

NUREMBERG AND THE TOPOGRAPHIES OF EXPECTATION

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The history of the history of Renaissance art is and will remain a messy affair. Diverse narratives compete for audiences and authority. Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of Famous Artists*, published in 1550 and re-issued in an expanded edition in 1568, provided a methodological model that prevailed for centuries. His accounts weave biographical anecdotes and observations about specific works into a broader historical fabric, one in which art and certain artists ascend over time toward ever greater perfection. Subsequent Northern European biographers of artists, notably Karel van Mander (1604) and Joachim von Sandrart (1675), adopted Vasari's monographic approach for their own highly influential histories. In contrast with these celebrations of the individual master, civic artistic identity is a topic only rarely written about substantively before the nineteenth century. When and how did certain cities consciously cultivate their reputations as prominent artistic centres during the early modern era? Beyond obvious economic self-interest, some towns valued their artistic prestige. In the case of Nuremberg, like many German cities, local awareness came gradually and was articulated rather haphazardly in images and texts. Nuremberg's artistic fame during the Renaissance has proved enduring, indeed mythic, even centuries later.

In this essay I shall address what I refer to as Nuremberg's topographies of expectation, specifically the role that art and writing about art had in establishing a positive civic portrait. The German term *Kunsttopographie* means a descriptive inventory of the art of a town or region. In cartography, a topographic map graphically charts the physical characteristics of place. Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann has succinctly defined topography as 'a body or object of knowledge, and [...] the way it is ordered' (Kaufmann 2004: 20-22).

One such ordering occurs in Friedrich Wanderer's portrayal of Nuremberg's most renowned late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth century artists (Figure 1), part of a series of famous Nurembergers painted for the Rathaus in 1901 (Götz 1981: 173-77; Mende 2000: 123; Maué and others 2002: no. 2; Smith

2002: 36). From left to right are Adam Kraft, Veit Hirsvogel the glazier, Veit Stoss, Michael Wolgemut, Peter Vischer the Elder, Albrecht Dürer, Hans von Kulmbach, Johann Neudörfer, Nikolaus Glockendon, Anton Koberger with a press assistant, and Augustin Hirsvogel (Smith 1983; Cat. New York 1986). Wanderer selected, excluded, and arranged artists from this local pantheon. Personally, I would have added Peter Flötner and Georg Pencz.



Figure 1. Friedrich Wanderer, *Famous Nuremberg Artists of Dürer's Time*. Painting, c. 1901, Museen der Stadt Nürnberg (photo: museum)

Not surprisingly, Dürer stands in the center, and, as we shall see later, Dürer becomes the embodiment of Nuremberg's art already in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In good hierarchical fashion, Wanderer depicts him taller and more prominently placed than his peers. Dürer's elegant attire and bright red hat stand in marked contrast with Peter Vischer's leather apron and dull brown cap. Neither Dürer nor Vischer, who both enjoyed great fame throughout the nineteenth century, needs to be linked with a specific work of art because their physical features were well known. In the eyes of Wanderer and his contemporaries, Dürer and Vischer represented the summit, or the cartographic highpoint in this metaphorical topography, of Nuremberg's artistic golden age. By the twentieth century, the period around 1500 came to be labeled the *Dürerzeit*. It is a convenient, if highly limiting, term.

Today we are familiar with, if sometimes critical of, such labels. The shaping of Nuremberg's fame as a city and the canonization of certain of its artists, however, are the results of a long process of self-definition. Using just a few examples, I wish to consider three topics: civic visual identity, civic artistic identity, and, briefly, civic historical identity. Each informs the topographies of expectation that culminate in images such as Wanderer's paintings and more recent works.

Civic Visual Identity

In 1493, Michael Wolgemut, Dürer's teacher, and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff portrayed Nuremberg in a two-page woodcut (Figure 2) in Hartmann Schedel's *Liber Chronicarum*, better known as the *Nuremberg Chronicle* (Smith 2008a).



