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A HARB

ALBRECHT DÜRER
DRAWINGS AND WATER-COLOURS

SELECTED AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY EDMUND SCHILLING

WITH 57 ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON · A. ZWEMMER

TRANSLATED BY EVELINE WINKWORTH

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1949

ALBRECHT DÜRER
Born at Nuremberg in 1471
Died there in 1528

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The ultra-violet photograph for plate 10 was taken by
Hans Hinz, Basle.

INTRODUCTION

In the study of drawings, we are confronted with a variety of spiritual expressions. The aims and objects vary with each artist, and it may clarify the profusion to group them from three main points of view.

For some artists, like Raphael and Michelangelo, Holbein and Rubens, drawings are primarily stages in the development of a composition or an idea; the finished painting, the sculpture, or the building, is the ultimate aim. Preliminary or detail studies are first sketched on paper, later to be reworked and completed in another medium.

Titian's attitude toward drawing is typical of a second group of artists. Only a few pen and chalk drawings have survived from the nearly one hundred years of his long and active life. It is as though he were reluctant to draw. He preferred to work directly with his brush, designing the outlines of his pictures as an underpainting on the canvas. Tintoretto, too, was more painter than draughtsman. His many studies of nudes and drapery on blue paper are spirited in invention, but, in the last analysis, they are really only painter's aids in the completion of the cartoon or the mural painting on which he happened to be working at the time.

With Watteau, it is hard for us to choose between the painter and the draughtsman. He had a curious method of working: to stimulate his creative faculty before he started composing his pictures, he used to look through his sketchbooks of coloured chalk studies. He combined in his paintings individual motifs previously unrelated to one another and in his *Fêtes Galantes* figures and properties are juxtaposed as on a stage.

For many other artists, however, drawing is the most important expression, or even the sum and substance of their creative ability. The pen sketches in Leonardo's manuscripts are organically connected with the handwriting, and become a pictorial language peculiar to their author. Most of Rembrandt's pen drawings, too, were created for their own sake, even though some were important in the development of etchings and paintings.

Albrecht Dürer decidedly belongs to this third group. His vital preoccupation was with drawing. His work as a draughtsman reflects his time, his own life, and the successive changes in his art. Having completed his apprenticeship as goldsmith with his father, he chose painting as his profession and became a pupil of Michael Wolgemut at Nuremberg. In spite of this early training, however, his subsequent work indicates that he painted little and drew much. It seemed a long difficult road to the completion

of the painting; he was all too much inclined to linger over the preparatory detail drawings and these are often fitted only with difficulty into his many-figured compositions.

Dürer's contemporaries most admired his woodcuts and engravings, their profusion of ideas and technical perfection. The studies from which they evolved were kept hidden in his workshop, accessible only to a few good friends. Yet they were closely related to his finished work. We can recognize in Dürer's prints his drawings, perfectly polished and translated in terms of the engraver's technique. Unfortunately, we have none of his final conceptions intended for the cutting of any of the large woodcut series, but there are some of the studies immediately preceding the engraving. They are drawn with the pen, the linear disposition closely approaching that of the graver's burin on the copperplate.

Today, we are still impressed by Dürer's remarkable virtuosity. More than any other artist, he explored different techniques and experimented with various media. His earliest surviving study, a self-portrait, is drawn with the silver-point on prepared paper (Plate 1). This technique, almost forgotten today, requires a sure hand and a clear conception of the object. It was used by the great portrait draughtsmen, Leonardo and the Florentines in the South, and Jan van Eyck and Gerard David in the North. While in the Netherlands, Dürer filled a sketchbook with portraits, animals and landscapes, all drawn in silver-point in the minutest detail (Plates 40, 41). He also used silver and metal point on coloured prepared paper for his larger studies (Plates 11, 45, 55). He often heightened them with white, to achieve a plastic effect.

Dürer used soft chalk and charcoal for some of his large figures, especially the portraits, which were drawn from nature in rapid succession. With this technique, effects of light and shade, or correction of details, present no difficulty. The portraits of his mother (Plate 33), his friend Pirkheimer, the Emperor Maximilian (Plate 34), and many of the people he met in the Netherlands are done in this medium.

About 1495, Dürer was painting landscapes in water-colour, the earliest ones that we know by any great European artist (Plates 8, 9, 12, 13, 26, 27). He found his subjects in the immediate vicinity of Nuremberg and on his journey to Italy. Curiously, the joy of *painting* in the open seems to have left him after a time; we have these water-colour landscapes only from the first half of his creative career. It is possible, of course, that others have been lost or destroyed. For Dürer continued to *draw* from nature until old age.

We are accustomed to call Dürer's landscape studies simply "water-colours." Yet, at that time, the modern technique, which makes use of the lightness of the paper's surface and the transparency of the washes laid upon it, was unknown. Dürer's landscapes are mainly painted in body-colour, which often adheres only loosely to the prepared ground of the paper. He preferred cool combinations of colour.

In his panel pictures Dürer strictly observed the traditional technique of painting:

painstakingly he laid glaze upon glaze on the painting ground in order to obtain the desired transparency of surface. But in his water-colours he obeyed other laws. Confronted with the natural object, he evokes a landscape with his brush in the shortest possible space of time, almost with the speed of a pen drawing (Plates 26, 27). His aim undoubtedly was thoroughly finished water-colour drawings (Frontispiece, Plate 15), and the sheets which today are taken for the forerunners of Impressionism were probably, in his estimation, only unfinished sketches. The evening landscape and the turning leaves in autumn were vital experiences for Dürer. But it was space with its objects and their local colour that really interested him, not atmosphere with its unifying prismatic reflexions.

When Dürer was in Venice, about 1505, he became acquainted with the technique of brush drawing—in particular, brush drawing on coloured ground with added lights (Plates 23–25). Yet the connection with Venetian art is a purely technical one. His delicate brush line, executed with inimitable precision, can scarcely be distinguished from the stroke of a pen. With the brush, occasionally aided by the pen, the many-figured compositions, final results of whole series of sketches, were set out on carefully prepared coloured ground. Sometimes they were an end in themselves, pictures drawn in monochrome, such as the *Green Passion* series (Plate 21). More frequently they were projects for other artists—painters, sculptors, or craftsmen—to whom Dürer sought to impart his wishes with the utmost clarity.

The pen remained Dürer's favourite and most compliant instrument. He used it to hastily note his first visions (Plates 6, 30, 32), and also to render smaller objects (Plate 35). Occasionally he combined linear representation with broad monochrome or coloured brush strokes, to achieve more quickly the plastic modelling which was his aim (Plates 18, 54).

Since so many pen drawings from all periods of Dürer's career have been preserved, they best illustrate his versatility and the stages through which his art passed. His drawings as a boy, up to the beginning of his travels (1490), are examples of the Nuremberg late-Gothic, mannerist style (Plate 2). In this he had but little to learn from Michael Wolgemut, his first teacher.

Dürer's spiritual ancestor was Martin Schongauer, the great engraver, with whom late-Gothic ornamental graphic art reached its final development. Although Schongauer himself was no longer alive, Dürer seems to have spent some time in his workshop at Colmar in 1492. What he there aspired to learn was dexterity in copperplate engraving.

Pen drawings of this period, such as the *Holy Family* (Plate 3), already show Dürer's own aptitude and the path his art was to follow. They show, too, the divergences between him and his spiritual teacher. The seated Madonna, with her somewhat affected pose, may indeed have been inspired by Schongauer, but Dürer approached his subject from a different angle. Looking at his surroundings with keen and observant

eyes, he sought a fresh and universal interpretation of the relation between figures and space. Dürer had set out on this path before he encountered the Italian Renaissance, which was intent on similar aims.

In his pen drawings of the human figure, Dürer proceeded from the outer contours (Plates 6, 7, 17), and from there developed with harmonious, sweeping rhythms the lines of the inner contours. He draws forth life convincingly from the surface of the page. When we follow the waving lines of the hair or the movement of a sinewy hand, the eye cannot rest, and we are enchanted by the melody of his language. He seeks to symbolize in this way the exuberance of his inner vision in the most economical form. The lack of an important line or the addition of an unnecessary flourish would destroy the whole structure.

Effects of light and shade are used on similar principles, to achieve the desired modelling. The swelling and diminishing hatchings of light and shade bring the relief, the third-dimensional appearance, to the surface of the page; at the same time, his rounded lines render the contours of the body. By their numerous intersections, now closely, now loosely ranged, crosshatchings are formed, transparent or close and thick; Dürer's line renders form and shadow at the same time.

The elements in a landscape—rocks or trees, clouds and buildings—are depicted in their relation to one another. In this process, the precise separate representation of individual objects often disappears, bushes resolve themselves into space as luminous phenomena or are combined into groups by a single line. In the arrangement of the picture, Dürer concentrated on the proportions of objects as they recede into the distance and yet remain visible.

Toward the middle of the 1490's, Dürer encountered for the first time the Italian Renaissance forms—the well-constructed figures and groups in the style of the Antique. Eagerly, he imbibed these new impressions. They encouraged him on his chosen path and clarified his conceptions; yet they also imposed restrictions. His solution was to leave the new gods untouched, to use them without adapting them to his own style. Thus his figures modelled after Italian originals stand forlornly in the foreground of a landscape that is Nordic in conception and execution.

