.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> A. J. J. Delen, *Histoire de la gravure dans les anciens Pays-Bas et dans les provinces belges, des origines jusqu’à la fin du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, vol. 2 (Paris: F. de Nobele, 1969), 36-38. In a 1975 catalogue entry for a newly acquired Master S print, curator Marie Mauquoy-Hendrickx later argued that this same Alexander hailed instead from Bruchsal in Baden; see “Meester S, Salamo in aanbidding voor het gouden kalf,” in *Vijf Jaar Aanwinsten 1969-1973: Tentoonstelling Georganiseerd in de Koninklijke Bibliotheek Albert I van 18 Januari Tot 1 Maart 1975*. (Brussel: Koninklijke Bibliotheek Albert I, 1975), 395-97 (no.186).

<sup>155</sup> Albrecht Dürer, *Memoirs of Journeys to Venice and the Low Countries*, trans. Rudolf Tombo (Auckland: The Floating Press, 1913), 49 and 91.

<sup>156</sup> Robert Koch, “Two Engravings by Monogrammist ‘S’ (Alexander van Bruessele?),” *Princeton University, Record of the Museum of Historic Art* 10 (1951), 16-17.

<sup>157</sup> And yet, in a recent exhibition at the Louvre, curators continued to identify S with Alexander van Brugsal; see Pierrette Jean-Richard, *Graveurs en taille-douce des anciens Pays-Bas 1430/1440–1555 dans la collection Edmond de Rothschild* (Paris: Reunion des Musées Nationaux, 1997), 144.

<sup>158</sup> The dates 1519 and 1520 appear on a set of six apostles with the S monogram (H.299-304). The monogrammed reverse copy (H.325) of Vellert’s dated *The Vision of Saint Bernard* (H.8) establishes a *terminus a quo* for S’s production at 1524, but it is difficult to know how much



Scholars have traditionally agreed, however, that the prints gathered under the *Notname* Master S are likely the products of a prolific South Netherlandish workshop and by a group of followers rather than a single individual.<sup>159</sup> Passavant identified the Master's work as subtler than that of his students, while still observing that he was a secondary talent who drew without finesse and whose contours betray the work of a craftsman trained as a goldsmith.<sup>160</sup> Given the mixed quality of the corpus, it is unsurprising that less-accomplished but monogrammed compositions might be attributed to unnamed students, some of whom may have worked under the master's supervision. Other unsigned prints in the same style might logically be given to followers of Master S. Ultimately, however, no documentary evidence survives to define the parameters of this theoretical workshop, and more work must be done to disentangle Master S from his followers.

As with Monogrammist AC, the qualitative differences between prints in the Master S oeuvre make it difficult to describe a fundamental style that unites the corpus. In general, prints attributed to the S monogram are exceptionally small in scale but relatively crudely executed, with deeply incised and angular engraved lines used to delineate crowded and flat compositions. Robert A. Koch accurately described this overall aesthetic as “akin to that of niello work with its crisp contrast of dark and light areas.”<sup>161</sup> Passavant went so far as to identify specific prints—including a round *Mass of Saint Gregory* [Fig. 1.59]—as niello proofs, indicating their origin in a metalsmith's

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earlier or later S and his followers might have been active. Recent publications have only ventured so far as to locate Master S as active in the first half of the sixteenth century.

<sup>159</sup> Jacobowitz and Stepanek, *The Prints of Lucas van Leyden & His Contemporaries*, 306; Matile, *Die Druckgraphik Lucas van Leydens und seiner Zeitgenossen*, 220

<sup>160</sup> Passavant, *Le Peintre-Graveur*, vol. 3, 1862, 48.

<sup>161</sup> Koch., “Two Engravings by Monogrammist ‘S’,” 16.

workshop.<sup>162</sup> Prints attributed to Master S and his school often exhibit crosshatching intended to communicate shadows, but the lack of an orderly and consistent system of shading lines contributes to a slapdash overall aesthetic. Hatching in these prints, for instance, frequently extends beyond the edges of the object that it portends to describe. These coarse contours and closely-spaced lines are particularly unforgiving in the faces of figures in many compositions, where eyes and brows suggested by quick strokes of the burin blend together and are incapable of expressing human emotion.

The large corpus of prints attributed to Master S and his school comprises mainly religious subjects, especially scenes from the life and Passion of Christ and images of identifiable saints. Given their small scale and devotional subjects, many of these prints were likely also aimed at pilgrims and other devotees that formed the market for low-cost devotional images. Heinrich Schwarz suggested that these prints, “which were frequently colored and thus simulated small miniature paintings or illuminations of an earlier period, were probably sold at church doors or in market places to be pasted or put into prayer books as mementos of holidays or pilgrimages.”<sup>163</sup> Although only a few of the engravings might be classified as ornament prints, the niello-like quality of many engravings and their decorative framing devices—including pseudo-gothic tracery above standing saints

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<sup>162</sup> Master S, H.347. The impression of the *Mass of Saint Gregory* described by Passavant is now located in the Dresden Print Cabinet and reproduced in the recent collection catalogue; see Pfeifer-Helke, *Mit den Gezeiten*, 242 (cat.184). Passavant also claimed that an image of the *Beheading of Saint Catherine* (later H.395) was a niello print. See Passavant, *Le Peintre-Graveur*, vol. 3, 49-50 and 72 (no.221) and 76 (no.252). For an overview of niello printing, see Jay A. Levenson, Konrad Oberhuber, and Jacquelyn L. Sheehan, *Early Italian Engravings from the National Gallery of Art* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1973), Appendix B, 528-549; and Gisèle Lambert, “Niello print,” *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed June 22, 2018, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T062411>.

<sup>163</sup> Heinrich Schwarz, “Two Unrecorded Engravings by Master S,” *Bulletin Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts / Bulletin Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten*, vol. 6 (1957), 39-42.

and ornamental borders around passion scenes—indicate their potential use as models for the embellishment of metalwork objects for both personal and religious use (see Chapter Three on prints and metalwork). In spite of their rather unrefined artistic qualities, Master S and his followers clearly sought to meet the needs of a variety of low-end print markets that are frequently overlooked in print scholarship.

### ***Monogrammist AC and Master S: Who is looking at whom?***

While the majority of engravings in the style of Master S are ostensibly original compositions, several prints are clearly modeled on works by other northern printmakers of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, including Israhel van Meckenem, Albrecht Dürer, and Lucas van Leyden.<sup>164</sup> These generally reduced copies hew closely to their models, making only incidental changes to the compositions. A prime example is one of Master S's most accomplished engravings: a copy [Fig. 1.60] after Dirk Vellert's *Vision of Saint Bernard* [Fig. 1.61], in which Master S faithfully replicates the prototype in reverse, including the ornamental architectural setting. Master S's loose copy, however, is unable to capture the softness and depth of his model.<sup>165</sup> He fails to communicate the recession of space in the tiled pattern behind Bernard, and his scratchy burin-work flattens shadows and texture. Master S's copies rarely exhibit the kind of creative revision or interest in technical replication evident in copies by other printmakers during this period (see Chapter Two on copying in the sixteenth-century).

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<sup>164</sup> Among Master S's copies after other artists are H.453 (after Van Meckenem, H.478); H.166 (after Dürer, B.20); and H.198 & H.297 (after Lucas, NHD.73 & NHD.111). Master S also engraved a number of copies after woodcuts by Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostanen; see H.125, 127, 128, 130, 133, 135, 183, and 191.

<sup>165</sup> Master S, H.325; and Vellert, H.8.

Direct correlations also exist between prints with an AC monogram and those attributed to Master S and his school, relationships that have largely been ignored in previous scholarship. Take, for instance, two circular engravings executed at the same minute scale depicting the Old Testament story of *Bathsheba at the Bath*: one signed with S [Fig. 1.62] and the other with a flat top AC [H.16; Fig. 1.63].<sup>166</sup> In both prints, Bathsheba stands in a fountain set in the foreground of a crowded city, as an emissary from King David approaches her with a letter coercing her subsequent adultery. David peers down at the bathing beauty from a balcony behind the messenger. Aside from the reversal inherent in copying, the differences between the two prints are minimal, but significant. Master S's print, an impression of which survives at the British Museum, includes a dog lying at the base of the fountain between Bathsheba and the messenger, perhaps a reference to the marital fidelity forsaken in the ensuing narrative. In this print Bathsheba's robe is draped over her left arm, but her body is exposed to the viewer as she glances over her shoulder at the approaching visitor. In AC's print, however, Bathsheba leans on the fountain for support, her robe strategically wrapped around her body to cover the nudity at her waist while leaving her breasts exposed. The faithful dog in the foreground has been removed, and Bathsheba looks not at the messenger but rather out of the picture plane, more explicitly implicating the viewer in the voyeurism central to the scene. The AC monogram appears on the wall of the fountain at the bottom of the composition, in the same location as the monogram in Master S's print.

Other direct, but previously unpublished, connections between signed prints by AC and S are evident in engraved scabbard designs. One such S-monogrammed print

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<sup>166</sup> Master S, H.4. For the story of David and Bathsheba, see 2 Samuel 11.

depicts a *Gentleman and a Lady* [Fig. 1.64], standing in a niche near the top of the long, tapering composition.<sup>167</sup> Dressed in lavish clothes—note the man’s extravagantly plumed hat—the two figures face each other, as the man appears to touch his partner’s covered breast with his right hand. This type of amorous subject is commonly found on such designs for scabbards, which often offered playful warnings about the need for self-control in both love and swordplay. The rest of the print is ornamental, with stacks of winged putti, grotesque heads, and hybrid vegetal strapwork flourishes providing a decorative support and embellishment for the scene. Another scabbard design, signed with the flat top AC monogram [H.227; Fig. 1.65], replicates the ornamental elements of the print in reverse but replaces the anonymous man and woman in the niche with Adam and Eve.<sup>168</sup>

Segments of two additional *Scabbards with a Gentleman and a Lady*, each bearing the S monogram, are reflected in AC’s *Scabbard Design with Hercules and Venus* [H.233; Fig. 0.7], discussed in the introduction to this dissertation. The bottom left portion of AC’s engraving—including its central motif of a ram’s head—is loosely (but recognizably) reproduced in the lower half of another Master S scabbard [Fig. 1.66].<sup>169</sup> The bottom right section of the AC print—which features a tondo containing a head in profile—is reproduced in reverse in the lower quadrant of another Master S design [Fig. 1.67].<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Master S, H.459.

<sup>168</sup> See Chapter Three for a more in-depth examination of this print.

<sup>169</sup> Master S, H.457. The print is illustrated in the Dresden Kupferstich-Kabinett collection catalogue: see Pfeifer-Helke, *Mit den Gezeiten*, 241 (cat.182).

<sup>170</sup> Master S, H.458.

Clearly printmakers using the AC and S monograms were relying on prototypes created by the other monogrammist as sources for their engravings. Since both monogrammists (or their workshops and followers) borrowed freely from compositions by other early modern printmakers, it is unsurprising to find nearly identical engravings signed by each of them. But which printmaker set the precedent, and which was the copyist? The only dated prints attributed to S come from 1519 and 1520, earlier than dated prints by AC, but these particular prints are undated, and we know too little about the full scope of either artist's activity to confidently determine which engravings were created first. Although it is tempting to assume that S copied compositions by AC, given the former's looser and less refined engraving technique, we cannot definitively declare which print served as the model for the other. We cannot simply surmise that the more capable printmaker originated the model image for the lesser engraver.

Additional undescribed prints bearing the AC monogram also correlate directly to unsigned works attributed to Master S and his followers. One engraving signed with the crossbar AC, known only as an undescribed unicum in the reserve print collection at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, depicts *Christ on the Cross with the Virgin, Saint John, Mary Magdalene, Saint Francis and Saint Jerome* [App.16; Fig. 1.68]. The engraving is reproduced at approximately the same scale in a print attributed to a follower of Master S [Fig. 1.69].<sup>171</sup> The only major difference in the Master S composition is the substitution of AC's stigmata-bearing Saint Francis with the figure of Bernard of Clairvaux, identified by the bishop's miter at his feet. While the same component elements are reproduced in

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<sup>171</sup> An impression of this print survives in Brussels at the Royal Library of Belgium (acc. no. F949). It does not appear in Hollstein, but is described in the appendix of Jansen, "Nederlandse monogrammisten," no.95.

both prints—including wisps of grotesque tracery floating in the upper corners—the stylistic differences between the two engravings are stark. Whereas the print in the style of Master S reflects the flat, angular aesthetic of that corpus, AC's more refined engraving technique employs a range of cross-hatching to produce softer contours and a tonal variety that lends the scene a greater sense of depth. The print in the style of S is relatively stiff and stylized, with bubbly clouds in the sky and figures with scrunched and generic features. AC, however, enlivens the sky with parallel lines to suggest thin, undulating clouds, and he imbues the faces of the figures with emotion—even adding tears to their cheeks. If AC's print is a copy, it exhibits marked technical and formal improvements over its model.

Another AC engraving of *Christ on the Cross* [App.17; Fig. 1.70], also known only in a unique impression in Paris, depicts Christ surrounded by the Virgin, Saint John, Mary Magdalen, and a kneeling Benedictine monk and nun. The arched composition is surrounded by a decorative border containing the instruments of Christ's Passion, including not only the standard symbols of his ordeal—such as the nails, scourges, and lance—but also less common iconography, including the knife slicing Malchus's ear and a hand holding a clump of Jesus's hair taken in his mocking. The print, which has the formal hallmarks of AC's finest engravings, is signed near the base of the cross with the crossbar AC monogram. Both the central image of the Crucifixion and the decorative border are replicated in a previously undescribed print at the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin that has been attributed to Master S [Fig. 1.71].<sup>172</sup> The print, while unsigned, is not the only engraving in the style of Master S that utilizes this frame containing the *Arma*

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<sup>172</sup> Berlin Kupferstichkabinett (acc. no. 683-13). The print does not appear in Hollstein's catalogue for Master S.

*Christi*; variations on the same border appear in prints depicting *Christ on the Cross* [Fig. 1.72] and *The Man of Sorrows Seated between The Virgin and Saint John* [Fig. 1.73].<sup>173</sup> While the borders of all three of these S-attributed prints contain the small, disembodied heads of Christ's tormenters floating amidst the Passion implements, AC's print only includes the objects themselves, making for a less crowded marginal space. Is this engraving by AC a copy after a print from a larger series by Master S or his followers? Or did Master and his school take inspiration from AC's print and employ the same border motif in a series of subsequent prints?

Prototypes for these decorative borders containing the instruments of Christ's Passion are found in Flemish and French illuminated manuscripts from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. A Book of Hours produced in Ghent during the 1480s for Duke Adolph of Cleves, for instance, includes an illuminated border containing the implements surrounding text from John's account of the Passion and a historiated initial "I" depicting the *Man of Sorrows* [Fig. 1.74].<sup>174</sup> An illumination depicting *The Arrest of Christ* [Fig. 1.75] from a slightly later Psalter, produced in Western France, England, or the Southern Netherlands and now in the collection of the British Library, is also surrounded by a similar border of Passion symbols.<sup>175</sup> Like other decorative borders in

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<sup>173</sup> Master S, H.214 & H.281.

<sup>174</sup> *Hours of Duke Adolph of Cleves*, Walters Art Museum, Ms W.439, fol.246. For a full description of the manuscript and additional bibliography, see "The Digital Walters," The Walters Art Museum, accessed June 22, 2018, <http://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W439/description.html>.

<sup>175</sup> British Library MS. Harley 1892, pt.2, f.47. For additional images, description, and bibliography related to this manuscript, see "Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts," The British Library, accessed June 22, 2018, <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=6644>.



manuscript illuminations, these borders serve to both embellish the page and sustain the reader's attention for further focused reflection.

The relationship between AC and S has not been completely ignored by previous scholars. Engravings bearing a common variation on the flat top AC monogram have been cited as the source for three additional unsigned prints in the style of Master S. Each of these prints depicts a saint and employs a decorative border that mimics the types of illuminations found in contemporary Flemish manuscripts. In his volume for Master S, Hollstein lists a *Martyrdom of Saint Lambert and Two Deacons* [Fig. 1.76] in the collection of the Royal Library of Belgium in Brussels, which he describes as a reverse copy after AC's version of the same scene [H.76; Fig. 1.77].<sup>176</sup> The arched, central portion of the composition depicts the ambush and murder of Lambert, the bishop of Maastricht in the late seventh century, by Frankish troops while he celebrated mass in nearby Liège. The engraving is framed by a border comprising whimsical vegetal-ornamental flourishes and flanked by architectural niches supporting standing noblemen. Hollstein also attributed to Master S an engraving in the Liège University Library depicting *Saint Apollonia* [Fig. 1.78], noting in his catalogue that the print was modeled on a composition by AC [H.94; Fig. 1.79].<sup>177</sup> Both original and copy depict the Christian martyr standing within a niche, flanked by two female saints (probably Saints Magdalene and Clare). In her hands she holds a book and her main attribute: a pair of pincers gripping a tooth. Embedded in the Renaissance architectural portico above her head is a roundel illustrating a key episode from her narrative: the moment when a mob removes her teeth before burning her alive. Lost in the faithful but inferior copy preserved in Liège

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<sup>176</sup> Master S, H.354.

<sup>177</sup> Master S, H.379.

is the border, comprising flowers, birds, and fruit, that embellishes the sides and bottom edge of AC's print.<sup>178</sup> Although rudimentary in its execution, this margin recalls the late fifteenth-century floral borders of the Ghent-Bruges school of manuscript illuminators, who introduced naturalistic *trompe l'oeil* effects and inspired miniaturists throughout the Netherlands and Western Europe.<sup>179</sup> The flora and fauna in AC's border are crudely rendered and lack the cast shadows of true *trompe l'oeil*, but they are identifiable as specific species with established Christian symbolism; for example, the peacock, symbol of immortality and Christ's resurrection, stands atop a column of lilies, representing saintly purity, in the right-hand margin.<sup>180</sup> Hollstein was unaware of a third unsigned print in the style of Master S, this one depicting the *Conversion of Saint Hubert* [Fig. 1.80] surrounded by a historiated border containing hunting scenes, that also replicates a composition bearing the AC monogram [H.72; Fig. 1.81].<sup>181</sup> While we might logically

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<sup>178</sup> The unique, anonymous copy is trimmed within the image, making it likely that the complete print also replicated the marginal decoration seen in the AC print.

<sup>179</sup> The initiation of this *trompe l'oeil* tradition is attributed to an illuminator known as the Vienna Master of Mary of Burgundy who was active in Ghent in the last quarter of the sixteenth-century; see Thomas Kren and Scot McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003), 126-157; and Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann and Virginia Roehrig Kaufmann, "The Sanctification of Nature: Observations on the Origins of Trompe l'oeil in Netherlandish Book Painting of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 9 (1991): 43-64. For the adoption of Ghent-Bruges manuscript forms in Holland, see also James H. Marrow, "Dutch Manuscript Painting in Context: Encounters with the Art of France, the Southern Netherlands, and Germany," in *Master and Miniatures: Proceedings of the Congress on Medieval Manuscript Illumination in the Northern Netherlands (Utrecht, 10-13 December 1989)*, eds. Koert van der Horst and Johann-Christian Klamt (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1991), 62-64.

<sup>180</sup> James Hall, "Peacock" and "Lily," in *Dictionary of Subjects & Symbols in Art* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1974), 192-193 and 238, respectively.

<sup>181</sup> Hollstein and other previous scholars have identified the print as the *Conversion of Saint Eustace*; see Matile, *Die Druckgraphik Lucas van Leydens und seiner Zeitgenossen*, 222-223 (no.183), and note 315. While the iconography of the conversions of Eustace and Hubert have become conflated, with each being brought to the Christian faith through an encounter with a stag bearing a crucifix in its antlers, the protagonist of this engraving is clearly a nobleman like Hubert and not a Roman soldier like Eustace. This reattribution is affirmed by the print's survival in manuscripts devoted to Saint Hubert (see below).

conclude that these unsigned engravings are copies after AC's models, it is as yet impossible to determine which prints came first.

***Monogrammist AC, Master S, and the market for printed manuscript illuminations***

Ultimately, however, the distinction between original and copy in these related prints attributed to AC and S is less consequential than the small scale and format of the prints and the physical circumstances of their survival to this day. Small-scale devotional prints—including scenes from Christ's Passion and images of saints—with decorative borders appear frequently in the corpora attributed to Masters AC and S. Such prints were attractive to an early modern Catholic audience, looking for cheap alternatives to hand-painted manuscript illuminations. From the very beginning of their production in the late fourteenth century, single-leaf prints were pasted into prayer books and other private volumes and sometimes even further painted and gilded.<sup>182</sup> In the fifteenth century several engravers in the Rhine-Maas valley, such as The Master of the Berlin Passion, specialized in small prints aimed at this hybrid devotional manuscript market.<sup>183</sup> Some monasteries in the Low Countries also began producing prints of their own to use and

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<sup>182</sup> On the early use of prints in hybrid illuminated manuscripts, see Sandra Hindman, "Cross-Fertilization: Experiments in Mixing the Media," in Sandra Hindman and James Douglas Farquhar, *Pen to Press: Illustrated Manuscripts and Printed Books in the First Century of Printing* (College Park: University of Maryland, 1977), 101-156. Larisa Grollemond's PhD dissertation *Necessary Luxury: The Illuminated Manuscript at the French Courts, c.1460-1515* (University of Pennsylvania, 2016), includes a chapter-length case study of a French manuscript in which single-sheet engravings were incorporated into larger hand-painted illuminations as a luxurious hybrid product. She describes the manuscript illuminator Robinet Testard's (fl.1470-1531) use of contemporary engravings by the German printmaker Israhel van Meckenem in his *Hours of Charles of Angoulême* (mid-1480s) as a means of bridging the patron's interest in print and manuscript; see 212-273.

<sup>183</sup> In her book *Early Engravers & Their Public: The Master of the Berlin Passion and Manuscripts from Convents in the Rhine-Maas Region, ca. 1450-1500* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2004), Ursula Weekes examines engravings and metalcuts created as integral parts of fifteenth-century manuscripts, intended to be inserted during the creation of the codices.

sell.<sup>184</sup> This market for cheap engravings for monastic audiences clearly continued into the sixteenth century, and many prints attributed to both the AC and S monograms were intended to meet the demand. In this milieu of engravings, created as inexpensive substitutions for Flemish manuscript illuminations, lie the most direct connections—and the greatest confusion—between these two anonymous producers.

The location of several extant impressions of the AC-monogrammed prints with decorative borders prove that the images not only aspired to adorn sixteenth-century manuscripts, but also that they were actively employed in this context and in dialogue with marginal ornament from manuscript models. Several engravings survive almost exclusively as extra-illustrations, pasted into Dutch-language manuscripts produced in the Southern Netherlands, where they appear most often in the company of prints by Master S and printmakers working in his style. Impressions of *The Martyrdom of Saint Lambert and of Two Deacons* and *Saint Hubert*, both discussed above, are preserved in liturgical manuscripts—now held by the University of Liège Library – that were assembled by clerics at the Abbey of Sint-Truiden in the mid-sixteenth century.<sup>185</sup> Both Lambert and

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<sup>184</sup> In his study of early printmaking in Antwerp, Jan van der Stock notes that specific monasteries in Mechelen, Vilvoorde, and Brussels published their own devotional prints in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. These monastic workshops were not regulated under the guild structure that applied to publishers in Antwerp; see Van der Stock, *Printing Images in Antwerp*, 31. For a survey of this monastic production and additional bibliography, Van der Stock cites Maurits de Meyer, *Volksprenten in de Nederlanden, 1400-1900* (Amsterdam: Scheltema & Holkema, 1970).

<sup>185</sup> The manuscripts containing prints by AC are located in the collection of the Université de Liège, Bibliothèque ALPHA (Architecture, Lettres, Philosophie, Histoire et Arts), Manuscrits et fonds anciens. For the engraving depicting Saint Lambert, see Manuscript 324, *Catalogus Pontificum et Imperatorum Romanorum*, mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, folio 147v. For impressions of the Saint Hubert print, see Manuscript 278, *Vita S. Huberti, cum genealogia ejusdem, etc.*, 16<sup>th</sup>-century, titlepage verso; and Manuscript 311, *Ordinarius Ceremoniarum, Sint-Truiden*, 1564, folio 50v. For a discussion of the manuscripts from Sint-Truiden, see Els Deconinck's essay on "Handschriften met Gravures," in Provinciaal Museum voor Religieuze Kunst, *Handschriften uit de Abdij van Sint-Truiden* (Leuven: Peeters, 1986), 65-71. Manuscript 311 is specifically discussed in catalogue entry no.7 (pp.98-101). Special thanks are due to Jeroen Luyckx, who

Hubert were rare subjects for prints in the period, but they were revered locally as the patron saints of nearby Liège, making their inclusion in these books especially fitting for the devotional practices of the local monastic community. In addition, a hand-painted impression of AC's engraving of *Saint Apollonia* (also discussed above) apparently survives in a bound compilation of texts emphasizing female piety, likely made at, or for use in, the convent of Sint-Hieronymusdal, also located in Sint-Truiden. The manuscript, now in private hands, is dated 1546 and includes at least one additional engraving monogrammed with an AC as well as numerous prints attributed to Master S and also by more prominent printmakers from the Lower Rhine, including Jacob Binck (c.1500-c.1569) and the late fifteenth-century German master Israhel van Meckenem.<sup>186</sup>

Regrettably, nineteenth-century collectors frequently disassembled such illustrated manuscripts, removing the tipped-in prints and thus permanently disassociating those images from their former devotional settings. But a group of single-sheet, rudimentarily hand-colored prints, now housed in the collection of the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam, also stemmed from a sixteenth-century manuscript assembled in the Maas-valley region. In addition to impressions of AC's *Martyrdom of Saint Lambert* and *Saint Hubert*, this group includes several other prints bearing the AC

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visited the library as my proxy and provided me with photographs to confirm my suspicion that these manuscripts contained rare, and in some cases otherwise unrecorded, impressions signed with the AC monogram.

<sup>186</sup> “*Spiegel der Ghewariger Maecheden Christi*,” Les Enluminaires, accessed June 22, 2018, <http://www.textmanuscripts.com/medieval/jerome-epistles-rare-books-60377?referenceNumber=TM%2085&p=7>. In addition to the engraving of *Saint Apollonia*, the manuscript also allegedly contains a hand-colored impression AC-monogrammed *Saint Catherine* (H.101)—see Chapter Four in this dissertation—and perhaps an impression of an otherwise lost *Last Supper* including a roundel depicting Moses instituting the Passover (H.35?). Unfortunately, the owner of the manuscript did not agree to allow me to peek inside to see what other previously unrecorded impressions might lie within.

monogram as well as prints attributed to Master S and the anonymous monogrammist DT.<sup>187</sup>

A print depicting *Saints Lucia and Geneviève* [H.108; Fig. 1.82] with an elaborate double ornamental border and a flat top AC monogram also appears alongside prints attributed to Master S and his followers in a related group of 220, mostly hand-colored prints by lower German and Flemish printmakers, now in the British Museum collection. Manuscript scholar Kathryn Rudy has linked the sheets to a specific cannibalized manuscript in the British Library, and she dates the manuscript to around 1530 by further attributing the text to the hand of a named Franciscan monk at a monastery in Maastricht, a city along the Maas River in the southern Netherlands near the current Belgian border.<sup>188</sup> In addition to Master S, the British Museum group also include numerous engravings by an anonymous Monogrammist M, who has been identified as a friar at the Abbey of Sint-Truiden.<sup>189</sup> Monogrammist M and several additional printmakers,

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<sup>187</sup> Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, *Lucas van Leyden en tijdgenoten*, 58-59 (no.135). The catalogue suggests that a number of prints with similar hand-coloring attributed therein to Allaert Claesz., Master S, Master DT, and a Master WR, all likely came from a manuscript written around 1500 in the Maas Valley region of present day Belgium (perhaps Liège); see 72-73 (no.198) and 74-75 (no.207). This determination is made based in part on the presence of a print depicting Saint Lambert, patron saint of Maastricht. In the catalogue entries for related prints by Master S and Master DT the author also points to Friedrich Sotzmann's 1857 essay on Master S in which he mentions a similar manuscript from Liège dated 1526 that contains prints by these same artists; see Sotzmann, "Der Altdeutsche Zeichner und Kupferstecher mit dem Monogramm S. auch oder E.S.," 22. I have been unable to trace the specific manuscript mentioned by Sotzmann.

<sup>188</sup> See curator's note for print 1868,1114.1 on the British Museum's website (accessed June 22, 2018): [http://britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=1494606&partId=1&searchText=1868,1114.1&page=2](http://britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1494606&partId=1&searchText=1868,1114.1&page=2). Many of the sheets in this group were described in an 1868 essay by Andreas Andresen, who also suggested an origin for the manuscript in the Maas Valley; see Andresen, "Beiträge zur altern niederdeutschen Kupferstichkunde des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts," *Archiv für die zeichnenden Künste* 14 (1868): 1-56.

<sup>189</sup> For prints attributed to Monogrammist M, see Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish*, vol. XIII, 75-92.

including the aforementioned DT, have been described as followers of Master S and are known almost exclusively from impressions such as these that come from Maas Valley monastic manuscripts.<sup>190</sup> The conclusion that Master S and his school were working in and around Liège is therefore a reasonable, but ultimately still inconclusive, hypothesis.<sup>191</sup>

The recurrence of AC prints, along with related copies attributed to Master S and his followers, in these Sint-Truiden manuscripts from the second quarter of the sixteenth century raises the possibility that at least one engraver employing the AC monogram was also active in the Maas valley, perhaps near Liège, or else saw this region as a particularly fertile market for devotional prints. Of course, the easy mobility of printed sheets does not preclude the possibility that the AC engravings, like the prints by Israhel van Meckenem, were brought in from a point farther north along with other prints destined for monastic use. Nevertheless, the prints in this group suggest that scholars trying to locate a single Monogrammist AC in Amsterdam or Utrecht, associated with Allaert Claesz., may have been looking for their author in the wrong part of the Netherlands for the past several hundred years.<sup>192</sup>

A final example of a previously unrealized connection between two prints, respectively signed with AC and S monograms, highlights what might be learned from additional research into the relationship between these two anonymous printmakers.

Hollstein's catalogue lists, but does not illustrate, an engraving depicting the *Man of*

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<sup>190</sup> Passavant, *Le Peintre-Graveur*, vol. 3, 1862, 47-93; Delen, *Histoire de La Gravure*, 38.

<sup>191</sup> Els Deconinck argues against the certainty of both the specific identities ascribed to monogrammists DT and CP and their supposed presence as friars at the Abbey of Sint-Truiden; see Deconinck, "Handschriften met Gravures," 70-71.

<sup>192</sup> For more on suites of AC-monogrammed engravings intended as miniatures for the manuscript market, see Chapter Four of this dissertation.

*Sorrows*, signed with an AC monogram. With the help of my Belgian colleague Jeroen Luyckx, I located the print [H.38; Fig. 1.83] in a single, partially hand-colored impression that remains pasted into another mid-sixteenth-century manuscript from the Sint-Truiden monastery.<sup>193</sup> In the tradition of Man of Sorrows imagery, the engraving depicts Christ, bloodied from the Crucifixion and crowned with thorns, sitting in a melancholic posture with his head supported by his hand and a skull at his feet. Angels surrounded by haloes of light hover in the upper corners, one holding lilies and the other a sword. After finally being able to view the print, I puzzled over the immediately illegible inscription on a tablet hanging from a tree at the upper left next to Christ's head.

Only when I observed the direct relationship between this print and an engraving signed with an S monogram in the collection of the Royal Library of Brussels was I able to translate this enigmatic text. Master S's more crudely rendered *Man of Sorrows* [Fig. 1.84] contains the same basic elements: the melancholic seated Christ with his eyes closed, the skull, the tree, and the angels of Mercy and Judgement hovering at the upper corners.<sup>194</sup> Unlike the AC-monogrammed engraving, however, the text in this print is not inscribed on a tablet, but rather floats in the space around Christ's head, where it can be clearly deciphered. The text, taken from the Song of Solomon 5:2, reads "Ego dormio et cor meum vigilat": *I sleep but my heart waketh*. Sure enough, the poorly inscribed text on the tablet in AC's print includes the same text, intended to guide the viewer in an empathetic devotional exercise.

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<sup>193</sup> Université de Liège, Bibliothèque ALPHA (Architecture, Lettres, Philosophie, Histoire et Arts), Manuscrits et fonds anciens, Manuscript 248, *Collectarium Praeceptorum Moraliū*, Sint-Truiden, 1552, folio 9v.

<sup>194</sup> Master S, H.285.



Once again, it is unclear whether the technically superior composition by Monogrammist AC served as the model for the print attributed to Master S, or else if AC set out to improve upon an inferior prototype by S. It also remains possible that both artists were looking to a lost model by a third, independent artist. We are unable to determine whether these printmakers were working in the same region or in the same studio, or whether one engraver even trained the other. Nevertheless, the relationship between the two engravings is not coincidental, and acknowledging the connection between these prints allows us to look at each print in new and revelatory ways.