Dürer is for the world the representative of the German art of his time, standing at the turning point from Gothic to Renaissance. He was promoter rather than perfecter. In his attempts, at the turn of the century, to discover the ideal forms of the human body in terms of construction (Plate 18), and in his concern with perspective, he is following southern fashions. Yet it was at the same time a task he had set himself in order to clarify his own aims. After he had finished these labours, the restlessness which so often pervades his early compositions seems to have left him.

The second visit to Venice, in 1505, the contact with its colourful art, momentarily awakened the painter in Dürer. Never again was he to paint as ardently as he did then on his *Rosenkranzfest* (Feast of the Rose Garlands). When he reached home again, he

returned eagerly to his drawing and to his graphic work, the *Life of the Virgin* and the *Passion* series.

Although Dürer was repeatedly enriched by contact with Italy, he never absorbed the classical proportions of Italian art. His work attracts us more often by its truthfulness and its versatility of ideas than by its beauty and harmony.

Contact with Italian form helped Dürer in his composition. In the second decade of the sixteenth century, the groups are more clearly composed, the general atmosphere of his pictures is more consistent. This development is reflected in his pen drawing by the adoption of a new technique. The lines which he formerly used for contour modelling, the many little strokes and touches used to suggest light, disappear. Instead, long parallel lines, variously placed in relation to one another, now appear in contrast to white surfaces, and draw our eyes from one level to another into the distance (Plates 30, 38).

During his journey to the Netherlands (1520–1521), at the age of fifty, Dürer reached his final state of equilibrium. The portrait drawings of this period are simple and penetrating (Plates 40, 44, 45, 47). Once more he musters all his powers of vision and we can feel his joy in seeing. His figure compositions now acquire tranquillity. In the Netherlands he again came across Italian compositions (Plate 48), and he prepared sketches for a large panel picture, a *Santa Conversazione*; he also once more planned a cycle of the *Passion*, probably in woodcut technique. But neither of these projects reached completion, we know not why. Only a few pen drawings have been preserved (Plate 43).

In the last years of his life, Dürer apparently painted and drew very little. His main concern was the publication of his theoretical writings. Perhaps these were the only creative channels left to the sick and dying man.

Love and appreciation for Dürer have never died out. But it was only at the end of the nineteenth century that a comprehensive review of the widely scattered remains of his draughtsmanship was undertaken and the task of reproducing them suitably began. It took two generations to complete this work. Fortunately, it was finished just in time. For during World War II, many of the prints and studies were destroyed in Germany, or at least have become unavailable to the art lover for an indefinite period of time.

In all, about a thousand sheets of Dürer's work have come down to us. An artist whose first known work was done when he was thirteen (1484), and whose element was drawing, must have produced many times that number of drawings during his productive years. In addition, there exist three books with drawings: the *Prayerbook of the Emperor Maximilian* at Munich, the *Fencing Book* at Vienna, and the so-called *Dresden Sketchbook*, containing studies of proportion. What we have today is probably only a fragment of Dürer's total output. Our loss becomes apparent when we consider that few or none of the studies for Dürer's great woodcut series have survived, even

though each composition must have passed through many stages of detailed studies before it was in final shape for the press. Nor do we have a continuous series of studies for any of his engravings or his large paintings. Only from his journey to the Netherlands there exist the remains of two pocket sketchbooks. And surely Dürer had used this favourite device of the travelling artist before he reached old age—during his journeys to Italy, for example.

We can only speculate about the extent of the work that Dürer left behind when he died. Some conclusions can be drawn from what we know of his character. The man who in his Netherlandish diary recorded his experiences and his expenditures so accurately, and whose art demanded such subtle order and concentration, must also have kept his studio and his finished work in meticulous order. We may suppose that, following the practice of bygone centuries, his drawings were preserved and classified according to subject. He himself frequently provided them with written explanations, intended less for himself than for future generations. Studies in his possession by other artists, Schongauer and Raphael for example, were carefully identified by inscriptions. Possibly he destroyed unimportant items before his death, among them many of the sketches of his early youth. The immaculate condition of some of the studies that have not changed hands too often show us even today the fondness felt by Dürer for his own creations; they are just as fresh as if they had come straight from the studio of the master.

Dürer's fame among his contemporaries was great; it reached far beyond recognition by his fellow artists. He had discovered a language comprehensible to all, to the scholar and the common man alike. Yet, as we look back over the successive changes in creative art, we tend to confine our appreciation and enjoyment of Dürer to his aspect as a classic master, somewhat remote from our time. It is true that his style stands in contrast to that of the present day. Wölfflin called it the antithesis of Expressionism. But when the time comes that artists once more strive for a new approach to nature, and for directness of expression, Dürer's legacy will gain new value and meaning, since living art needs tradition as the root of its creative power.

NOTES ON THE PLATES

With few exceptions, the illustrations are arranged in the order of date of execution.

Inscriptions on the drawings are mentioned only when they are by Dürer himself.

Frontispiece

A Hare

Monogram and date 1502. Water and body colour. 251 × 226 mm. $9\frac{7}{8} \times 8\frac{7}{8}$ in. Vienna, Albertina.

Together with some of the floral pieces, this animal study has always been among Dürer's most popular works. It has been copied frequently, and even its own authenticity has been disputed. Over a broad underpainting in brown and gray washes, the artist developed the much-admired, minutely executed brushwork.

Plate 1

Self-Portrait

Silver-point on prepared paper. 275 × 196 mm. $10\frac{7}{8} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ in. Vienna, Albertina.

This self-portrait is the only drawing left from the period of Dürer's early youth. After he had become an old man he added these illuminating words for the benefit of posterity: "Dz hab ich aws eim spigell nach mir selbs kunterfet im 1484 jar do ich noch ein kind was Albrecht Dürer." (This I drew after myself in a mirror in the year 1484 while still a child Albrecht Dürer.)

"In this finely constructed head, there lies a peculiar tension, and one might easily be tempted to see more in it than the tension of a model before a mirror: something of the astonished expectancy with which genius encounters its first impressions of the World" (Wölfflin).

Plate 2

Three Lansquenets in Conversation

Monogram and date 1489. Pen drawing. 220 × 160 mm. $8\frac{5}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$ in. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

The three warriors engaged in lively conversation probably represent the guards at the foot of the Cross. This drawing is one of the rare examples dating from the period of the artist's youthful apprenticeship with Michael Wolgemut at Nuremberg. The excited imagination of the young apprentice is shown in the restless gestures of the soldiers.

Plate 3

The Holy Family in a Landscape

Pen drawing. 290 × 214 mm. $11\frac{3}{8} \times 8\frac{3}{8}$ in. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

In this first large representation of the Madonna, executed about 1493/94, during the "*Wanderjahre*," the close relationship of the young Dürer to Martin Schongauer, his spiritual master, becomes apparent. Although Dürer never knew Schongauer personally, he had eagerly studied his art; here, however, the introduction of the wide, well-designed landscape behind the group in the foreground reveals the new, spacious vision which distinguishes Dürer's work from that of all his predecessors.

In his early engraving, *The Madonna with the Grasshopper*, he repeats, perhaps less successfully, the lines of the same composition.

Plate 4

Self-Portrait

Pen drawing. 204×208 mm. $8 \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ in. Erlangen, Library of the University.

Dürer's earliest painted self-portrait (Paris, Louvre) dates from the year 1493. In recent years, two self-portrait drawings have been discovered, one in 1894 at Erlangen, and the other in 1927 at Lemberg (Lubomirski Museum). The similarity between the drawings before the mirror and the painting establishes beyond doubt the identity of the sitter. The meditative earnestness of Dürer's character is expressed most strikingly in the Erlangen self-portrait.

Plate 5

The young Couple

Pen drawing. 258×191 mm. $10\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ in. Hamburg, Kunsthalle.

The *Liebesgarten* (Garden of Love) was a very popular subject during the fifteenth century. A festive spirit prevails as fashionably dressed youths and maidens pass by. At Nuremberg, as well as during his travels on the Upper Rhine, Dürer may have come across pictures of this kind. A few years later, in his print *The Walk*, he was to use the same theme again, but without attaining the rhythmic ease of this drawing.

Plate 6

Portrait of his Wife Agnes

Inscribed "mein agnes." Pen drawing. 156×98 mm. $6\frac{1}{8} \times 3\frac{7}{8}$ in. Vienna, Albertina.

On July 7, 1494, at Nuremberg, Dürer married Agnes Frey, who remained his companion until his death. With great speed and supreme sureness of touch, this drawing was done from life. Rembrandt's silver-point drawing of his bride Saskia (Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett) speaks in a similar way of youthful happiness. Dürer's drawing undoubtedly belongs to the early period of his marriage.

Plate 7

Nude Woman

Dated 1493. Pen drawing. 272×147 mm. $10\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$ in. Bayonne, Musée Bonnat.

The many tentative touches are indicative of the speed with which this study was sketched from life. It is the earliest of its kind in Northern Europe. Fifteenth-century artists had great difficulty in finding models for the study of the nude. Besides the artists' wives, only the girls in the bath houses consented to serve as models.

Plate 8

Lime Tree on the Ramparts

Body-colour on parchment. 343×267 mm. $13\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$ in. Vierhouten, D. G. van Beuningen Collection.