### *Untangling AC and S*

The perceived similarities between the work of Master S and Monogrammist AC and their presence in related manuscripts produced in the Southern Netherlands have also led to some confusion between the two hands, with previous scholars ascribing unsigned prints to each respective printmaker within the same multi-volume series. Some of this duplication can be attributed to the standard uncritical repetition of information from one unillustrated catalogue raisonné to the next. Several prints were first attributed to Claesz. by the Leipzig print dealer and publisher Rudolph Weigel in 1847 and subsequently included in Passavant's catalogue and subsequent publications.<sup>195</sup>

Unsurprisingly, Hollstein codified the conflation between the two monogrammists in his partially illustrated catalogue series. He illustrated an engraving of *The Adoration of the Shepherds* in his catalogue for Allaert Claesz. [H.28; Fig. 1.85] and then unwittingly attributed an impression of the same print to Master S in a separate volume

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<sup>195</sup> Rudolph Weigel, *Rudolph Weigel's Kunstlager-Catalog*, vol. 19 (Leipzig: Rudolph Weigel, 1847), 40 (nos. 16483-90).

five years later.<sup>196</sup> This unsigned print depicts the veneration of the newborn Christ Child by the Virgin and a pair of kneeling shepherds as a third shepherd lingers in the background.<sup>197</sup> An inset roundel above the main scene shows the Annunciation to the Shepherds that presaged their arrival in Bethlehem. An arabesque border comprising rudimentary floral motifs—including strawberries at the left symbolizing the Virgin's fruitfulness—provides a decorative frame that recalls the painted marginal decoration common to contemporary Flemish devotional manuscripts (Discussed more fully above).

A group of eight engraved *Apostles* with similar floral borders and slapdash hand-coloring also appear both in Hollstein's catalogue for Allaert Claesz. [H.80-87; Figs. 1.86- 1.93] and the volume for Master S, reflecting the ongoing confusion between the two hands.<sup>198</sup> Each of the unsigned prints depicts an apostle standing in a niche, flanked

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<sup>196</sup> Master S, H.165. The print was first attributed to Claesz. in 1847 by the Leipzig print dealer and publisher Rudolph Weigel: Weigel, *Rudolph Weigel's Kunstlager-Catalog*, vol. 19, 40 (no.16482). The impression attributed to Allaert Claesz. and illustrated in Hollstein's catalogue is trimmed slightly within the composition at the bottom of the print. It is now in the collection of the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam. The print illustrated in Hollstein's catalogue for Master S is a later impression from the same plate that exhibits a degradation of the printed lines but includes the full bottom edge of the floral border, including a shield with a cross at its center. This impression is now in Brussels: <http://uurl.kbr.be/1045549>.

<sup>197</sup> The central portion of this print is a previously unrecognized copy after an engraved *Nativity* signed by a different anonymous Netherlandish printmaker known as the Master PVL (H.1). Master PVL was thought to have been active in the Netherlands in the first quarter of the sixteenth century and is often classified, like Monogrammist AC, as a follower of Lucas van Leyden in exhibition catalogues. For Master PVL, see Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish*, XIII, 113-117; Matile, *Die Druckgraphik Lucas van Leydens und seiner Zeitgenossen*, 216-217; and Jacobowitz and Stepanek, *The Prints of Lucas van Leyden & His Contemporaries*, 304-305.

<sup>198</sup> In this volume for Master S, Hollstein does not give the prints independent catalogue numbers but describes the group of engravings as "8 plates (from a set of 12): *Apostles in Arabesque Borders*" and provides the Passavant catalogue reference (no. 203); see Hollstein, Master S, p.185. The entry also provides a cross reference to the Claesz. entries for the same prints without asserting to which artist they should ultimately be ascribed. The eight prints described by Hollstein were previously in the collection of Friedrich August II, King of Saxony and purchased by the Rijksmuseum in 1938 as the work of Master S. Seven of the prints are unique impressions, although, adding to the attribution confusion, Hollstein separately catalogues an impression of the print depicting *Saint Simon* in Brussels as the work of Master S (Master S; H.368). An additional print of *Saint John the Evangelist*—which was previously described by Hollstein but not illustrated (Master S; H.311)—now in the collection of the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin should

by ornamental columns beneath whimsical and grotesque tracery. As with the *Adoration of the Shepherds* discussed above, an inset circle at the top of each engraving illustrates a related scene: in this case the martyrdom of the respective saint. The bottom quadrant of each composition identifies the apostle by way of crudely-rendered capital letters followed by some portion of the Latin phrase *Ora Pro*, or “pray for”, an indication that the prints were intended for devotional purposes.

The prints in the *Apostles* series, while unsigned, are engraved in a manner unlike any other signed AC prints. Passages of shading, including the undisciplined cross-hatched shadows on the doorways around the figures, are more consistent with prints attributed to Master S and his followers. The overall format of the *Apostles* series—with an inset roundel at the top, floral border, and Latin text in imprecise block-lettering at the bottom of the composition—as well as the loose engraving of the figure’s faces, correspond directly with other prints that have been confidently attributed to Master S and his school, including four prints from a *Passion of Christ* series; see, for example *Christ Carrying the Cross* [Fig. 1.94].<sup>199</sup> Based on these formal similarities, I believe that the *Adoration of the Shepherds* and the *Apostles* series were most likely executed by engravers working in the milieu of Master S and should be excised from the AC catalogue.

Several additional prints attributed by Hollstein to both AC and Master S should be given entirely to Master S and his followers. An engraving of *Saint Dominic and Saint Catherine of Siena* [H.115; Fig. 1.95], for instance, is clearly not the work of

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be considered the ninth print in the series. I have not located the final three undescribed prints from the series, which presumably depict Saints Andrew, Bartholomew, and Thomas. One might also expect an additional image of Christ to round out the series.

<sup>199</sup> Master S, H.149-152; for *Christ Carrying the Cross*, see H.151.

Monogrammist AC.<sup>200</sup> The printmaker's heavy-handed articulation of the saints' faces and the haphazard shading of the ground beneath their feet align more with the school of Master S than with any print by AC. The format of the composition, with the saints standing in an ornate portal surrounded by a manuscript-like border of acanthus leaves, is consistent with other prints by Master S but otherwise absent in the AC oeuvre.<sup>201</sup>

Likewise, an unsigned *Monstrance with Seven Scenes from the Life of Christ* [H.225; Fig. 1.96] that Hollstein attributed to both monogrammists finds no formal or technical parallel in the AC corpus, but is at home with other engravings given to Master S.<sup>202</sup>

Along with these prints, I would add two additional unsigned engravings from Hollstein's AC catalogue that should be bundled with prints attributed to Master S. The first, an engraving of *Saint Martin, Bishop of Tours, Flanked by Kneeling Pilgrims* [H.88; Fig. 1.97], survives in a single recorded impression in Rotterdam that comes from the same group of hand-colored prints from an unbound early modern manuscript (see note 29). The decorative acanthus leaves that support the roundel containing the legend of Saint Martin's cloak at the top of the print, the imprecision evident in the engraving of human faces, and the irregular approach to crosshatching in shadows all support an attribution to the milieu of Master S. Similarly, the partially hand-colored unicum of *Saint Monica and a Bishop Saint* [H.114; Fig. 1.98] in the Rijksmuseum collection

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<sup>200</sup> Hollstein, Vol. XIII (Master S), H.372. The entry in the catalogue for Master AC identifies the female figure as Saint Bridget, but the British Museum's identification of the figure as Catherine is more logical given the print's overall focus on Dominican iconography. The roundel at the top of the engraving depicts the Virgin appearing to Reginald of Orleans and presenting him with the habit of the Friars Preachers.

<sup>201</sup> For similar prints attributed to Master S, see *Saints Catherine, Dorothy, and Agatha* (H.398) and *A Saint Abbess with Cross and Book* (H.408).

<sup>202</sup> Master S, H.147. For additional prints attributed to Master S that include seven scenes in small circles as part of a larger devotional composition, see H.148, H.217, and H.269.

exhibits more affinities with the works given to S than to AC. Once again, the carelessness of the print's crosshatching and the heavy-handed engraving of facial feature, as well as the gothic text at the bottom of the print, lead me to remove these prints from the AC corpus and tentatively group the print with other unsigned works in the mode of Master S.

Even after more than two hundred years of scholarship on the AC monogram, much work remains to establish the boundaries of the oeuvre and the identities of the engravers employing the many related signatures and styles that it encompasses. Rather than reiterating the misinformation provided by Hollstein's overly inclusive catalogue raisonné, we must continue to subdivide and reorganize the AC corpus, acknowledging that not all prints attributed to the monogram are the product of a single hand or workshop or timeline. Even as newly discovered prints are gathered under the AC umbrella, a revised catalogue raisonné must interrogate the certainty of long-held attributions and assumptions. As I have outlined in this chapter, many unsigned prints attributed to AC are the work of other Netherlandish and German printmakers. Unrelated AC monograms should be set aside and groups of prints with cohesive monograms, engraving styles, and compositional approaches should be considered in isolation and put into new contexts. The ongoing clarification and fragmentation of the AC corpus will likely undermine the myth of the singular artist or workshop responsible for these prints and further muddy any attempts to tether an AC monogram to a named artist.

By leaving Allaert Claesz. behind, we might continue to look at the monogram in a new light: as a window onto the formal strategies and business practices of early Netherlandish engravers and print publishers in the second quarter of the sixteenth

century. Even in their continued anonymity and dislocation, these prints offer a multitude of case studies in the larger, interrelated issues at the core of scholarship on early modern printmaking. Using the expanded and clarified AC corpus as a data set, subsequent chapters of this dissertation will explore the role of copying in the period's print production (Chapter Two); the sixteenth-century engraver's proactive engagement with other crafts, especially metalwork (Chapter Three); the strategies used by printmakers to appeal to a variety of consumers and the business practices necessary to keep those markets supplied (Chapter Four); and how the afterlives of engravings, including physical interventions by collectors and later publishers, can reveal truths about anonymous printmakers and the shifting historical value of their work (Conclusion).

## CHAPTER TWO: AC's Complicated Copies

While we talk much about contrast and difference, we surely know well that all things a man can create differ in themselves and one from the other. So no artist ever lives who is so precise that he can make two things so like one another that they are not recognizable as distinct from one another. Of all our works, none is ever truly and completely identical with the other. This we cannot prevent. We can see, when we print two impressions of an engraved copperplate, or cast two forms in the same mould, that straight away we spot differences and can tell them apart for all sorts of reasons. If this is the case with things made so precisely, then how much more so with what is done free-hand.<sup>203</sup>

Albrecht Dürer, "Discourse on Aesthetics," from Book III of his *Four Books on Human Proportion*, published posthumously in Nuremberg in 1528

The scant scholarship on prints attributed to the AC monogram has generally divided the corpus into two dichotomous categories: a small selection of full-sheet prints defined by their purported originality; and a larger assortment of small-scale copies after prints by other artists. Engravings from the former group, including large and enigmatic engravings like the *Allegory of Time and Fortune* [H.149; Fig. 2.1], occasionally appear in exhibition catalogues dedicated to the master prints of the early modern period as illustrative examples of Monogrammist AC's creativity and skillful burin-work.<sup>204</sup> Other

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<sup>203</sup> Dürer's "Discourse on Aesthetics" at the end of Book III of his *Four Books on Human Proportion*, published posthumously in Nuremberg in 1528; translated by Jeffrey Ashcroft, *Albrecht Dürer: Documentary Biography* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017), vol. II, 873.

<sup>204</sup> This unsigned engraving—catalogued in Hollstein as an *Allegory with Two Naked Young Men in a Shell-Boat*—was illustrated as the lone and representative work by Allaert Claesz. in Suzanne Boorsch and Nadine M. Orenstein's *The Print in the North: The Age of Albrecht Dürer and Lucas van Leyden*, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, vol. 54, no. 4 (Spring 1997), 44. An impression of the print from the Rijksmuseum collection was one of just three Claesz. engravings illustrated in Jacobowitz and Stepanek, *The Prints of Lucas van Leyden & His Contemporaries*, 256 (no.105). It was also one of a handful of engravings attributed to Claesz. that were reproduced in the catalogue accompanying the 1997 exhibition of Netherlandish prints from the Collection Edmond de Rothschild at the Louvre Museum; see Jean-Richard, *Graveurs en taille-douce des anciens Pays-Bas*, 154-155, no.98.

relatively large prints traditionally included in the AC corpus, such as *The Baptism of the Eunuch* [H.77; Fig. 1.11] and *The Naked Queen on a Throne, Threatened by a Dragon* [H.145; Fig. 1.2], have been illustrated in exhibition catalogues to demonstrate the tonal variety evident in the printmaker's full-sheet engravings.<sup>205</sup> Paradoxically, as the previous chapter elucidated, these same prints have also received scholarly attention as works that should be reattributed to other Netherlandish artists precisely because of the exceptional quality of their engraving.

Exhibition catalogue essays, however, almost invariably gloss over the AC engravings that are based on models by more famous European printmakers, such as Albrecht Dürer, Lucas van Leyden, Marcantonio Raimondi, and the German "Little Masters." In the tradition descended from Adam von Bartsch's Romantic era project to elevate *Le peintre graveur*, scholars have tended to privilege AC's original compositions, however tenuous their attributions, over the printmaker's copies after other artists. Deemed too small in scale to carry an exhibition wall and too derivative in content to warrant close analysis, this significant portion of the AC oeuvre remains marginalized in outdated and frequently un-illustrated catalogue raisonné publications.

Now, however, equipped with a more comprehensive view of the AC corpus—aided in particular by images of many prints that were not previously reproduced in published catalogues—it becomes clear that this group of mostly small-scale engraved copies should not be viewed as a category of lesser interest, but rather as an essential core of the AC oeuvre. While Hollstein's catalogue only identified 39 prints that borrowed

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<sup>205</sup> Jacobowitz and Stepanek's catalogue, for instance, includes entries with illustrations for both of these prints and retains the attribution to Allaert Claesz.; see 254-255 (cat. no.104) and 257-258 (cat. no.106).



from works by other artists, there are, in fact, dozens of additional prints now attributed to the AC monogram that draw on specific compositions by other sixteenth-century printmakers. Although previous authors have variously identified specific prints that served as sources for AC compositions, the nature of the differences between the prototype prints and AC-attributed copies has rarely been interrogated. More critically, the motivations and strategies of the AC printmakers as copyists have never been comprehensively considered.<sup>206</sup>

Early modern printmakers frequently looked to prints by other artists as sources for their own work. Instead of viewing such compositional recycling as “copying” in the derisive contemporary sense of the word, implying an act of plagiarism, these engravings should be considered within a culture of early modern printmaking, which viewed whole or partial re-inscription as a necessary workshop practice essential to artistic training and development.<sup>207</sup> Apprentice printmakers learned their craft by copying the work of other

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<sup>206</sup> An introductory essay by Lothar Schmitt in the recent catalogue of the Dresden print room’s collection of Northern prints, for instance, provides an extended discussion of two AC copies after Dürer: *Saint George* (H.67) and *The Desperate Man* (H.175), both of which are discussed at length later in this chapter; see Schmitt, “Abseits der Renaissance: Innovationen im niederländischen Kupferstich,” in *Mit den Gezeiten: Frühe druckgraphik der Niederlande*, ed. Tobias Pfeifer-Helke (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2013), 55-57. Schmitt’s text mainly points out the formal differences between model and copy, however, and fails to fully discuss the artistic, practical, and financial reasons for the copyist to make these changes. The catalogue’s subsequent entries for prints attributed to AC (see pp.246-264) identify a source image for engravings known to be copies but do not include any further analysis.

<sup>207</sup> My efforts to contextualize the practice and reception of early modern copying benefitted greatly from the terminology, frameworks, and bibliographies provided by Freyda Spira and Marta Faust in their respective studies of Daniel Hopfer and Israhel van Meckenem, pioneering and prolific German printmakers whose work as copyists was maligned in literature of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. See Freyda Spira, *Originality as Repetition / Repetition as Originality: Daniel Hopfer (ca. 1470-1536) and the Reinvention of the Medium of Etching*, PhD. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania 2006, especially 4-8; and Marta Faust, *Aspects of Copying: An Historiographic Investigation of the Engravings of Israhel van Meckenem*, MA Thesis, Hunter College 2008. For additional attempts to clarify the range of practices and motivations within the broad category of reproductive printmaking, see Caroline Karpinski, “Preamble to a New Print Typology,” in *Coming About: A Festschrift for John Shearman*, Lars R.

masters in a workshop setting, reproducing admired motifs before embarking on innovative compositions of their own. Established printmakers also turned to prints by other artists both for inspiration and as an economical shortcut to quick production. Rather than developing their own complex drapery patterns or intermingled figure groups, for instance, engravers often borrowed from those artists who had already resolved these formal puzzles. Printmakers—like their fellow painters, manuscript illuminators, and artisans—compiled workshop print collections along with model-books of drawings to serve as libraries of forms intended for copying.<sup>208</sup>

Early modern printmakers reproduced the works of other artists, not only by directly replicating their compositions but also by imitating admired forms and styles. Peter Parshall and David Landau contend that fifteenth-century Northern printmaking was a fundamentally imitative medium that embraced the type of formal replication predominant in Netherlandish painting workshops:

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Jones and Louisa C. Matthew, eds. (Cambridge: Harvard University Art Museums, 2001), 375-380; and Rebecca Zorach and Elizabeth Rodini, eds., *Paper Museums: The Reproductive Print in Europe, 1500-1800* (Chicago: The David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago, 2005).

<sup>208</sup> As early as the 1430s, manuscripts throughout Europe reproduced motifs such as birds and flowers that were copied directly from engravings by the so-called Master of the Playing Cards. While these engravings were initially intended for gaming, the prints were reprinted and copied in short order both by other printmakers and by manuscript illuminators; see Anne H. van Buren and Sheila Edmunds, "Playing Cards and Manuscripts: Some Widely Disseminated Fifteenth-Century Model Sheets," *The Art Bulletin* 56, no. 1 (March 1974): 12-30. Martha Wolff subsequently argued that the Master of the Playing Cards actually derived his designs from previous manuscript sources. His engravings therefore standardized already popular motifs and disseminated them to other artists in a kind of printed model book format; see Wolff, "Some Manuscript Sources for the Playing-Card Master's Number Cards," *The Art Bulletin* 64, no. 4 (December 1982): 587-600. For the use of model books based on (or comprising) engravings by contemporary engravers such as Master ES, the Master of the Power of Women, and Israhel van Meckenem in Netherlandish illuminated manuscript workshops of the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, see Ursula Weekes, *Early Engravers and Their Public: The Master of the Berlin Passion and Manuscripts from Convents in the Rhine-Maas Region, ca. 1450-1500* (London: Harvey Miller, 2004), 149-150. These compiled workshop materials in turn comprised some of the earliest print collections; see Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 355-357.

Intaglio printmakers quickly found a comfortable place within the milieu of modified compositions and conventional figure types being traded about the painter's workshops of the southern Netherlands and along the middle and upper Rhine. It was precisely in this constant and often imaginative exchange that the capacity for invention was best exercised. This was an arena for improvisers and pasticheurs, the dependence of prints being only a relative condition typical of the pictorial arts in general.<sup>209</sup>

The canonization of artistic genius in the sixteenth century—driven in part by the recognition of the technical and formal advances of painter-printmakers such as Albrecht Dürer and Lucas van Leyden—would eventually result in greater value being placed on innovation in printmaking. But printmakers like the AC engravers who were active in the second quarter of the sixteenth century still catered in part to an audience with late-medieval tastes—again, including fellow artists—that acquired prints both for their novelty and for their success in replicating established forms and motifs.

In his essay on the concept of “originality” in art, Richard Shiff argues that early modern viewers would have had a more nuanced understanding of the difference between the various types of formal reproduction that we see in Renaissance prints:

Before nineteenth-century romantics complicated the matter, classically minded art theorists had no difficulty distinguishing two modes of transformation: ‘imitations’ of sources and ‘copies’ of the same. With imitation they associated a certain originality. They argued that imitation is an interpretive act involving a degree of difference between the model (the ‘original’) and its copy, whereas copying is an attempt at mechanistic replication. Both procedures amount to the creation of a form analogous to that of its original. In the case of copying, the principle of transformation can be described in terms of a geometric or mathematical algorithm. [...] In the case of ‘imitation,’ however, the principle of transformation is free and irregular; it is as if new, potentially radical, interpretive decisions are made at every moment in the process. [...] With ‘imitation,’ the individual artist becomes as much of a center as the model, perhaps seeking something hidden or lost within.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 48.

<sup>210</sup> Richard Shiff, “Originality,” in *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, 2nd ed (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 148–49.

The corpus of AC-monogrammed prints based on the work of other artists includes both direct replications and the kind of loose “imitations” that embody the interpretive creativity described by Shiff. The individuality and originality of these printmakers’ imitative work is perhaps most clearly seen in eclectic copies that combine disparate forms of printed inspiration into new and unique conceptions.

More focused analysis of AC-monogrammed copies and comparisons with their often-overlooked sources offer a broad survey of early modern copying modes and a window onto the nuanced and varied function of replication and imitation in the business of early modern printmaking. The AC oeuvre includes two kinds of engravings: those that copy their source nearly line-for-line; and other prints that reimagine a predecessor’s composition, sometimes so fully that the prototype is difficult to discern. AC copies often employ shifts in scale, format, and medium. Sometimes they borrow elements from disparate print sources and combine them into a single new image, or else subtly refine their models in nuanced ways that reveal the printmaker’s creative ambition.

Alternatively, some copies exhibit a carelessness seemingly born of expediency, perhaps driven by a desire to quickly meet the growing market for inexpensive prints. The copies attributed to the AC monogram derive their forms and inspiration from a wide range of sources: not only prints by the most famous artists of the period but also from lesser-known printmakers from Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy, whose works were already in circulation throughout Europe by the second quarter of the sixteenth century.

Understanding the practical and strategic purposes of AC’s copying requires close and careful looking and resisting the urge to dismiss a print simply because it derives from a previous source.

### *Copies after Albrecht Dürer*

The printmakers who employed the AC monogram not only mimicked the format of Albrecht Dürer's famous *AD* mark, but also looked directly to this graphic innovator of the previous generation as a primary pictorial source for at least eight separate monogrammed engravings. The AC printmakers were far from unique in mining Dürer's models for graphic inspiration; Dürer was the most venerated, collected, and imitated printmaker of the sixteenth century.<sup>211</sup> Joseph Heller's 1827 catalogue raisonné of Dürer's work records thousands of distinct copies after the artist executed by printmakers across Europe.<sup>212</sup> Several pioneering printmakers of the late fifteenth century, including German engravers and unabashed copyists Israhel van Meckenem and Wenzel von Olmütz (active 1481-1497), had already reproduced Dürer's prototypes and signed the prints with their own monograms before the turn of the sixteenth century. These copies have subsequently been described both as acts of pragmatic appropriation and as piracy, but in the context of late-medieval image-making the prints were unlikely to be considered forgeries. Prints, after all, were intended to be copied by other artists and

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<sup>211</sup> For exhibition catalogues about prints based on Dürer's prototypes, see Julius S Held, *Dürer Through Other Eyes: His Graphic Work Mirrored in Copies and Forgeries of Three Centuries* (Williamstown, MA: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1975); and Peter Strieder, *Vorbild Dürer: Kupferstiche und Holzschnitte Albrecht Dürers im Spiegel der europäischen Druckgraphik des 16. Jahrhunderts* [exh. cat., Germanischen Nationalmuseums, Nuremberg, 1978]. For a more comprehensive exploration of Dürer's influence on his contemporaries and followers, see Giulia Bartrum, *Albrecht Dürer and his Legacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002). More recently, a study by Christine Vogt offers an overview of the many northern printmakers who copied Dürer's prints during his lifetime; see Vogt, *Das druckgraphische Bild nach Vorlagen Albrecht Dürers (1471-1528): zum Phänomen der graphischen Kopie (Reproduktion) zu Lebzeiten Dürers nördlich der Alpen* (München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2008). Curiously, in spite of AC's numerous copies after Dürer, which were likely executed in the 1520s, Vogt's text only briefly discusses two unsigned and tentatively attributed AC prints, both of which are likely copies of copies after Dürer. See pp.174-175 (no.25) and p.304 (no.138).

<sup>212</sup> Joseph Heller, *Das Leben und die Werke Albrecht Dürer's* (Bamberg: Kunz, 1827).

craftsmen, and Dürer's innovative compositions were tantalizing specimens. Dürer famously took legal action against the Italian engraver Marcantonio Raimondi when he copied Dürer's *Life of the Virgin* woodcuts, replicating even the AD monogram and apparently selling the works as Dürer originals. The Venetian authorities' decision—reiterated in decision by the Nuremberg council in separate Dürer charges against an anonymous copyist—protected only the artist's trademark and not the images themselves.<sup>213</sup> This legal outcome suggests that an early modern artist's tolerance for copies relied less on claims to a print's design than on credit for its material fabrication.

Many of the abundant early sixteenth-century copies after Dürer, including prints signed by now anonymous monogrammists, are inferior imitations of their prototypes that demonstrate the desire of aspiring printmakers to align themselves with (and borrow from) Dürer's genius. Other epigones exhibit what Joseph Koerner describes as “the productive swerve away from the master.”<sup>214</sup> In his essay on Dürer's impact on sixteenth-century artists Koerner argues that “[e]xtreme, self-conscious transformation is the response of ambitious masters anxious to turn influences that others have on them into ones they can have on others.”<sup>215</sup> AC-monogrammed copies after Dürer offer a sampling of prints that attest the ambitions of these printmakers, even as they both adhere to the master's models and swerve away from them in intentionally complicated ways.

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<sup>213</sup> For the controversy over Marcantonio's copies, see Joseph Koerner, “Albrecht Dürer: A Sixteenth-Century *Influenza*,” in Giulia Bartrum, *Albrecht Dürer and his Legacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 25; and Lisa Pon, *Raphael, Dürer, and Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying and the Italian Renaissance Print* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), especially 39-41, and 53-59.

<sup>214</sup> Koerner, “Albrecht Dürer: A Sixteenth-Century *Influenza*,” 24.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*

One previously undescribed AC engraving [App.26; Fig. 2.2], for example, appears at first to simply reproduce Dürer's 1518 *Virgin and Child Crowned by Two Angels* [Fig. 2.3] at the same scale and in reverse.<sup>216</sup> However, unlike numerous other copies after the print by fellow sixteenth-century printmakers, such as Cologne's Jacob Binck [Fig. 2.4] and the later Flemish engraver Hieronymus Wierix (1553-1619) [Fig. 2.5], who aim to replicate the print line for line, the AC engraving subtly reworks the composition to give it new meaning.<sup>217</sup> Whereas Dürer depicts the Christ Child as a baby, grappling at his mother's neckline and seeking her attention, AC's child is already the *Salvator Mundi*, holding the orb with cross that signifies his dominion over the earth. He stares knowingly out at the viewer, precociously evoking more direct devotional engagement. AC also replaces the floral crown worn by the Virgin in Dürer's original with a more modest veil that covers her hair and reinforces both her humility and subservience in the presence of Christ. AC's understated variations on the print's iconography reward close viewing and display the artist's creative imagination while still embracing the graphic aesthetic and famous pedigree of its model. Although the copy is undated, the AC monogram—itsself based on Dürer—replaces Dürer's own mark on the stone slab at the bottom corner of the print, in effect claiming credit for the innovative alterations above.

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<sup>216</sup> Dürer, B.39. Although it is undescribed in previous catalogues raisonnés, the AC print survives in at least two impressions: one at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (1966.521.98), where it is attributed to Allaert Claesz.; and another at The British Museum (E,4.63), where it is currently given to an anonymous German artist.

<sup>217</sup> Binck, H.39; and Wierix, H.1022. *The Illustrated Bartsch* describes 18 separate copies after Dürer's engraving— all in mirror image of the original print—by anonymous and named artists alike; see Adam von Bartsch, *The Illustrated Bartsch*, ed. Walter L. Strauss, vol. 10 [Albrecht Dürer (Commentary)] (New York: Abaris Books, 1981), 92-95. The AC-monogrammed print is not included in this list and appears to be the only copy that takes creative license with the composition beyond changes to the monogram and date.

Another AC-monogrammed engraving [H.74; Fig. 1.6] adapts Dürer's 1512 woodcut depicting *Saint Jerome in a Cave* [Fig. 2.7] by translating the composition from relief to intaglio lines.<sup>218</sup> Executed at approximately half of the original's scale, the engraving is a direct but loose copy. It retains the orientation of the model and makes only minor changes to the scene to reinforce Jerome's seclusion and the sanctity of his hermetic activity. For instance, AC's print eliminates some references to the world outside the cave—including a city in the distance at the center of the print and vegetation at the top right corner—and adds an oblong halo behind Jerome's head. Accompanied by the lion that serves as his attribute, the saint sits within his grotto and focuses his gaze on a small crucifix before him, while he executes his Vulgate translation of the Hebrew Bible, aided by Christ's guidance and inspiration. Dürer signed his woodcut with an *AD* monogram in the shadows on the rear wall of the cave and dated it on the rock ledge that serves as Jerome's workspace. In his engraved version of the scene, however, AC removes the date and Dürer's signature and audaciously adds his own monogram on the rock ledge next to the saint's inkwell. Positioned on an angle between Jerome and the crucifix, the signature appears to have been scrawled by the saint himself, effectively equating the saint's divine work with the printmaker's own feat of graphic translation between printed media.

Other AC engravings after Dürer's models exhibit even more creative uses of engraved sources, piecing together single figures from several related prints. AC's engraving of the *Virgin on the Crescent with a Crown of Stars and a Scepter* [H.54; Fig.2.8] is identified in Hollstein's catalogue raisonné as a copy after Dürer's 1516

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<sup>218</sup> Dürer, B.113.



engraving of the same subject [Fig. 2.9].<sup>219</sup> The bulk of AC's composition, however, was actually based on a different Dürer engraving of the *Virgin on the Crescent* [Fig. 2.10] from around seventeen years earlier.<sup>220</sup> AC clearly modeled the Virgin's posture, the flow of her garments, the position of her arm within a sling-like sleeve, and the formal relationship between the upturned face of Christ and bowed head of his young mother on this earlier print. The printmaker appears to have turned to Dürer's 1516 print as inspiration for the regalia that would transform the Virgin into an apocalyptic allegory.<sup>221</sup> AC's print adds a crown of stars, a scepter, and a figure eight of radiating halos based on the later print to create his own eclectic version of the popular Catholic devotional subject. Julius Held identified a similar amalgamation of sources in an engraving of the *Seated Virgin and Child* [H.56; Fig. 2.11] signed with an AC monogram, a print which survives in just a single impression at the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam.<sup>222</sup> The position of the Virgin's lap and the complex drapery folds that fall around her legs are copied directly from Dürer's *Madonna with the Monkey* [Fig. 2.12], while her hands and forearms and the figure of Christ reaching for the fruit that she holds are lifted from Dürer's *Virgin on the Crescent with a Crown of Stars* [Fig. 2.13].<sup>223</sup> These composite creations are weaker than the sum of their parts, paling in comparison to

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<sup>219</sup> Dürer, B.32. AC's print is listed in *The Illustrated Bartsch* as one of twelve independent copies after Dürer's model; see *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. 10 [Albrecht Dürer (Commentary)], 82, no.C12.

<sup>220</sup> Dürer, B.30.

<sup>221</sup> Prints like this depicting the *Virgin in the Sun*, derived from Saint John's description of the Apocalyptic Woman (Revelation 12:1-6), were popular beginning in the late fifteenth-century as indulgenced images related to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception; see Larry Silver, "Full of Grace: 'Mariolatry' in Post-Reformation Germany," in *The Idol in the Age of Art: Objects, Devotions and the Early Modern World*, ed. Michael Cole and Rebecca Zorach (Farnham, Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), especially 296-301.

<sup>222</sup> Julius Held. *Dürers Wirkung auf die niederländische Kunst seiner Zeit* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1931), Exkurs IV (no IIa,3), 141.

<sup>223</sup> Dürer, B.42 and B.31.

Dürer's more refined prototypes. But the AC engravers' strategy of mining prints by other artists for shortcuts to create complicated formal components—including extensive drapery and the intimate interaction between mother and child—was a clever business decision. These unexpectedly composite prints are not always immediately recognizable as direct copies.

The largest and most ambitious AC-monogrammed copy after Albrecht Dürer, an engraving popularly known as *The Desperate Man* [H.175; Fig. 1.47], occupies a middle-ground between the broad categories of original and copy that have divided the AC oeuvre and hampered close looking.<sup>224</sup> Scholars have long recognized this print as a reverse copy after Dürer's experimental etching [Fig. 2.14] and have previously noted that the copy makes slight changes to the composition's background.<sup>225</sup> A comprehensive 2001 survey of Dürer's prints finally acknowledged in a single sentence that the AC print removed the etching's two most incongruous elements—a clothed man in profile at the left and a disconcerting floating head—helping to clarify the composition in the process.<sup>226</sup> Closer examination reveals that AC's changes turn Dürer's convoluted sketch plate into a more harmonious, if still enigmatic, figure group in a more articulated, rocky landscape. Employing a masterful variety of lines, hatching, and stipple marks, the monogrammist reworked the darkly-hatched tangle of rocks and roots at the upper left of Dürer's print into a light and airy distant mountainous landscape. AC transforms Dürer's

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<sup>224</sup> As the previous chapter discusses, in spite of the fact that this print exists only in impressions monogrammed with the AC mark, this print has sometimes been given to the artist Frans Crabbe. Without definitive proof for this reattribution, I will continue to discuss the print as a print in the AC-monogrammed corpus.

<sup>225</sup> Dürer, B.70.

<sup>226</sup> Rainer Schoch, Matthias Mende, and Anna Scherbaum, eds. *Albrecht Dürer: Das druckgraphische Werk*, vol. I (Munich; London; New York: Prestel, 2001), no.79, 198-200.

area of abstract etched hatching at the right into a complex engraved wall of rock that undulates with cracks and ridges that gives the scene a more terrestrial and less dreamlike setting.<sup>227</sup>

In translating the composition from etching to engraving, the printmaker also clarifies features of the three remaining figures. He sheds more light on the sliver of hairy leg that had always—whether it was articulated or not—identified the standing man as a satyr, and reinforces the pupils of the reclining woman, suggesting that she may not actually be asleep. Instead, she looks out at the viewer from beneath heavy eyelids, perhaps awakening to receive another drink from the satyr’s flagon. AC also goes to the trouble of giving this otherwise nude woman a set of bejeweled necklaces that offer an indication of her wealth and status. This is the only known copy by a printmaker after Dürer’s model, and it is an ambitious product. While it does not clarify the cause of the central figure’s seeming dismay or the relationship between the three remaining figures, AC’s simplified and finely engraved composition offers a more intimate and legible scene, one that cannot be mistaken for the composition that Erwin Panofsky unconvincingly interpreted as a rumination on the four temperaments.<sup>228</sup> While Dürer apparently was not pleased enough with his effort to sign or date the plate, as he did with his other four etchings, AC marked the print with his monogram and the date 1524 as a

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<sup>227</sup> This passage of craggy cliff might have been inspired by the multi-faceted rock formations in another Dürer print: his 1496 engraving of *Saint Jerome in the Wilderness* (B.61).

<sup>228</sup> Erwin Panofsky, *Albrecht Dürer* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1943), 177. Panofsky tentatively refined his analysis (while continuing to ignore the relationship between the number of figures in the composition and the four parts of his argument) in a later essay, suggesting that the print might be connected to the four forms of an alternate melancholic condition known as “melancholia adusta”; see Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl, “The Meaning of the Engraving B.70,” Appendix II in *Saturn and Melancholy* (London: Nelson, 1964), 403-405.

piece of carved graffiti on the rocks at the right, perhaps claiming ownership over this new and original topography.

While these ambitious prints all rely on printed prototypes by Dürer, each exhibits an aspiration to move beyond—and even to challenge—the authority of its model(s). By adding new iconographic details, exploiting shifts in scale, and translating the compositions into different printmaking media, the AC engraver demonstrated his own virtuosic talent. The printmaker both honored the original prints and transformed them into new compositions, for which he was inclined to take credit.

### ***Copies after Heinrich Aldegrever and the “Little Masters”***

Not all AC-monogrammed copies revise their source material in such radical ways. In some cases, such as an engraving of *The Virgin with Child, Seated Under a Tree* [H.61; Fig. 2.15], after a work by the German printmaker Heinrich Aldegrever [Fig. 2.16], the copies directly reverse the original printed image, reinscribed almost line for line and at the same scale.<sup>229</sup> These copies showcase the printmaker’s impressive mimetic skills or demonstrate the use of a mechanical transfer process for accurate replication; aside from the reversal inherent in copying and the (slight) change in monogram, few stylistic differences separate the AC print from its model. The large corpus of AC-monogrammed ornament prints includes several of these faithful— and frequently deceptive—copies after Aldegrever’s prints of the late 1520s. Some of these engravings, such as a small *Ornament with Fighting Centaur Couple* [H.193; Fig. 2.17] after Aldegrever’s print from 1529 [Fig. 2.18], are such careful imitations that aside from their

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<sup>229</sup> Aldegrever, NHG.55

identifying monogram, they remain difficult to differentiate, even when placed side by side.<sup>230</sup>

In all, about half of the copies attributed to AC are based on models by Aldegrever and the other so-called German *Kleinmeister*, or “Little Masters,” including Nuremberg artists Sebald and Barthel Beham (1500-1550 and 1502-1540, respectively), the anonymous Master IB (active c.1523-1530), and Cologne’s Jacob Binck. Working in the intricate manner of Albrecht Dürer, these artists began producing prints of exceedingly minute scale in the years around 1520, probably inspired by fellow German artist Albrecht Altdorfer’s tiny imitations of Italian nielli.<sup>231</sup> Stephen Goddard has suggested that this trend in small-scale printmaking in standardized sizes may relate to the tastes and practices of educated merchants and wealthy urban elites who formed the primary class of popular art collectors in the early sixteenth century.<sup>232</sup> Like the small devotional images also produced by these artists, inexpensive mythological and ornament prints could be glued into blank albums, be used to enhance existing texts, or be inserted into letters of refined correspondence between friends.<sup>233</sup> Unorthodox and intimate, these prints were made for private viewing that would enable the collector to appreciate the virtuosic style of engraving, the sometimes-complex allegories or satirical subjects, and the decorative beauty of the sheets. By directly copying these minuscule prints, AC successfully aligned himself with the Little Masters and appealed to this same market of

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<sup>230</sup> Aldegrever, NHG.222.

<sup>231</sup> A. Hyatt Mayor, *Prints & People: A Social History of Printed Pictures* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1971), 304.

<sup>232</sup> Stephen Goddard, “The Origin, Use, and Heritage of the Small Engraving in Renaissance Germany” in *The World in Miniature: Engravings by the German Little Masters, 1500-1550*, ed. Stephen Goddard (Lawrence, KS: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, 1988), 14.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

consumers. While it is tempting to see these copies as fakes or forgeries, most are clearly signed with the AC monogram, perhaps to display pride in the protean quality of their fine engraved lines. There is no evidence that AC knew or worked directly with any of these German artists, but his interest in replicating their work suggests that he saw a ready market for copies and works in the style of these masters, printmakers who often copied each other as well.<sup>234</sup>

Some of the AC-monogrammed engravings after prototypes by the Little Masters make subtle, seemingly unnecessary changes to the original compositions that reveal the copyist's keen editorial eye. One ornamental *Vignette with a Sphinx and a Satyr* [H.191; Fig. 2.19] copies a print by Jacob Binck [Fig. 2.20] at the same scale in reverse, replacing Binck's *ICB* monogram with the AC mark.<sup>235</sup> But whereas Binck's original print is formally imbalanced, with the cropped ox-skull and vase motif at its right edge unrepeated at the left side of the print, AC's engraving includes those decorative details to both edges. This supplemental element, however unnecessary from a practical perspective, enhances the ornamental symmetry of the print, suggesting that the motif could be repeated end-to-end, perhaps employed on part of a decorative border.

Another AC engraving depicting *Death and a Foot-Soldier* [H.162; Fig. 2.21], appears at first to be a simple reverse copy of Binck's printed model [Fig. 2.22].<sup>236</sup> The soldier of fortune, with his outrageously slashed sleeves billowing in the face of

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<sup>234</sup> Most of AC's copies after the Little Masters draw from engravings of mythological subjects and charming vignettes of playful putti. None of the known copies replicates the satirical peasant groups or the more overtly erotic prints that these artists created during the 1530s and 40s. This discrepancy might indicate that AC had little interest in such provocative themes, or that the monogrammist stopped looking to the Beham models after a burst of productivity in the 1520s, or even that he was no longer working as an engraver in the 1530s.

<sup>235</sup> Binck, B.84.

<sup>236</sup> Binck, B.52.

sumptuary laws, struggles to defend himself against his skeletal yet muscular attacker. AC's copy after Binck offers a mirror image of Death's voluminous cape, which hovers above the soldier's prone body and contributes to a sense of violent motion in the composition. Although he remained faithful to Binck's model in the form of Death's twisting body, the AC printmaker chose to diverge from the original in the specifics of the battle. The spear that had been broken in half by Death's powerful left arm in Binck's engraving has been snapped into three parts in AC's reworking of the print. The demon's sword, once gripped as if to jab at the overpowered mercenary, is drawn back in AC's print in order to deliver a more punishing blow against the soldier's now backwards, left-handed defense. Taking advantage of the opportunity for reversal, AC subtly alters the power dynamic in the print and offers Death an even greater advantage against the soldier in his futile struggle for survival.

AC's ostensibly trivial amendments to these printed sources serve as indices of the creative energy exhibited even at the margins of the artist's oeuvre in his so-called copies. These alterations also demonstrate the printmaker's protean skills. While an exact copy would perhaps indicate the artist's use of common copying techniques like tracing to move from original to copy, these small changes cry for recognition as freely executed lines that improve on the original composition.<sup>237</sup> A similar strategy of graphic one-upmanship might be at play in an AC-monogrammed ornament print depicting *Three Cupids Carrying a Bear* [H.207; Fig. 2.23], which stacks two separate ornament prints by Heinrich Aldegrever [Figs. 2.24 & 2.25] into a single, unified print.<sup>238</sup> The print's

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<sup>237</sup> For a brief summary of sixteenth-century techniques employed for printed copies, see Held, *Dürer Through Other Eyes*, 1975, 13-17.

<sup>238</sup> Aldegrever NHG.230 & NHG.231.

ambitious balancing-act, topped by the cupids and their ursine cargo, is a miniature performance of this AC engraver's versatility and confidence as a printmaker.

### *Shifts in format and the business of printmaking*

Even direct copies with the AC monogram offer a window into the printmaker's business strategies. An engraving after the Netherlandish printmaker Lucas van Leyden's *Lot and His Daughters* [Fig. 2.26], replicates the source almost exactly but reduces the scale of the composition from a full sheet print to an engraving one-third its size.<sup>239</sup> AC's copy [H.6; Fig. 2.27] thus seems both a display of technical bravado and a practical tactic to bring the print into the miniature realm of the Little Masters. A separate print after Dürer's engraving of a *Satyr Family* [Fig. 2.28] both reduces the scale of the original print and reformats the image into a round composition [H.137; Fig. 2.29].<sup>240</sup> This shift to a circular format visually distinguishes this copy from numerous other direct, rectangular copies after Dürer's model.<sup>241</sup> In markets teeming with imitation Dürers, such a formal twist might have allowed AC's copy to stand out as a novelty and increase its purchase potential.

Monogrammist AC also might have altered the format of these and other prototypes in order to suggest his new composition's utility as a model for craftsmen in

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<sup>239</sup> Lucas van Leyden, NHD.16.

<sup>240</sup> Dürer, B.69.

<sup>241</sup> *The Illustrated Bartsch* includes AC's engraving as one of six separate copies after Dürer's print, but the entry for the print offers an instructive example of the partial (and frequently incorrect) information that is propagated in such composite catalogues raisonné; see Bartsch, *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. 10 [Albrecht Dürer (Commentary)], 153-155. AC's engraving (C3, p.154) is not illustrated, and the short description of the print does not indicate that the engraving takes a round format. It is incorrectly described as a copy in mirror image, and the entry reproduces a specific AC monogram that does not, in fact, appear on the print itself.



other media. Artisans working with metal, enamel, leather, stained glass, and other crafts formed a major category of print consumers in the sixteenth century. Workshops would amass albums of prints to use as direct models or as sources of formal inspiration for their own decorative programs. A metalsmith looking to decorate the round back of a mirror or the top of a toilet box might gravitate toward a circular print, whereas an artist carving a decorative ivory strip for the long side of a crossbow might need a thin, frieze-like model. In transforming compositions by other artists into new and unorthodox formats, AC might have been aiming to anticipate and meet the needs of these craftsmen.

In this vein, two unsigned prints, commonly attributed to the AC monogram, rework engravings by Sebald Beham into small diamond-shaped compositions that accrue decorative value due to their unusual format. One of the engravings [H.4; Fig. 2.30] depicts the Old Testament figure Tamar, daughter of King David, as she struggles to prevent her half-brother Amnon from raping her. AC's composition extracts the twisting, naked figures from Beham's print [Fig. 2.31] and copies them in reverse, adding strategically placed swirls of drapery to cover the original's explicit sexuality.<sup>242</sup> Beham's print, apparently targeted at an audience of educated collectors capable of reading Latin, is inscribed at the bottom left corner with several lines of text lauding Tamar for her attempts to prevent the incest, along with a reference to the Bible verse that describes and authorizes a depiction of the lurid scene.<sup>243</sup> The AC-attributed print distills the text into a single banderole at the top bearing the words "CUBA MECUM" ("come to bed with me,

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<sup>242</sup> Gustav Pauli, *Hans Sebald Beham: ein kritisches Verzeichniss seiner Kupferstiche, Radirungen und Holzschnitte*, Studien zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte 33 (Strassburg: Heitz, 1901), 31 (no.16). This print is not listed by Bartsch but is illustrated by in Hollstein's *German Engravings, Etchings, and Woodcuts*, ca.1400-1700, vol. 3, p.14.

<sup>243</sup> Beham's inscription, however, identifies the source of the story as II Kings 13, when the narrative actually derives from II Samuel 13.

my sister”), Amnon’s threat and proposal from the text of the Vulgate Bible. While the print’s full meaning still relies on a reading knowledge of Latin, its textual simplification and censorship recommend it to a wider audience. A second AC-attributed print of a different amorous encounter quotes Beham’s round depiction of the Old Testament story of *Joseph and Potiphar’s Wife* [Fig. 2.32], in which Joseph flees from the unwelcome advances of his master’s spouse.<sup>244</sup> The copy attributed to AC reproduces Beham’s figures in a rhomboid format with an ornamental border [H.19; Fig. 2.33] and includes a blank banderole at the top, into which the collector might add a pithy inscription. As with the image of Tamar and Amnon, the printmaker includes changes to tamp down the scene’s overt eroticism, shifting Potiphar’s wife’s robe down to cover her genitals and replacing Joseph’s erection with a more modest and less threatening flaccid member. This clear but understated censorship of Beham’s salacious overtones allows both images to function more broadly as moralizing bedroom scenes suitable for a variety of decorative functions.<sup>245</sup> The changes in format make the AC copies viable as sources for metalsmiths, who could have looked to these small, lozenge-shaped prints as models for plaques or other small decorative objects intended for both religious and private use.

Another, larger category of AC copies encompasses engravings in which the figures from other printed sources have been reproduced within the tapered confines of a design for a scabbard: a slipcase for a sword or dagger. For a scabbard design depicting *Saint George on Foot* [H.67; Fig. 2.34], AC re-inscribed Dürer’s engraving of the holy

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<sup>244</sup> Sebald Beham, B.13. For the story of Joseph and Potiphar’s wife, see Genesis 39.

<sup>245</sup> For more on these erotic prints of Biblical subjects, see Janey L. Levy, “The Erotic Engravings of Sebald and Barthel Beham: A German Interpretation of a Renaissance Subject,” in *The World in Miniature: Engravings by the German Little Masters 1500-1550*, ed. Stephen Goddard (Lawrence: Spencer Museum of Art, 1988), 47-50.

knight from around 1502 [Fig. 2.35] at roughly half of its original size.<sup>246</sup> The only major element lost in the translation is the cross on the saint's flag—a symbol of the Order of Saint George and the patron saint of the Holy Roman Emperor's crusade against the Turks—a detail in Dürer's print that has been interpreted as a specific piece of political propaganda for Maximilian I.<sup>247</sup> AC places this more apolitical knight within a confined and simplified pictorial space constricted by slightly sloping side edges and an embellished, sculptural top edge to signify the print's suitability as a metalwork design. Again, AC includes his own emulative monogram at the bottom of the composition, claiming credit for the print without denying Dürer's authorship of the original design. The printmaker would perform the same trick with an equally appropriate print of the sword-bearing *David with the Head of Goliath* [H.11; Fig. 2.36] after a 1526 engraving by Cologne's Jacob Binck [Fig. 2.37].<sup>248</sup> Slimmed down, placed against a less complicated background, and embedded in an ornamental frame, Claesz.'s appropriated David gains associative implications as potential surface ornamentation existing beyond the small, flat sheet. Scabbard designs, an oft overlooked subset of ornament prints, represent one of AC's key contributions to sixteenth-century printmaking and will be discussed at length in Chapter Three.

### ***Copies after Netherlandish models***

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<sup>246</sup> Dürer, B.53.

<sup>247</sup> Rainer Schoch, Matthias Mende, and Anna Scherbaum, eds. *Albrecht Dürer: Das druckgraphische Werk*, vol. I, 100-101, no.34. On Maximilian and the cult of Saint George, see Larry Silver, *Marketing Maximilian: The Visual Ideology of a Holy Roman Emperor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 110, 112-123.

<sup>248</sup> Binck, B.5

Although the majority of the AC-monogrammed copies were based on prints made in Germany by Dürer and his followers, the printmaker also looked to prints by the Netherlandish artists with whom the monogram is traditionally classified and exhibited. Unsurprisingly, several AC copies are based on prototypes by Lucas van Leyden, an artist whose prints—like those of his German contemporary Albrecht Dürer—were distributed internationally and widely admired in his own lifetime.<sup>249</sup> AC's prints after Lucas, like those after Dürer, employ a variety of copying modes and strategies. In addition to the straightforward miniaturized copy after *Lot and His Daughters* (H.6) discussed above, AC also made a reverse copy to scale of Lucas's *Saint Christopher with the Infant Christ* [Fig. 2.38]. AC's print [H.66; Fig. 2.39] successfully mimics the tonal and linear variety of Lucas's engraving style but includes an extra flourish above his monogram in the form of the hermit who guided the saint to Christianity.<sup>250</sup> While this detail is a logical iconographic addition, the figure is superfluously tucked into the bottom corner of the print where he seems to impede the saint's traversal of the river. Christopher and Christ focus their attention on the opposite bank and seem at risk of tripping over the lantern-bearing monk. Unlike many of the creative copies by AC discussed earlier in this chapter, this revision of Lucas's model actually muddles the composition. Another image of *Saint Christopher Seated Near the River* [H.65; Fig. 2.40]

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<sup>249</sup> Bart Cornelis and Jan Piet Filedt Kok discuss the distribution, reception, and reproduction of Lucas van Leyden's prints in "The Taste for Lucas van Leyden Prints," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 26, no. 1 (1998): 18–86. The authors identify four engravings with the AC monogram that copy prints by Lucas; see p.20. For the reception of Lucas and copies after his prints in late sixteenth-century Holland and copies after his prints, see Larry Silver, "Marketing the Dutch Past: The Lucas van Leyden Revival around 1600," in *In His Milieu: Essays on Netherlandish Art in Memory of John Michael Montias*, A. Golahny, M.M. Mochizuki, and L. Vergara, eds. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 411–22.

<sup>250</sup> Lucas van Leyden, NHD.109.

signed with a version of the AC monogram, is a free variation of a different *Saint Christopher* by Lucas [Fig. 2.41].<sup>251</sup> The more loosely engraved AC print compresses and reformats Lucas's composition into a much smaller roundel, making the relationship between original and copy easy to overlook. Here, Lucas's prototype was most useful to AC as a model for the complicated folds of the saint's costume, spilling across the ground around him. Given Christopher's role as the patron saint of travelers and mariners, it seems possible that the print's small, round format might have made it ideal as a template for medals that could be carried for protection. And yet, this shift in the composition results in a variation that is less sophisticated and precise than its source material. As we have already seen, not all AC copies were created equal.

The AC monogram also appears on several engravings derived from ornament prints by Lucas van Leyden and other Netherlandish printmakers active in the late 1520s. One of these engravings [H.202; Fig. 2.42] is a loose but faithful copy of Lucas's 1528 *Ascending Ornament with Two Sirens* [Fig. 2.43].<sup>252</sup> Its reversal of Lucas's prototype can most easily be recognized in the winged male figure with a pitchfork at the top of the print. AC's copy, which measures roughly half the size of Lucas's already small original, eschews some of the prototype's silvery tonal gradations, subtle detail, and balanced proportions in favor of a simplified and more broadly engraved miniature. Two other AC-signed ornament prints draw on Lucas's *Ornament Print with Two Sphinxes and a Winged Man* [Fig. 2.44].<sup>253</sup> The first, an *Arabesque with a Vase Between Two Sphinxes* [H.216; Fig. 2.45], clearly borrows from Lucas's print its composite figures with tails that

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<sup>251</sup> Lucas van Leyden, NHD.108.

<sup>252</sup> Lucas van Leyden, NHD.164.

<sup>253</sup> Lucas van Leyden, NHD.162.

swirl into hybrid plant and animal forms. The AC-monogrammed print replaces Lucas's central pedestal motif, topped by a twisting Mercury-like winged figure wielding a caduceus, with a more rudimentary vase.<sup>254</sup> A previously unrecorded half of another AC print [H.223; Fig. 2.46] includes that same caduceus-bearing figure on a pedestal between two griffons. AC's composition proves to be an eclectic copy, with beasts and the composite vegetal-strapwork swirls that flank the figure inspired by a separate ornament print by a Monogrammist IG [Fig. 2.47]. The same printmaker (sometimes catalogued as GI and previously as GJ), a now-anonymous Netherlandish engraver active in the 1520s, also provided the direct model for a separate AC-monogrammed ornament print comprising fantastical hybrid creatures, including a winged siren at its base.<sup>255</sup> AC's copy [H.195; Fig. 2.48] replaces the blank white background of IG's print [Fig. 2.49] with the rich mesh of horizontal and diagonal lines typical of the background shading in his ornamental work.<sup>256</sup> Unsurprisingly, given the similarity of these two undated ornament prints, AC's print has alternatively been claimed as the source for IG's print while unmonogrammed prints by IG are occasionally miscatalogued as the handiwork of AC in museum collections.<sup>257</sup> AC's fluid combination of models by Lucas and IG reflects the

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<sup>254</sup> For a discussion of Lucas's ornament prints from the late 1520s and their relationship to similar prints by anonymous Netherlandish artists known as the Master of the Horseheads, Monogrammist IG (referred to therein as Monogrammist GJ), and Monogrammist R, see Jan Piet Filedt Kok, *Lucas van Leyden - Grafiek. Exh. Cat., Rijksprentenkabinet. Amsterdam, 9 September - 3 December 1978* (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 1978.). Filedt Kok suggests that the fantastical forms of Lucas's ornament prints may be inspired by the work of these contemporary printmakers.

<sup>255</sup> Monogrammist IG, H.XIII.23.

<sup>256</sup> Monogrammist IG, H.XIII.1.

<sup>257</sup> IG's print is identified as a copy of AC's model in Marijnke de Jong and Irene de Groot, *Ornamentprenten in Het Rijksprentenkabinet, vol. I, 15de & 16de EEUW* (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 1988). The Austrian Museum of Applied Arts tentatively attributes at least two unsigned ornament prints traditionally given to Monogrammist IG to Allaert Claesz.: see accession numbers K1 6592 (usually given to IG as H.22) and K1 6693 (IG, H.18).

mélange of ornament prints being produced at this time and the freedom with which printmakers borrowed from the sources at hand.<sup>258</sup>

In addition to copying works by the anonymous Master S (whose complicated connection to AC is discussed in the previous chapter), AC also worked from prototypes by a number of printmakers active in the Southern Netherlands. Three of these prints, including a monogrammed scabbard design depicting the *Virgin and Child with Saint Anne* (H.58; see Chapter 3, Fig. 3.33), are copies after works by Dirk Jacobsz. Vellert, a painter, stained-glass designer, and printmaker active in Antwerp in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>259</sup> Although unsigned, copies of Vellert's etched and engraved *Venus on a Shell Boat* [H.134; Fig. 2.50; cf. Vellert, H.11; Fig. 2.51] and *A Faun Seated on a Cask* [H.178; Fig. 2.52; cf. Vellert, H.12; Fig. 2.53] have been attributed to AC based on the style of their engraving. Both prints retain the exceptionally small scale of the original compositions. While the prototypes are marked on the matrix with the specific day of their completion—20 October 1524 and 14 September 1522, respectively—the AC-attributed copies are undated and make only slight changes to the composition.<sup>260</sup> AC is one of only a few artists to have produced copies after Vellert, perhaps suggesting that the prints had limited circulation in the period. The other artist known to have copied Vellert in the early sixteenth century is, perhaps not coincidentally, Master S, adding

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<sup>258</sup> It remains difficult to say definitively whether Lucas was inspired by IG for his refined ornament prints of the late 1520s or vice-versa.

<sup>259</sup> On Vellert as a printmaker see A.E. Popham, "The Engravings and Woodcuts of Dirick Vellert," *Print Collector's Quarterly*, vol. 12 (1925), 343-368; Jacobowitz and Stepanek, *The Prints of Lucas van Leyden & His Contemporaries*, 318-325; and Matile, *Die Druckgraphik Lucas van Leydens und seiner Zeitgenossen*, 204-214.

<sup>260</sup> AC's engraving depicting the seated faun is slightly cropped on the right edge and an ewer that in Vellert's model was at the lower right corner is moved to the left center foreground. This alteration does not appear to have an iconographic or formal significance.

further credence to the possibility that AC was at some point active in the southern Netherlands.<sup>261</sup>

### *Copies after Italian models*

Just as Marcantonio Raimondi learned from and profited by copying his northern European contemporaries—including not only Dürer but also Lucas van Leyden—so AC and printmakers north of the Alps borrowed abundantly from Italian sources.<sup>262</sup> In the early 1520s, for instance, Albrecht Altdorfer engraved a reduced-scale reverse copy [Fig. 2.54] of Marcantonio's *Satyrs Fighting For a Nymph* [Fig. 2.55], which anticipates the miniaturized copies later made by AC and the Little Masters.<sup>263</sup> Another German artist, Jacob Binck, produced a faithful copy to scale of Marcantonio's showpiece *The Massacre of the Innocents* [Fig. 2.56].<sup>264</sup> In his undated engraving [Fig. 2.57] Binck chose not to miniaturize Marcantonio's model but rather to embrace its full-sheet format, replacing the Italian master's monogram with his own mark, inscribed on a wall on the left side of the print.<sup>265</sup> Further north, Lucas van Leyden found a source for the voluptuous, twisting body of the Roman noblewoman in his *Suicide of Lucretia* [Fig. 2.58] in a Marcantonio engraving of *Venus and Cupid* [Fig. 0.6].<sup>266</sup> This is the same

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<sup>261</sup> Master S's print of *The Vision of Saint Bernard* (H.325) is a slightly reduced reverse copy of Vellert's 1524 (H.8).

<sup>262</sup> A fine example of a Marcantonio copy after Lucas van Leyden is his engraving of *The Pilgrims* (B.462). Marcantonio's unmonogrammed reverse copy of Lucas's prototype (NHD.149) makes only minor changes to the print and retains its scale. For a more thorough comparison of the prints, see Innis H. Shoemaker and Elizabeth Brown. *The Engravings of Marcantonio Raimondi* (Lawrence, Kansas: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, 1981), 80-81, cat. 14.

<sup>263</sup> Altdorfer, NHG.45; and Marcantonio, B.215.

<sup>264</sup> Marcantonio, B.20.

<sup>265</sup> Binck, H.20.

<sup>266</sup> Lucas van Leyden, NHD.134; and Marcantonio, B.234.



model by Marcantonio that was copied at least a decade later by AC in his *Scabbard Design with Hercules and Venus* (H.233), the print which cuts through so many aspects of this study.<sup>267</sup>

AC appears never to have copied an entire print by an Italian printmaker directly, but rather to have extracted figures from Italian prints and put them to work in new contexts. One of AC's closest copies after Marcantonio is a monogrammed engraving [H.146; Fig. 2.59], based on the Italian printmaker's *Shepherd and Nymph* [Fig. 2.60].<sup>268</sup> Although the copy loosely replicates the lounging female form and the crooked male figure reaching down to rouse her, AC completely changes the scene's backdrop. Instead of the claustrophobic corner of a ruined building in Marcantonio's engraving, AC stages the encounter in a more open space, with a fence behind the figures and a large tree extending across the top of the composition. This shift in setting not only adds more visual interest to the scene but also makes less threatening the shepherd's crouching reach toward the sleeping nymph, who is now at rest in a landscape more fitting for a woodland deity.

Two other unsigned prints attributed to AC based on prototypes by Marcantonio depict the gods *Saturn* [H.124; Fig. 2.61] and *Mercury* [H.142; Fig. 2.62], their specific identities fashioned by the printmaker's addition of specific attributes. The small prints are based on larger Marcantonio's engravings of two unidentified "seated emperors" [Figs. 2.63 & 2.64] in niches, who each hold a scepter and an orb symbolizing their

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<sup>267</sup> In his 1933 dissertation on the influence of Marcantonio's prints on the work sixteenth-century Northern European artists, Albert Oberheide identified seventeen different prints by AC that look directly to Marcantonio. See Albert Oberheide, "Der Einfluss Marcantonio Raimondis auf die nordische Kunst des 16. Jahrhunderts: unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Graphik," PhD Dissertation, Hamburg University 1933.

<sup>268</sup> Marcantonio, B.429.

governance and dominion over the world.<sup>269</sup> AC replaces the scepter held by the crowned emperor with the body of a nude baby—one of Saturn’s children about to be consumed by the fearful god—dangled upside-down by its ankles. In the other print, AC swaps the generic orb on the laurelled emperor’s lap with a book and transforms the plain scepter into a caduceus. In AC’s print the seated ruler becomes Mercury, the Roman messenger god and the deity of eloquence. In both cases, AC’s reverse copies add a strip of inhabited landscape at the right edge of the print, opening up the confining niche and connecting the gods to the human world. The prints might have been part of a larger series of the planetary gods, a subject taken up by many artists of the 1520s and 30s, including Sebald Beham, Monogrammist IB, and Heinrich Aldegrever.

AC’s most radical transposition of a Marcantonio model [H.144; Fig. 2.65] takes a detail from the Italian printmaker’s *Quos Ego* [Fig. 2.66], an engraving illustrating vignettes from Book I of Virgil’s epic *Aeneid*, and repurposes the figures into an image of Christian triumph.<sup>270</sup> At the top right corner of Marcantonio’s print, Venus beckons to Cupid—or perhaps beyond him to the central figure of Jupiter—asking for assistance in her plot to protect her son Aeneas and ensure the founding of Rome. The goddess sits atop her golden chariot, which is pulled by four doves and is accompanied by a retinue of putti that guide her cart, shade her head, and announce her presence. AC’s engraving copies this chariot motif in reverse but reworks the figure’s specific attributes in order to transform the enthroned deity into an allegory of the Church or a crowned and haloed Virgin Mary. In AC’s revision, the woman gestures, not to Cupid but to the figures of the Holy Trinity hovering in the clouds before her cart. A single, haloed Dove of the Holy

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<sup>269</sup> Marcantonio, B.441 & B.442.

<sup>270</sup> Marcantonio, B.352.

Spirit pulls the divine carriage before a wooded landscape and a host of horn-blowing angels add to the glory of the scene.<sup>271</sup>

This clever quotation certainly served as a compositional shortcut, enabling the printmaker to quickly fabricate an appealing devotional or theological composition. But it also draws on established iconographic links between the Virgin and Venus. Rather than beseeching the gods for assistance in protecting a Trojan hero, the seated woman calls attention to the sacrifice of the son of God, who is himself the source of Christian protection. This conflation of mythical and theological narratives may have amused and challenged more erudite consumers and could have played a role in a connoisseurship game in which the collector would be rewarded for identifying the image's original source in Marcantonio's famous print. In addition, the engraving draws on the conventions of monumental sixteenth-century woodcut friezes depicting powerful men—including Caesar, Christ, and the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian—borne on chariots as part of Triumphal Processions.<sup>272</sup> AC's small-scale chariot bears both the Virgin and the weight of its association with more grandiose print projects with which collectors might have also been familiar.

Other engravings attributed to AC draw on Italian prototypes beyond Marcantonio. A frieze-like *Battle Scene* [H.154; Fig. 2.67], depicting at least twenty-one

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<sup>271</sup> For further information about Marcantonio's print, see Shoemaker and Brown, *The Engravings of Marcantonio Raimondi*, 120-122, cat. 32.

<sup>272</sup> See, for example, Jacob of Strassbourg's 1504 woodcut *Triumph of Caesar* after Benedetto Bordon; an anonymous woodcut *Triumph of Christ* after Titian, dated 1517; and Dürer's 1523 woodcut *The Great Triumphal Chariot of Maximilian I*. For a full consideration of these multi-block, multi-sheet prints as displays of political strength and printmaking prowess, see Larry Silver, "Triumphs and Travesties: Printed Processions of the Sixteenth Century," in *Grand Scale: Monumental Prints in the Age of Dürer and Titian*, eds. Larry Silver and Elizabeth Wyckoff (Wellesley, MA: Davis Museum and Cultural Center, Wellesley College, 2008), 15-32.

figures in vigorous combat, is copied after a print by Marco Dente [Fig. 2.68], a composition that was in turn inspired by a design by Raphael.<sup>273</sup> AC's print extracts the fighting figures, including their muscular horses and the bodies of fallen men, and sets them against the field of orderly hatched lines typical of the printmaker's ornament prints.<sup>274</sup> Reduced from a full-sheet print to a horizontal strip less than half the source's scale, the battle scene harkens back to the sarcophagus-like, relief decoration that likely inspired the tangled bodies of Marco Dente's original print.