The artist's first paintings in body-colour date from the year 1494. A direct impression of nature is captured in the lightly applied fresh green tones of the foliage and the violet shadows of the wall. Parchment, instead of paper, was chosen for this little picture, a sign that a certain

importance was attached to the occasion. Perhaps Dürer has given us here the earliest "portrait" of a tree. He may have painted it near his home, where until recently lime trees lined the ascent to the citadel.

Plate 9

The little House by the Fishpond

Inscribed "Weier haws." Water and body colour. 213 × 222 mm. 8³/₈ × 8³/₄ in.
London, British Museum.

This beautifully executed evening landscape of the country near Dürer's native town is painted in a mixture of water-colour and tempera. The intimate little picture reappears in the print *Virgin with the Monkey* (about 1498). There the pond has widened into a river, and the little house stands on the bank.

Plate 10

Venetian Costume Study

Pen drawing. 273 × 197 mm. 10³/₄ × 7³/₄ in. Basle, Öffentliche Kunstsammlung.

We have no written evidence of Dürer's first journey to Venice, but a series of drawings clearly indicates that he visited the "City on the Lagoons." This beautiful woman with the veil wears on her braids an ornament with pearls and precious stones and surmounted by a pelican.

The reproduction is made from an ultra-violet photograph which brings out the black pen strokes and thereby enables us to see the beauty of the now faded original.

Plate 11

Angel playing on the Lute

Monogram and date 1497. Silver-point on reddish-lilac ground, heightened with white, on paper. 268 × 195 mm. 10¹/₄ × 7⁵/₈ in. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

This angel has something in common with similar figures in the *Apocalypse*. It does not belong to the effortless creations of fantasy in which Dürer excelled. The pose and costume suggest that Dürer was attempting to drape a model in the antique manner.

Plate 12

The Watermill

Inscribed "weyden mull." Water-colour and tempera. 251 × 367 mm. 10 × 14¹/₂ in.
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale.

This unfinished painting on paper, an actual representation of nature, will always remain intelligible. The freshness and brilliance of the colours are astonishing. The patches in the sky and in the foreground are broadly drawn, while other parts of the picture, especially the houses, are finely delineated in the greatest detail. Several different shades of green are used recurrently in meadows and trees; contrasted with them are shadows of deep green, almost black. The reflections of the evening sky appear in the water and a remarkable effect is created by dazzling flecks of light on the great trees.

Plate 13

Trent seen from the North

Inscribed "Trint." Water-colour and tempera. 238 × 356 mm. 9³/₈ × 14 in.

Formerly Bremen, Kunsthalle.

From his first journey to Italy, which lasted from approximately autumn 1494 to spring 1495 and took him over the Brenner Pass and Bolzano to Venice, Dürer brought home several landscape studies. They are the earliest known examples of water-colours by an artist travelling to the South. In this view of a town, several shades of blue and blue-green have been washed lightly onto the paper. The architectural details, sharply drawn in brown ink, and the blue-black foliage of the trees stand out in strong relief.

Plate 14

Portrait of a young Man

Inscribed: "Also pin Ich gschtalt in achtzehn jor alt." (This is what I looked like at eighteen years old.) Monogram and date 1503. Chalk heightened with white. 296 × 213 mm. 11⁵/₈ × 8²/₈ in.

Vienna, Bibliothek der Akademie der Künste.

Judging by the inscription, this must have been a commissioned portrait. Dürer has not mentioned the name of the young man whose portrait he drew with unusual sympathy and completeness. It is one of the most charming examples of his work. In addition to this, the drawing is in a remarkably fresh and well-preserved condition, such as is not often the case with drawings in this technique.

Plate 15

Study of Plants

Dated 1503. Water and body colour. 410 × 315 mm. 16¹/₈ × 12²/₈ in. Vienna, Albertina.

This little masterpiece has the freshness of a folksong. We can recognize the individual grasses and flowers, we can name the dandelion and the yarrow, and yet the water-colour is not merely a naturalist's note, or a botanist's catalogue. The profusion of stems and blades of grass is clearly organized in space and there is no effect of restlessness or confusion. Dürer's own words are pertinent: "*Die Kunst aber ist in der Natur, wer sie heraus kann reißen, der hat sie.*" (Art, however, is in nature, and whoever can draw it out, he possesses it.)

Plate 16

Greyhound

Brush and india ink. 145 × 196 mm. 5³/₄ × 7³/₄ in. Windsor Castle, Royal Library.

By gracious permission of H. M. The King.

Unfortunately, this lively animal study is the only detailed sketch that remains of those done in preparation for the engraving of St. Hubert, 1500. But many such sketches must have been needed to complete that splendid composition, with its rich landscape, fine figures and animals.

Plate 17

Studies of Arm and Hand

Pen drawing. 216 × 274 mm. 8¹/₂ × 10³/₄ in. London, British Museum.

From these studies for the Adam of the engraving *Adam and Eve*, the arm with the staff and the hand in the centre were repeated fairly exactly in the engraving. This sheet of sketches shows with how much care each separate motif was worked out.

Plate 18

Studies of Adam and Eve

Monogram and date 1504. Pen and brush. 242 × 201 mm. $9\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{7}{8}$ in.
New York, Pierpont Morgan Library.

None of Dürer's engravings required more preparatory work than his *Adam and Eve* (1504). We can follow the process of growth in the drawings that have been preserved. They are studies in proportion, attempts to express constructively the ideal beauty of man and woman. These sketches were the final versions which Dürer combined; he actually glued them together from two earlier detailed studies. With minor alterations, they were used in the engraving.

Plate 19

Three Views of a Jousting Helmet

Signed with the monogram. Brush drawing in water and body colour. 422 × 268 mm.
 $16\frac{6}{8} \times 10\frac{1}{8}$ in. Paris, Musée du Louvre.

Here, with his peculiar love for precise delineation of the smallest forms, Dürer concentrated on the portrayal of a helmet, viewed from three angles. The steel-blue, metallic gleam of the helmet is but little relieved by the tones of the greenish-brown leather straps, bordered with black, or by the yellow metal studs. The two upper studies were used for the engravings *The Coat of Arms with the Skull* (1503) and *The Coat of Arms with a Helmet*.

Plate 20

The Visitation

Signed on the little tablet, with the monogram in reverse. Pen drawing. 255 × 207 mm.
 $10 \times 8\frac{1}{8}$ in. Vienna, Albertina.

Only three preparatory studies for the series of woodcuts known as the *Life of the Virgin* have been preserved: the study reproduced here, and compositions for the *Birth of the Virgin* (about 1504; Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett) and for the *Death of the Virgin* (about 1510; Vienna, Albertina).

The *Visitation* belongs to the early sketches done before the journey to Venice. The woodcut shows that an even wider development and clarification of the hasty sketches were attempted, not altogether successfully. In the woodcut, the door from which Joachim emerges seems like stage property, in comparison with the realistic landscape.

Plate 21

Christ taken Captive

Monogram and date 1504. Pen and brush in black on paper with green prepared surface, heightened with white. 282 × 180 mm. $11\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{1}{8}$ in. Vienna, Albertina.

The so-called *Green Passion*, to which the *Christ taken Captive* belongs, consists of a series of eleven (originally twelve) sheets. As early as the seventeenth century, they were mentioned as being in the possession of the Emperor Frederick III, and were admired for their greatness of conception and completeness of execution. The twelve sheets probably formed a frame for a central composition, drawn in the same manner, with a *Calvary* (Florence, Uffizii). A highly evolved preliminary study for the *Christ taken Captive* has been preserved (Turin, Library). As usually happens, certain happy inspirations have been sacrificed in the finished composition; in their place, we have a carefully planned and balanced composition.

Plate 22

Portrait of a Peasant Woman

Monogram and date 1505. Charcoal, dark gray wash as background. 350×266 mm.
13³/₄×10¹/₄ in. Rotterdam, Boymans Museum.

Here Dürer has immortalized the coarse features of a South Tirolese peasant woman whom he had come across on his second journey to Italy. Fresh impressions are accompanied by an intensified feeling of well-being, which is conveyed by this drawing.

Plate 23

Head of the twelve-year-old Jesus

Brush drawing on blue Venetian paper. 275×211 mm. 10⁷/₈×8¹/₄ in. Vienna, Albertina.

This drawing was done for the painting of the *Twelve-year-old Jesus among the Scribes* (Lugano, Thyssen Collection), which Dürer boasted to have painted in five days. This remark doubtlessly refers only to the painting itself, for three other preparatory studies (Vienna, Albertina, and Brunswick, Blasius Collection) and even the picture itself all point to the fact that its actual completion must have taken longer. The study of the head of the Christ-child is an example of the suave simplicity which Dürer really mastered only while in immediate contact with Italian art; it was not surpassed, even in the painting.

Plate 24

Studies of Hands

India ink and brush, heightened with white on blue Venetian paper. 247×184 mm. 9³/₄×7¹/₄ in.
Vienna, Albertina.

In his letters to his friend Pirkheimer, we read repeatedly of Dürer's finest panel-painting, the *Rosenkranzfest* (Feast of the Rose Garlands) (Prague, Národní Museum), which, after five months of work, he completed in 1506 for the House of the German Merchants in Venice. We have no preliminary sketches in support of this literary evidence, and no sketch of the whole composition, but there are a series of detail sketches, mostly drawn with the brush on coloured ground in the Venetian manner.