Another AC-attributed battle print based on Italian sources depicts a *Fight Between Eleven Warriors* [H.153; Fig. 2.69] staged in a shallow frieze-like space and set against a dark hatched background. In addition to the warriors—all entirely nude but outfitted for battle with shields, helmets, and a variety of deadly weapons—the engraving depicts a pair of men at the left side of the composition being freed from captivity by nude women. The engraving's closest graphic analog is a slightly larger fifteenth-century Italian pen and ink drawing, now held by the Biblioteca Reale in Turin [Fig. 2.70], which includes a few additional figures, including an enigmatic man sitting ruefully beneath a tree amidst the escaping captives. Scholars of Italian art have argued that the AC print and the Turin drawing are both based on a lost composition by the Florentine painter and engraver Antonio del Pollaiuolo, part of which is known from an autograph drawing at

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<sup>273</sup> B.XIV.316.420. A "curator's comment" in the record for the British Museum's impression of Marco Dente's print (1868,0822.60) contends that the engraving is a copy after Raphael's designs for *The Battle of the Milvian Bridge*, frescoes executed by Giulio Romano in the Sala di Costantino in the Vatican; see the British Museum website (accessed June 22, 2018): [http://britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=1437896&partId=1&searchText=1868,0822.60&page=1](http://britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1437896&partId=1&searchText=1868,0822.60&page=1).

<sup>274</sup> The AC print has long been called a *Fight Between Nineteen Warriors* in spite of the fact that there are 21 figures depicted in the scene.

Harvard's Fogg Art Museum [Fig. 2.71].<sup>275</sup> This fragment depicts the basic forms of three nude figures—one armed with a bow and arrow and the other two standing in a face-off with blades and shields—that appear in the AC-attributed print and the Turin drawing. The three figures are also crudely reproduced in a larger engraved battle scene [Fig. 2.72], spuriously titled the *Battle of Hercules and the Giants*, which is attributed to an anonymous north Italian printmaker and considered to be one half of an incomplete or lost two-plate composition based on Pollaiuolo's drawing.<sup>276</sup> The AC print and the Turin drawing therefore roughly record the full scope of Pollaiuolo's original design, only half of which was brought to fruition in the larger North Italian print.<sup>277</sup> The full two-plate engraving presumably would have rivalled the artist's famous *Battle of the Nudes* in its complex examination of the human body in violent motion as well as the oversized grandeur of Andrea Mantegna's *Battle of the Sea Gods*, another iconic 15<sup>th</sup>-century Italian intaglio.

How then did our Monogrammist AC, a printmaker or group of engravers believed to be active in the Netherlands no earlier than the 1520s, reproduce this Italian model of the fifteenth-century? While it is possible that Pollaiuolo's complete design may have travelled to the Netherlands with another artist in the form of a copy, or that AC

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<sup>275</sup> Fogg accession no: 1940.9; see Agnes Mognan and Paul J. Sachs, *Drawings in the Fogg Museum of Art*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1946).

<sup>276</sup> B.XIII.203.3. The print exists in two known states, the latter and more finished of which bears an engraved inscription in the foreground identifying the scene as a depiction of Hercules and twelve giants in spite of the fact that only ten figures are visible in the composition. This title may have been added retrospectively by a later printer in a misguided attempt to tie a specific narrative to this incomplete composition.

<sup>277</sup> These interrelated prints and drawings were most recently been discussed in relation to Pollaiuolo's landmark *Battle of the Nudes* (B.XIII.202.2), which Shelley Langdale suggests might even have been created as a reaction to the poor engraving after his drawing; Shelley Langdale, *Battle of the Nudes: Pollaiuolo's Renaissance Masterpiece* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 2002). See also, Lillian Armstrong Anderson, "Copies of Pollaiuolo's Battling Nudes," *The Art Quarterly* 31 (1968): 155–67.

might have voyaged south and encountered the original or a replica before they were lost, it seems unlikely that the AC-attributed print is based on direct contact with a Pollaiuolo drawing. It is more plausible that the engraving is a copy after a now-lost Italian print by Pollaiuolo or a follower that circulated north of the Alps during the early sixteenth century. There still seems to be a missing link in the chain of replication that led from Pollaiuolo's design to the tiny frieze.

Many prints lauded as original compositions by AC may in fact be more dependent on previous printed sources than has previously been realized. One striking example of this fact is the enigmatic *Allegory of Time and Fortune* [H.149; Fig. 2.1], which has been identified as one of AC's crowning achievements. Johann David Passavant acknowledged as early as 1862 that the composition's striding male figure owed a debt to engraved Italian models, and his assertion that this figure might be based on Marcantonio's *Man Carrying the Base of a Column* was reiterated by Hollstein and other cataloguers.<sup>278</sup> Subsequent scholars, including Henri Delaborde, saw a greater affinity between this standing figure and the male nude holding a child under his arm from *Lo Stregozzo* [Fig. 2.73], a print generally given to Agostino Veneziano (active 1509-1536).<sup>279</sup>

Frequently overlooked, however, is the direct debt of both prints to a lost but extremely famous composition by Michelangelo. In his 1933 Ph.D. dissertation about the impact of Marcantonio Raimondi's prints on northern artists, Albert Oberheide noted that the engraving borrows directly from Michelangelo's cartoon for the unexecuted fresco

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<sup>278</sup> Marcantonio, B.476. Passavant, *Le Peintre-Graveur*, 42 (no. 115).

<sup>279</sup> Marcantonio, B.426. Henri Delaborde, *Marc-Antoine Raimondi: étude historique et critique, suivie d'un catalogue raisonné des oeuvres du maître* (Paris: Librairie de l'art, 1888), 207 (no. 175).

*The Battle of Cascina*, a composition known in full only as a result of a grisaille painting dated to c.1542 and now at Holkham Hall in Norfolk, England (Fig. 2.74).<sup>280</sup> Oberheide's observation is spot-on: the muscular bodies of the heroic figure striding to the left and the twisting, recumbent man at his feet are clearly modelled on two nude figures at the far right of Michelangelo's design. The formal relationship between the two men relies directly on Michelangelo's model. Yet Oberheide and the few subsequent scholars to identify the source of these figures failed to take their analysis a step further, employing this formal evidence to interrogate the authorship of the print itself.<sup>281</sup> If this unsigned print is, in fact, by the hand of an AC printmaker, how did this northern artist have access to Michelangelo's composition in the second quarter of the sixteenth century?

Michelangelo's fresco, which depicted a group of bathing Florentine soldiers rushing to assemble in response to news of a surprise attack by their Pisan enemies, was intended to join Leonardo da Vinci's *Battle of Anghiari* in the Hall of the Great Council in the Palazzo della Signoria in Florence. Although the works were commissioned in 1503-4, neither project was completed, and both artists had left Florence by 1506. Michelangelo's cartoon remained and was described by Giorgio Vasari and Benvenuto Cellini as a "school for artists," perhaps serving as a literal model for students who would have found much to copy in the muscular mass of twisting bodies.<sup>282</sup> There is no

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<sup>280</sup> Oberheide. *Der Einfluß Marcantonio Raimondis*, 100-101, and 138.

<sup>281</sup> See, for instance, Pierrette, *Graveurs en Taille-Douce*, 154 (no. 98).

<sup>282</sup> The first chapter of Bernadine Ann Barnes's book on printed copies after Michelangelo deals specifically with prints after *The Battle of Cascina*. See Bernadine Ann Barnes, *Michelangelo in Print: Reproductions as Response in the Sixteenth Century* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010). Barnes tells us that Vasari, in his *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors and Architects* lists a number of artists who copied the cartoon, including Baccio Bandinelli, Alonso Berruguete, Andrea del Sarto, Rosso Fiorentino, Jacopo da Pontormo, and Perino del Vaga. But few of these drawings survive, and those that do are generally quick sketches of individual figures in new contexts. Barnes notes that this type of drawing conforms to typical painting workshop practice of the time,

evidence, however, that the cartoon was displayed to the public, and letters from Michelangelo in 1508 suggest that the work was in fact locked up and accessible only to artists permitted to study the work by the artist himself. The design was subsequently moved several times and eventually torn into pieces and dispersed around 1515, with sections making their way into collections throughout Italy.<sup>283</sup> Vasari claims that Bastiano (Aristotile) da Sangallo was the only artist to make a full small-scale drawing after the cartoon, which he hoarded until Vasari himself encouraged him to make a grisaille copy that can now be seen at Holkham Hall.

Several prints from the period show at least second-hand knowledge of Michelangelo's cartoon. Most famous among these is Marcantonio's *The Climbers* [Fig. 2.75] of 1510, which extracted the three figures at the leftmost edge of the cartoon and inserted them into a landscape largely borrowed from Lucas van Leyden.<sup>284</sup> But no print would reproduce the entire composition until Luigi Schiavonetti's 1808 etching [Fig. 2.76] after Sangallo's painting.<sup>285</sup> No known drawing after the cartoon reproduces the figures at the right edge of the composition that we see in the print attributed to AC. It therefore seems most likely that the print, with its crinkly drapery and dark hatched background, is the work of a northern artist looking at a lost work by Marcantonio or a

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in which artists would copy small groups of figures in order to improve their handling of bodies and objects in three dimensions; see especially pp.10-12.

<sup>283</sup> According to Barnes, "[s]ections of the cartoon were owned by Bernardo Vecchietti in Florence, the Strozzi family in Mantua, and the Duke of Savoy in Turin at least until the early seventeenth century." See Barnes, 25, note 2.

<sup>284</sup> Marcantonio, B.487. The print's background, including a stand of trees at the left and a building with a thatched roof at left, is copied from Lucas's 1508 engraving *Mohammed and the Monk Sergius* (NHD.126). Other prints that copy figures from Michelangelo's cartoon include Marcantonio's *Man Putting on His Breeches* (B.472) and the *Soldier Attaching His Breeches to His Breastplate* (B.463), which is attributed to Agostino Veneziano.

<sup>285</sup> See British Museum accession number 1849,0512.30.



member of his school.<sup>286</sup> The print is probably a copy, but it is a copy that stands as the singular monument to an otherwise forgotten composition.

This detour into lost Italian prototypes reminds us of a fundamental truth about early modern printmaking: the prints that survive to this day represent only a small fraction of the compositions published in the period.<sup>287</sup> Given the propensity of artists to copy the successful designs of other printmakers, it is sometimes difficult to ascertain the original model for a print. Dozens of other engravings attributed to the AC monogram may in fact be copies after designs by other artists that simply were not preserved in collectors' albums or in museum Solander boxes. Other purportedly original AC prints are likely copies after as-yet-unidentified surviving models, copies that are so complex in their creative interventions that they have not yet been linked to their source material. Other extant unmonogrammed prints made by an AC printmaker likely remain miscatalogued due to the exceptional mimicry of their engraved lines; they hew too closely to their model and are subsumed into the corpus of another printmaker.

As the examples in this chapter illustrate, however, the work of untangling the sources from which the AC-attributed prints derive is not a fruitless endeavor. Identifying

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<sup>286</sup> Incidentally, the print has also been attributed to Italian artists. Passavant includes the print twice in his six-volume supplement to Bartsch. He first lists the print in volume three as a work by Allaert Claesz., noting that the print is based in part on Marcantonio but that it also shows similarities with unnamed compositions by Giorgio Ghisi. In volume six, published two years later, the author gives the print to the Mantuan artist Giovanni Battista Scultori (1503-1575) without noting that the same engraving (albeit with slightly different dimensions) was attributed to a northern artist in the same publication; Passavant, *Le Peintre-Graveur*, vol. 6 (Leipsic: R. Weigel, 1864), 137 (no. 21). Over 150 years later, the cataloguing of two impressions of the print at the British Museum still reflects this divergent opinion, with one impression filed under Claesz. and the other still given to Scultori; British Museum accession numbers 2004,U.82 (Claesz.) V,2.116 (Scultori).

<sup>287</sup> A manuscript inventory of prints belonging to the sixteenth-century Spanish collector Ferdinand Columbus, for instance, describes over 3,200 prints, of which only half appear to have survived to the present in even a single impression. See Mark P. McDonald, *Ferdinand Columbus: Renaissance Collector (1488-1539)* (London: British Museum Press, 2005), 71-75.

AC's models and comparing them to the AC copies reveals many of the disparate business strategies and artistic motivations hidden between the lines of purportedly derivative compositions. These copies reflect the international movement of printed images in the second quarter of the sixteenth century and embody the voracious eclecticism of the artists who collected and reworked printed sources for their own purposes. Whether an engraved copy survives as the printed product of a workshop training exercise, a shortcut for a new market niche, a display of technical bravado intended to impress a group of collecting connoisseurs, or an (often accidental) record of a lost prototype, these prints are records of the oftentimes overlooked business of early modern printmaking and the struggles and aspirations of a now anonymous artist (or artists). Prints that have long been considered uninteresting and unoriginal under the broad banner of "the copy" actually contain many nuanced layers of information waiting to be brought back to light.

### CHAPTER THREE: AC and the Engraved Scabbard Design<sup>288</sup>

Approximately twenty percent of the engravings attributed to Monogrammist AC might be broadly classified as ornament prints: works on paper that record fanciful decorative motifs with implied applications to the embellishment of objects in other media.<sup>289</sup> These tiny prints generally comprise vegetal, anthropomorphic, and sculptural forms intertwined as complex vegetal arabesques or stacked in candelabra-like superstructures against a dark background of crosshatched lines. Their forms derive from Italian “grotesque” ornament prints produced in Rome beginning around the year 1500, which reflects the Renaissance interest in classical forms.<sup>290</sup> This style of whimsical decoration, a hallmark of antique wall painting, was recreated and emulated by Italian painters and craftsmen at the end of the fifteenth century, inspired in particular by finely preserved examples rediscovered at the Golden House of Nero around the year 1500. Italian printmakers such as Nicoletto da Modena and Giovanni Antonio da Brescia subsequently helped to disseminate these grotesque forms across Europe through engraved ornament prints.<sup>291</sup> A prime early example is Nicoletto’s c.1507 print inscribed

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<sup>288</sup> This chapter expands upon a previously published essay by the author; see Rich, “The Burin, the Blade, and the Paper’s Edge: Early Sixteenth-Century Engraved Scabbard Designs by Monogrammist AC,” in *The Primacy of the Image in Northern European Art, 1400-1700: Essays in Honor of Larry Silver*, edited by Debra Cashion, Henry Luttikhuisen, and Ashley West (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 347-361.

<sup>289</sup> For a discussion of the classification and function of ornament prints, albeit with a focus on the following century, see the introduction to Peter Fuhling, *Ornament Prints in the Rijksmuseum II: The Seventeenth Century*, part one, translated by Jennifer Kilian & Katy Kist (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision Publishers, 2004), 17-38. See also Janet S. Byrne, *Renaissance Ornament Prints and Drawings* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1981).

<sup>290</sup> For more on the resurgence of the ornamental grotesque in Italy, see note 31 in the Introduction to this dissertation.

<sup>291</sup> For Nicoletto da Modena, see Levenson, Oberhuber, and Sheehan, *Early Italian Engravings from the National Gallery of Art*, 466-488. On Giovanni Antonio da Brescia, see *Ibid.*, 235-264; and Suzanne Boorsch, “Mantegna and his Printmakers,” in *Andrea Mantegna*, ed. Jane Martineau [exh. cat. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1992],

“Victoria Augusta” [Fig. 3.1], a print which includes satyrs, sirens, masks, birds, and monsters stacked and interwoven in a tightly-packed assemblage against an open background.<sup>292</sup> In addition to engraving his own ornamental improvisations, Giovanni Antonio also copied the grotesque forms from this Nicoletto print, placing them against a background of dense crisscross diagonal hatching [Fig. 3.2], a compositional model followed by northern printmakers in subsequent decades.<sup>293</sup> In fact, later in the sixteenth century, the German printmaker Lambrecht Hopper (active c.1525-50) would issue an etched copy of Giovanni Antonio’s copy of Nicoletto’s composition [Fig. 3.3], demonstrating how these forms were reproduced and transmitted in prints throughout Europe before mid-century.<sup>294</sup>

As the previous chapter demonstrated, AC’s strange designs—teeming with putti, masks, hybrid creatures, and leafy swirls—were also often copied directly after engraved designs by the German and Netherlandish artists of the period, all of whom looked back to Italian prototypes. Even AC’s seemingly original ornament designs, such as a previously undescribed engraving in Bremen depicting an *Ascending Ornament with a Vase and Foliage with Two Grotesque Faces* [App.50; Fig. 3.4], reflect the compositional models that the German Little Masters appropriated from Italy. Engraved with dark contour lines and shaded on only one side as if illuminated from a single lateral light

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56-66. Boorsch proposes that Giovanni Antonio and a printmaker commonly known as Zoan Andrea are the same individual.

<sup>292</sup> Hind, *Early Italian Engraving*, pt. II, vol. V, 136 (no.106). This print, one of a series of four ornamental panels, was later reissued by the Roman publisher Antonio Salamanca, whose international reputation helped to further spread the Italian grotesque.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid., pt. II, vol. V, 50 (no.45).

<sup>294</sup> B.VIII.532.31.

source, these whimsical forms appear to stand out in relief against a flat, uniform background.<sup>295</sup>

In spite of their frequently derivative motifs, the high quality of these engravings led early scholars of ornamental prints to consider Monogrammist AC among the pioneering Netherlandish engravers of the early sixteenth century, responsible for helping to spread the Renaissance ornamental style in northern Europe.<sup>296</sup> Nevertheless, this sizable group of engravings, like most ornamental prints, has subsequently received little scholarly analysis. In the tradition descended from Adam Bartsch's early nineteenth-century project to elevate *Le peintre graveur*, such ornament prints have been relegated to the tail end of print catalogues raisonné, sequestered apart from the virtuosic compositions that align the printmaker with his contemporary painter-engravers. Like the ornament prints of many other Renaissance artists, these engravings have been dismissed as mere decorative afterthoughts in the few studies of AC's work. A closer look at the ornamental engravings at the fringes of Monogrammist AC's oeuvre, however, reveals

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<sup>295</sup> Carsten-Peter Warncke, *Die ornamentale Grotteske in Deutschland: 1500-1650*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Spiess, 1979). Warncke includes prints by Monogrammist AC (discussed as Allaert Claesz.) in his overview of the origins and early development of the German grotesque ornament print. He notes the direct connection between these engravings and those by Aldegrever and the Little Masters, whose prints between c.1524/25 and 1532 popularized the genre in northern Europe. He argues that grotesque designs, modelled after Italian prints, first appeared in the north as decorative frames of book title pages before the etchers Daniel and Lambrecht Hopper (see below) and subsequently Heinrich Aldegrever and his contemporaries inspired a flourishing of the genre in intaglio prints in the second decade of the sixteenth century.

<sup>296</sup> Désiré Guilmar, *Les Maîtres Ornemanistes* (Paris: E. Plon et cie, 1880), 474-475 (as the work of Allaert Claesz.), with four prints illustrated on plate 161. Albert Brinckmann, *Die praktische Bedeutung der Ornamentstiche für die deutsche Frührenaissance* (Strassburg: J.H.E. Heitz, 1907), 88. Even while deriding Allaert Claesz. as a copyist "distinctly without individuality" and "exceedingly uneven in both the motifs and their treatment," Alfred Lichtwark included the printmaker in his important study of the predominant forms and designers of early sixteenth-century ornament prints; see Lichtwark, *Der Ornamentstich Der deutschen Frührenaissance*, 220-222.

that these prints offer an important case study in sixteenth-century Northern printmaking precisely because of their marginality.

One important subset of the period audience for ornamental prints was the group of artists who looked to these sheets as formal models and sources of pictorial inspiration. Painters and printmakers relied broadly on prints as mobile carriers of visual motifs, sometimes adapting designs for their own purposes or simply copying the prints directly as a compositional shortcut. Craftsmen throughout Europe working in allied fields, such as tapestry, leatherwork, and woodwork, looked to ornamental printed images in particular as sources for their own decorative work in other media.<sup>297</sup>

Evidence of the practical application of an AC-monogrammed engraving in the field of ceramics, for instance, survives in the surface decoration of a work of Rhenish stoneware, now in the Museum of Applied Arts in Cologne. A brown salt-glazed jug (*krug*), fabricated in Cologne's Maximinenstraße workshop and dated to c.1530 [Fig. 3.5], reproduces AC's *Vignette with a Satyr and a Woman* [H.188; Fig. 3.6] on the vessel's central horizontal frieze.<sup>298</sup> While the engraving may not have been made with this specific decorative function in mind, its lack of narrative subject broadened its commercial potential and allowed the design to transcend the print media through this type of ornamental application.

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<sup>297</sup> In his essay on the German Little Masters, whose engravings AC emulated and copied, Stephen Goddard offers an extensive list of objects made during the sixteenth-century which derived their decoration directly from their prints. These objects include: clocks, locks, ceramic and pewter plates, enamel ware, majolica ware, wooden cabinets, candle sticks, stained glass windows, church furnishing, game boards, meals, bricks, and bronze plaquettes; Goddard, "The Origin Use, and Heritage of the Small Engraving in Renaissance Germany," 23.

<sup>298</sup> Otto von Falke, *Das rheinische Steinzeug* (Berlin-Schöneberg: Meisenbach Riffarth, 1908), 50-51, ill. no.37. See also Gisela Reineking-von Bock, *Steinzeug*, Kunstgewerbemuseum Der Stadt Köln 4 (Cologne: J. P. Bachem, 1971), cat. no. 292.

Even professional goldsmiths, trained in the technical use of an engraving burin and possessing the skill to inscribe a design on a metal plate, were generally less practiced in the draughtsman's art and frequently looked to other artists to do the work of laying out their compositions on paper before beginning to incise a three-dimensional object. A fine example of a metalsmith's reliance on printed sources can be found on a suit of plate armor in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Wrought by Wolfgang Groszschedel in Landshut, Germany in 1529, the suit includes several areas of etched surface decoration, including a design of battling tritons on its neck plate [Fig. 3.7]. The motif is taken either from an ornament print by the anonymous printmaker known as the Monogrammist IB [Fig. 3.8] or from a reverse copy signed with the AC monogram [H.186; Fig. 3.9].<sup>299</sup> We can assume that neither printmaker knew of this specific application of his design. Instead, the motif was probably plucked from a collection of printed images assembled as potential models in the armorer's workshop. The same is likely true for the engraved decoration on the silver tip of a scabbard once held by the Royal Museum in Kassel, Germany [Fig. 3.10].<sup>300</sup> Its embellishment—comprising leafy tendrils, a pair of dolphins, and a medallion containing a winged beast—was modelled on either an AC-monogrammed ornament print with the same motif [H.214; Fig. 3.11] or its prototype by Heinrich Aldegrever [Fig. 3.12].<sup>301</sup> The primarily ornamental nature of these prints made them enticing sources for decorative metalwork, even when their forms did not explicitly refer to arms or armor.

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<sup>299</sup> B.VIII.315.45. The positions of the battling tritons etched on the armor align more directly with the unreversed figures on IB's print, making that the armorer's most likely source.

<sup>300</sup> Brinckmann, *Die praktische Bedeutung Der Ornamentstiche für die deutsche Frührenaissance*, 52; scabbard tip reproduced on Tafel 11.

<sup>301</sup> Aldegrever, NHG.233.

The dissemination of ornament design to craftsmen in other media was, in fact, one of the original impulses for engravings printed on paper. The German artist known as the Master of the Playing Cards (active c.1430-c.1450), one of the pioneers of the intaglio printmaking, issued printed images of flowers and animals [c.f. Fig. 3.13] that were intended to function both as playing cards and as models for manuscript illuminators and other craftsmen.<sup>302</sup> Master E.S., another early German engraver likely trained as a goldsmith, executed several sheets of ornamental foliage containing figures and birds [c.f. Fig. 3.14] intended as compositional aids for metalsmiths and wood and stone carvers.<sup>303</sup> In addition to numerous independent leafy ornaments, Martin Schongauer engraved more fully conceived designs for several religious objects, including a *Bishop's Crozier* [Fig. 3.15] embellished with saints in fictive niches on the shaft and a seated Madonna and Child within its curling finial.<sup>304</sup> Intaglio printmakers worked with their fellow craftsmen in mind from the very beginning of their medium.

Starting in the second decade of the sixteenth-century, however, German and Netherlandish printmakers actively courted the specific connection between ornamental engravings and the gentleman's blade. Ostensibly created as models for the decoration of engraved scabbards for swords and daggers, this subset of ornament prints occupies the thin space between surface and object; between the real, inscribed printing plate and the not-yet-realized (or never-to-be-realized) metalwork object. Cut with subtly angled edges

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<sup>302</sup> Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 4. For this specific print, see Max Lehrs, *Geschichte und kritischer Katalog des deutschen, niederländischen und französischen Kupferstichs im XV. Jahrhundert*, vol. 1 (Vienna: Gesellschaft für vervielfältigende Kunst, 1908), 111, no.63. For more about engravings by the Master of the Playing Cards as sources for manuscript illuminations, see note 208, in Chapter Two of this dissertation.

<sup>303</sup> Shestack, *Master E.S.: Five Hundredth Anniversary Exhibition*, no.64.

<sup>304</sup> Shestack, *Martin Schongauer*, 324-325, no.105.



and embellished at their extremities to signal a potential utility in the production of metalwork objects, these small engravings convey the printmaker's aspiration to move the design beyond the singularity of the printed page and into direct dialogue with works of art in other media.

In this chapter I will consider engraved scabbard designs by Monogrammist AC and his contemporaries as examples of the early sixteenth-century artist's self-conscious engagement with the materiality of both printmaking and metalwork. Focusing on the inherent affinity between the work of the engraver and the decorative metalsmith, I will explore the physical, commercial, and metaphoric implications of AC's choice to frame these prints as sheaths. I will consider how AC employed the tapered scabbard format in order to broaden the potential reach and haptic implications of his engravings. In the process, I aim to extract these supposedly ornamental prints from the realm of marginal interest and place them into the context of the early sixteenth-century kinship between print collecting and pageantry.

### *The origins of the printed scabbard design*

Given the close connection between art, pageantry, and power, it is no surprise that many prominent sixteenth-century artists with court affiliations were commissioned to design metalwork and armor decorations for wealthy patrons.<sup>305</sup> Albrecht Dürer completed at least one set of drawings for parade armor for the Holy Roman Emperor

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<sup>305</sup> For a fundamental survey of the roots and public manifestations of princely spectacle in Renaissance Europe and the role of the visual arts in propagating monarchic power through grand pageants and processions, see Roy Strong, *Art and Power: Renaissance Festivals, 1450-1650* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

Maximilian I.<sup>306</sup> While the armor does not survive, several of Dürer's extant drawings for the project display the elaborate nature of the finished product [c.f. Fig. 3.16].<sup>307</sup> An unrelated pen and black ink drawing in the collection of the British Museum [Fig. 3.17], attributed to Dürer and dated to circa 1515, appears to represent a study for part of an ornamental scabbard.<sup>308</sup> Measuring over sixteen inches in length, the curving composition employs the same sort of stacked hybrid beasts and decorative flourishes that would appear in ornamental engravings by AC and his fellow Northern printmakers in the coming decades. As a detailed, large-scale drawing, however, Dürer's design was likely intended to offer a blueprint for a specific, probably commissioned, court project. Handed over to a talented goldsmith, the drawing could be translated into the decoration on a scabbard for a wealthy patrician. After training as a metalworker with his goldsmith father, Dürer likely appreciated the type of clearly delineated drawing that a craftsman would need in order to bring a design into three dimensions.<sup>309</sup>

In addition to designs for goldsmiths to create jewelry, elaborate cups, and table fountains, the German painter and draughtsman Hans Holbein the Younger (1497-1543)—another prominent artist with court affiliations—also executed several drawings for dagger sheaths in the 1520s and 1530s.<sup>310</sup> Around 1523 he created pen and ink

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<sup>306</sup> See the catalogue for the exhibition *From Schongauer to Holbein: Master Drawings from Basel and Berlin* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1999), 164-165 (no.69).

<sup>307</sup> Ibid. Also, Friedrich Winkler, *Die Zeichnungen Albrecht Dürers* (Berlin: Deutscher Verein für Lunstwissenschaft, 1938), 3:90-93 (nos.678-82).

<sup>308</sup> British Museum accession no. SL,5218.73. John Rowlands, *Drawings by German Artists and Artists from German-Speaking Regions of Europe in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum: The Fifteenth Century, and the Sixteenth Century by Artists Born before 1530*, vol.1 (London: British Museum Press, 1993), 93 (no.199).

<sup>309</sup> For some further examples of Dürer's designs for goldsmiths, see Jeffrey Chipps Smith, "Dürer and Sculpture," in *The Essential Dürer*, ed. Larry Silver and Jeffrey Chipps Smith (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), especially 83-86.

<sup>310</sup> For an overview of Holbein's designs for goldsmiths, see Susan Foister, *Holbein and England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 137-147.

designs for the scabbard of a so-called Swiss dagger depicting a Dance of Death, possibly intended as a gift for his friend Erasmus of Rotterdam.<sup>311</sup> While Holbein's original drawings do not survive, these designs were copied by numerous other hands [c.f. Fig. 3.18], some likely in Holbein's workshop, and eventually translated into open-work relief decoration for daggers by metalworkers later in the sixteenth-century.<sup>312</sup> Holbein's frieze-like composition was well-suited for a Swiss dagger, which was worn horizontally at the hip.<sup>313</sup> On the visible exterior of a dagger, the procession of skeletons and their doomed conscripts—including a child, a monk, a soldier, an aristocratic woman, and an emperor—would project a reminder of Death's inevitability for all people, regardless of their social rank. Additional Holbein designs for a pair of dagger sheaths—also dated to the mid-1520s, before he departed Basel for England to enter into the service of King Henry VIII's royal patronage—only survive in the form of woodcuts. The two prints, which were likely cut by Holbein's frequent collaborator Hans Lützelburger, depict dagger sheaths with *Venus and Cupid* [Fig. 3.19] and *Fortuna* [Fig. 3.20], respectively, and were accompanied by hilts cut from separate woodblocks.<sup>314</sup> Divided into two

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<sup>311</sup> Christian Müller, *Hans Holbein the Younger: The Basel Years, 1515-1532* (Munich: Prestel, 2006), 314-315 (cat.99). Erasmus received other similar daggers as gifts from friends and wrote a handbook for the Christian knight that was available after 1503; see Konrad Hoffmann, "Holbeins Todesbilder," in *Laienfrömmigkeit im späten Mittelalter: Formen, Funktionen, politisch-soziale Zusammenhänge*, ed. Klaus Schreiner (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1992), 263-282.

<sup>312</sup> For descriptions of eight related copies after Holbein's design and images of the three drawings in Basel, see Christian Müller, *Katalog der Zeichnungen des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts im Kupferstichkabinett Basel; die Zeichnungen von Hans Holbein dem Jüngeren und Ambrosius Holbein*, vol. 2A (Basel: Schwabe & Co., 1996), 162-164, (nos.327-329).

<sup>313</sup> For the history of the Swiss dagger, see Hugo Schneider, *Der Schweizerdolch* (Zurich: Orell Füssli, 1977). Examples related to Holbein's *Dance of Death* design are discussed on pp.66-69, and 165-175 (cat. nos. 113-130).

<sup>314</sup> Alfred Woltmann, *Holbein und seine Zeit*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: E.A. Seemann, 1876), 183-184 (nos.201-204); Hollstein, *German Engravings, Etchings, and Woodcuts*, ca.1400-1700, vol. XIV, 144-145 (H.5 & H.6); and Müller, *Hans Holbein the Younger: The Basel Years*, 434-435 (cat.D.4).

registers, with a female figure at the top and a vertical ornament at the bottom, the format of these prints prefigures influential designs by Heinrich Aldegrever that I will discuss later in this chapter.

Several surviving Holbein drawings dated to the 1530s all relate to a ceremonial dagger that was presumably intended for Henry VIII. Executed in pen, ink, and chalk, four drawings in Basel offer various designs for the ornamental I-shaped hilt of a so-called baselard dagger.<sup>315</sup> A more finished brush drawing in black ink at the British Museum [Fig. 3.21] provides a sense of the elaborate and finished composition, including the dagger's scabbard and fittings for inset jewels.<sup>316</sup> This drawing might have served as a means of recording the design of the completed object, which does not survive.

The relationship between early intaglio printmakers and the goldsmith's workshop is fundamental. Printed engravings likely emerged out of the goldsmith's practice of inking engraved metal plates in order to record and preserve the craftsman's work.<sup>317</sup> The conscious engraving of a metal plate for the express purpose of producing a replicable image began in the Upper Rhine region in the 1430s as a technical adaptation of the process used to decorate metalwork.<sup>318</sup> Similarly, printmakers incised their designs using a burin, a type of engraver's tool already in use by metalworkers since at least the

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<sup>315</sup> Müller, *Katalog der Zeichnungen des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts im Kupferstichkabinett Basel* vol. 2A 135-137 (nos.234-237); and *From Schongauer to Holbein*, 414-415 (no.187). For more on baselard daggers, see Claude Blair, *European & American Arms, c. 1100-1850* (New York : Crown, 1962), 13; and Bashford Dean, *Catalogue of European Daggers, 1300-1800* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1929), 23-33.

<sup>316</sup> British Museum accession no. 1874,0808.33. Rowlands, *Drawings by German Artists*, vol. 1, 149 (no.325).

<sup>317</sup> Ad Stijnman, *Engraving and Etching 1400-2000: A History of the Development of Manual Intaglio Printmaking Processes* (London: Archetype Publications Ltd, 2012), 43.

<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

twelfth century, which remains essentially unchanged today.<sup>319</sup> Consisting of a steel shaft measuring about 10cm long with an obliquely cut tip, the burin is set into a wooden handle that rests in the craftsman's palm as the tool is held between the thumb and the tips of last three fingers. Dipping the tip of the burin into the metal plate awaiting decoration, the engraver pushes the tool with his or her palm and directs it like a plow parallel across the surface of the matrix using the index finger as a guide. This pushing action requires significant force as the tool works to gouge out and displace a sliver of metal in its path through the plate. To create a print from this metal matrix, the incised channels of the design are filled with viscous ink, and the surface of the plate is wiped clean before it is run through a press along with a dampened sheet of paper.

The production of metal plates for engraving also depended on the tools and materials of the metalsmith.<sup>320</sup> Although iron, steel, silver, and gold were occasionally used as the support for intaglio prints, copper became the standard material for printing plates.<sup>321</sup> Copper plates were soft enough for engraving and easily burnished but still hard enough to withstand the printing of thousands of impressions. As a material, copper was also readily available.<sup>322</sup> Copper plates were flattened manually from cold ingots, using

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<sup>319</sup> In his *Schedula diversarum artium* of c.1100-25, the German monk Theophilus Presbyter explains how to create three different types of steel burin for incising metal. For a translation of the original text, see *Theophilus On Divers Arts: The Foremost Medieval Treatise on Painting, Glassmaking and Metalwork*, J.G. Hawthorne & C.S. Smith, eds., repr. of Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963 (New York: Dover, 1979), 91.

<sup>320</sup> For a thorough discussion of the production of metal plates for intaglio printing, see Stijnman, *Engraving and Etching 1400-2000*, 133-148.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid. For more on the use of silver and gold as materials for print matrices in the sixteenth century, see Madeleine Viljoen, "To Print or Not to Print? Hendrick Goltzius's 1595 *Sine Baccho et Cerere Friget Venus* and Engraving with Precious Metals," *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* 74 (2011): 45-76.

<sup>322</sup> Additional background on the extraction of copper in the early modern period and its use as printing plates and supports for early modern painting appears in the catalogue for the Phoenix Art Museum's exhibition *Copper as Canvas: Two Centuries of Masterpiece Paintings on Copper*,

goldsmith's tools, and the hammer marks were carefully planed and polished, using sands and stones. Before receiving an inscribed design, the edges of the matrix would need to be beveled to prevent the sharp sides and corners of the metal sheet from slicing the engraver's skin, the components of the press, or the paper support in their future contact. The intaglio plate, in both its raw and finished states, embodies its origins in the metalsmith's workshop.

Given the fundamental connection between the tools and materials employed in these two interdependent arts—and considering the market for ornament prints in the period—it follows that printmakers would tailor some of their decorative prints to appeal to an audience for metalwork or metalworkers themselves, particularly those already concerned with a gentleman's blade. Steel arms and armor plate were standard accouterments of early modern knights, noblemen, and the urban patrician class, and their decoration was essential to their social function.<sup>323</sup> Although advances in firearm technology and the desire for mobility on the battlefield made heavy armor for battle increasingly obsolete after the fifteenth century, the production of plate armor did not cease.<sup>324</sup> In fact, decorative armor was increasingly made for ceremonial purposes throughout Europe. The Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I took great pride in

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1575-1775 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), particularly Michael K. Komanecky's essay "Copper" and his "Introduction", 1-7.

<sup>323</sup> For a consideration of the rapier as both a weapon and a fashion statement, see Tobias Capwell, *The Noble Art of the Sword: Fashion and Fencing in Renaissance Europe, 1520-1630* (London: Wallace Collection, 2012), especially 29-33, 83.

<sup>324</sup> Ida Sinkević, "The Culture of Arms in the Renaissance and Baroque," in Sinkević, Ida., ed. *Knights in Shining Armor: Myth and Reality, 1450-1650* (Piermont, N.H.: Bunker Hill Publishing, in association with the Allentown Art Museum, 2006), 14-35. For an overview of the major technical and strategic shifts that reshaped warfare in the early modern period, see Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the rise of the West, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), especially 6-24.

commissioning the finest armorers in Augsburg and Innsbruck to create new forms of tournament and field armor, both to adorn himself and as extravagant gifts for friends and potential allies.<sup>325</sup> In Milan, Filippo Negroli (c.1510-1579) and his workshop inspired a revival of ceremonial armor in the classical style (*all'antica*), forms which drew on the humanist interest in antique forms and texts.<sup>326</sup> Elaborately rendered swords and daggers served as the more portable marks of nobility. Such weapons served practically for defense, but they also formed part of the period's fashionable dress, worn in parades and tournaments as a show of wealth and prestige. To carry a blade, a gentleman often needed a scabbard or sheath to house it and attach it to his body. Unless engaged in swordplay, the scabbard and the sword hilt would be the only visible surfaces of the weapon. As such, those surfaces required the bulk of decorative attention. The tubes were often made of wood covered in fabric and embellished with metal mounts and ferrules at the joints and tip that served to both reinforce and decorate [c.f. Fig. 3.22]. Other sheaths were made entirely of steel or leather, offering the scabbard's entire surface as a space for ornamentation. Despite their ubiquity in the period, however, original sheaths for sixteenth-century European daggers have rarely survived to the present day.<sup>327</sup>

Late in the second decade of the sixteenth century, German and Netherlandish printmakers broke out of the strictly rectangular format of the ornament print and allowed the shape of the composition to imply a specific application to the decoration of sword or dagger sheaths. Perhaps the earliest extant example of a print tailored as a design for a

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<sup>325</sup> Silver, *Marketing Maximilian*, 153-156.

<sup>326</sup> Stuart W. Pyhrr and José-A. Godoy, *Heroic Armor of the Italian Renaissance: Filippo Negroli and His Contemporaries* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998).

<sup>327</sup> For a concise, illustrated overview of the history of European daggers, see Dean, *Catalogue of European Daggers*. Dean estimates that less than one percent of extant early modern daggers survive with a contemporary scabbard; see p.6.

scabbard is an anonymous engraving in the reserve collection of the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris, dated 1516 [Fig. 3.23].<sup>328</sup> The print depicts three vertical ornaments, each of which narrows and curves into the shape of pointed dagger blades in order to drive home the specific utility of the designs. The bottom two-thirds of each composition comprises the type of symmetrical vegetal-ornamental structures common to the period's vertical ornament prints, with acanthus leaves that morph into vases and sprout disembodied faces. On pedestals atop each of these grotesque arabesques is a figure that further implies the design's applicability to a scabbard: a soldier armed with a blade and halberd, a putto holding a sword and orb, and a putto seated on a large metal helmet, respectively.<sup>329</sup> This type of arms and armor-related iconography would recur in scabbard designs throughout the 1520s and 30s, reaffirming the aspirational connection between these designs and the armorer's craft.

While the pointed blade-shaped design occurs occasionally in other northern ornament prints of the later 1520s and 30s, more frequently the slightly attenuated sides of an engraved panel were sufficient to suggest how the composition might lend itself to

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<sup>328</sup> The print is signed with the letters CE, letters long associated with the Netherlandish engraver Frans Crabbe, and subsequently catalogued by Hollstein in the volume for that printmaker as H.52. In his MA thesis on Crabbe, Maarten Bassens refutes the attribution to Crabbe, based on stylistic and chronological grounds. Bassens, *Frans Crabbe van Espleghem*, catalogue entry C.8, 229-231. Alfred Lichtwark describes another series of anonymous engraved designs for German dagger sheaths dated 1523 depicting allegories of "Fortitude" (*die Stärke*) and "Hope" (*die Hoffnung*) at the Kupferstichkabineten in Berlin and Dresden, respectively; Lichtwark, *Der Ornamentstich der deutschen Frührenaissance*, 106. I have, however, been unable to trace either of these impressions to confirm this early dating. Another anonymous scabbard-shaped composition in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum (inv. E.3259-1923), appears to be dated 1527; see Warncke, *Die ornamentale Grotteske in Deutschland*, vol. II, 39, no. 216.

<sup>329</sup> Bassens also accurately notes the engraving's reliance on Lucas van Leyden's engraving of the *Coat of Arms of the City of Leyden in a Circle, Surrounded by Four Putti in Circles* (NHD.168) for the figure of the putto sitting on a helmet that appears on the scabbard design at the far right; Bassens, *Frans Crabbe van Espleghem*, catalogue entry C.8, 229-231.



the decoration of a protective sheath.<sup>330</sup> Slightly tapered from top to bottom, the trapezoidal format of these engravings hints at a blade tapering from hilt to tip.

Daniel Hopfer (1471-1536), an armor decorator by trade and likely the first printmaker to apply the armorer's technique of chemical etching to the field of printmaking, even executed an undated print that visually represents the formal transition from the rectangular to the tapered ornamental form.<sup>331</sup> Etched on a single plate, the print depicts three *Ornamental Fillets* [Fig. 3.24] comprising vertical strips of vines and fig leaves rising from vases against a dark ground speckled with white dots.<sup>332</sup> The panel at the far left of the print offers the standard rectangular ornament, but the strips at center and right taper subtly, morphing into new but still related trapezoidal forms. The print might be read as a rhetorical device to demonstrate the morphology of scabbard ornament.

Heinrich Aldegrever's tapered scabbard ornaments from the later 1520s and early 1530s would serve as both the inspiration for—and the apogee of execution in—a more widespread northern trend of engraved scabbard designs. His earliest prints in this genre,

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<sup>330</sup> For additional engraved scabbard designs from this period that take the shape of a pointed blade, see Heinrich Aldegrever's two engravings dated 1535 (NHG.254 & NHG.255) and undated engravings by Monogrammist IW (or WIV?), alternately described as either a German and Netherlandish printmaker; for this printmaker, see Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish etchings, engravings, and woodcuts, ca. 1450-1700*, vol. XIII (Amsterdam: Menno Hertzberger, 1956), 69-70. A small pointed scabbard design comprising a vase and foliage, which Hollstein ascribes to Allaert Claesz (H.234), is actually the bottom portion of a trimmed print depicting a gentleman holding a skull that is also attributed to Monogrammist IW; see Marijnke de Jong and Irene de Groot, *Ornamentprenten in Het Rijksprentenkabinet*, vol. I (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 1988), 90, no.145. Monogrammist AC's shop does not appear to have issued any blade-shaped scabbard designs.

<sup>331</sup> First practiced in Augsburg in the mid-1490s, etching was employed as means of incising matrices for prints in Northern Europe throughout the sixteenth century. For the technique and history of etching, see Stijnman, *Engraving and Etching 1400-2000*, especially 45-57. For more on Hopfer as etcher and armorer, see Spira, *Originality as Repetition / Repetition as Originality*.

<sup>332</sup> Daniel Hopfer, H.99.

examples featuring a *Standard Bearer* [Fig. 3.25] and the *Whore of Babylon* [Fig. 3.26] each dated 1528, exemplify the format employed by many of the printmaker's contemporaries.<sup>333</sup> The engravings are divided into two distinct segments: the bottom half given to an ascending ornament, set against a dark hatched background, consistent with the period's independent grotesques, and the top half containing a standing figure or couple.

In many cases, the figures in the upper register of the scabbard design make overt reference to the daggers that they aspire to sheath and protect. A pair of Aldegrever engravings, dated 1529, include the figures of the biblical hero David with the head of Goliath and an executioner with the head of John the Baptist, respectively [Figs. 3.27 & 3.28].<sup>334</sup> Each figure holds the blade that enabled his triumphant act of decapitation, and each stands over the lifeless body of his victim. Applied to a sheath, such an ornamental design would house and protect the blade tucked behind it, while also offering a meta-commentary on the dangerous potential of a liberated edge.

Other similarly-formatted Aldegrever scabbard designs from 1532 depict couples engaged in erotic exchanges. In one print, a lascivious soldier with a large sword at his hip gropes a nude woman [Fig. 3.29] who turns toward him, suggestively grasping a tree branch with her left hand.<sup>335</sup> A related scabbard-shaped engraving depicts a nude man making advances toward a female partner [Fig. 3.30].<sup>336</sup> Despite his intentions, the woman holds the key to the chastity belt that has thus far prevented any romantic transgressions. In each case, the suggestion that these designs might be applied to a

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<sup>333</sup> Aldegrever, NHG.225 & NHG.226.

<sup>334</sup> Aldegrever, NHG.234 & NHG.235.

<sup>335</sup> Aldegrever, NHG.249.

<sup>336</sup> Aldegrever, NHG.248.

scabbard design could form part of a pun concerning the scabbard as a sheath for the phallic sword. Such racy innuendo is not uncommon in the work by the German Little Masters, and the application of the decoration to the scabbard offers some justification for the sexually suggestive visual content.<sup>337</sup>

James Clifton rightfully notes that Heinrich Aldegrever's designs for dagger sheaths might also serve as designs for decorative panels on breastplates or helmets.<sup>338</sup> While it is true that these thin strips might be applied to many different malleable metal surfaces, I contend here is that the iconography and formal qualities of these tapered compositions frequently make direct and intentional reference to the material qualities of the sheath.

Numerous German engravers of the same moment—including Aldegrever's fellow Little Master now known as the Monogrammist IB, Gillian Proger, Nikolas Wilborn, and the anonymous Monogrammist HE—also follow Aldegrever's general formula, combining a figural top with an ornamental bottom within a single trapezoidal composition. Although many of these prints by second-tier printmakers are marked by poor draftsmanship and careless engraving, they do indicate a measure of the desire for scabbard prints in the period.

### ***Monogrammist AC's innovative scabbard designs***

Engraved scabbard designs attributed to Monogrammist AC might be considered, at first, to simply follow the apparent fad for tapering sheath-like designs. The AC-

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<sup>337</sup> For amatory imagery in prints by the Little Masters, see Levy, "The Erotic Engravings of Sebald and Barthel Beham," 40–53.

<sup>338</sup> James Clifton, "To shoue to posteritie the manner of souldiers apparel": Arms and Armor in European Prints" in Sinkević, Ida., ed. *Knights in Shining Armor*, 56.

monogrammed *Scabbard Design with Adam and Eve* [H.227; Fig. 1.65] follows the formal model laid out by Aldegrever and his contemporaries. The amorous couple stands within an illusionistic recess at the top of the composition, with vertical strips of ornament, comprising putti, scrollwork, and grotesque faces, serving as a compositional support beneath their feet. Bands of scrollwork above their heads support a vegetal motif from which a winged putto emerges, providing a decorative cap at the top of the design. Adam fondles Eve's naked breast with his right hand, while reaching around her back with his left to receive the apple of Original Sin, a motif perhaps inspired by the erotic interaction between the couple in German printmaker Hans Baldung's (c.1484-1545) 1511 woodcut of *The Fall of Mankind* [Fig. 3.31].<sup>339</sup> While Adam's genitals are covered by a leafy vine around his waist in AC's engraving, Eve's body is completely exposed, adding to the explicit sexual morality of the design. As with the erotic encounters in the upper registers of the Aldegrever prints discussed above, the presence of this sinful interaction at the most prominent point on the scabbard design offers a playful reminder that virtuous behavior in both love and swordplay requires a similar measure of self-control.

Several of AC's other scabbard designs, including the engraving of *Hercules and Venus* [H.233; Fig. 0.7], offer a more complex twist on the genre, pairing two complementary scabbard compositions into a single engraved plate. Combining two scabbards side-by-side performs a significant conceptual task, bringing the flat decorative panel even further into three dimensions by simultaneously offering two sides—or a front and back—to a single scabbard. In AC's scabbard design with *Hercules and Venus*, for

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<sup>339</sup> Baldung, H.3.

instance, we can see that in spite of the hero's physical strength and the force of his desire for the goddess of love and beauty, a thick engraved line divides this print into two halves, preventing the figures from sharing the same space. A viewer who imaginatively extends the scabbard design to its logical assemblage in the round observes the sharp edge of the artist's formal joke. Once separated into the front and back of a scabbard, the composition becomes permanently divided. Hercules will never consummate his love for Venus, and Virtue claims victory over Vice. The hero will always remain on the opposite side of the sheath, stuck at the crossroads inscribed by the burin at the center of the sheet. The engraving takes on a new dimension when the viewer's imaginative engagement with the print enlivens this tension between its figural protagonists.

AC plays similar spatial games in scabbard designs adapted from prints by other artists. He uses Dirk Vellert's 1522 engraving of *The Virgin and Child with Saint Anne* [Fig. 3.32] as the model for one such ornamental sheath. Vellert's original print conveys all the tenderness traditionally associated with this multi-generational gathering.<sup>340</sup> Seated on the floor of a simple interior space, Mary supports the infant Christ, who stands on her lap, while the child's grandmother kneels before him. Anne bows her head towards the child as she offers him a piece of fruit. Fascinated with the pomegranate before him, Christ grabs at the food with both hands. Vellert presents us with an intimate moment of exchange between the extended holy family, in which the second Adam, the future resurrected Christ, accepts a piece of symbolic fruit under the sorrowful eyes of his prescient caretakers.

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<sup>340</sup> Vellert, H.7.

In contrast, the Christ child in AC's small engraving [H.58; Fig. 3.33] is left forever wanting. Standing on his mother's lap beneath a cloth canopy, the baby reaches to the right for the piece of fruit being offered by his grandmother. Saint Anne bows before him, the fruit in her hand tantalizingly close to his small fingers at the center of the composition. Yet the handoff will never be complete. The vertical strip divides the composition into two halves, two sides of the scabbard permanently separating the elderly saint from her holy family. Upon closer examination, it is clear from the discontinuous background in each half of the print that the holy family could never share a common space. Forever divided, the image takes on a more complicated life within the context of a double scabbard design.<sup>341</sup> The print's domestic Christian setting suggests that the design might be just as applicable to the decoration of a handle or sheath for domestic cutlery as to the embellishment of a gentleman's scabbard.<sup>342</sup>

Another similar AC-monogrammed print [H.226; Fig. 3.34] presents a pair of secular domestic scenes within the now-familiar scabbard design format. The left half of the engraving depicts three people in period attire sharing a meal at a small round table.

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<sup>341</sup> The divided nature of this religious image also hints at its additional potential use as a design for an engraved diptych. Such decorative panels were also applied as wings to reliquaries, ciboria, and personal altarpieces. For examples of such diptychs, see Johann Michael Fritz, *Gestochene Bilder: Gravierungen auf deutschen Goldschmiedearbeiten der Spätgotik* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1966).

<sup>342</sup> The late fifteenth and early sixteenth-centuries witnessed an extensive cult of Saint Anne, especially in Germany and the Netherlands. Ann was promoted as extraordinary among saints in part because of her genealogical connection to Christ. As Jesus's grandmother, Anne was understood as a root of salvation and the central figure in the Holy Kinship, the expansive family tree that linked Christ with numerous other holy figures. Virginia Nixon, *Mary's Mother: Saint Anne in Late Medieval Europe* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004). Jennifer Welsh, *The Cult of St. Anne in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2017). For the Holy Kinship, see Pamela Sheingorn, "Appropriating the Holy Kinship: Gender and Family History," in *Interpreting Cultural Symbols: Saint Anne in Late Medieval Society*, ed. Kathleen M. Ashley and Pamela Sheingorn (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), 169–98.

The architectural niche behind the table suggests that they are communing in an interior space. The right half of the print depicts a different, more aristocratic trio seated at a round table filled with food, this time in a garden setting with a grassy ground and a floral trellis in the background. The couple on the far side of the table appear to be making music, with the man holding a wind instrument and the woman looking down at a sheet of music or lyrics. These harmonious scenes lack any hints of violence or sexual indiscretion, present in many other scabbard designs. The print might be more at home on the handle of knife for a dining set than on a blade or scabbard intended for combat or hunting. In fact, the table settings in both of print's dining scenes include such knives intended for eating. Frits Scholten also notes the similarity between the format of this print and the figural decorations that appear on the carved boxwood handles of some finely wrought dining knives created in the Netherlands in the first third of the sixteenth century [c.f. Fig. 3.35].<sup>343</sup>

Another AC-monogrammed design depicting *Saint Mary Magdalene* (H.98; Fig. 3.36) seems to offer an alternative application for the scabbard format. Framed like other AC scabbards with an arch of tracery embellishment at the top and tapered sides, this print integrates the saint's body into the grotesque ornament. The Magdalene rises half-length from an urn-like pedestal with dolphin-shaped handles supported by cherubs.<sup>344</sup> Perhaps more suitable for the decoration of an apothecary jar than a dagger sheath, this

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<sup>343</sup> Frits Scholten, "The Boxwood Carvers of the Late Gothic Netherlands," in *Small Wonders: Late-Gothic Boxwood Micro-Carvings from the Low Countries*, ed. Frits Scholten (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum Publications Department, 2017), 44-45. The feasting scenes might also appeal to craftsmen creating other domestic objects, including ceramics and fine metalwork boxes.

<sup>344</sup> Hollstein and some previous cataloguers erroneously identified the print's subject as Saint Barbara, perhaps due to a misinterpretation of the ointment jar in the Magdalene's right hand as a chalice. The saint clearly holds the lid to the jar in her other hand.

fusion of biblical figure and fantastical ornament blurs the line between print genres. Even within the narrow category of scabbard designs, AC's engravings clearly catered to a broad range of potential craftsmen and to both secular and religious audiences.

While other printmakers in the period sometimes conceived of individual scabbard designs as separate but related pairs, AC's unorthodox tendency to engrave two compositions on a single plate—often separated only by a line or a narrow margin—indicates that these halves should be understood as complementary parts of a unified sheath.<sup>345</sup> The expectation of a symbolic connection between two sides of an AC scabbard can even assist in deciphering the subject of the print. For instance, close scrutiny of a print described by Hollstein as *Two Sides of a Scabbard with a Warrior and a Gentleman* [H.229; Fig. 3.37], reveals the possible identities of the previously generic figures. The warrior, clad in a decorative cuirass and a helmet with decorative plumes, wears a nearly identical costume to the figure of Mars that appears in other AC-monogrammed engravings depicting *Mars, Venus, and Cupid* [c.f. H.121; Fig. 4.49]. The crumpled body of a turbaned Turkish captive with a long, braided beard lies prostrate at his feet. His sword tucked away at his hip, Mars holds his conquered foe's bow and arrow and stands ready to repel the next threat. Rather than a generic warrior, this is the god of war, who has confidently quelled the threat of the Ottoman empire, perhaps a reference to the outcome of the Siege of Vienna in 1529.<sup>346</sup> Alternatively, the armored figure might represent Saint George, patron saint of crusading soldiers and the Holy Roman Empire.

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<sup>345</sup> For examples of separately printed but complementary scabbard designs from the 1530s, see Aldegrever's *Gentleman with a Parrot* (NHG.215) and *Lady with a Carnation* (NHG.216); and German engraver Nikolaus Wilborn's *Eve* (B.VIII.549.15) and *Adam* (B.VIII.549.16) from 1534.

<sup>346</sup> For imagery related to the Siege of Vienna and contemporary Germanic conceptions of the Turks, see Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien, *Wien 1529: Die Erste Türkenbelagerung* (Vienna: Eigenverlag der Museen der Stadt Wien, 1979).



Here AC replaces the slain dragon typically found at George's feet with a subdued Turk, updating the iconography with a more current, but still allegorically quelled, danger.

The "gentleman" on the opposite side of the engraving is no less militant than the Mars/Saint George figure on the left. Although he wears a soft plumed hat instead of a helmet, he is also protected by an armored breastplate and greaves on his legs. This armor, along with attributes of the lion at his feet, the anvil under his left arm, and the sword in his right, identify him as Saint Adrian, another patron saint of soldiers venerated throughout northern Europe.<sup>347</sup> The two halves of the engraving therefore represent two different protectors of the military man: either mythological on one side and Christian on the other, or else a pair of military saints without haloes. Rather than a warning about self-control of the passions, this print offers a measure of symbolic confidence and fortification for the armed man. The swords and armor carried by the figures and Adrian's anvil make further reference to the metalsmith's trade and recommend the figures as even more fitting icons for potential scabbard ornament.

AC's double designs depicting *Mars/Saint George and Saint Adrian* and *The Virgin and Child with Saint Anne* also illustrate another of the formal innovations that set many of AC's engravings apart from the period's standard scabbard designs; the prints lack the purely ornamental bottom half of the composition pioneered by Aldegrever and his imitators. While many of AC's engravings retain passages of arched, ornamental tracery at their top edge to serve as decorative caps for the composition, their utility as scabbard designs is signaled primarily through their tapering shape. As we saw in the previous chapter, AC accomplished this subtle shift from a rectangular composition to the

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<sup>347</sup> Hall, "Adrian and Natalia," in *Dictionary of Subjects & Symbols in Art*, 7.

attenuated scabbard frame in his creative copies after Albrecht Dürer's *Saint George* [Fig. 2.34] and Jacob Binck's *David with the Head of Goliath* [Fig. 2.36]. These small figurative prints featuring heroic Christian subjects that resonate as individual scabbard designs even without extensive strips of ornament at their feet.<sup>348</sup>

At the same time, several other tapered engravings attributed to AC are entirely ornamental, with no biblical, mythological, historical, or allegorical figure at the top of the composition to imply their specific utility as scabbard designs. One double scabbard design [H.224; Fig. 3.38], signed with a minute AC monogram in the background at the

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<sup>348</sup> AC's unique propensity to reformat compositions by other artists into truncated scabbard-shaped compositions has led scholars to add two additional unsigned scabbard designs to the AC corpus. Although this chapter focuses on securely attributed AC-monogrammed scabbard designs, it is worth mentioning these tenuously attributed prints here. The first engraving (H.232) borrows allegorical female figures from two separate prints by Marcantonio Raimondi and combines them into a double scabbard design. The figure on the right half of the print, standing with a firm grasp on a column, even as her garments and hair are blown to the left, unmistakably reproduces the Cardinal Virtue of *Fortitude*, as depicted in Marcantonio's engraving of the same figure (Marcantonio, B.375). But while the body of the female figure on the left half of the composition is modelled on Marcantonio's engraving of the virtue *Temperance* (Marcantonio, B.376), the figure's attributes have been changed to alter its allegorical significance. Instead of the horse's bridle and reins held by Marcantonio's figure, the AC-attributed figure holds a heart in one hand and an arrow in the other, objects more commonly associated with personifications of Love or the goddess Venus (c.f. Sebald Beham's allegory of Venus from his series of the *Seven Planets*, B.118). Juxtaposed as complementary sides of a scabbard design, these allegories of Love and Fortitude relate superficially to the themes of strength and virtuosity in the face of temptation. The combination, however, is less compelling than the more explicit and moralistic designs that bear AC's monogram, leading me to question the print's firm attribution to the printmaker.

The second, related scabbard design – also unsigned but finely executed in a similar style—depicts *The Suicide of Cleopatra* (H.130). The composition is a tapered, reverse copy after a 1515 engraving by the Italian printmaker Agostino Veneziano (B.XIV.158.193; likely after a design by Baccio Bandinelli) that represents the historical ruler leaning on a large vase while the asp bites her breast. The engraving shrinks Veneziano's full-sheet print into a scabbard-sized composition, eliminating the original's view onto a distant landscape and minimizing the curtain behind Cleopatra's nude body. At the lower left corner, however, the scabbard designer shoehorns in the half-length figure of Octavian, Cleopatra's enemy and the impetus for her death. The crowned figure is partially modelled on Aldegrever's *Seated Emperor* (NHG.442). Cleopatra was renowned for lustful behavior, and her body offered a printmaker the excuse to depict a classical contrapposto nude. Applied to a scabbard design, the subject offers the moralizing lesson about passions unchecked.

top of the left panel, depicts the sort of grotesque columns composed of vases, vegetation, putti, and hybrid creatures that we might expect to find as the bottom half of a larger scabbard print. In scale and execution, the print bears a specific affinity to other AC-monogrammed double scabbards. In fact, the impression of the engraving held by the Bibliothèque nationale de France is pasted on an album page directly beneath the scabbard design with *Mars/Saint George and Saint Adrian*, implying a possible relationship between the two compositions [Fig. 3.39].<sup>349</sup> Yet the visible plate mark on the Rijksmuseum's impression of the ornament print confirms that this engraving was printed as its own composition, published with independent potential as a scabbard design.<sup>350</sup>

A final, single-panel scabbard design [H.235; Fig. 3.40], perhaps the finest of AC's candelabra-like superstructures, depicts a pair of bound sphinxes on a pedestal at the base, a monstrous three-sided mask at the center, and winged horses and a bull at its apex. Although it does not bear the flat top AC monogram found on each of the printmaker's other securely-attributed scabbard designs, in style and execution the engraving is consistent with the other small, vertical ornament prints that populate the AC corpus. Furthermore, the print combines and reorders grotesque elements from two other

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<sup>349</sup> The two prints are also reproduced in the BnF's published catalogue of early northern European prints under a single entry; see Herbert, *Inventaire des gravures des écoles du Nord*, vol. 2, 328, cat. no. 3488.

<sup>350</sup> Impressions of another unsigned, entirely ornamental double scabbard design (App.47) has plausibly been attributed to AC by several European collections based on the style of its intricately engraved vegetal arabesques against an evenly crosshatched dark background. See Pfeifer-Helke, *Mit den Gezeiten*, 264 (cat.239). Both halves of this composition replicate rare tapered engravings attributed to Barthel Beham by Gustav Pauli; see Pauli, *Barthel Beham: ein kritisches Verzeichnis seiner Kupferstiche*, Studien zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte 135 (Strassburg: Heitz, 1911), nos. 79 & 80; and illustrated in Hollstein, *German Engravings, Etchings, and Woodcuts*, ca.1400-1700, vol. 2, pp. 220-221.

previously undescribed ornament prints, one of which [App.49; Fig. 3.41] bears an AC crossbar monogram in the background at its lower left [for the other engraving, see App. 48; Fig. 3.42]. But while AC could have simply stacked these fantastical elements on top of each other into one large, rectangular ornament, the printmaker consciously chose to taper the composition so that the base of the print is approximately one centimeter thinner than its top. This subtle peripheral shift allows the ornament to enter the world of the scabbard design.

### *The scabbard design in three dimensions*

Although AC is not known to have carried his engravings beyond the tapered confines of scabbard ornament, beginning in the 1530s Heinrich Aldegrever and several other artists expanded their ornamental sheath designs from single panels to engravings of entire daggers. Each of Aldegrever's three surviving designs, the largest of his ornamental prints, depicts a richly decorated Swiss dagger. The most ornate of these examples [Fig. 3.43], dated 1539, is embellished from the dagger's handle to the sheath's tip, teeming with masks, foliage, and grotesque creatures, including a hilt in the shape of a monstrous horned lion that swallows the rest of the piece.<sup>351</sup> A tapered panel near the top of the scabbard portion depicts the biblical brothers Cain and Abel at the moment just before the elder delivers the death blow to his brother. Even in the late 1530s, the engraved scabbard decoration offers a vignette concerning the responsible use of force. Presumably the bearer of such a dagger would be reminded of Cain's exile to the land of Nod, a consequence of his unrestrained passions. The printed designs push far beyond the

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<sup>351</sup> Aldegrever, NHG.270.

previously discussed models by Aldegrever, AC, and their engraver contemporaries, into the world of patrician fantasy. Shaded to communicate the illusion of depth and surface contour, these designs seem to represent daggers themselves rather than schematic plans for metalwork designs.

While these ornamental prints may have served as model sheets for goldsmiths, their imaginative forms were probably never translated into the round. Given their sumptuous detail, only a virtuoso goldsmith could have created a functional dagger based on the designs. In addition, as Nicholas Stogdon has noted, “such designs would have been prohibitively expensive to realize, and they were obviously intended for dress use by the patriciate or nobility and would have been amongst the trappings reserved to these classes by sumptuary laws of customs.”<sup>352</sup> In fact, despite their proliferation in the second quarter of the century, direct correspondences between prints and extant armor decoration are rare, and little evidence survives that printed scabbard designs of any shape, size, or detail were actually translated into three-dimensional etched or engraved scabbards.<sup>353</sup> What is the relationship, therefore, between the engraved image of a scabbard decoration or dagger sheath and the work of the goldsmith?

I suggest that the answer to this question resides in the material qualities of the printed sheet itself. Although perhaps imperceptible to the naked eye, the intaglio print becomes a sculptural object through the act of printing.<sup>354</sup> The paper fibers are molded

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<sup>352</sup> Nicholas Stogdon, *Oh Happy State: Prints on a Theme from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (New York: N.G. Stogdon, 1989), no.28.

<sup>353</sup> Clifton, “Arms and Armor in European Prints,” 56.

<sup>354</sup> This line of inquiry is partially inspired by Michael Gaudio’s study of sixteenth-century European engravings of Native Americans, particularly his discussion of “flatness and protuberance” in printmaking and its relationship to conceptions of idolatry. See *Engraving the Savage: The New World and Techniques of Civilization* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2008), 87-126.

into the incised furrows of the plate by the force of the press, transforming the sheet into a reverse, relief image of the engraved matrix. Furthermore, since the size of paper sheet must exceed the size of the intaglio plate for the purpose of printing, echoes of the matrix edges become visible in relief on the sheet. This is clearly visible in Aldegrever's large scale dagger designs, in which he used a fluted plate that mimics the shape of the scabbard. The print itself not only refers to an elaborately inscribed imaginary metalwork object in its inked lines (the dagger), but also to a real inscribed metalwork object (the intaglio plate). The print becomes a mobile messenger containing the forms of both of these decorative, articulated surfaces and enters the world as a sculptural object in its own right.