The hands here are those of the St. Dominic of the painting, for which another large study exists (Vienna, Albertina).

Plate 25

Portrait of an Architect

Monogram and date 1506. Gray brush drawing, heightened in white on blue Venetian paper.
386×263 mm. 15¹/₄×10³/₈ in. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

Around the throne of the Madonna of the *Rosenkranzfest*, beside the Donor, Dürer assembles St. Dominic, the Emperor, the Pope, and secular dignitaries. It was an old custom to use the portraits of contemporaries as models. The artist did not forget to immortalize himself as well.

This large study is probably the portrait of the architect, Hieronymus of Augsburg, who was working at the House of the German Merchants during Dürer's stay in Venice.

Plate 26

Mountain Landscape in the South Tirol

Inscribed "wehlsch pirg." Water and body colour. 210 × 312 mm. $8\frac{1}{4} \times 12\frac{1}{4}$ in.
Oxford, Ashmolean Museum.

A sunrise, with its quickly changing colours, prompted Dürer to make a rapid underpainting in delicate green and blue. Because of the rapidly altering light, he could concentrate only on a group of mountains in the middle distance. The traveller had no time for more. The district has been identified as being in the neighbourhood of Segonzano in the Val di Cembra, through which Dürer must have passed on his return from Venice.

Plate 27

Kalchreuth

Inscribed "Kalkrewt." Water and body colour. 216 × 314 mm. $8\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{3}{8}$ in.
Formerly Bremen, Kunsthalle.

Dürer visited this little village on a day in autumn. The view is from a window of the castle which belonged to the Nuremberg patrician family Haller. Such fresh landscape studies suggest the Impressionist work of the nineteenth century; Dürer himself doubtlessly considered the water-colour only half finished.

We have a similar study in the same technique of broad washes of colour—a view of the same range of mountains in the Jura that appears in the background of this drawing (Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett).

Plate 28

Study for a standing Apostle

Monogram and date 1508. Brush drawing on green prepared paper, heightened with white.
400 × 240 mm. $15\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$ in. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

The main part of the altar-piece commissioned by the merchant Jakob Heller (1509) in the Dominican church at Frankfort-on-Main represented the Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin. As the altar-piece has been destroyed, our knowledge of its history and artistic conception depends on a copy, on numerous studies drawn with the brush in the same technique, and on transcriptions of Dürer's letters to Heller.

This standing apostle, a St. Paul or St. James the Greater, was actually a drapery study for the picture. There further exists a study for the head which is carried out in greater detail (Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett).

Plate 29

Study of Hands in Adoration

Brush and india ink, on paper with a blue prepared surface, heightened with white.
290 × 197 mm. $11\frac{3}{8} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ in. Vienna, Albertina.

Although it is the preliminary study for the hands of a kneeling apostle in the so-called Heller Altar (1509), this study in brushwork is a masterpiece, complete in itself.

Plate 30

The Holy Family in a Room

Pen drawing. 254 × 216 mm. 10 × 8¹/₄ in. Formerly Brunswick, Blasius Collection.

The economy with which Dürer is able to give form to his vision is astonishing. The spacious room with its big window and the household utensils, the St. Joseph reading at a table, all are rendered with a few strokes of the pen. Only the Madonna with the little lively Child Jesus is brought into relief by a few lines of shading.

Plate 31

Studies of a Pair of Scales

Pen drawing. 205 × 175 mm. 8¹/₈ × 6⁷/₈ in. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

Dürer's masterpieces of engraving, *St. Jerome in his Study*, *The Knight, Death and the Devil*, and the *Melancholia*, date from the years 1513/14. Dürer himself did not explain the meaning of the *Melancholia*. Many scholars have been tempted to seek in contemporary thought for an explanation of the mysterious female genius in her strange surroundings. According to his usual custom, Dürer made minute detail studies for the child genius, the hound, and for all the various utensils, including the scales.

Plate 32

Madonna with two Angels

Monogram and date 1511. Pen drawing. 203 × 150 mm. 8 × 5⁷/₈ in. Venice, Accademia.

It is well known that the abundant series of Dürer's most beautiful Madonnas dates from the second decade of the sixteenth century.

Two angels are offering a sceptre, in the form of a cross, and a crown to the Queen of Heaven, who seems to shrink away in awe. The facility of the rhythm has almost the charm of late Venetian art, almost that of a Tiepolo.

Plate 33

Dürer's Mother

Signed "1514 an oculy" (March 19) and "Dz ist albrecht dürers muter dy was 63 jor und ist verschiden im 1514 jor am erchtag vor der crewtzwochn vm zwey genacht" (That is Albrecht Dürer's mother who was 63 years old and died in the year 1514 on Tuesday before Holy Week at two o'clock at night) (Tuesday, May 16). Charcoal, 421 × 303 mm. 16⁵/₈ × 12 in. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

This large charcoal drawing of his mother, Barbara Dürer, née Holper, is considered the most moving of Dürer's portraits. "This drawing is the picture of a woman, exhausted by childbearing, worn out by work and privation; the shrunken face with the squinting eyes has a gloomy and hopeless expression, almost terrifying in effect." (Wölfflin)

Plate 34

The Emperor Maximilian I

Inscribed "Das ist keiser maximilian den hab ich albrecht dürer zw awgsburg hoch obn awff der pfaltz in seine kleinen stüble künfterfett do man tzalt 1518 am mandag noch Johannis

tawffer." (This is the Emperor Maximilian whom I, Albrecht Dürer, drew at Augsburg in the upper Palatinate in his small chamber in the year 1518 on the Monday after the day of St. John the Baptist.) Charcoal, red and yellow washes. 381 × 319 mm. 15 × 12⁵/₈ in.
Vienna, Albertina.

This drawing was completed during the *Reichstag* at Augsburg on June 28th. For the short sitting granted him, Dürer used charcoal, which permitted rapid alterations. The sketch served as a preliminary study for the two paintings (Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, and Vienna, Gemäldegalerie) and for a portrait woodcut of the great Hapsburg monarch. The portrait drawing is not in perfect condition.

Plate 35 *A Page from the Prayerbook of the Emperor Maximilian I*

Pen, violet ink. 275 × 190 mm. 10⁷/₈ × 7¹/₈ in. Munich, Bayrische Staatsbibliothek.

The Emperor Maximilian was Dürer's most influential patron. Between the years 1512 and 1519, the artist was working almost exclusively on large woodcut series in honour of the Emperor, among them the *Ehrenpforte* (Triumphal Arch), the *Triumphzug* (Triumphal Procession), and the *Triumphwagen* (Triumphal Car). The happiest creation resulting from this "bread and butter work" is the so-called *Prayerbook of the Emperor Maximilian*. Other artists participated in the marginal drawings. Dürer's contribution, in coloured inks on parchment, is preserved at Munich (Staatsbibliothek). The rest of the *Prayerbook* is at Besançon (Bibliothèque Municipale). Among northern artists only the younger Holbein has succeeded in effecting such successful union of figures and ornament.

The decoration reproduced here is arranged around the printed text. The motif of the playing musicians accompanies the words of the text, "*Cantate domino canticum novum.*"

Plate 36 *Study of a Heron*

Water-colour on parchment. 272 × 349 mm. 10³/₄ × 13³/₄ in. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

This study of a dead bird is carried out with the greatest accuracy without preliminary drawing. The use of parchment for a rapid sketch is unusual.

Plate 37 *The Mill*

Silver-point. 151 × 228 mm. 6 × 9 in. Bayonne, Musée Bonnat.

About fifteen years earlier, in the mid-1490's, Dürer had painted the same landscape motif in water-colour (Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett). In this silver-point drawing, done outdoors, he combines with greater simplicity the individual motifs in the landscape and overcomes the restraint of the earlier, still very objective, work.

Plate 38 *The Holy Family*

Monogram and date 1511. Pen drawing. 300 × 219 mm. 11⁷/₈ × 8⁵/₈ in. Vienna, Albertina.

As this preliminary study shows, the woodcut of the *Holy Family with Joachim and Anna* was planned as a composition with several figures. The throng of figures in the background of the drawing gave place to trees and bushes, setting off the sharply lighted group in the woodcut.

The Virgin crowned by Angels

Pen drawing. 149×101 mm. $5\frac{7}{8} \times 4$ in. London, British Museum.

This lively composition is a sketch for the engraving of 1518. We here have a chance to observe, from afar, the creative process of genius. An earlier study (Vienna, Albertina), dating from 1508, was adapted for the cloak of the Madonna.

Portraits of Paul Topler and Martin Pfinzing

Inscribed "merten pfintzing XXII jor alt" and "pawll dopler 1520 LXI jor Alt" and "zw ach gemacht" (done at Aachen). Silver-point. 128×190 mm. $5 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ in. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

This drawing belongs to the pocket sketchbook of the journey to the Netherlands; with its silver-point drawings Dürer immortalized people, animals, buildings, landscapes—anything that caught his fancy. Pages of the little book are scattered among European collections. Dürer mentions in his diary this drawing of the two Nuremberg merchants. It was done at Aix-la-Chapelle, where he stayed in October, during the coronation of the Emperor Charles V (October 23, 1520).

Recumbent Lion

Inscribed "zw gent." Silver-point. 129×190 mm. $5\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{1}{8}$ in. Vienna, Albertina.