Unlike the singular, private drawings from the system of wealthy patronage, printed designs for sheaths and armor were often produced on speculation in multiples with the widest possible audience in mind. This audience of collectors, of course, included the very patrician class that wore and displayed decorative armor. In fact, as the military justification for arms and armor decreased, these metalwork objects became collector's items themselves, amassed in private armories as a show of wealth and power. By the end of the sixteenth century, armor and prints would both form essential components of encyclopedic princely collections.<sup>355</sup> As artistic commodities, prints could supplement and stand in for arms and armor as objects to display or hoard; material manifestations of refinement. The engraved design for a scabbard was less expensive to

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<sup>355</sup> Samuel Quiccheberg's 1565 manual on the composition and organization of *Kunstkammers* advocates for the acquisition of both prints and armor. See Samuel Quiccheberg, *The first treatise on museums: Samuel Quiccheberg's Inscriptiones, 1565*, ed. and trans. Mark Meadow and Bruce Robertson (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2013), 84-87.

produce, easier to procure, and more compact in its finished form than its metal counterpart, and as such, it would have been more accessible to a wider swath of the collecting public. Printed daggers could function as substitute armor at an affordable price for the burgher class.

One final consideration of the print as a potential objective substitute for the scabbard concerns the nature of the haptic relationship between the collector and the sculpted surface. A finished, engraved metalwork scabbard decorates the exterior surface of a slipcase for a sharp blade. When the owner wishes to access the dagger or sword, he must cover part of the design with the palm of the hand or tips of the fingers, gripping the tube in order to extract its contents. This physical contact with the relief surface of the engraving, while obscuring the composition, could also call to mind the moral reminder or satirical content inscribed in the decoration—whether a warning against the disarming power of lust, or the potential for decapitation inherent in the unguarded blade, not to mention the phallic puns inspired by the mere presence of the weapon on a man's hip. Handling prints, on the other hand, calls for manipulation at the edges, generally outside the plate mark, where the border of the paper frames the printed image. Although collectors frequently trimmed sheets to the edge of the printed design and often would have felt comfortable folding, slicing, and dividing these small prints, their manual contact with the engraving was peripheral, likely limited to careful manipulation with the tips of the fingers. Ultimately, the printed scabbard or dagger design would be activated not by the collector's hands but by his imaginative engagement with the engraving as part of an unrealized object in the round.

Of course, individual artists, craftsmen, wealthy merchants, and princely collectors could each engage with prints in their own personal manner. In framing compositions as small scabbard designs, AC, Aldegrevier, and their contemporaries capitalized on the versatility of the printed sheet, inspiring associations with other media that would have appealed to the needs and desires of the collecting public. Transformed by their contact with the plate, these sheets had the potential to carry images well beyond the local market for small prints. Incised by the tip of the steel burin and designed with reference to the sharp edge of a weapon, these imaginative prints transcend their classification as marginal ornament by embracing the material and metaphorical contact between the blade, the metal plate, and the ephemeral paper sheet.



## CHAPTER FOUR: Sets, Series, and Repetitions in the AC corpus

The printmakers who signed their engravings with the AC monogram employed a variety of strategies to appeal to broad swaths of early modern print consumers. As the previous two chapters demonstrated, these entrepreneurial tactics included adapting prototypes by other printmakers and formatting prints into irregular shapes, like scabbards, that might appeal to craftsmen in other media. The prevalence of these business strategies becomes especially clear within the expanded AC corpus, which includes previously unillustrated and undescribed impressions. My research demonstrates how, as the oeuvre is clarified and broadened to include new material discoveries, new patterns of production are further revealed.

Within this wider landscape of AC prints, a third business strategy becomes evident in the form of printed repetitions. Considered together, small clusters of previously unknown or unrelated prints coalesce into sets and series, connected by similarities in scale, format, and engraving style. Unorthodox prints, long attributed to Allaert Claesz. or the Monogrammist AC, acquire greater resonance or iconographic specificity in the company of other engravings with similar subjects and potential uses. In this chapter I will consider how a few repeated subjects and compositional formats in the AC corpus reveal both the potential target audiences for these prints and the strategic practices of the printmakers hoping to supply those markets.

### *Fragments of a print series*

As previous sections of this dissertation have argued, understanding the full scope of AC's production is often limited by the rarity of intact surviving prints. To rediscover a single new impression can resituate a familiar print in a surprisingly expanded context. This shift occurs with several AC-monogrammed engravings that have historically been accepted as independent compositions, but which actually represent only a fraction of a larger undescribed print. Hollstein's catalogue, for instance, illustrates a small engraving at the Rijksmuseum, depicting *Christ and a Saint Before God on the Throne* [H.51; Fig. 4.1]. The horizontal composition, signed at the bottom center with a flat top AC monogram, shows Christ kneeling on an orb, accompanied by the Virgin, holding a lily and surrounded by clouds. Crowned with thorns and wearing only a loincloth and a cloak over his shoulders, Christ bears the weapons of his torment and displays his wounds to God the Father, who sits enthroned under a canopy, held open by two attending angels. Viewed independently, the print offers a reminder of Christ's sacrifice and the desire of the faithful to please God through their pious actions.

Hollstein, however, was unaware that this engraving is just the bottom fragment of a much larger, multi-tiered composition printed from a single plate. The complete print [App.21; Fig. 4.2], known in a unique impression at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, consists of three distinct stacked rectangular sections, separated by horizontal engraved borderlines. The topmost register includes a roundel in which Christ, dressed in simple robes and again kneeling on an orb, opens his arms to receive the cross and a blessing from God the Father, who descends from the clouds at the upper left along with two angels. In a confusing conflation of past and present, the earthly Virgin stands behind

Christ, while holding the baby Jesus. Grotesque vegetal ornament frames the circular composition and fills the rectangular space at its sides and corners. The central section of the print depicts Christ as the *Salvator Mundi*, standing in an arch flanked by decorative pillars, each topped by an angel playing an instrument. Christ holds the *globus cruciger* in his left hand and offers a gesture of blessing with his right.

Read together, the three sections of the print simultaneously offer Christ as savior of the world and as a model servant, receptive to God's will. The kneeling figures of Christ in the top and bottom registers illustrate the posture of acceptance and humility expected of devout Christians. The standing Christ at the center, empowered through his servitude and demonstrating his dominion over the earth by holding the globe instead of kneeling upon it, serves as a comfort for the faithful and as an intercessor on their behalf. While the format of the bottom section alone might not immediately recommend the print as a devotional image, the entire unorthodox composition presents a more complex aid to prayer and discipleship. Measuring only 13.5 x 6.2 cm overall, the complete three-tiered print is still small enough to be tipped into an octavo-format Book of Hours, within which it might serve as a private devotional aid and model of humility in prayer. While the decorative columns and flourishes of ornament in the upper registers of the print do not appear to mimic the borders of any specific regional school of illumination, they do relate directly to other AC-monogrammed prints known to have been used in manuscripts. Comparable decorative motifs appear as framing devices in the prints depicting *Saint Lambert* [H.76; Fig. 1.77] and *Saints Lucia and Geneviève* [H.108; Fig. 1.82] discussed in Chapter Two of this dissertation. Both of those prints were hand-colored and employed as substitute illuminations in manuscripts compiled in the Mass-Rhine valley near Liège.

This three-part print was likely engraved by the same hand and intended for the same devout context.

Moreover, additional undescribed engravings in the BnF collection reveal that this multipart engraving is just one in a series of four prints, all sharing a common three-tiered format, all signed with the flat top AC monogram.<sup>356</sup> While the scale and overall compositional motif remains consistent across all four prints, the whimsical decorative flourishes around each respective upper-tier roundel and the columns framing the central standing figures are all unique. One of these prints [App.22; Fig. 4.3] depicts the Virgin and Child seated within the arched niche of the central section, framed by columns comprising flowering vines. The upper and lower registers of the print illustrate separate scenes from the lives of two Old Testament women renowned for their acts of virtuous intercession. The roundel in the top section of the engraving depicts Esther, the beautiful wife of the Persian king Ahasuerus, as she kneels before her husband to plead for mercy on the Jews in his kingdom.<sup>357</sup> As both a woman and a clandestine Jew herself, Esther risks her own life by proactively approaching the King on behalf of her people. The section at the bottom of the print depicts a moment from the less common narrative of Jephthah's daughter.<sup>358</sup> The unnamed young woman kneels at the right side of the composition, her hands folded in prayer, as she waits to welcome her father home from his victorious battle against the Ammonites. She remains unaware of her father's promise, offered to God in exchange for his protection in battle, to sacrifice the first

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<sup>356</sup> All four prints were catalogued and illustrated in the second volume of Michèle Hébert's catalogue of the BnF's early northern prints; see *Inventaire des gravures des écoles du Nord: 1440-1550*, vol. 2, 319-320 (nos.3428-3431). The series has not been otherwise analyzed.

<sup>357</sup> Esther 5

<sup>358</sup> Judges 11:30-40.

creature to greet him upon his return. The story of her willingness to sacrifice her body to fulfill a pledge to God might be interpreted, like the actions of Esther, as a prefiguration of the Virgin Mary's intercession on behalf of mankind. As with the engraving depicting Christ's humble acceptance of God's will, this three-part print offers models of prayer and intervention that would be at home within the covers of a devotional manuscript.

The central sections of the other two prints in the set depict Saint Peter [App.23; Fig. 4.4] and Saint Paul [App.24; Fig. 4.5], respectively. Each saint, holding his attribute and a book that further references the engraving's suitability for a manuscript, stands in his own arched niche flanked by ornamental columns. Curiously, while the roundel in the top section of the print depicting Paul provides an illustration of the saint on his knees during his conversion on the road to Damascus, the roundel at the top of the print showing Peter depicts the seemingly unrelated creation of Eve. While Eve's prayerful posture resonates with the kneeling figures in top sections in the other prints, the iconography has an uneasy fit in the series. The bottom section of each print, however, depicts the saint's respective martyrdom: his final act of humility and submission to God's will. Peter is shown being crucified upside down, as Emperor Nero Augustus Caesar looks on. Paul is depicted blindfolded and kneeling in anticipation of his decapitation at the hands of the Romans. This small, horizontal strip featuring Paul's execution actually appeared independently as an unillustrated entry in Hollstein's catalogue (H.79) and was described as a work by AC in Bartsch due to the presence of this trimmed section in the Vienna collection.<sup>359</sup> The BnF's impressions of these four

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<sup>359</sup> Bartsch, *Le peintre graveur*. vol. 9, 126 (no.19).

complete prints finally allow us to understand the fragment's role in a larger, interrelated iconography.

The independent survival of both this trimmed section and the portion of the Christ engraving depicting the Man of Sorrows before God demonstrates how the engraved lines separating the tripartite compositions could also function as a means of division. Enterprising print consumers might choose to turn the four engravings into twelve separate compositions, each piece gaining utility as an independent collector's print or as a separate engraved substitute for a hand-painted miniature.

It is conceivable that the tiny roundel portion from the upper registers of these prints—each measuring only 4.9cm in diameter—could also be cut out and pasted into a manuscript as the pictorial center of a historiated initial. While I am unaware of any AC roundels that survive in this capacity, similar circular compositions were commonly employed for this purpose in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century manuscripts. Among the many examples of this phenomenon in the manuscripts from the Abbey at Sint-Truiden, for instance, is a round print by Master S depicting *Christ the Savior Between Two Angels* that appears within an historiated letter G [Fig. 4.6].<sup>360</sup> A page from a separate mid-sixteenth-century Sint-Truiden manuscript illustrates an additional use of trimmed engravings in the period: component pieces of creative collages assembled from disparate prints [Fig. 4.7]. The manuscript's compiler illustrated the page preceding a section about the Roman popes with five small round prints artistically arranged around a *Martyrdom*

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<sup>360</sup> Master S, H.275. Université de Liège, Bibliothèque ALPHA, Manuscrits et fonds anciens, Manuscript 248, *Collectarium Praeceptorum Moraliū, Sint-Truiden*, 1552, folio 34v. For a description of the manuscript's contents, see Provinciaal Museum voor Religieuze Kunst, *Handschriften uit de Abdij van Sint-Truiden*, 191-196 (cat. no.34).

of *Saint Peter* attributed to Master S.<sup>361</sup> The collage even includes two impressions of the same anonymous engraving depicting the Lamb of God on either side of the pasted composition, employing it both as a symbolic image and a decorative pattern. The versatile format of these small prints and the willingness of early modern collectors to cut and paste allowed the engravings to take on a variety of personal functions and meanings.

### ***Fractured Sets and Series***

Within the context of an expanded and illustrated AC corpus, many of the other independent engravings described by previous cataloguers fall into sharper focus as parts of sets and series of prints. Consider, for instance, two previously unillustrated AC-monogrammed engravings depicting Old Testament women. The first, an unconventional image of *Eve* [H.2; Fig. 4.8], depicts the first woman in the Garden of Eden where she stands beneath the tree of knowledge. Under the watchful eye of the serpent, she grasps a small, round object in her right hand. Iconographic precedent conditions the viewer to initially perceive this object as the forbidden fruit, the biblical symbol of temptation that reveals the existence of evil in the world and precipitates the Fall of Man. Eve, however, holds not an apple or a pomegranate, but rather a miniature human skull, a symbol of death. The small print offers the original *momento mori*; newly aware of her own sin and nudity, Eve covers her waist with a leaf and contemplates her mortality.

The second, related engraving, dated 1526 at the lower left, depicts *Jezebel* [H.17; Fig. 4.9], the pagan queen of Samaria whose deceitful behavior led to the demise of her

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<sup>361</sup> Master S, H.312. Université de Liège, Bibliothèque ALPHA, Manuscrits et fonds anciens, Manuscript 324, *Catalogus Pontificum et Imperatorum Romanorum*, mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, folio 1v. For the contents of this manuscript, see *Handschriften uit de Abdij van Sint-Truiden*, 201-203 (cat. no.37).

husband, King Ahab.<sup>362</sup> A tablet and crown mysteriously suspended from the thread margin at the upper left corner of the print identifies the print's relatively uncommon subject. The print does not depict a specific moment from the biblical narrative but rather mines the story for iconographic details to symbolize the nefarious woman. Grape vines extend from a trellis at the right side of the print, perhaps referring to the dispute over a vineyard that led to Jezebel's false accusations and resulted in the unrighteous stoning death of Naboth, the vineyard's owner. The engraving presents Jezebel as a femme fatale, cavalierly trampling three small men beneath her feet as God the Father emerges from the clouds at the upper right corner of the print, wielding an arrow to smite her for her misdeeds. Jezebel's nudity, as well as her accessories—a snake coiled around her right arm and a cup of wine in her left hand—recall the themes of temptation and sin in the related print depicting Eve.

Engraved at the same scale and signed with an identical loose, flat top monogram, the prints of *Eve* and *Jezebel* might have formed pendants, encouraging a comparison and association between two biblical women infamous for their transgressions against God and perceived responsibility for their husband's downfall. The women stand in complementary postures, each bare-breasted and striding forward with one leg crossed in front of the other. Both women also appear with their hair gathered into ornate, classicizing topknots, coiffures borrowed from earlier Italian prints and often associated with sinful and voluptuous women in art of the period.<sup>363</sup> An untraced image of

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<sup>362</sup> 1 Kings: 21

<sup>363</sup> Jefferson Harrison discusses this type of hairstyle and its association with passionate, sinful women in relation to paintings by Jan Gossaert. See Harrison, "Jan Gossaert's *Madonna and Child*: A Newly Proposed Mabuse Triptych," *Chrysler Museum Journal*, 1 (1994): 3 and 10no12.



*Bathsheba* (H.14), listed by Hollstein with nearly identical measurements and the date 1526, might have joined these two engravings as part of a larger print series.

The expanded AC corpus includes numerous engravings like these related to the Power of Women, a popular theme in theological and moral philosophical texts since the middle ages.<sup>364</sup> Stories that exemplified a woman's inherent power over men and the destructive effects of lust were likewise common subjects for artists and craftsmen in all media. Drawn from biblical, historical, and mythological sources, these cunning and dangerous women were also frequent subjects of prints in the sixteenth century, likely inspired by satirical texts warning against folly such as Sebastian Brant's *Ship of Fools* (1494) and Erasmus's *In Praise of Folly* (1509). AC's contemporary printmakers often engaged with the theme in the form of multi-print series, creating separate images of famous couples (Adam and Eve; Samson and Delilah; Aristotle and Phyllis; etc.) as examples of powerful or wise men who were fooled into submission by a woman's wiles. Lucas van Leyden, for instance, designed two separate series of woodcuts dealing with the theme in the second decade of the sixteenth century.<sup>365</sup> In addition to warning men about the threat of feminine persuasion, these paragons simultaneously presented an opportunity to demonstrate an artist's knowledge of the classical nude. Alternatively,

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<sup>364</sup> For an overview of this flexible topos in Medieval art and literature and its adaptation in the Renaissance, see Susan L. Smith, *The Power of Women: A Topos in Medieval Art and Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995). For prints and the Power of Women theme, see H. Diane Russell, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1990); Susan Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened: Old Testament Women in Northern Prints* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Art Museums, 1993); and Yvonne Bleyerveld, *Hoe Bedriechlijck dat die Vrouwen Zijn: Vrouwenlisten in de Beeldende Kunst in de Nederlanden, circa 1350-1650* (Leiden: Primavera Pers, 2000), especially Chapter Five on sixteenth-century prints, 87-144.

<sup>365</sup> Jacobowitz and Stepanek, *The Prints of Lucas van Leyden & His Contemporaries*, 102-123 (nos.33-39) and 164-183 (nos.59-66). The smaller of Lucas's two Power of Women series includes prints of both Adam and Eve (NHD.2) and the less-common scene of *Jezebel Promising Naboth's Vineyard to King Ahab* (NHD.11).

these stories of powerful women could be vehicles to the objectification of female bodies and the display of misogynistic stereotypes. The AC printmakers clearly understood the theme's potential to concurrently caution and titillate, a tension that they exploited in a variety of different print formats.<sup>366</sup>

Virtuous historical women—sometimes presented in sets as honorable foils to their sinful, selfish sisters—were also popular subjects for sixteenth-century printmakers and appear throughout the AC corpus. Two related AC-monogrammed prints depicting *Judith* [H.13; Fig. 4.10] and *Lucretia* [H.129; Fig. 4.11], figures often found in Renaissance series of heroic and worthy women, are engraved at the same small scale and framed at the top edge by similar gothic tracery and dangling garlands. Judith, the Hebrew widow who saved her people by seducing and subsequently decapitating the Assyrian general Holofernes, sits on a ledge, a sword in one hand and the head of her conquered foe as a trophy in the other.<sup>367</sup> In the other print, the Roman noblewoman Lucretia sits on a tree trunk and turns her blade on herself, committing suicide to preserve her family's honor after she was raped by the son of a tyrannical king.<sup>368</sup> Lucretia's heroic act allegedly inspired a larger rebellion against the monarchy, ultimately leading to

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<sup>366</sup> In addition to the hypothetical series of prints including the engravings of *Eve* and *Jezebel* discussed above, the Power of Women provided the subject for numerous AC-monogrammed engravings with more immediately decorative connotations. Among these are the scabbard designs depicting *Adam and Eve* (H.227) and *Hercules and Venus* (H.233) discussed in the previous chapter, as well as small circular engravings of *Bathsheba at the Bath* (H.15), *Salome Receiving the Head of John the Baptist* (H.75), *Mars and Venus* (H.120), and *Hercules and Dejanira* (H.117).

<sup>367</sup> Judith's story appears in the apocryphal Book of Judith.

<sup>368</sup> The story of Lucretia's suicide in the sixth-century B.C. and its relationship to the semi-mythic founding of the Roman Republic was first recorded in Livy's history of Rome: *Ab urbe condita* (c.27-9 B.C.). For the origins of the narrative and its historical accuracy, see Ian Donaldson, *The Rapes of Lucretia: A Myth and Its Transformations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 5-8. For Lucretia's representation in Renaissance prints, see Bernadine Barnes, "Heroines and Worthy Women," in Russell, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Print*, 29-35 and subsequent catalogue entries.

the founding of the Roman Republic. Unlike the engravings of *Eve* and *Jezebel* discussed above, these brave and honorable women are depicted fully clothed, training the viewer's attention on their heroic deeds rather than their naked bodies. Paired together, these images of Judith and Lucretia might be read as allegories of Justice and Virtue, antidotes to the negative portrayals of powerful women common in the period. Other ostensibly independent prints within the wider AC corpus depict Judith [c.f. App.1; Fig. 4.12], Lucretia [c.f. App.41; Fig. 4.13], and another powerful historical woman, the Egyptian Queen Cleopatra [c.f. H.127; Fig. 4.14], in isolation, complicating our attempts to interpret the nuances of their moral message. It remains possible, however, that any one of these small engravings was originally part of a larger complementary set or series, linked to other heroes or dangerous women that would help to clarify their relative role as an exemplar of virtue or vice.

Other newly rediscovered and photographed engravings provide evidence that can help us to reconstitute larger series of AC-monogrammed biblical and hagiographic prints. Take for instance, three previously unillustrated AC prints—each executed in the same format at the approximate scale of a credit card—depicting scenes from the narrative of Christ's Passion. Each print includes an inset roundel at the top of the composition containing a separate, but related, episode from the Gospel accounts. An engraving of *Christ Praying on the Mount of Olives* [H.36; Fig. 4.15], includes a circular depiction of the subsequent moment, when a disappointed Christ returns to find his disciples sleeping instead of keeping watch as he had requested. A related image of the *Seizure of Christ* [H.37; Fig. 4.16] includes a roundel at the top showing Judas's

betraying kiss and Peter cutting off Malchus's ear.<sup>369</sup> A third image of the *Last Supper* [H.34; Fig. 4.17], unsigned but attributed to AC based on style, includes a roundel at the apex of the image showing the Man of Sorrows accompanied by the Virgin.

Given the affinities in scale, format, and subject matter among these three prints, it is unsurprising that other engravings would come to light linking them as a cycle of prints. Previously undescribed engravings of the *Flagellation* [App.10; Fig. 4.18] in the collection of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford and the *Resurrection* [App.14; Fig. 4.19] at the Bibliothèque nationale de France also conform to the same minute scale and compositional format. The roundel at the top of the *Flagellation* depicts Pilate washing his hands in symbolic denial of the responsibility of Christ's bloodshed. The circular image that complements the main scene in the engraving of the *Resurrection* shows Christ descending into Limbo to rescue the souls of the righteous. Five additional undescribed prints in the collection of the Kunsthalle, Bremen, help to flesh out the series even further, offering separate depictions of *Christ Before Caiaphas* [App.8; Fig. 4.20], *Christ Before Pilate* [App.9; Fig. 4.21], *Christ Presented to the People* [App.11; Fig. 4.22], *Christ Carrying the Cross* [App.12; Fig. 4.23], and *Christ Nailed to the Cross* [App.13; Fig. 4.24]. Consistent with the rest of the series, each engraving contains an inset roundel at the top with a related episode from the narrative that serves as a the transition between scenes in the cycle or illustrates a new aspect of Christ's ordeal.<sup>370</sup> Since a full Passion cycle should also include common scenes, such as the Crucifixion,

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<sup>369</sup> The print shows the specific moment from John 18:6 when the soldiers tasked with arresting Christ draw back and fall down at his admission that he is Jesus of Nazareth.

<sup>370</sup> The roundels within these compositions depict, respectively: Christ led out of the Garden of Gethsemane (App.8); Christ led away from Pilate (App.9); Christ crowned with thorns (App.11); mourners of Christ including the Virgin, Saint John, and Saint Veronica holding the Sudarium (App.12); and the taunting of Christ (App.13).

Deposition, Lamentation, and Entombment, to bridge the space and time between *Christ Nailed to the Cross* and the *Resurrection*, it is likely that other prints from the series have been lost. In fact, two of the ten related prints—*Christ Nailed to the Cross* and *The Last Supper*—are unsigned, raising the possibility that other extant unmonogrammed prints from the series have not yet been connected to the AC mark.<sup>371</sup> An additional undescribed print in Bremen offers an alternate depiction of the *Last Supper* [App.7; Fig. 4.25] with an inset roundel showing Christ washing the feet of his disciples. Engraved at the same small scale as the other prints in the series, this print might have been created as a replacement for a lost or damaged plate or could come from a separate, now lost, Passion series. In fact, the entirety of this fragmented series could represent the reorganized pieces of several related cycles.

The Passion of Christ was a fundamental subject for engraved print series in the early modern period. In the later fifteenth-century, painter-engravers like Israhel van Meckenem and Martin Schongauer issued masterfully engraved and inventive full-sheet engravings depicting scenes from the narrative.<sup>372</sup> In 1509 Lucas van Leyden issued his *Round Passion*, a cycle of large-scale circular compositions, framed by ornamental borders that may have served as models for stained glass.<sup>373</sup> Albrecht Dürer's

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<sup>371</sup> All eight of the other prints related to the Passion are marked with some variation on the AC flattop monogram (including some with a backward letter C). It also remains possible that the engraving of *Christ Nailed to the Cross* was originally signed at the top right corner of the sheet. Unfortunately, the print is known only through a unique impression in Bremen that has a hand-drawn repair disguising the loss of the upper right corner.

<sup>372</sup> For Meckenem's series, see H.142-153; and Achim Riether, *Israhel van Meckenem: Kupferstiche - der Münchner Bestand* (Munich: Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, 2006). For the Schongauer series, see Lehrs, *Martin Schongauer: The Complete Engravings*, 120-149 (nos.19-30).

<sup>373</sup> Lucas van Leyden, NHD.57-65; see also Jacobowitz and Stepanek, *The Prints of Lucas van Leyden & His Contemporaries*, 78-81 (nos.20-22).

engagement with the Passion narrative included three separate print series, including a relatively small-format engraved series that he worked on between 1507 and 1512 and sold both separately and as a set.<sup>374</sup> A complete series of these engravings, owned by Friedrich the Wise, Elector of Saxony, even survives in a contemporary binding, accompanied by handwritten Latin prayers, demonstrating that even Dürer's engravings of the Passion were integrated into manuscripts.<sup>375</sup> By the second quarter of the sixteenth century, highly finished Passion series by many of the most famous early modern engravers were available to the burgeoning class of art collectors.

In their small scale and format, however, the AC-monogrammed Passion prints are more closely aligned with engravings attributed to Master S and his school: mass-produced engravings, likely created specifically with the manuscript market in mind. Hollstein's volume for Master S illustrates numerous small engravings in a similar format with inset roundels at the top—including several examples discussed in Chapter One of this dissertation [c.f. Fig. 1.95]—which likely represent surviving fragments of lost Passion cycles.<sup>376</sup> This type of manuscript-ready print comprised Master S's primary category production. The same printmaker is also credited with two larger format series of 57 and 46 plates, respectively, which include scenes spanning the entire life of Christ.<sup>377</sup> Although AC's Passion cycle lacks elaborate decorative borders, the subject

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<sup>374</sup> Dürer, B.3-B.18; and Giulia Bartrum, *German Renaissance Prints 1490-1550* (London: British Museum Press, 1995).

<sup>375</sup> Rainer Schoch, Matthias Mende, and Anna Scherbaum, *Albrecht Dürer: Das Druckgraphische Werk*, 3 vols. (Munich: Prestel, 2001).

<sup>376</sup> In addition to Master S engravings H.149-152, which were discussed as a set in Chapter One of this dissertation, see H.153, 154, 174, 181, 182, 186, and 187 for Passion engravings with inset roundels attributed to Master S and his school. The consistent format and scale of several prints (c.f. H.182, 186, and 187) clearly link them as related pieces of a larger series.

<sup>377</sup> See Master S, H.22-78 and H.79-124.

matter and minuscule scale of the series align it with Master S's engravings intended for the manuscript market.

In this way the Passion series by AC and Master S are successors to fifteenth-century print cycles by The Master of the Berlin Passion (active c.1450-1470) and engravers working in his circle. Ursula Weekes argues that these printmakers created their small engravings specifically for inclusion in octavo and quarto size devotional prayer books at a time of transition between manuscript and print.<sup>378</sup> Print series were flexible products; manuscript makers could disassemble series of the Passion and Life of Christ and use only the images that they needed for a particular Book of Hours or else keep the group intact to illustrate a longer set of prayers.<sup>379</sup> Weekes notes that “the presence of engravers working so assiduously for this market seems to have been a factor largely peculiar to the Rhine-Maas region.”<sup>380</sup> The Master of the Berlin Passion is believed to have worked in the Germany city of Cleves, farther down the Rhine, but his prints appear in extant hybrid manuscripts in the Southern Netherlands as well. In fact, Weekes illustrates and discusses a manuscript in the library of the Franciscan monastery at Sint-Truiden that includes prints by this engraver.<sup>381</sup> Extant impressions of prints by the AC printmakers and Master S in manuscripts from monastic communities in the same region, and even the same city, indicate that the desire for small-scale Passion engravings for the Netherlandish manuscript market continued into the second and third decades of the sixteenth-century.

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<sup>378</sup> Weekes, *Early Engravers & Their Public*, especially 81-119.

<sup>379</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>380</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>381</sup> *Ibid.*, 35-37. The manuscript is catalogued in Sint-Truiden as Minderbroederenbibliotheek, Ms. A32.

### *Sets of saints*

Sets and series of related prints are also prevalent among AC's large body of hagiographic engravings, another specialty subject of early modern printmakers. While series of saints could be sold individually, the printmaker hoped to entice the buyer to collect the whole set, especially of Christ's disciples: early modern trading cards for the Catholic audience. Once again, these prints had particular utility for manuscript makers who sought to preface suffrages and prayer cycles with images of the saintly intercessors through whom the devout hoped to reach God. A group of AC monogrammed engravings depicting female saints—*Saint Agatha* [H.89; Fig. 1.34], *Saint Barbara* [H.97; Fig. 4.26], *Saint Catherine* [H.104; Fig. 4.27], *Saint Mary Magdalene* [H.109; Fig. 4.28], *Saint Ursula* [H.113; Fig. 4.29], and *Saint Anne* [App.28; Fig. 4.30]—should be considered collectively, as a series linked by consistent scale and format.<sup>382</sup> Each of these six rare engravings measures approximately 6.8 x 4.8 cm—about 2/3 the size of a standard playing card—and depicts a female saint standing full-length in the foreground of the composition. All of the women wear distinctive costumes with voluminous, cascading drapery folds, but the shadows and contours of these garments are communicated through a uniform, yet flexible, system of cross-hatching and stipple marks. Every saint carries or stands with her respective attribute and is crowned with a similar open halo formed by an outer boundary of parallel radiating lines. The compositions situate the saints in an earthly context—often amid classical ruins reclaimed by grasses and weeds—while still

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<sup>382</sup> The prints of Saints Catherine and Ursula were previously illustrated together in Jean-Richard's catalogue for the exhibition *Graveurs en taille-douce des anciens Pays-Bas*, 153 (nos. 96 and 97, respectively). The engravings were not, however, discussed as part of a larger series.



distancing them from the contemporary world. A low stone wall or a clump of earth divides the foreground within which the saint stands from a background landscape at the edge of the print, which often includes the buildings of a small village. The sky in each print remains blank aside from a few horizontal parallel lines intended to delineate the contours of clouds. The prints are all signed on an inset rectangle at one of the corners with the AC crossbar monogram.

In addition to their common format and signature, these six prints also share a visual language of engraved lines. The printmaker articulates the earth and grass in the foreground of the prints with curving, cross-hatched lines to suggest the undulations of the ground. The vertical walls in the foreground are shaded with closely spaced, parallel crosshatching that contrasts with the short and irregular stippled burin flicks that describe the adjacent horizontal stone surfaces nearby. This consistent use of varied hatching systems to describe different textures and surfaces unites the prints through a common style of engraving.

Given the limited survival of these prints, none of which exists in more than three extant impressions, it remains possible that engravings of additional female saints may have originally joined these to form an even larger series. A unicum depicting *Saint Agnes* [H.93; Fig. 4.31] in the Rijksmuseum collection shares the general compositional characteristics and approximate scale of the six prints discussed above, but it is signed in the foreground with a variation on the AC monogram without the crossbar. An additional print depicting *Saint Gertrude, Abbess of Nivelles* (H.107) is listed in Hollstein with comparable dimensions, but I have been unable to locate an impression.

Similarities in format and engraving style between other groups of AC-attributed saints imply their unity in pairs or, more broadly, as part of a larger lost series. An engraving of *Saint Agnes* [H.90; Fig. 4.32] standing between two columns, for instance, finds a kindred spirit in a previously undescribed unicum of *Saint Barbara* [App.35; Fig. 4.33] in the Louvre's Rothschild Collection. Barbara's primary attribute, the tower within which she was confined by her pagan father, replaces or obscures the column at the left side of the print. But an arch of swirling tracery, containing monstrous finials at the top of the engraving, clearly parallels the embellishments above Agnes's head in the related print.<sup>383</sup> Both engravings are signed with a loose flat top AC monogram and executed with a consistent style of engraving at the same small scale. It is reasonable to assume that these two virgin martyrs might have originally been joined by other female saints in a series.

### ***Proliferating images of saints for the manuscript market***

Several female saints are the subject of multiple prints in the expanded AC corpus, an indication that these figures were particularly revered in the printmakers' milieu. Saints Agnes, Catherine, Barbara, and Mary Magdalene—all common patrons of female Catholic religious orders—each appears repeatedly in the AC corpus. These small hagiographic prints would have had particular appeal for cloistered women in need of devotional prints and economical alternatives to painted manuscript illuminations. Ursula Weekes notes that “typically a nun who owned her own books might have possessed a liturgical book, such as a breviary or diurnal, and/or a para-liturgical book, such as a

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<sup>383</sup> Some marginal details in this unique impression of the Saint Barbara engraving are lost due to wear, soiling, and trimming within the plate mark in this unique impression.

Book of Hours, a psalter or a prayerbook.”<sup>384</sup> While they were celebrated as intercessors throughout Catholic Europe, these virgin martyrs had a particular cult following among cloistered women in Germany and the Low Countries who extolled them as models for their own lives of self-sacrifice and Christian devotion.

In addition to the two images of Saint Agnes discussed above, five additional prints marked with a variation on the AC monogram depict the same early fourth-century virgin martyr. According to the *Golden Legend*, Agnes was a beautiful, thirteen-year-old girl who rejected the fine gifts and romantic advances of a Roman prefect’s son, claiming instead that she was already betrothed to Christ and adorned with his riches.<sup>385</sup> Unwilling to forsake her Christian faith in favor of worldly wealth and pagan marriage, the young woman was delivered to the stake and eventually beheaded as a martyr. In each of the AC prints, according to iconographic tradition, Agnes is accompanied by a white lamb, a reference both to the similarity of her name to the Latin *agnus* and an attribute referring to her innocence, purity, and chastity.<sup>386</sup>

In the AC-monogrammed prints, however, the lamb provides more than an identifying attribute; it also serves as a symbol for Christ, the Lamb of God. In all seven AC prints, including a previously undescribed engraving in Berlin [App.33; Fig. 4.34], Agnes offers the lamb a ring to symbolize her commitment to the Christian faith and her rejection of worldly temptation, a narrative detail more commonly associated with Saint Catherine of Alexandria and her mystical union with Christ. This unorthodox

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<sup>384</sup> Weekes, *Early Engravers & Their Public*, 117.

<sup>385</sup> Jacobus de Voragine and William Caxton, *The Golden Legend; or, Lives of the Saints*, vol. 2. (London: J.M. Dent, 1928), 245-251.

<sup>386</sup> The name Agnes actually derives from the Greek for ‘chaste,’ an equally fitting name for a virgin martyr. See Hall, “Agnes,” in *Dictionary of Subjects & Symbols in Art*, 10-11.

iconographic twist might have appealed to religious orders in which nuns mimicked this relationship with Christ and concomitant renunciation of the world. In fact, Agnes was particularly esteemed as a virgin martyr by devout women in the Southern Low Countries, particularly the *beguines*, women who voluntarily committed to a life of service, and chastity without taking formal religious vows.<sup>387</sup> Agnes had a particular cult devotion in the vicinity of Liège, and even served as the patron saint of a community in Sint-Truiden.<sup>388</sup> This beguinage, a semi-monastic complex within which these lay women lived, was founded in 1258 but was still flourishing in the early sixteenth century. Other nearby religious communities in the Prince Bishopric of Liège, including a beguinage in Hasselt and an Augustinian convent in Maaseik, were also dedicated to Saint Agnes and still active during the period of the AC printmakers' activity.<sup>389</sup> In their peculiar iconography, these AC's small prints of Agnes seem to cater directly to the female religious communities of this region.

Several other AC-monogrammed engravings of Saint Agnes share a compositional format that more explicitly indicates a market for manuscript-ready images of the young martyr. Four prints, each signed with a different variation on the AC monogram and all surviving in a single known impression, adapt the same motif: a half-

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<sup>387</sup> Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200-1565* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001). Withdrawing within the urban environment and away from material comforts, these women sustained themselves through manual labor, served the sick and poor, helped to educate young women, and sought to focus their minds on God. They frequently worked in the textile industry, weaving and manufacturing cloth. Although beguinages would not be created until the early 13<sup>th</sup> century, a dissident priest known as Lambert le Bègue who was active in Liège in the 12<sup>th</sup> century even translated *The Life of Saint Agnes* into the vernacular French with devout lay women in mind; Ibid., 31. For further scholarship on late medieval religious communes in the Low Countries, see John van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers of the Common Life: The Devotio Moderna and the World of the Later Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

<sup>388</sup> Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, 31.

<sup>389</sup> Ibid., appendix I, 279 (no.45); and 287-288 (no.65), respectively.

length Agnes behind a stone ledge within an arched composition. While the quality of the engravings varies, it is impossible to identify which print, if any, served as the prototype for the others. Perhaps the finest of the four engravings [App.32; Fig. 4.35], located at the British Museum and signed with a flat top AC monogram at the lower left, depicts the saint wearing an elaborate jeweled headdress and a pearl necklace, embellishments befitting the bride of Christ. She wears a voluminous garment with a low neckline, slashed sleeves, and a cloak with swooping lapels. Her eyes lowered, the saint offers her ring to a small lamb lying on a book placed on the parapet before her, a reference to the type of devotional prayer book within which such a print might be pasted. The engraving's border, comprising birds on the bottom edge and tendrils of flowers on the sides, further aligns this print with the Ghent-Bruges manuscript tradition.<sup>390</sup>

The other three related AC prints of Saint Agnes replicate the essential components of this composition with only minimal alterations. An engraving of *Saint Agnes* in Dresden [App.31; Fig. 4.36], also signed with a flat top AC monogram, is a reverse copy, framed by a slightly different floral border. The printmaker makes some small changes to the saint's costume, adding an extra necklace and an even more ornate headdress, and a leash around the lamb's neck to further link the saint to her attribute. Instead of blank space behind Agnes, this print includes a dark crosshatched wall, beyond

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<sup>390</sup> For the use and significance of flowers in marginal Ghent-Bruges marginal decoration, see Celia Fisher, "The Development of Flower Borders in Ghent-Bruges Manuscripts 1470-1490." Ph.D. Dissertation, University of London, 1996; and Fisher, *Flowers in Medieval Manuscripts* (London: The British Library, 2004). Overviews of Ghent-Bruges border types appears in Greet Nijs, "Typology of the Border Decoration in the Manuscripts of the Ghent-Bruges School," in *"Als Ich Can": Liber Amicorum in Memory of Professor Dr. Maurits Smeyers*, edited by Bert Cardon, Jan van der Stock, and Dominique Vanwijnsberghe (Paris: Peeters, 2002) 1007–36; and Anne Margreet As-Vijvers, *Re-Making the Margin: The Master of the David Scenes and Flemish Manuscript Painting around 1500*. Translated by Diane Webb (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2013).

which rise mountain peaks. A different *Saint Agnes* [H.92; Fig. 4.37] in the collection of the British Museum retains the same basic format, including the saint's essential costume, but revises her face, replaces her headdress, and repackages the composition within an alternate floral border. This printmaker also enlarges slightly the scale of the leashed lamb and signs the print with an AC crossbar monogram. A final engraving of *Saint Agnes* [H.90; Fig. 4.38] is signed on the foreground ledge with a unique AC monogram defined by a unique v-shaped crossbar on the A. Unlike the other three related prints, the lamb in this composition does not lie on a prayer book, but rather rises from behind the parapet to reach for the ring in Agnes's hand.<sup>391</sup> The lone extant impression of the print, located in Rotterdam, is trimmed to the arched central composition, but in its original state it likely included a decorative floral border like its other fraternal quadruplets.

A similar engraving of *Saint Catherine of Alexandria* [H.101; Fig. 4.39] provides evidence that AC engravings of saints in this arched format were, in fact, used as miniatures in sixteenth-century hybrid manuscripts. An impression of the print survives in a hybrid illuminated manuscript compiled in 1546 and used by nuns at a convent in Sint-Truiden.<sup>392</sup> In this case, the image of the saint provides a model and devotional intermediary for the reader, prefacing a suffrage, or set of intercessory prayers. Unlike the trimmed impression of this engraving in the Rijksmuseum collection that illustrates the print's entry in Hollstein, the lightly hand-colored example tipped into the Sint-Truiden manuscript retains the border of flowers and fruit on three sides that identifies it as a manuscript-ready composition. A photograph of the print from the manuscript's previous

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<sup>391</sup> This more active lamb of God that reaches up in anticipation of a union with Agnes also appears in H.93 and App.33.

<sup>392</sup> For additional information on this manuscript, now in a private collection, see note 186 in Chapter One of this dissertation.

sale at auction [Fig. 4.40] shows that the complete print echoes the British Museum's *Saint Agnes* [see Fig. 4.35, above] in overall scale and format, perhaps joining it as part of a set.<sup>393</sup> A unique impression of yet another comparably formatted AC-monogrammed engraving depicting *Saint Clare of Assisi* [App.37; Fig. 4.41] survives in manuscript in Rotterdam, dated 1577.<sup>394</sup> Clare, dressed in the Franciscan habit, holds a monstrance, symbolic of her repulsion of the Saracens attacking Assisi with the holy host, as described in the *Golden Legend*.<sup>395</sup> Within the manuscript, the arched engraving received a painted floral border and hand-coloring. This example demonstrates that AC's engravings apparently retained their utility as printed substitutes for illuminated miniatures into the last third of the sixteenth century.

Other pairs of nearly identical engravings of female saints reveal a curious system of copying within the expanded AC corpus. Unica of two prints depicting *Saint Catherine* [H.102 & H.103; Figs. 4.42 & 4.43], each signed with a different AC flat top monogram, offer slight variations on the half-length martyr. Both prints present the saint behind a stone ledge, upon which rest the ubiquitous prayer book and a fragment of a broken wheel, one of her main attributes and a symbol of her deliverance from torture at the hands of the Roman emperor Maxentius. In each print Catherine holds the handle of a

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<sup>393</sup> Hartung & Karl, Munich, Auction 55, *Wertvolle Bücher, Manuskripte, Autographen, Graphik*, 3-6 November 1987, lot 11; AC's *Saint Catherine* appears as lot 11.4 and is illustrated on page 9.

<sup>394</sup> The manuscript, which contains spiritual exercises and prayers, is held by Gementeenbibliotheek Rotterdam (inv. nr. 96 E 16), and the print is located on folio 214r. The volume also includes tipped-in prints by Northern Netherlandish artists Lucas van Leyden and Maarten van Heemskerck. See Evelyn M. F. Verheggen, *Beelden Voor Passie En Hartstocht: Bid- En Devotieprenten in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 17de en 18de Eeuw* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2006). For a full description of the manuscript, see Dalmatius van Heel, *Middeleeuwse Handschriften Op Godsdienstig Gebied in Het Bezit van de Bibliotheek Der Gemeente Rotterdam*. (Rotterdam: Stichting Vrienden der Gemeente-Bibliotheek, 1948).

<sup>395</sup> De Voragine and Caxton, *The Golden Legend; or, Lives of the Saints*, vol. 6, (1935), 161-198.

large sword, the weapon used in her execution and her other identifying symbol. In spite of differences to the saint's halo and costume, the two engravings are executed at the same small scale and depict the saint with nearly identical, mirroring postures: one looking to the left and the other to the right. Another pair of AC prints, both images of *Mary Magdalene* [App.38 & App.39; Figs. 4.44 & 4.45] that were undescribed by Hollstein and previous cataloguers, offers similar mirror-image depictions of a half-length saint. Engraved at the same scale as the prints of Saint Catherine, the nearly identical reverse copies show the haloed saint opening the ointment jar that serves as her attribute. Why would the Monogrammist AC produce these two seemingly redundant pairs of mirrored engravings?

While there is no definitive answer to this question, I can propose several hypotheses grounded in the practical strategies of early modern printmaking. One simple explanation for the similarities between these prints is that one engraving was an unauthorized copy of the other, made at a different time or place by a forger or engraver looking for a shortcut to a profitable product. In fact, an inferior image of Saint Mary Magdalene, engraved at the same scale by the anonymous Netherlandish engraver Monogrammist BD [Fig. 4.46], appears either to have served as the prototype for the AC prints or else to have followed their precedent.<sup>396</sup> However, the stylistic affinities between the pairs of AC prints depicting both Catherine and Mary Magdalene suggest that the prints were executed by the same workshop, if not by the same hand. In this case the

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<sup>396</sup> The engraving survives in a unique, partially hand-colored impression at the Rijksmuseum. It includes an engraved inscription at the bottom—*S. Maria Magdalena ora pro nobis* (“pray for us”)—that makes the print's devotional function more explicit. See Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish*, XIII, 19 (no. 1).



copies could be understood as replacements for lost, worn, or damaged plates, edited in the case of the Catherine print to include slight alterations to the configuration of the saint's halo and costume. Alternatively, the differences between the Catherine prints could be the product of competition between different engravers trained in the same workshop, each approaching the same essential composition with his own flair. More likely, however, the pairs of prints, each facing in different directions, were made with the manuscript market in mind. Engravings could be pasted on either side of a manuscript page, depending on the needs of the compiler and the organization of the accompanying text. A right-facing saint pasted on the verso of a sheet would look toward the text on the opposite side of the opening, while a left-facing saint tipped onto a sheet's recto would appear to address text on the verso of the preceding page. The AC printmakers were savvy to create pairs of popular saints like Catherine and Mary Magdalene that faced both left and right, allowing the manuscript maker to choose the orientation that best suited the artistic vision for his book.<sup>397</sup>

A unique impression of *Saint Barbara* [H.96; Fig. 4.47] at the Albertina in Vienna adds a further wrinkle to this tangle of AC-monogrammed copies. The engraving, which was known to Bartsch and subsequently included unillustrated in Hollstein's catalogue, replicates the half-length compositions of Mary Magdalene, specifically the iteration of the saint facing to the left [Fig. 4.44, above]. Positioned behind a parapet signed with a crossbar AC monogram, the saint holds a prayer book in her left hand and a martyr's palm in her right instead of the Magdalene's ointment jar. Barbara's tower attribute appears over her left shoulder. The saint's costume—marked by details such as slashed

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<sup>397</sup> Saint Catherine and Saint Mary Magdalene also appealed to beguines due both to their constant faith and their work as teachers and evangelists. Simon, *Cities of Ladies*, 87-89.

cuffs and shoulder caps, an embroidered panel on her breast, and a fantastic jeweled headpiece—is especially suitable for Barbara’s origins in a wealthy family. Whether it preceded the AC engravings of Mary Magdalene or followed in their wake, the print illustrates how easily the identities of these saints could be transformed through minor alterations.

### ***AC-monogrammed repetitions and the business of printmaking***

The phenomenon of AC-monogrammed copies after other signed AC engravings is not limited to images of popular saints intended for the manuscript market. Consider, for example two circular prints depicting the mythological trio *Mars, Venus, and Cupid* seated together on a ledge, their legs all casually crossed. Engraved at the same scale but in opposite orientations—one with Mars on the left [H.120; Fig. 4.48] and the other with Mars seated on the right [H.121; Fig. 4.49]—both prints are signed with the AC flat top monogram on a step near the bottom of the composition. The differences between the two prints are minimal: the engraving that situates Mars on the right includes additional parallel shading in the background and exhibits a slightly inferior handling of the burin in details like passages of shading and the faces of the gods. The only significant formal difference between the two engravings appears in the head of the god of war. While the print with Mars sitting on the left depicts a bearded warrior wearing a winged helmet topped with a few small feathers, the alternate print features a clean-shaven Mars crowned by a more elaborate spray of plumage and a helmet with a raptor-beaked visor. A unique second-state impression of the engraving with the bearded Mars at the Albertina [Fig. 4.50] includes some ill-advised embellishments to the god’s helmet that

muddy the composition. Perhaps the reversed engraving with Mars positioned on the right side of the print was created to replace the original after the second state was deemed a failure.<sup>398</sup> As with the images of saints discussed above, however, the possibility remains that these prints were executed simultaneously by different hands in a busy workshop.

The exceptionally small scale and relative marginality of some AC-monogrammed ornament prints have also led scholars to overlook the differences between nearly identical impressions. Close comparison of these ornament prints reveals that they were not pulled from the same plate, but rather represent distinct engraved duplicates. Hollstein was aware of at least one such pair: two *Ascending Ornaments* [H.204 & H.205; Figs. 4.51 & 4.52], featuring horn-blowing satyrs, acanthus-bibbed lizard-men, and a grotesque, leafy face peering out from the center of the design. The two prints differ only in the location of their crossbar AC monograms and a few small details, including the satyrs' hairstyles. I have identified a number of additional, undescribed prints, however, which indicate that this replicative phenomenon recurs in other ornament prints within the AC corpus. An engraving at the Bibliothèque nationale de France [App.45; Fig. 4.53] that had previously been catalogued as a relatively common horizontal ornament [H.189; Fig. 4.54] featuring a siren suckling and two putti is, in fact, a copy printed from a separately engraved plate.<sup>399</sup> While the more prevalent print is monogrammed with an AC flat top monogram in the dark background at the upper right, this alternate print bears a crossbar AC near the lower right edge. Similarly, a horizontal

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<sup>398</sup> A smaller, less accomplished, and unsigned reverse copy of the composition with the beardless Mars also exists at the Albertina Museum (accession no. DG1937/537), an indication that this alternate or replacement print was also admired.

<sup>399</sup> Herbert, *Inventaire des gravures des écoles du Nord: 1440-1550*, vol. 2, 329 (no.3506).

*Vignette with a Satyr and a Woman* [App.51; Fig. 4.55] at the Kunsthalle Bremen is not identical to the engraving of this same subject recorded in Hollstein [H.188; Fig. 3.6] and discussed in Chapter Three. Upon very close inspection it becomes clear that the two prints are impressions from distinguishable matrices, each signed at the lower right with different iterations of the AC monogram. Yet another unsigned *Ascending Ornament with Two Sirens* [App.52; Fig. 4.56], a reverse copy of the AC-monogrammed print discussed in Chapter Two of this dissertation [H.202; Fig.59], hues so closely to its model that it has been mistaken for the original print in several European collections.

This obsessive, line-by-line comparison of seemingly identical impressions and the enumeration of their deviations may, at first, appear overmagnified and irrelevant. However, these deceptive replications demonstrate that even AC ornament prints were worthy of duplication in the sixteenth-century, whether from within a single workshop or outside it. Moreover, these examples reinforce my hypotheses about the business practices employed by AC printmakers and the craftsmen in their milieu. These nearly identical copies might have served to replace lost or damaged plates that had proved popular in the ornament print market. Alternatively, these duplicates might have been created in tandem as a strategy for efficient printing. To save paper and to consolidate the printer's effort, these exceptionally small plates might have been combined in the press so that several prints could be published on a single sheet.<sup>400</sup> The possibility also remains that the duplicate plates were created as forgeries by printmakers unaffiliated with our

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<sup>400</sup> I owe a debt of gratitude to Ad Stijnman for encouraging me to consider this possible function of duplicative monogrammed plates. See Chapter One (Figs.37 & 38) for a discussion of uncut sheets in the Wolfegg collection that demonstrate a similar practice of combining small prints in the press.

AC printmakers and their hypothetical workshop. In this scenario the fame of AC's monogram serves as the catalyst for production.

Although many of the individual engravings discussed in this chapter have been part of public museum collections for generations, their connections to other prints in sets and series have often gone unnoticed. Whether they were previously unrecognized ornament print replicates hiding in plain sight or undescribed images of saints obscured in boxes or collector's albums, these displaced engravings were isolated and marginalized. Gathered back into the fold of the expanded corpus, however, they gain significance as part of a larger whole, offering new insights into the marketing strategies and modes of production employed by the AC printmakers.

## **CONCLUSION: The Afterlives of AC Engravings**

In many ways this monograph about the AC monogram must conclude where it began, by acknowledging the uncertainty surrounding the mark. Although my scrutiny of the monogram has shifted the boundaries of the discussion—gathering new prints under the umbrella while moving other prints to the sidelines—it has yet to yield the name of a single named individual or group of printmakers behind the AC initials. Our yearning for biographical certainty to anchor the monogram to a specific person and place remains unfulfilled.

The continued anonymity of the AC printmaker(s), however, must not be seen as an insurmountable roadblock and further study of these prints should not be deemed fruitless. As this dissertation has demonstrated, even anonymous prints retain value as evidence of early sixteenth-century business practices, offering windows onto the desires of both the period's print markets and the meaningful interventions of later hands. Drawing close attention to these previously marginalized engravings brings them back into the fold where they gain vitality through their relationships to other prints and contribute to a more prismatic view of the history of early printmaking and print consumption. Furthermore, as many of the examples in this study have demonstrated, these small forgotten engravings are often complex works of art in their own right, introducing complex iconographies and exhibiting virtuosic linework that reward careful scrutiny.

*The future of the AC catalogue raisonné*

This dissertation does not include a definitive revision of the AC catalogue raisonné—that task can fall to the next AC-focused project. Instead, it has undertaken the vital steps of compiling the most expansive and critical view to date of the AC monogram and the prints associated with the mark. Hollstein’s 1951 volume for Allaert Claesz.—in spite of its flaws and limitations—provides the essential scaffolding upon which this and future studies of the AC monogram must be built and against which they should be measured. My research has fleshed out much of Hollstein’s skeletal overview of the AC corpus. I have located and photographed 89 of the 122 prints listed but left unillustrated in that catalogue. I believe that nearly half of the remaining thirty-three unlocated prints are likely accidental duplicates: prints that were previously thought to be distinct compositions but are actually identical to other catalogued prints. This leaves only eighteen independent prints listed by Hollstein that I have been unable to find, photograph, and reassess.<sup>401</sup>

Although my hunting and gathering has yet to unearth a small group of previously-described compositions, the search has yielded numerous undescribed impressions that alter our perspective on familiar prints. These new discoveries reveal that several canonical engravings previously considered as complete impressions are, in fact, fragments of larger prints or just one component of a more extensive set or series. Just as critically, I rediscovered dozens of hitherto undescribed AC-monogrammed engravings in collections around the world. Forty-four of these monogrammed prints (listed in an Appendix to this dissertation) were not included in previously published

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<sup>401</sup> The following prints listed in Hollstein remain unlocated: H.3, H.14, H.27, H.35, H.44, H.47-49, H.60, H.105, H.107, H.141, H.151, H.208, H.210-211, H.217, H.231.

catalogues raisonnés. In total, some iteration of the nestled AC monogram appears on nearly two hundred separate engravings.

My critical review of the Hollstein catalogue also confirms that at least fifty-five of his AC-attributed prints bear no monogram at all. These engravings were presumably included in previous publications based on stylistic similarities with monogrammed prints. The lack of signature alone should not exclude these prints from further consideration alongside compositions given to the AC printmakers. In the company of newly illustrated prints with AC monograms, however, it becomes clear that some unmarked prints have been misattributed for generations. I believe that thirteen of these prints, many of which were illustrated in Hollstein, might be reassigned to anonymous printmakers in the milieu of the Flemish engraver known as Master S, whose extensive output in the early sixteenth century also deserves further scrutiny and clarification.<sup>402</sup> Other engravings such as *The Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (H.30) and the fragment of a *Scabbard with Vases and Leaves* (H.234) should be reattributed to different anonymous monogrammists.

Even without a specific alternate attribution, some extremely fine and previously canonical AC-attributed prints should also be removed from the central core of future discussions surrounding the monogram. The large, unmonogrammed engraving known as the *Allegory of Time and Fortune* (H.149), for example, bears little resemblance in scale and execution to signed prints in the oeuvre. Although the engraving has long been considered a masterwork by Allaert Claesz., its deviations from AC-monogrammed prints make it a distracting outlier. A future revision of the catalogue should separate out other

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<sup>402</sup> These prints that should be reattributed to the circle of Master S, as discussed in Chapter One, are H.28, H.80-88, H.114-115, and H.225.



unsigned, and likely apocryphal, prints in order to further clarify the essential characteristics of the central AC oeuvre. As long as these incongruous prints remain illustrated as representative works by the Monogrammist AC, they will continue to inspire additional misattributions.

The presence of an AC monogram on an impression also must not guarantee that a print should remain at the heart of a future catalogue. The multi-sheet woodcut of *The Righteous and Unjust Judgement* (H.236) with its side-by-side AC monogram, for instance, should be excised from the corpus. I also contend that twelve engravings bearing the same variation on the AC crossbar monogram with serifs—including the *Dance of Death Series* (H.167-173), *Standard Bearer* (H.164), *Stag Hunt* (H.179), and *Wolf Hunt* (H.180)—are most likely the work of a different and unrelated AC printmaker active in Germany in the later sixteenth-century.<sup>403</sup> The expanded corpus includes numerous additional engravings with disparate AC monograms: single outliers or groups of related prints that should be sequestered and considered as the work of independent and unrelated printmakers. The relationships between the many AC monograms requires further analysis.

Ultimately, I believe that the expanded and clarified landscape of AC-monogrammed prints actually demonstrates that the oeuvre does not represent a single body of work but rather a Frankenstein's monster comprising fragments of other corpora. Disparate monograms and other unsigned engravings were compiled into a solitary oeuvre due to poor cataloguing, the limited photography of surviving prints, and misguided attempts by connoisseurs to organize and rationalize an irrational set of data.

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<sup>403</sup> The prints that should be reattributed to the later German AC printmaker are H.8, H.21, H.164, H.167-173, H.179-180, and H.183.

The format of the catalogue raisonné—structured around a single artist or workshop—does not easily accommodate such a multifaceted mélange of anonymous prints. By continuing to discuss all of these engravings as a cohesive group we persist in conflating and relating prints that were likely made at different times, in different places, for different purposes, and by different hands. No single narrative can fully account for the diversity of prints associated with the AC monogram.

Within this disparate landscape of prints, however, a large core of small-scale, precisely executed AC-monogrammed engravings can be considered together as a interrelated group. Signed with several different iterations of the flat top, crossbar, and pointed AC monogram, these prints are engraved with a variety of closely-spaced and consistent lines. The stylistic characteristics of this group are most immediately recognizable in the ornament prints bearing the AC monogram, including scabbard designs such as the engraving of *Hercules and Venus* (H.233) that has been a touch-point throughout this dissertation. Many of these prints are either based directly on compositions by the German Little Masters or else emulate the miniscule form and thematic diversity embraced by those printmakers. In addition to numerous ornament prints and images of saints, this core group of monogrammed prints includes images of soldiers as well as allegorical subjects and devotional prints. This central group of AC prints offers a cross-section of print genres and a mix of copies, creative revisions, and presumably original compositions.

It is tempting to identify these consistently fine, small prints as the work of a singular Master AC, a painter-engraver or master metalsmith whose identity might one day be revealed in city guild records or correspondence. This printmaker's protean ability

to both creatively copy works by other printmakers and simultaneously produce original compositions situates him among the premier Northern engravers of the early sixteenth-century. The decision to model his monogram after those of Albrecht Dürer and Heinrich Aldegrever might be construed as a demonstration of bravado and an effort to rival the success of those paragons of the medium. It is possible that this same figure even trained apprentices and hired lesser engravers to issue prints emblazoned with his monogram, looking to create prints in a variety of different formats and subjects to capitalize on a growing collector's market for prints.

Perhaps the fame of this now anonymous Master AC inspired other printmakers to emulate his mark, using similar AC monograms in order to associate their work with his reputation. These second-rate printmakers might have sullied our understanding of the singular master's standing, flooding the market with inferior copies and additions that have subsequently been gathered together into one oeuvre. The engraver that executed some of the finest Northern ornament prints of the sixteenth-century seems unlikely to have also issued many of the less accomplished prints signed with a variation on the monogram. In order to move forward we must be willing to discuss groups of prints independently from the traditional, monolithic oeuvre. An uncritical reliance on the biographical assertions of early print scholars has long tethered the AC monogram to Allaert Claesz., a painter-printmaker active in Amsterdam and Utrecht. Distancing the AC mark from this specific name is the first step in moving beyond the antiquated notion that any solitary figure with the initials AC was responsible for engraving every print bearing some variation on the monogram.

By acknowledging that not all AC prints were created equally and under the authority of a single hand or workshop, scholars can begin to think more creatively about the hypothetical origins of specific prints and their intended meanings and functions. The impressions still pasted into sixteenth-century manuscripts, for instance, suggest that at least one AC printmaker was likely active in the Southern Netherlands. This engraver or workshop of printmakers issued engravings with particular utility as substitute manuscript illuminations for faithful customers in the Bishopric of Liège, especially around the monastery of Sint-Truiden. While these prints were not necessarily produced within the religious community itself, images of saints with particular resonance in this region—including saints Lambert and Hubert, as well as unorthodox images of Saint Agnes depicted as the bride of Christ—seem tailor-made for this market. By employing floral borders that broadly mimic the margins of Ghent-Bruges illuminations, this engraver or group of printmakers actively courted an audience whose desire for manuscript-ready prints superseded their interest in high-quality engravings. If the figure behind this AC monogram was not active in the Bishopric of Liège, he might have been working in adjacent printmaking centers in the Rhine-Maas valley, including Cologne. Other clusters and subgroups of AC prints might eventually lead to additional alternate geographical contexts and specific audiences that will encourage scholars to further divide the oeuvre and differentiate the hands behind the monogram.

As mentioned above, a printed revision of the AC catalogue would remain fundamentally flawed in its fixity. Even an expanded and illustrated volume would once again codify a temporal snapshot of a fragmentary and fractured corpus of prints by the AC printmakers. It would return these engravings to a hierarchical format in which they

are arranged by subject matter according to the traditions of print history. Inflexible and immediately out of date, a print version of the catalogue does not facilitate active comparison or fresh thinking. Furthermore, the printed catalogue does not take advantage of the technological advances, especially in photography, that have enabled recent steps forward in understanding the AC oeuvre.

Instead, I believe that the future of the catalogue raisonné for AC engravings should be online, where it can be updated and accessed with greater ease and regularity by a larger number of constituents. A digital platform would offer a more flexible system within which to organize and display the current state of scholarship and acknowledge the gaps in our knowledge about the monogram. A digital catalogue would also reflect the twenty-first-century research methodologies and technological advances that enabled many of the discoveries at the heart of this dissertation. When I began the project, I built an electronic database using Filemaker Pro software, and I populated it with the information and images provided by Hollstein's entries. Then I started hunting, visiting as many collections as possible in search of AC, adding to the database, and filling in the blanks. The ability to sort these records by size, format, subject matter, monogram type, compositional source, and dozens of other fields and factors allowed me to see patterns and connections that had previously evaded print scholars. My research was facilitated by technology that had been unavailable to Bartsch, Hollstein, and previous cataloguers. Easy and relatively inexpensive air travel allowed me to visit international collections on a student's budget. Advances in personal digital photography enabled me to return home with images of previously unphotographed prints that I could then bring to other collections as a source of comparison. I can zoom in on details and supplement my

memory and my paper records with high-resolution digital files. Ideally, these tools and images should be made available to the next researcher to go out in search of AC.

More importantly, the opportunity for museums, libraries, and collectors to illustrate newly discovered prints and impressions in an online database would allow us to further reconstitute the corpus in real time and would offer a platform for fruitful discussion and debate. Similar searchable databases already exist for later Netherlandish artists. A website edited and organized by art historian Elizabeth Hoenig compiles the work of Jan Breughel (1568/9 – 1625), including paintings, oil sketches, drawings, and prints.<sup>404</sup> The RKD (Netherlands Institute for Art History) and the Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis in The Hague maintain a similar database—still in the beta phase—of Rembrandt van Rijn’s paintings, which is intended as a preliminary source of information for researchers.<sup>405</sup> An even more pertinent model is Martin Royalton-Kisch’s website about Rembrandt’s drawings, a “work-in-progress” revision of Otto Benesch’s catalogue raisonné from 1973.<sup>406</sup> This type of online catalogue, which encourages collaboration and recognizes the inherent ongoing nature of the project, might limit the probability that misattributions will linger uncontested and settle into the core of the corpus.

The process of visualizing and reconstituting the AC oeuvre has revealed a fractured and many-faceted corpus that reflects how little we know about printmaking in the second quarter of the sixteenth-century. Print scholarship has tended to focus on

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<sup>404</sup> “Brueghel Family: Jan Brueghel the Elder,” *The Brueghel Family Database*, University of California, Berkeley, accessed June 22, 2018, <http://www.janbrueghel.net/>.

<sup>405</sup> *The Rembrandt Database*, RKD, The Hague (Netherlands Institute for Art History), accessed June 22, 2018, <http://www.rembrandtdatabase.org/Rembrandt/>.

<sup>406</sup> *The Drawings of Rembrandt*, Martin Royalton-Kisch, accessed June 22, 2018, <http://rembrandtcatalogue.net/home/4564920240>; Otto Benesch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt*, ed. and expanded by Ana Benesch, 2nd ed., 6 vols. (London; New York: Phaidon, 1973).

named artists or established masters, painter-engravers whose biographies provide context for their genius and allow us to position printmaking within a broader history of art. The AC printmakers fall just below this top tier of print producers and became invisible and unclassifiable because their products do not always conform to established categories of high-end production. This group of engravers likely included craftspeople and entrepreneurs looking to profit from the burgeoning interest in prints in a wide variety of markets and communities. Using the monogram not as firm evidence of a specific hand but rather as a lens onto the work of a cross-section of prints that have been pushed to the margins or fallen between the proverbial cracks, I have been drawn to consider segments of the print market that have long been overlooked. Finally, this approach to the monogram has challenged me to contend with the fluidity of authorship in early modern printmaking. The story of the AC mark extends beyond the engraver's workshop to encompass the hands of numerous collectors, publishers, and print scholars who have actively shaped and revised its legacy.