While at Ghent on April 20, 1521, Dürer wrote in his diary: "*danach sahe ich die löben und conterfeyt einen mit den steffi*" (after that I saw the lions and drew one with the point). There exist three other sketches of the same animal. Dürer represented lions at various times throughout his life, first in a miniature in water-colour (Hamburg, Kunsthalle) in the year 1494. But nowhere else is his observation of nature as fresh and immediate as in this record of his travels.

View of the Quai near the Scheldetor at Antwerp

Inscribed "1520 Antorff." Pen drawing. 213×283 mm. $8\frac{2}{8} \times 11\frac{1}{8}$ in. Vienna, Albertina.

Dürer arrived in Antwerp on August 2, 1520. The boats with their rigging give rhythm to the composition; this rhythm is repeated in the towers on the river banks. The economy of the whole design, executed in lines and planes almost without shadow, suggests Japanese drawing. The movement of the water is indicated by a few light wavy lines in the foreground.

Christ on the Mount of Olives

Monogram and date 1520. Pen drawing. 206×274 mm. $8\frac{1}{8} \times 10\frac{3}{8}$ in.

Basle, Robert von Hirsch Collection.

At the beginning of the 1520's, Dürer was planning a series of oblong drawings of the Passion; only a few single sheets now exist. The *Mount of Olives*, mentioned by Dürer in his Netherlandish diary together with a second version (Frankfort-on-Main, Staedelsches Kunstinstitut), is distinguished from other compositions by the richly developed landscape.

The Christ crying out in agony, and the disciple who buries his sleeping head in his arms, are not newly developed motifs. They derive from the *Green Passion* (1504), and were adapted, with numerous alterations, in engravings as well as drawings.

Plate 44

Portrait of Lucas van Leyden

Monogram. Silver-point. 244×171 mm. 9⁵/₈×6³/₈ in. Lille, Musée Wicar.

In his diary, Dürer mentions his meeting in June 1521, with the great Netherlandish engraver and painter: "*Ich habe Meister Lucas van Leyden mit dem Steft conterfet*" (I have drawn Master Lucas van Leyden with the point).

Plate 45

Agnes Dürer in Netherlandish Costume

Inscribed: "*Das hat albrecht dörer noch seiner hawsfrawen Conterfet zw antorff in der niderlendischen Kleidung im jor 1521 do sy aneinander zw der e gehabt hetten XXVII jor*" (This Albrecht Dürer drew in Antwerp of his wife in Netherlandish costume in the year 1521 when they had been married for 27 years). Metal-point on a dark-violet prepared surface. 407×271 mm. 16×10⁵/₈ in. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

The consequential inscription shows the importance that Dürer attached to this large portrait drawing. Agnes Dürer has been characterized as a capable, but not, perhaps, an adaptable woman. Dürer, too, saw firmness and shrewdness in his wife's features. At a later date, in July 1521, Dürer drew his wife for the second time on this journey.

Plate 46

Study for an Angel's Head

Monogram and date 1521. Pen and wash on violet-brown ground, heightened with white. 217×155 mm. 8¹/₂×6¹/₈ in. Formerly Bremen, Kunsthalle.

In the sketch of the picture of the Virgin (Plate 48), an angel crouches at the right, playing the lute with rapt expression. This head, a study from the model, is more objective, less ethereal in effect. The brush treatment is impulsive, the highlights are applied with strong touches. The left eye remains unfinished.

Plate 47

The Head of an old Man of Ninety-Three

Monogram and date 1521. Brush drawing on dark-violet prepared ground, heightened with white. 269×200 mm. 10⁵/₈×7⁷/₈ in. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

The large, technically perfect portrait study in the Albertina (Vienna), which was done at Antwerp in 1521, is much better known than this sketch from the same model. Both studies relate to one of the few paintings done on the journey to the Netherlands, a *St. Jerome* (Lisbon, National Museum). The free treatment of the white highlights and the expression of the open eyes indicate a quickly executed study. In the Vienna drawing, the old man leans his head to the right, and his eyes are partly closed, as though he were weary from the lengthy sitting. The finished portrait is a combination of both sketches.

Plate 48

Madonna enthroned, surrounded by Saints and Angels

Pen drawing. 315×444 mm. 12³/₈×17¹/₈ in. Bayonne, Musée Bonnat.

From about 1520 to 1521, Dürer was busy with a picture of the Virgin, planned on a large scale. Four pen studies and some careful studies of detail show that the execution was already

far advanced. We do not know whether the commission was ever completed. On one of the other studies we are given precise information about the individual saints. Close to the throne, there is the Holy Family with King David; to the right, near the kneeling woman donor, stand St. Agnes and St. Apollonia; to the left, St. Dorothea and St. Barbara; before them sits St. Catherine.

Plate 49

Studies for a Saint Christopher

Monogram and date 1521. Pen drawing. 228×407 mm. 9×16 in. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

In his Netherlandish diary, Dürer mentions on May 19, 1521, that he had done four sketches for a Saint Christopher for the painter Joachim Patinir. The facility with which the motif is varied, recalls Dürer's own words: "*Dann ein guter Maler ist inwendig voller Figur*" (For a good painter is inwardly full of figures).

Plate 50

The Kurfürst Frederick the Wise

Silver-point over preliminary drawing in charcoal. 177×138 mm. 7×5³/₈ in.
Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

The Kurfürst was one of the greatest art lovers of the time of the Reformation. Dürer had occasion to draw him from life during the *Reichstag* at Nuremberg about 1522/23. This keenly observed study served as a preparation for the engraving of the year 1524.

Plate 51

Ulrich Varnbüler

Black and brown charcoal. 415×320 mm. 16³/₈×12⁵/₈ in. Vienna, Albertina.

The proportions of this drawing undoubtedly once corresponded exactly to those of the large portrait wood-engraving of 1522, for which it was the preparatory study. This is not a first, direct study from life for composition and details are already executed according to the requirements of woodcut technique.

Ulrich Varnbüler, one of the Emperor's councillors, belonged to the circle of the Humanists Erasmus and Pirkheimer.

Plate 52

The Lamentation over the dead Christ

Signed and dated 1522. Silver-point. 416×293 mm. 16³/₈×11¹/₈ in.
Formerly Bremen, Kunsthalle.

Dürer here put on paper one of the greatest spiritual visions of the Passion theme. Attempts to explain this unusual composition have been in vain. The combination of the two half-length figures with the two crouching figures beside the body of the dead Christ is probably of Dürer's own invention. In the endeavour to keep all the figures in the foremost plane of the picture, Dürer obviously had difficulty with the foreshortened left leg of Christ on the steep bank beside the half-length figures.

Plate 53

The Adoration of the Kings

Monogram and date 1524. Pen drawing. 215×294 mm. $8\frac{3}{4} \times 11\frac{5}{8}$ in. Vienna, Albertina.

A careful study of every detail must have preceded the execution of this composition, which is carried out with great thoroughness. This is an example of a drawing that was, for Dürer, an end in itself, not merely a necessary step in the preparation of a woodcut (cf. page 7).

The truly regal bearing of the Holy Family makes us forget that the reception of the Wise Men took place in a stable.

Plate 54

The Annunciation

Monogram and date 1526. Pen drawing, with water-colour. 288×211 mm. $11\frac{3}{8} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ in.
Chantilly, Musée Condé.

Examples of Dürer's draughtsmanship become more and more rare as he advances in old age and illness. This late example, however, shows the unbroken power of his creative genius. Figures and space are clearly and harmoniously related. Compared with an early study of the life of the Virgin (Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett), which deals with the same subject, this late version has calm and detachment.

Plate 55

Study for the Head of the Apostle Paul

Monogram and date 1526. Metal-point on paper with brown prepared surface, heightened in pink with the brush. 380×291 mm. $15 \times 11\frac{1}{2}$ in. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

The pictures of the four evangelists, the last of Dürer's large paintings, are considered his artistic legacy. He sent them in 1526 to the council of his native town. Of the preparatory work, three other heads and a study of drapery—five sketches of models altogether—have been preserved.

Plate 56

Study for a Resurrection

Signed with monogram and dated 1526. Pen drawing. 188×206 mm. $7\frac{3}{8} \times 8\frac{1}{8}$ in.
Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

The meaning of this dramatic representation cannot be explained with any certainty. However, the ecstatic figures gazing upwards, and the second group blinded by light and lying prostrate on the ground, would appear to be intended for a scene of the Resurrection or the Last Judgment.