### **The AC monogram and the collector's hand**

In spite of a printmaker's conscious efforts to advertise his role in a print's production through the inclusion of the AC device, an engraving was vulnerable to alteration as soon as it left his hand. An engraver's claim to authorship might be subjected to the tools of the collector, which could permanently divide a print from its monogram or else disguise its original appearance. Examples throughout this dissertation have demonstrated how extant prints, even those in prominent collections, have been misattributed or marginalized as a result of some previous owner's cutting and pasting. In

many cases, the obliteration of the monogram appears to have been an accidental occurrence, the product of damage from handling at the edges of a sheet or a collector's prerogative to divide a multi-part print into a number of equally useful sections, only one of which continues to bear the printmaker's signature.

Other surviving impressions, however, exhibit scars only at the site of the AC monogram, evidence that a collector employed his or her blade in an active attempt to prevent the print's proper attribution. An impression of AC's *The Desperate Man* in the Rijksmuseum collection [H.175; Fig. 5.1], for instance, exhibits the efforts of a previous collector or unscrupulous print dealer to remove the letter "c" from under the "A" frame of the monogram. The attack on the monogram indicates some anxiety about the print's authorship—and perhaps value—transferred as part of the copying process after the Dürer original. Perhaps the owner of this impression wanted to suggest that the print was actually signed by Albrecht Dürer, whose etching had served as the prototype for AC's engraving.

An impression of another AC engraving modelled after a print by Dürer exhibits an even more egregious attempt to erase the monogram. Based on Dürer's woodcut of *Saint Jerome Sitting in a Cave* (see Chapter Two), the print at the British Museum [Fig. 5.2] bears no signature, a fact that understandably led to its attribution to an anonymous German printmaker. Upon close inspection of the impression, however, a clumsy repair becomes visible near the center of the composition, just below the crucifix that occupies Jerome's attention. This section of the sheet was previously cut out and replaced with a circle of hatched lines from another piece of paper in order to disguise the loss. Only the recent discovery of an intact impression of this same engraving in the collection of New



York Public Library confirmed that this print is the engraving catalogued by Hollstein (H.74) and described in detail by Edouard Aümuller in 1893.<sup>407</sup> The impression in New York corroborates the fact that a tiny AC monogram originally rested at the print's focal point, beneath the crucifix. The position of the loss in an otherwise intact impression suggests that a previous owner of the British Museum sheet clearly intended to disassociate the print from AC's hand.<sup>408</sup>

A pen could be as useful as a blade in changing—at least temporarily—a print's monogram and its potential value. An impression of AC's engraving of a *Horseman and Foot-Soldier* [H.158; Fig. 5.3] at the Rijksmuseum evinces the efforts of a previous owner to alter the AC to Heinrich Aldegrever's more famous AG monogram. The extra horizontal line of the crossbar on the A and the stem on the C likely blended in with the black ink of the monogram when they were initially applied. Over time, however, the pen lines have proven fugitive, lightening to a brown tone that reveals their counterfeit intentions.

### **Alterations by later publishers**

Evidence of AC's authorship has been clouded not only by the manipulations of collectors, but also by the tools of later publishers. An AC-monogrammed reverse copy after Jacob Binck's *Soldier and his Family* [Fig. 5.4] includes only two small changes to the composition: the addition of an extra six millimeters of space at the top of the print to

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<sup>407</sup> Aumuller, *Les Petites Maîtres Allemands*, 42 (no.57).

<sup>408</sup> An additional impression of the same print in Bremen has been tentatively attributed to Heinrich Aldegrever due to a misreading of the monogram. See Peter Strieder, *Vorbild Dürer*, 144-145 (no.172). The Bremen impression is also reproduced as a possible Aldegrever engraving in Vogt, *Das druckgraphische Bild nach Vorlagen Albrecht Dürers*, 298-299 (no.131).

include room for the entirety of the soldier's feathered hat and the AC monogram in place of Binck's mark [H.159; Fig. 5.5].<sup>409</sup> In several extant impressions of the print, however, the "c" in the monogram has been altered with an additional stroke that turns the signature into Aldegrever's AG mark [c.f. Fig. 5.6].<sup>410</sup> Spurious stems were also added to the monogram on several other AC plates.<sup>411</sup> These conscious changes to the matrices were likely made by an enterprising publisher who saw monetary potential in reissuing AC's copies under Aldegrever's more famous name.<sup>412</sup> Unsurprisingly, given their technical proficiency, these late impressions marked with an AG monogram have sometimes been accidentally catalogued and stored as works by Aldegrever.

An altered monogram also appears on several late impressions of AC's scabbard design depicting *Adam and Eve*, including an example in the collection at Schloss Wolfegg that shows a further change to the plate. Unlike most other extant impressions of the print, which are trimmed to the edge of the image, the specimen in Wolfegg [Fig. 5.7] retains a wide margin of paper around the design, leaving the plate mark clearly visible. This impression demonstrates that the copper plate itself was cut, dividing the ornamental foot of the composition from the upper, figural portion so that they could be printed

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<sup>409</sup> Binck, B.67.

<sup>410</sup> Impressions pulled from this altered plate can be found in London (British Museum), in Dresden, Munich, Bremen, Wolfegg, Cambridge (Fitzwilliam Museum), the Louvre, the Wittert Gallery in Liège, and the Brown University Library.

<sup>411</sup> Impressions of AC's *Satyr Family* (H.137; after Dürer, B.69) with the altered monogram are held at Schloss Wolfegg, the Albertina, and the BnF. An impression of the altered *Judgment of Paris* (H.116; after Sebald Beham, B.88) survives in the Wolfegg collection. Extant impressions of the ornament print depicting the *Fight Between Four Centaurs* (H.150; after Sebald Beham, B.94) are owned by Wolfegg, the Albertina, and the Rijksmuseum.

<sup>412</sup> In the introduction to her New Hollstein volume for Heinrich Aldegrever, Ursula Mielke's acknowledges these altered monograms but suggests, I think incorrectly and without supporting evidence, that the AC printmaker himself made these changes. See Mielke, *New Hollstein German* (Aldegrever), 15. It seems unlikely that the plate's author would desecrate his own monogram and forgo credit for his work as an engraver.

separately.<sup>413</sup> The presence of the altered AG monogram on Schloss Wolfegg's later, lightly printed impression indicates that the alteration of both the plate and the signature likely occurred after the matrix had left AC's workshop.<sup>414</sup> Wolfegg's impression of the scabbard design depicting *Hercules and Venus* [Fig. 5.8], discussed in the Introduction to this dissertation, also features a paper margin wide enough to leave the plate mark visible, revealing that the figural top half of this matrix was also separated from its ornamental bottom section before later impressions were produced. It remains possible that similar alterations were made to other truncated scabbard designs in the AC corpus, including those depicting *David with the Head of Goliath* (H.11) and *Saint George* (H.67), discussed earlier in this dissertation, which are known only in impressions without ornamental feet.

Late impressions of additional AC prints exhibit similar attempts by subsequent publishers to alter or obliterate the monogram. Unsurprisingly, the attributions of several of these prints have been contested over time. The engraving of the *Nativity* (H.24), for instance, discussed in Chapter One as a print that may not have been engraved by AC but rather published under his mark [see Fig. 1.3 & 1.53], exists in a later state, in which the AC monogram has been sloppily burnished out of the plate at the lower right and replaced with the letters *ICB*, the mark of Jacob Binck [Fig. 5.9].<sup>415</sup> In addition to

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<sup>413</sup> In fact, an engraving comprising only the bottom half of the print, with the winged cupid standing on a sphere, survives in the ornament print collection at the Berlin Kunstbibliothek (acc. no. 01,07). The visible plate mark on the sheet confirms that the plate itself was cut before printing. Disassociated from its monogrammed upper section, however, the print is attributed by the library to a different anonymous printmaker: the Monogrammist IW. For other prints given to this Netherlandish monogrammist, see Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish*, vol. XIII, 69-70.

<sup>414</sup> Other impressions of the print with an altered monogram, all presumably pulled from the plate after it was cut, can be located in Rotterdam, Bremen, and the BnF.

<sup>415</sup> This third state is the most prevalent of surviving impressions, preserved at the British Museum, Wolfegg, and the BnF.

remnants of the AC mark beneath the updated signature, the ghost of the enigmatic “VTRICHT” inscription remains visible on the block at the bottom margin. The later owner of this plate, whether it was Binck himself or another unrelated publisher, made a half-hearted attempt to remove references to all previous published states.<sup>416</sup>

Nevertheless, the presence of the *ICB* monogram has led to the print’s attribution to Binck and its inclusion in catalogues raisonnés under the German printmaker’s name.<sup>417</sup>

Three other much-contested engravings, the *Naked Queen on the Throne* (H.145), *The Deploring of the Venetian General Gattamelata de Narni* (H.138), and the *Baptism of the Eunuch* (H.77), exist in late impressions, in which the AC monogram and all additional inscriptions have been burnished out of the plate. In the third and final state of the *Naked Queen* [Fig. 5.10], the most common state for surviving impressions, only fragments of the monogram, date, and “VTRICHT” lettering survive. In the second state of the *Baptism of the Eunuch* [Fig. 5.11], the tablet behind the Ethiopian, which previously displayed the date and AC monogram, has been wiped clean and replaced with diagonal hatching. In all three of these cases, a subsequent owner of the plate clearly sought to disassociate the print from AC’s hand or publishing house. Was this cleansing of the matrix a form of commentary on the previous inscriptions, an effort to eradicate the confusion caused by previous tampering with the matrix? And why did the new publisher decide not to add his own address in place of AC’s? Without being able to trace the ownership history of the plate, it remains impossible to say when and why this later

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<sup>416</sup> An unmonogrammed reverse copy of this print survives in Bologna, which Arthur Hind attributed to an anonymous Italian engraver; see Hind, *Early Italian Engraving*, pt. II, cat. vol. V, 301 (no.33). In addition to other minor changes, the copy replaces the angel descending from the sky with a radiating star and simplifies the virgin’s halo.

<sup>417</sup> Binck, H.17.

printer chose to intervene, which has compounded the confusion regarding the identity of AC and which works belong to the AC oeuvre.

Although the subsequent owners of these plates remain unidentified, and the dates of their alteration and reprinting are unknown, inscriptions added to two other AC-monogrammed prints provide more specific information about the afterlives of their matrices. Both plates were acquired and reissued by publishers active in Cologne at the end of the sixteenth century. An engraving of *The Annunciation* [H.22; Fig. 5.12], copied after a woodcut from Albrecht Dürer's *Small Passion* series of 1511, was originally inscribed only with the AC crossbar monogram on the canopy above the Virgin at the upper right of the composition.<sup>418</sup> A later state of the print, however, includes the added inscription "Quad exc. 1587" at the lower left corner of the composition [Fig. 5.13]. This text likely refers to the engraver, cartographer, and historian Matthias Quad (also known as Matthias Quad von Kinkelbach; 1557-1613), who trained in the Netherlands with Dutch engravers and goldsmiths, including Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617), before moving to Cologne in 1587 and collaborating with print and map publishers.<sup>419</sup> A unique impression of the print in Berlin [Fig. 5.14] shows that the "Quad" in the inscription was subsequently replaced with the initials "P.O.", perhaps an indication that the plate had

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<sup>418</sup> Dürer, B.19.

<sup>419</sup>For a brief biography of Quad, with special attention to his work the primary composer of Latin verses for the Cologne publisher Crispijn de Passe, see Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny*, 60-64 and 151-155. Quad would also publish the first German history of Netherlandish and German printmaking, his *Teutscher Nation Herrligkeit* (Cologne, 1609). For more on this publication, see Paul Kutter, "Des Mathias Quad von Kinkelbach Nachrichten von Künstler - Der älteste deutsche Versuch einer Kunstgeschichte, gedruckt zu Köln 1609," *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 3-4 (1927 1926): 227-33; Otto Pelka, "Matthias Quad von Kinkelbach und seine Abhandlung 'Von den berühmten kunstnern Teutscher Nation,'" *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* 9 (1934): 187-94. For more on Quad's engagement with mapmaking, see Peter H. Meurer, *Atlantes Colonienses: Die Kölner Schule der Atlaskartographie, 1570-1610* (Bad Neustadt a.d. Saale: Dietrich Pfaehler, 1988), 197-235.

been acquired by Quad's frequent collaborator Peter Overadt (active 1590-1652), a Cologne publisher more famous for his cartographic prints and city views.<sup>420</sup>

Another engraving of *The Nativity* [H.23; Fig. 5.15], signed with a flat top AC monogram on the ground next to the Virgin, survives only in later impressions with inscriptions that already identify a Cologne-based publisher.<sup>421</sup> The earliest known state features the inscription "Jan Busche / maker" in a window at the upper right corner of the composition, confirmation that the plate was issued by the printer and publisher Johann Bussemacher (active c.1577-1620s), another of Quad's collaborators.<sup>422</sup> In an even later impression of the print [Fig. 5.16], Bussemacher's claim to the matrix has been burnished away and a crudely engraved inscription reading "PET. OVERAET EX / cudis" indicates that Peter Overadt eventually acquired and issued this plate as well.

Given the close working relationship between these three Cologne publishers, it is unsurprising that plates would change hands between them. But how and when did the plates arrive in Cologne in the first place? If, as some scholars have argued, the AC mark was the symbol of a previous publisher, why didn't these later publishers remove the monogram before adding their own inscriptions? Is this an indication that AC was not a

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<sup>420</sup> Peter H. Meurer, "The Cologne Map Publisher Peter Overadt (fl. 1590-1652)," *Imago Mundi* 53 (2001), 28-45.

<sup>421</sup> This same composition is replicated in reverse in an engraving at the same scale by an anonymous Netherlandish printmaker (see British Museum, accession no. 1856,0209.85). Engraved with softer lines and more subtle shading, the unsigned print is an otherwise faithful replication (or source for AC).

<sup>422</sup> On Bussemacher's output as a print publisher, see Bernadette Schöller, *Kölner Druckgraphik der Gegenreformation* (Cologne: Kölnisches Stadtmuseum, 1992). The publication includes a list of prints bearing the Bussemacher address (pp.129-190), including this engraving by AC (134, cat. no.10). On Bussemacher as a publisher of cartographic and historical books, often in partnership with Matthias Quad, see Josef Benzing, "Der Kupferstecher, Kunstdrucker und Verleger Johann Bussemacher zu Köln," in *Aus der Welt des Bibliothekars: Festschrift für Rudolf Juchhoff zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Kurt Ohly and Werner Krieg (Cologne: Greven Verlag, 1961), 129-46.

publisher after all? Or was the timing of the republication and the distance from the original source great enough to ignore AC's specific role in the production of the original print? Further research into the afterlives of AC's plates—none of which appear to have survived—could help to tell us more about the monogram.

### **Impressions printed in red ink**

One final and unconventional group of AC-monogrammed impressions likely indicates attempts by a later publisher to market the printmaker's small religious compositions to a more exclusive audience of discerning collectors. Several engravings bearing the monogram were printed in red ink, an incredibly uncommon practice in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>423</sup> Most of the handful of surviving examples from the period are impressions of prints by the most famous and collected artists of their time, including Albrecht Dürer and Lucas van Leyden, placing these engravings in august company. Two previously undescribed AC engravings—one depicting *Christ on the Cross* [App.15; Fig. 5.17] and the other portraying *The Virgin on a Crescent Moon, Crowned by Angels* [App.27; Fig. 5.18]—are known only through impressions at the Bibliothèque nationale de France printed in this luxurious sanguine tone. Hollstein also correctly noted that an impression of AC's *Adoration of the Magi* [H.26; Fig. 5.19],

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<sup>423</sup>Ad Stijnman, "Colour Printing in Intaglio before c.1700: A Technical History," in *Printing Colour 1400-1700: History, Techniques, Functions and Receptions*, ed. Ad Stijnman and Elizabeth Savage (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2015), 42–47. See also Stijnman, *Engraving and Etching, 1400-2000*, 45, 341. In a note to the text, see 69n180, the author provides a list of known color intaglio prints from the fifteenth and early sixteenth century. This list does not include AC's color prints. Etchings produced in the 1540s by printmakers from the School of Fontainebleau were also printed in colored inks, particularly reds and reddish-browns; see Catherine Jenkins, *Prints at the Court of Fontainebleau, c.1542-47*, vol. 1 (Ouderkerk aan den IJssel: Sound & Vision Publishers, 2017), 43-44.

printed in red ink, survives in Berlin's Kupferstichkabinett. In comparing this sheet with the only other known impression of the print, an example printed in black ink held by the Dresden Kupferstichkabinett [Fig. 5.20], it is clear that the red example is a later impression, pulled from the plate after the printing process had compressed some of the finer lines, making them less receptive to ink. While it is difficult to confirm without additional material evidence to compare, such as paper watermarks, these red impressions may have been issued by a different publisher in the later sixteenth century after the plates had passed from AC's hands. This shift was also the case with other prints—engravings by Lucas van Leyden and Rembrandt van Rijn—that were published in red ink by later owners of the plate and marketed as special editions for collectors.<sup>424</sup> While it is tempting to conclude that these AC engravings were reissued in colored impressions to capitalize on an outsized desire for AC-monogrammed prints inspired by the printmaker's fame, the pigment might have been added to simply enliven lower-end compositions intended for the manuscript market.<sup>425</sup> Whether its targeted consumer was an elite collector or a monastic supplicant, color intaglio printing was a novelty employed as a marketing strategy by entrepreneurial printers.

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<sup>424</sup> Stijnman, *Engraving and Etching*, 395n825. Late-sixteenth-century red impressions of Lucas van Leyden's *Christ, Paul, and the Twelve Disciples* (NHD.86-99) were likely issued posthumously by the Antwerp printer Maarten Peeters. For posthumous impressions of Rembrandt etchings printed in red ink, see Erik Hinterding, *Rembrandt as an Etcher*, *Studies in Prints and Printmaking* 6, vol. 1 (Ouderkerk aan de IJssel: Sound & Vision), 185.

<sup>425</sup> This seems to be the case with a decidedly mediocre engraving depicting *Saint Trudo* signed by the later sixteenth-century engraver Monogrammist CP which survives in a red impression pasted into one of the sixteenth-century manuscripts from the Sint-Truiden monastery. See Université de Liège, Bibliothèque ALPHA, Manuscrits et fonds anciens, Manuscript 278, *Vita S. Huberti, cum genealogia ejusdem, etc.* 16<sup>th</sup>-century, folio 207v; Monogrammist CP, Hollstein, XIII, H.5, p.26. Monogrammist CP sometimes thought to be a friar at the monastery of Sint-Truiden; see Maurits de Meyer, *Volksprenten in de Nederlanden, 1400-1900* (Amsterdam: Scheltema & Holkema, 1970), 49-50.



Print matrices, after all, were a print producer's capital, capable of generating hundreds or even thousands of impressions that could be tailored over time to new markets and consumer desires.<sup>426</sup> Within the dynamic and rapidly changing business of sixteenth-century printmaking, plates were frequently sold, traded, cut, and altered as a matter of course. As I demonstrated in earlier sections of the dissertation, the presence of the AC monogram on later impressions of several finely-engraved, typically large-scale prints even presents the possibility that a figure using that mark did not engrave some compositions but simply added his monogram to the copper matrix before printing. As the owner of a purchased, inherited, or otherwise coopted plate, the AC monogrammist was entitled to add his mark as an indicator of control, regardless of his role in the image's initial conception and fabrication. This practice was ultimately at home as part of an early sixteenth-century print producer's strategic arsenal. In addition to copying the models provided by other printmakers and replicating popular images from their own corpus, entrepreneurial printmakers were wise to acquire and republish plates by other artists as a shortcut to a diversified and expanded stock list.

These examples of the afterlives of AC plates and impressions might serve as a concluding reminder of the many ways in which the boundaries of a peripheral printmaker's corpus can be blurred by the interventions of later hands. Evidence of authorship and ownership are mutable, subject to loss and alteration. Just as the accidental effects of time can preclude our understanding a print's original appearance, so too can the intentional modifications of collectors and publishers. When these later,

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<sup>426</sup> The number of good impressions that could be pulled from an engraved plate vary depending on the depth of the engraved lines and a publisher's definition of an acceptable impression; see Stijnman, *Engraving and Etching*, 331-333.

altered impressions are the only extant examples of a composition (or at least the most visible of surviving prints), the modified multiple can be mistaken for a representative sample rather than a temporal record of shifting tastes and desires.

Finally, we must also acknowledge the complicity of the scholar's hand in perpetuating the myths and errors that often preclude new revelations about early modern prints. While the mystery of the AC monogram might stem from the rare survival of impressions and the distance of those engravings from the hands of their makers, the confusion surrounding the AC mark was further compounded by the reiteration and codification of misconceptions and questionable attributions by print scholars such as Passavant, Aumüller, and Hollstein. In order for scholarship about the AC monogram to progress we must return to the prints themselves, looking for new impressions and remaining skeptical of previously accepted attributions and assumptions.

The revelatory discoveries that will help us to further reconstitute and understand the AC monogram are in the margins: in manuscript borders, outlying collections, and in previously unnoticed alterations to individual plates and impressions. In searching for answers, my project has attempted to open up new avenues of inquiry, laying the groundwork for future discoveries. Untangling the mystery of the AC monogram will require continued searching and close looking, but this dissertation makes important strides in revealing previously unknown truths about this enigmatic mark.

**APPENDIX I: ILLUSTRATED FIGURES**

*\*due to copyright restrictions this section has been redacted by the author.*

## **Appendix II: Proposed AC additions to Hollstein**

### **Old Testament**

App.1

*Judith with the Head of Holofernes*

possibly inspired by Jan Swart van Groningen (H.75), woodcut illustration from Willem Vorsterman's *De Bibel* (Antwerp, 1528)

8.4 x 6.6 cm

AC crossbar

Collections: British Museum [1890,0415.64]; Bremen [10340]; Hamburg [3982]

### **New Testament**

App.2

*The Nativity*

7.8 x 5.8 cm

AC crossbar

Collections: Oxford [1863.1964]

App.3

*The Nativity*

11.6 x 8.5 cm

AC flat top

Collections: British Museum [1858,0417.1015]

App.4

*The Nativity*

(dimensions unknown)

AC flat top

Hauswedell auction catalogue (9 VI 1994, no.43)

Collections: unknown

App.5

*Virgin and Angels Adoring the Christ Child*

10.5 x 7.9 cm

AC flat top

Collections: BnF (partially hand-colored) [Ec N 3418]

Literature: Hébert, 317-18 (no.3418)

## App.6

*Christ with the Woman Taken in Adultery* (with inset roundel depicting *Christ and the Virgin*)

7.6 x 5.5 cm

AC flat top

Collections: Oxford [1863.1949]

## App.7

*Last Supper* (with inset roundel depicting *Christ Watching the Feet of the Disciples*)

7.6 x 5.3 cm

AC flat top with reversed c

Collections: Bremen [10347]

## App.8

*Christ Before Caiaphas* (with inset roundel depicting *The Taking of Christ*)

7.4 x 5.2 cm

AC flat top with reversed c

Collections: Bremen [10349]

## App.9

*Christ Before Pilate* (with inset roundel depicting *Christ Led Away*)

7.8 x 5.5 cm

AC flat top

Collections: Bremen [10351]

## App.10

*The Flagellation* (with inset roundel depicting *Pilate Washing his Hands*)

8.2 x 5.5 cm

AC flat top

Collections: Oxford [1863.1947]

## App.11

*Christ Presented to the People* (with inset roundel depicting *Christ Crowned with Thorns*)

7.8 x 5.5 cm

AC flat top

Collections: Bremen [10350]

## App.12

*Christ Carrying the Cross* (with inset roundel depicting *The Marys Mourning*)

7.6 x 5.4 cm

AC flat top

Collections: Bremen [10352]

## App.13

*Christ Being Nailed to the Cross* (with inset roundel depicting *Christ Taunted*)

7.9 x 5.6 cm

unsigned

Collections: Bremen [10353]

## App.14

*The Resurrection* (with inset roundel depicting *Christ's Descent into Limbo*)

After Albrecht Dürer (B.17)

AC flat top

8.8 x 5.5 cm

Collections: BnF [Ec N 3427]

Literature: Hébert, 319 (no.3427)

## App.15

*Christ on the Cross, with the Virgin, Saint John, and Mary Magdalene*

11.7 x 7.7 cm

AC flat top

Collections: BnF (red ink) [Ec N 3426]

Literature: Hébert, 318-19 (no.3426)

## App.16

*Christ on the Cross, with the Virgin, Saint John, Mary Magdalene, Saint Francis, and Saint Jerome*

after (or copied by) Master S or workshop (undescribed, Brussels F949)

18.4 x 14.0 cm

AC crossbar

Collections: BnF [Ec N 3424]

Literature: Hébert, 318-19 (no.3424)

## App.17

*Christ on the Cross*

- arched composition with border containing instruments of The Passion

after (or copied by) Master S or workshop (undescribed, Berlin 683-13)

11.6 x 8.3 cm

AC crossbar

Collections: BnF [Ec N 3425]

Literature: Hébert, 318-19 (no.3425)

**Christ**

App.18

*Ecce Homo*

- arched composition with floral border

10.6 x 7.4 cm

AC flat top

Collections: Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (hand-colored) [P.144-2007]

Literature: Craddock &amp; Barnard Auction (Cat no. 111, 1965, no.83)

App.19

*Man of Sorrows*

24.3 x 12.8 cm

AC crossbar

Collections: Metropolitan Museum, NY [59.644.136]

App.20

*The Good Shepherd*

11.0 x 7.7 cm

AC crossbar

Collections: BnF [Ec. N. 4174]; Wolfegg (later state with added text and background details, plate trimmed to remove monogram [stored in Box 17 as Anonymous German])

App.21

*Christ as Salvator Mundi standing in an arch; Christ receiving the cross from God the Father in a roundel (above); Christ kneeling before God the Father (below)*

13.5 x 6.2 cm (overall)

AC flat top

Collections: BnF [Ec N 3428]; Rijksmuseum (bottom section; see also H.51) [RP-P-1886-A-10326]

Literature: Hébert, 319-20 (no.3428)

App.22

*Virgin and Child seated between two angels in an arch; Esther and Ahasuerus in a roundel (above); Jephthah's daughter (below)*

14.0 x 6.2 cm (overall)

AC flat top

Collections: BnF [Ec N 3428]

Literature: Hébert, 318-19 (no.3429)

## App.23

*Saint Peter standing in an arch; Creation of Eve in a roundel (above); Martyrdom of Saint Peter (below)*

13.8 x 6.3 cm (overall)

AC flat top

Collections: BnF [Ec N 3430]; Bremen [10354]

Literature: Hébert, 318-19 (no.3430)

## App.24

*Saint Paul standing in an arch; Conversion of Saul in a roundel (above); Martyrdom of Saint Paul (below)*

13.6 x 6.2 cm (overall)

AC flat top

Collections: BnF [Ec N 3431]; Albertina (bottom section only) [DG1937/449]

Literature: Hébert, 318-19 (no.3431)

**Virgin**

## App.25

*The Virgin Breastfeeding the Christ Child*

7.1 x 4.9 cm

AC flat top

Collections: BnF [Ec N 3422]

Literature: Hébert, 318-19 (no.3422)

## App.26

*Virgin and Child Crowned by Two Angels*  
after Albrecht Dürer (B.39)

15.1 x 9.7 cm

AC crossbar

Collections: Metropolitan Museum, NY [1966.521.98]

## App.27

*Virgin on a Crescent Moon, crowned by Angels*

11.6 x 8.4 cm

AC pointed with reverse c

Collections: BnF (red ink) [Ec N 3423]

Literature: Hébert, 318-19 (no.3423)

## App.28

*Virgin and Child with Saint Anne*

7.0 x 4.7 cm

AC crossbar

Collection: Louvre [Collection Edmond de Rothschild 2605 LR/ Recto]



App.29

*The Holy Kinship*

12.2 x 7.9 cm

AC crossbar

Collection: Rijksmuseum (partially hand colored) [RP-P-2004-470]

## **Saints**

App.30

*Saint George on Horseback, killing a dragon*

9.3 x 7.3 cm

AC flat top

Collections: BnF [Ec N 3435]

Literature: Hébert, 320 (no.3435)

App.31

*Saint Agnes*

- facing to the left in an arched composition with a floral border

9.7 x 6.9 cm

AC flat top

Collection: Dresden [A125342]

Literature: Pfeifer-Helke, 256 (no.215)

App.32

*Saint Agnes*

- facing to the right in an arched composition with a birds and flowers in the border

10.5 x 6.8 cm

AC flat top

Collections: British Museum [1849,1208.595]

App.33

*Saint Agnes*

- facing to the right, with a palm frond

8.9 x 6.2 cm

AC flat top

Collections: Berlin [743-13]

App.34

*Saint Barbara*

8.8 x 6.5 cm

AC cross bar

Collections: Louvre [Collection Edmond de Rothschild 2609 LR/ Recto]

## App.35

*Saint Barbara Walking to the Right*

7.2 x 5.0 cm

AC flat top

Collections: Louvre [Collection Edmond de Rothschild L 32 LR/9 Recto]

## App.36

*Saint Barbara*

10.8 x 6.0 cm

AC flat top

Collections: BnF [Ec N 3440]

Literature: Hébert, 321 (no.3440)

## App.37

*Saint Clare of Assisi*

- arched composition

13.0 x 9.5

AC flat top

Collections: Gementeenbibliotheek, Rotterdam (partially hand-colored) [in manuscript inv. 96E16, folio 214b]

## App.38

*Saint Mary Magdalene*

- facing to the right

6.7 x 4.5 cm

AC crossbar

Collections: Louvre [Collection Edmond de Rothschild 2608 LR/ Recto]

## App.39

*Saint Mary Magdalene*

- facing to the left

6.8 x 4.6 cm

AC flat top

Collections: Munich [151450]; BnF [Ec N 3444]

Literature: Hébert, 321 (no.3444)

**Mythology**

## App.40

*Venus and Cupid*

7.0 x 5.1 cm

AC flat top

Collections: Louvre [Collection Edmond de Rothschild 2606 LR/ Recto]

**History**

App.41

*Lucretia*

9.5 x 6.9 cm

AC crossbar

Collections: Wittert Collection, Liège [CA 44238]

App.42

*Lucretia in a Niche*

6.3 x 4.1 cm

unsigned

Wolfegg [Box 15]; Wittert Collection, Liège [CA 44258]

**Allegory**

App.43

*Winged Venus Standing on a Globe*

after Monogrammist HL [sometimes Hans Leinberger] (H.31)

1524

11.5 x 7.5 cm

AC flat top

Collections: British Museum [1930,0424.1]

Literature: Campbell Dodgson, "Quarterly Notes," *Print Collector's Quarterly* 17 (1930): 208–9.

App.44

*Woman Standing on a Winged Heart Holding a Hawk*

7.6 x 5.1 cm

AC flat top

Collections: Oxford [1863.1954]; BnF [Ec N 3468]

Literature: Hébert, 325 (no.3468)

**Ornament**

App.45

*Vignette with a Siren and Two Children*

copy of H.189

3.0 x 8.5 cm

AC crossbar

Collections: BnF [Ec N 3506]

Literature: Hébert, 329 (no.3506)

## App.46

*Two Putti on Either Side of a Vase*

after Barthel Beham (P.67)

2.7 x 7.7 cm

unsigned

Collections: Rijksmuseum [RP-P-OB-4333]

## App.47

*Double Scabbard Design with Two Sirens and Vases*

Left half after Barthel Beham (P.80)

15.3 x 4.1 cm (overall)

unsigned

Collections: Dresden [A 1901-28]; V&A [E.3258-1923]; MAK Vienna [KI 1-224-1 (left half); KI 1-224-2 (right half)]; British Museum [1869,0410.111 (left half); 1869,0410.113 (right half)]

Literature: Pfeifer-Helke, 264 (no.239)

## App.48

*Ascending Ornament with Six Figures: Two Masks, Two Winged Horses, and Two Monsters with Tails*

8.2 x 2.8 cm

unsigned

Collections: BnF [Ec N 3525]; Berlin (?)

Literature: Hébert, 331 (no.3525); Warncke, vol. 1, 143 (Abb.185)

## App.49

*Ascending Ornament with Two Dragons, Two Winged Women, and a Bull Topped by a Candelabra*

8.7 x 2.9 cm

unsigned

Collections: BnF [Ec N 3527]

Literature: Hébert, 331 (no.3527)

## App.50

*Ascending Ornament with a Vase and Foliage with Two Grotesque Faces*

9.0 x 3.2 cm

AC crossbar

Collections: Bremen [10344]

## App.51

*Vignette with a Satyr and a Woman, the centre a vase*

copy of H.188

2.9 x 8.5 cm

AC flat top

Collections: Bremen [10319]

App.52

*Ascending Ornament with Two Sirens, Carrying a Vase*

copy of H.202

8.6 x 4.0

unsigned

Collections: British Museum [1858,0626.267]

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NHD *The New Hollstein Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, 1450-1700*. Rotterdam; Ouderkerk aan den IJssel: Sound & Vision Publishers, 1993-.

NHG *The New Hollstein German Engravings, Etchings, and Woodcuts, 1400-1700*. Rotterdam: Sound & Vision Publishers, 1996-.

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