PLATE I SELF-PORTRAIT

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PLATE 2 THREE LANSQUENETS IN CONVERSATION



PLATE 3 THE HOLY FAMILY IN A LANDSCAPE



PLATE 4 SELF-PORTRAIT



PLATE 5 THE YOUNG COUPLE



PLATE 6 PORTRAIT OF HIS WIFE AGNES



PLATE 9 THE LITTLE HOUSE BY THE FISH POND



PLATE IO VENETIAN COSTUME STUDY



PLATE II ANGEL PLAYING ON THE LUTE



PLATE 12 THE WATERMILL



PLATE 13 TRENT SEEN FROM THE NORTH



PLATE 14 PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN



PLATE 15 STUDY OF PLANTS



PLATE 16 GREYHOUND



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PLATE 17 STUDIES OF ARM AND HAND

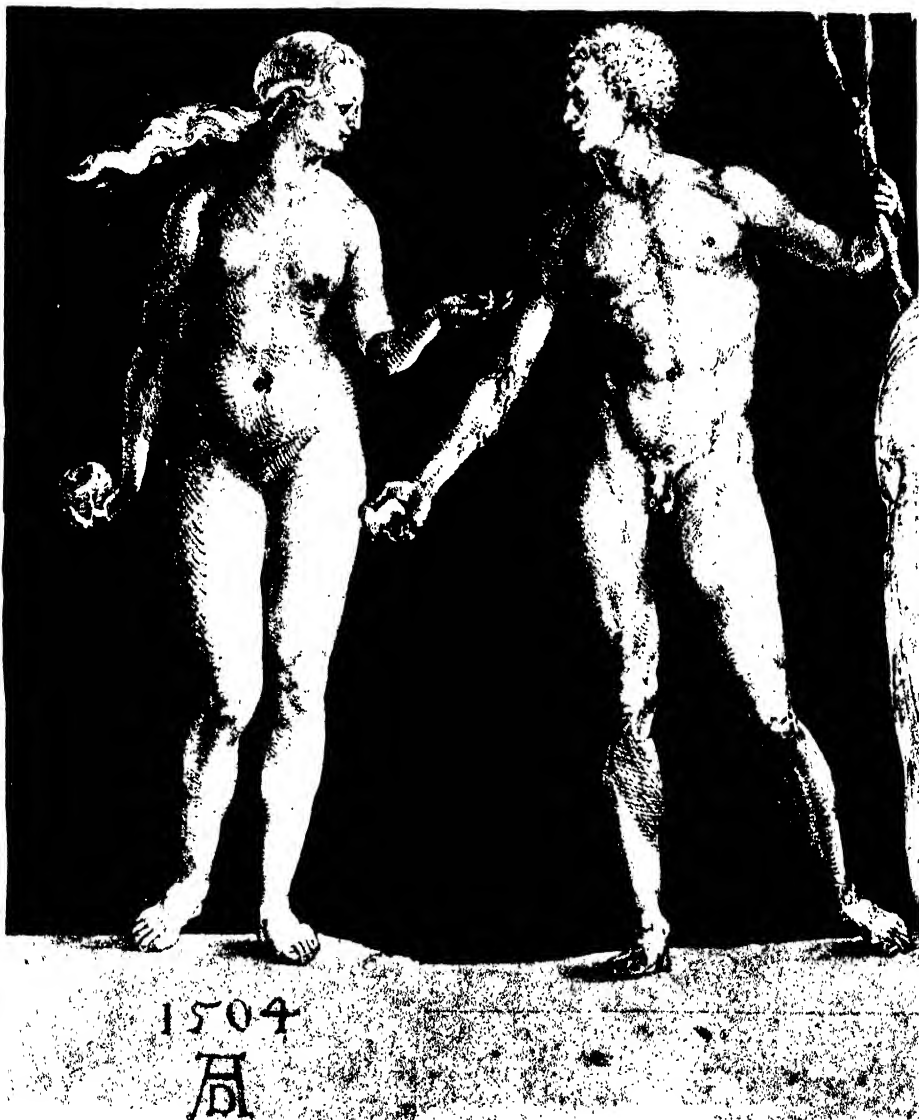


PLATE 18 STUDIES OF ADAM AND EVE



PLATE 19 THREE VIEWS OF A JOUSTING HELMET



PLATE 20 THE VISITATION



PLATE 21 CHRIST TAKEN CAPTIVE



PLATE 22 PORTRAIT OF A PEASANT WOMAN



PLATE 23 HEAD OF THE TWELVE-YEAR-OLD JESUS



PLATE 24 STUDIES OF HANDS



PLATE 25 PORTRAIT OF AN ARCHITECT



PLATE 26 MOUNTAIN LANDSCAPE IN THE SOUTH TIROL

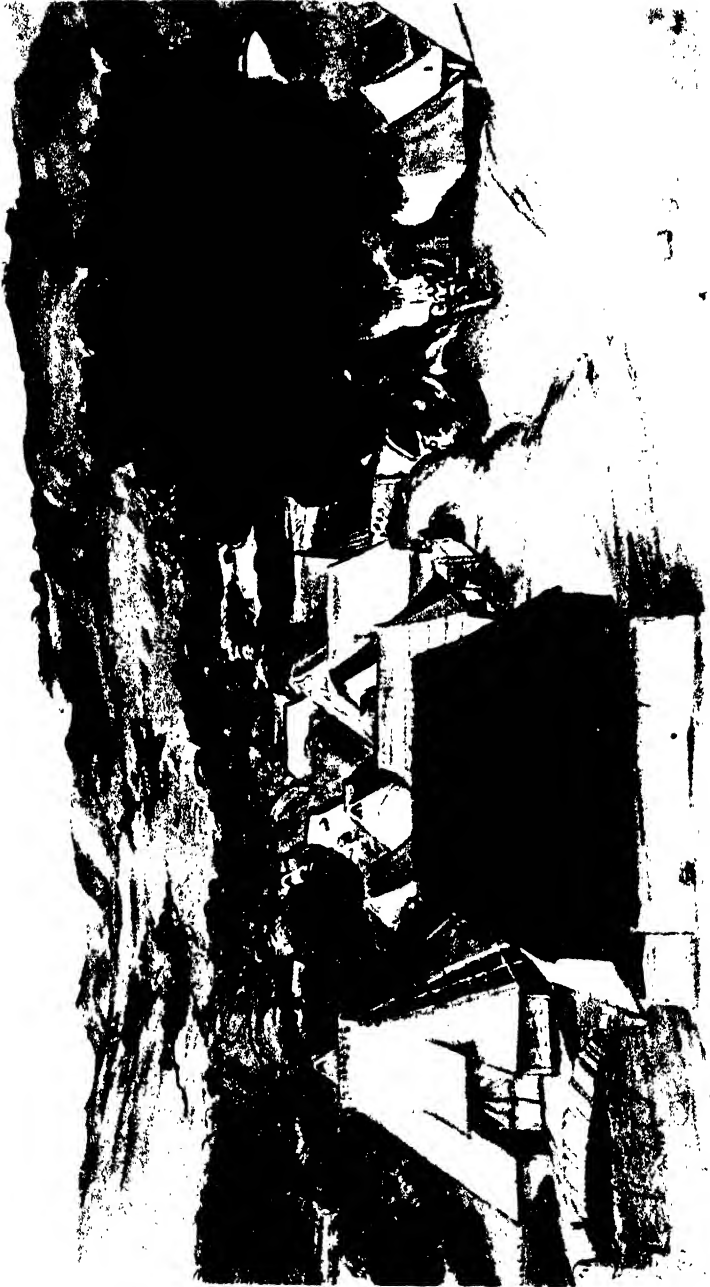


PLATE 27 KALCHREUTH



PLATE 28 STUDY FOR A STANDING APOSTLE

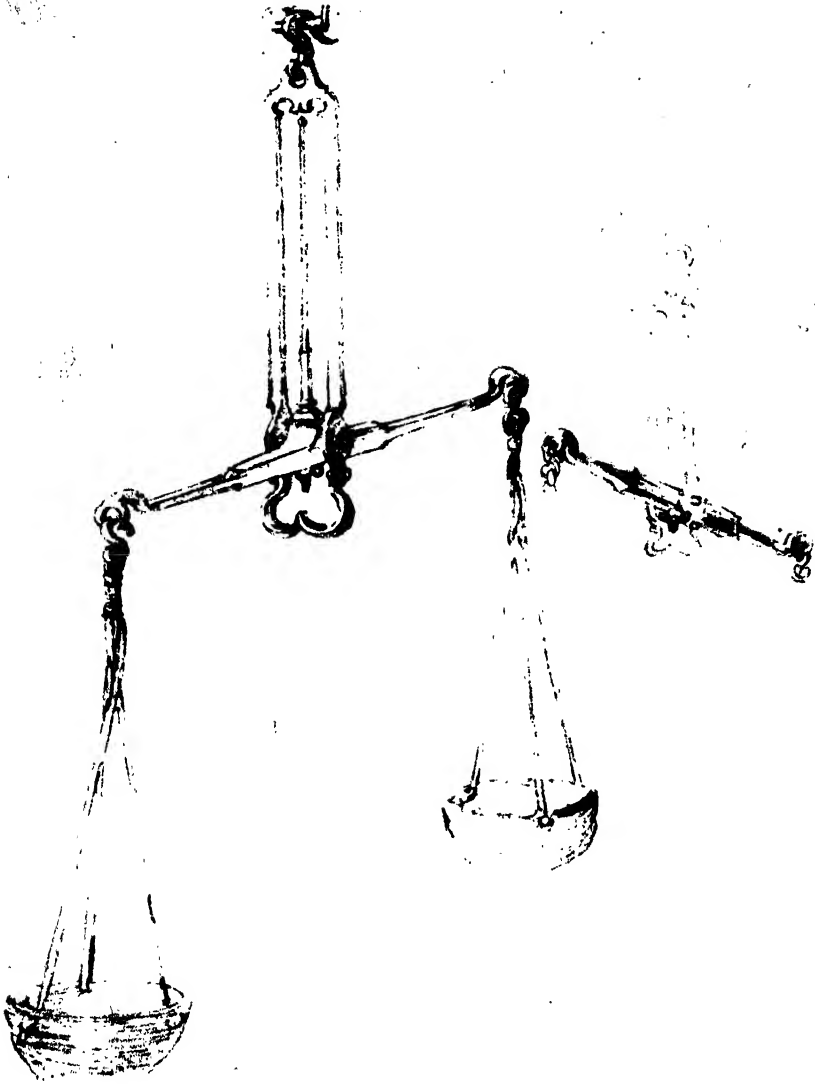


PLATE 31 STUDIES OF A PAIR OF SCALES



PLATE 32 MADONNA WITH TWO ANGELS



PLATE 33 DÜRER'S MOTHER



PLATE 34 THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN I



PLATE 35 A PAGE FROM THE PRAYERBOOK OF THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN I



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PLATE 36 STUDY OF A HERON

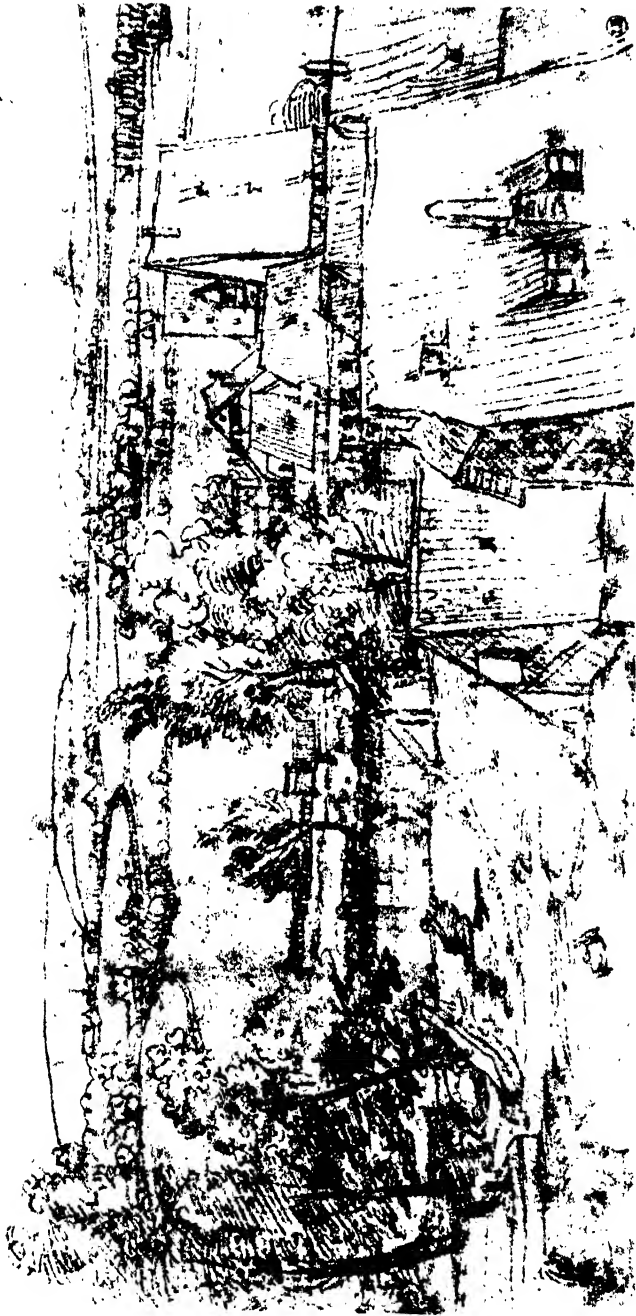


PLATE 37 THE MILL



PLATE 38 THE HOLY FAMILY



PLATE 39 THE VIRGIN CROWNED BY ANGELS

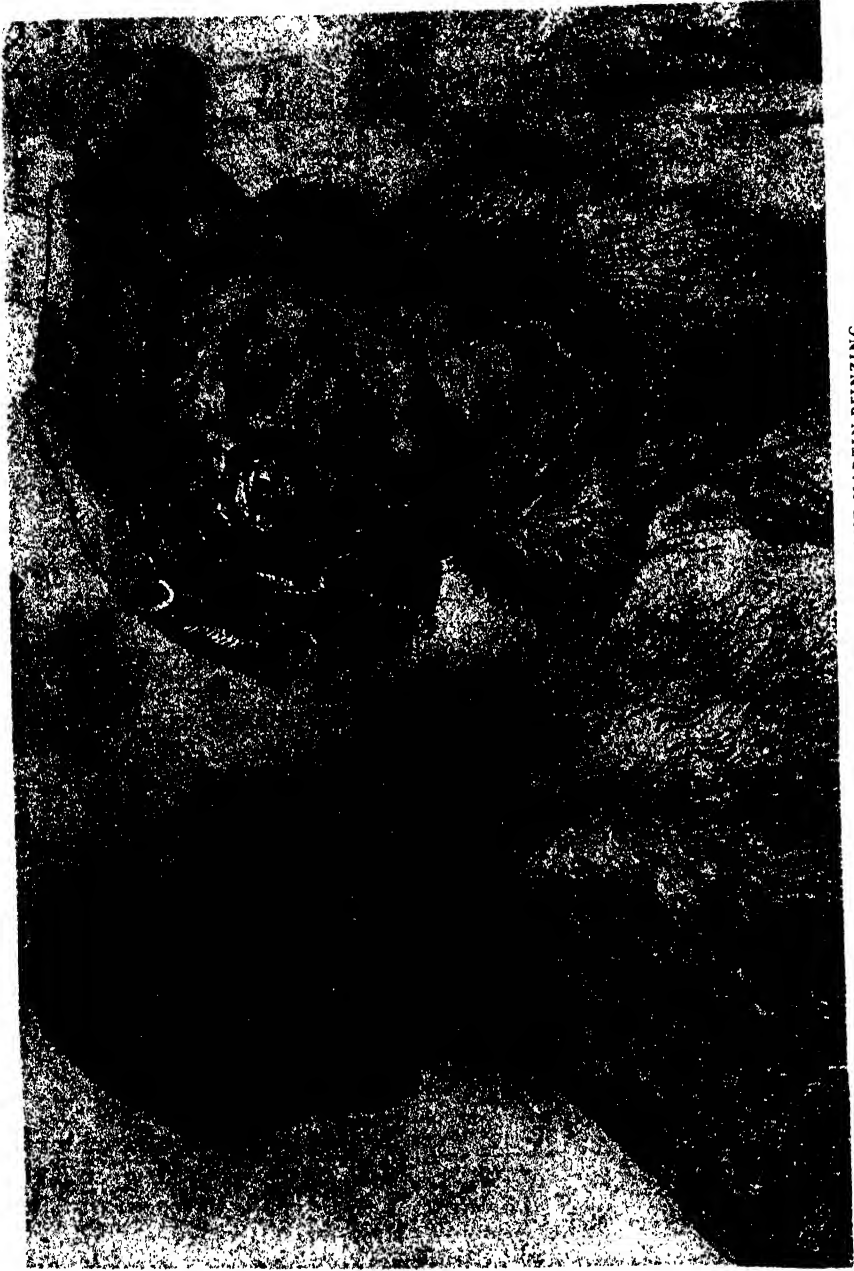


PLATE 40 PORTRAITS OF PAUL TOFLER AND MARTIN PINZING



PLATE 41 RECUMBENT LION

1520 Amoy

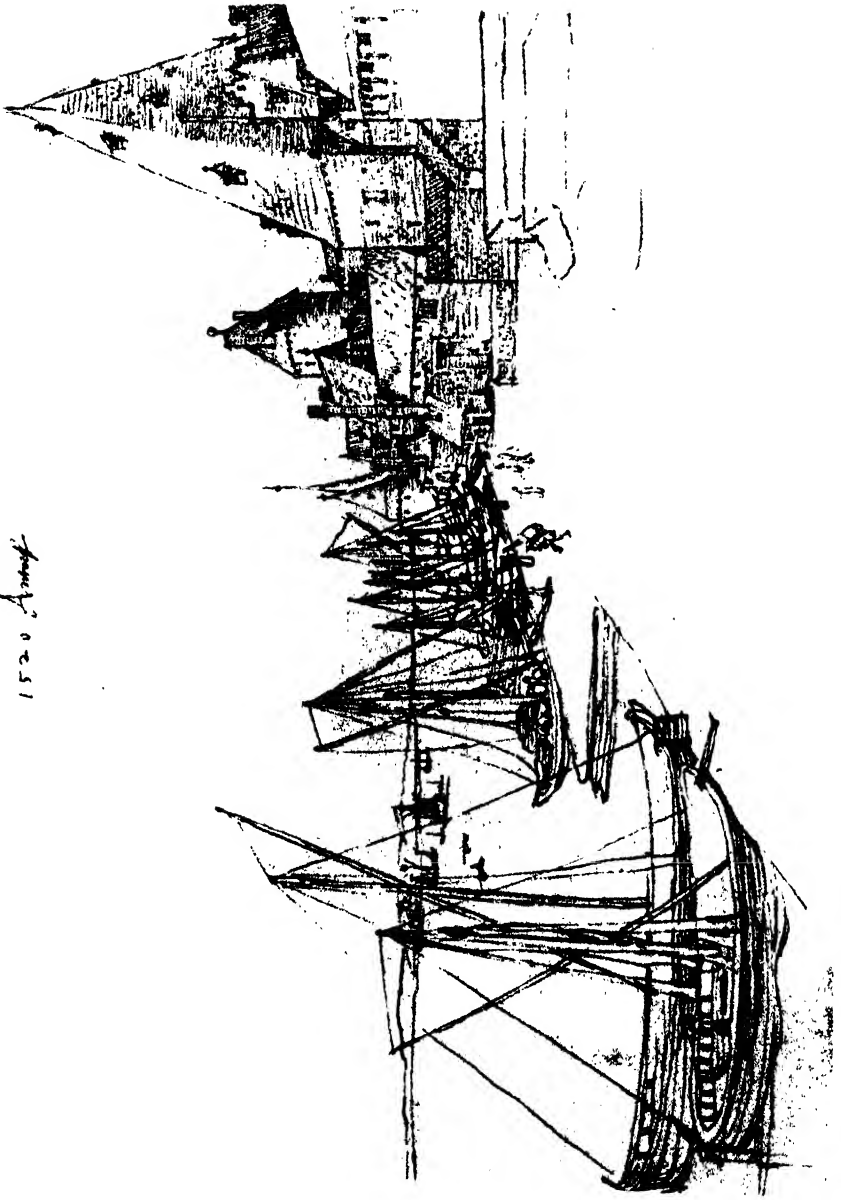


PLATE 42 VIEW OF THE QUAY NEAR THE SCHELDETOR AT ANTWERP



PLATE 43 CHRIST ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES



PLATE 44 PORTRAIT OF LUCAS VAN LEYDEN



PLATE 45 AGNES DÜRER IN NETHERLANDISH COSTUME



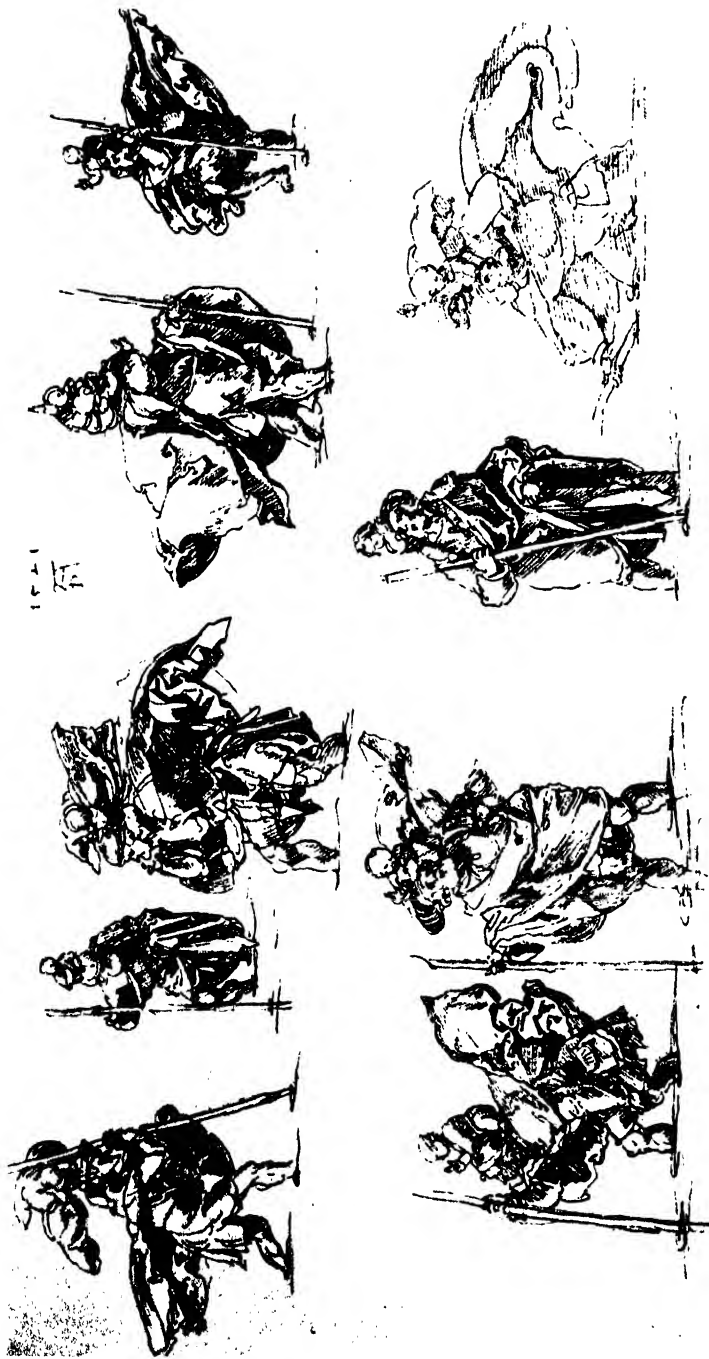
PLATE 46 STUDY FOR AN ANGEL'S HEAD



PLATE 47 THE HEAD OF AN OLD MAN OF NINETY-THREE



PLATE 48 MADONNA ENTHRONED, SURROUNDED BY SAINTS AND ANGELS



1
2
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4
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PLATE 49 STUDIES FOR A SAINT CHRISTOPHER



PLATE 50 THE KURFÜRST FREDERICK THE WISE



PLATB 51 ULRICH VARNBÜLER



PLATE 52 THE LAMENTATION OVER THE DEAD CHRIST



PLATE 53 THE ADORATION OF THE KINGS

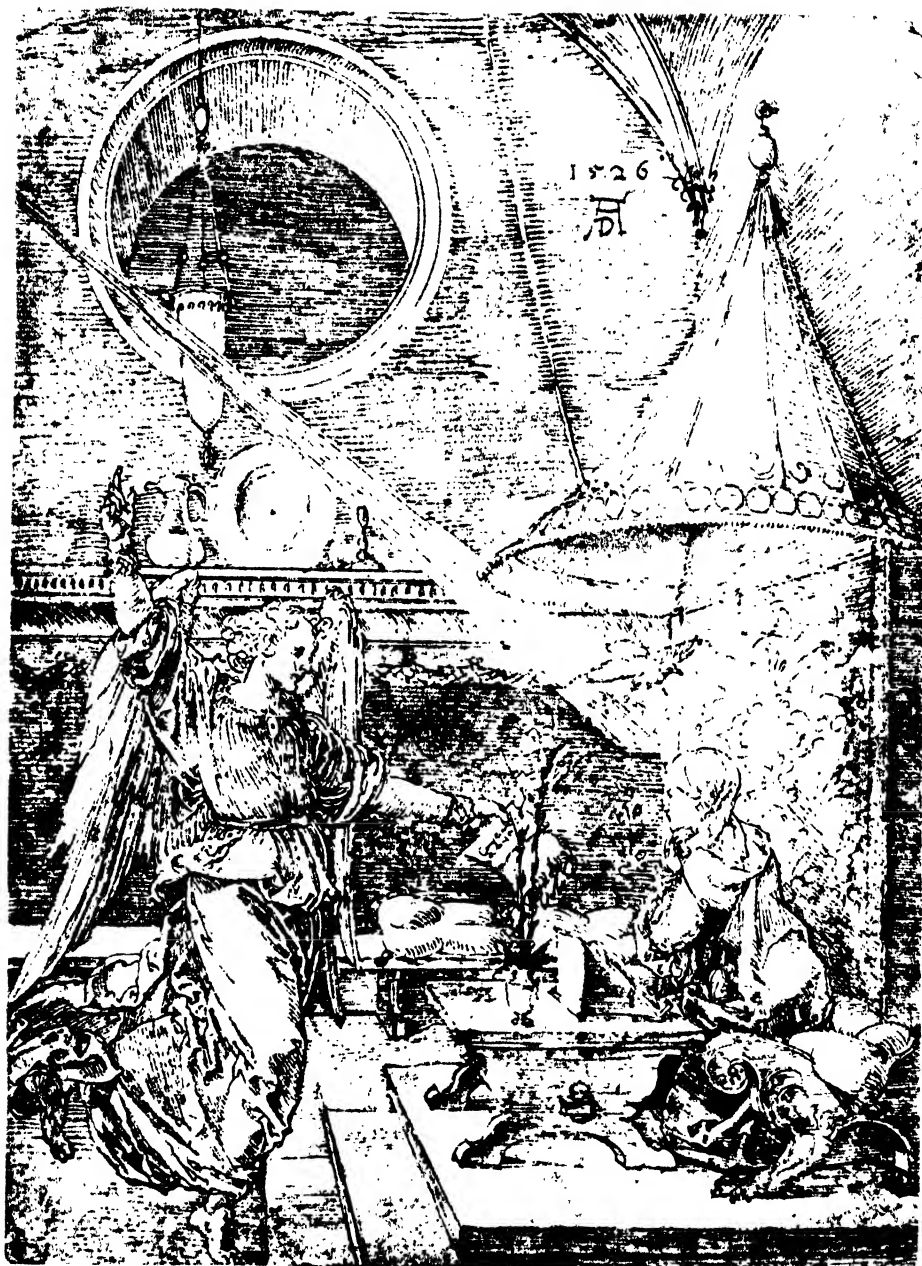


PLATE 54 THE ANNUNCIATION



PLATE 55 STUDY FOR THE HEAD OF THE APOSTLE PAUL



1526
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PLATE 56 STUDY FOR A RESURRECTION

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