Figure 2. Michael Wolgemut and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff, *View of Nuremberg*. Woodcut in Hartmann Schedel, *Liber Chronicarum* (*Nuremberg Chronicle*) (Nuremberg: Anton Koberger, 1493), folios 99v-100r. Museen der Stadt Nürnberg (photo: museum)

This, the earliest published view of the city, shows a densely built town ringed by impressive fortified walls and watchtowers. The imperial castle and civic towers dominate the northern ridge. The River Pegnitz bisects the town into the northern parish of St. Sebaldus and the southern parish of St. Lorenz. The spires of these churches, proudly labeled here, soar above the rooftops of other religious establishments, stone houses, and public buildings. This print conveys more than just Nuremberg's prosperity and security. The Frauentor, one of the main gates, is painted with the imperial double-headed eagle. This identifies Nuremberg as an imperial free city. In exchange for supporting and funding the Holy Roman emperor, Nuremberg enjoyed a special legal status that permitted its government much greater local autonomy and political independence than in most German cities. Since the proclamation of the Golden Bull in 1356, newly elected emperors were obligated to hold their first diet or assembly in Nuremberg. The city often functioned as the de facto capital in an age where there was not yet a permanent imperial residence. In the foreground, a peddler passes three crosses and, a few paces ahead, a stone monument with a crucifixion. Since 1423-24, Nuremberg had served as the official guardian of the imperial relics and regalia, which included the

lance that pierced Christ's side and a piece of the True Cross. The woodcut proudly alludes to these holy relics. For a contemporary viewer, Nuremberg is portrayed as prosperous, pious, and politically well-connected.

This civic consciousness and image construction extend to Schedel's text, which stresses many of the same features. He locates his section on Nuremberg at the beginning of the Sixth Age of the World (folios 95-258), the Christian era that starts with Christ's birth (Kugler 2000). Schedel invents a fictive Roman origin for Nuremberg alongside his accounts of Regensburg (folios 97v-98) and Vienna (folios 98v-99), two cities actually established by the Romans. In his text (folio 100v), Schedel erroneously traces the name Nuremberg (Neroberg or Norica) to Emperor Tiberius Claudius Nero (r. 14-37 C.E.). In actuality, Nuremberg was a relatively new city; the oldest reference to it dates about 1050. Artists and author alike used this highly original and widely-circulated publication to portray Nuremberg most flatteringly.

The city council soon embraced Wolgemut and Pleydenwurff's portrait of Nuremberg for its own use. In 1483 Nuremberg was the first German town to rewrite its legal code to be based upon Roman law. The frontispiece of the published text, known as the *Reformation*, appeared a year later with a woodcut by Wolgemut depicting Nuremberg's patron saints, Sebaldus and Lorenz, plus its triple coats of arms. When the second edition was published in 1498, Wolgemut or, more likely, a follower augmented the original design with a simplified portrait of the city (Figure 3), which derives from the woodcut in the *Nuremberg Chronicle* (Baxandall 1980: 7). Where armorials and saints once sufficed to identify a town, now a visual image of Nuremberg was appended. This topographic view charts both the city's physical features and its sense of pride.

The *Nuremberg Chronicle's* prospect of Nuremberg visually defined the city for over a half-century. It was supplanted in 1552 by Hans Lautensack's two monumental etchings that represent the city from the east and from the west (Figure 4). (Schmitt 1957: nos. 50-51; Shestack and Talbot 1969: no. 104; Smith 1983: nos. 163-64). Three copper plates, with a combined measurement of about 30 by 150 centimeters, were needed to print each impression. The artist rendered the city, its buildings, and its countryside with painstaking precision. The inscription above the city's coats of arms on the eastern view reads: 'A Truthful Counterfeit [Portrait] of the Praiseworthy Imperial Town from the East [literally: against the ascent of the sun]' ('Warhafftige Contrafactur der Löblichen Reychstat Nuremberg gegen dem Aufgang der Sonnen. 1552'). The term *contrafactur/conterfactur*, or 'counterfeit,' used here, was then synonymous with portraiture from life (Parshall 1993; Swan 1995). Painters and sculptors who made portraits were often referred to as *Conterfettters* because of the realism of their art. To reassure the viewer of his absolute fidelity to nature, Lautensack includes an artist, presumably a self-portrait, diligently working under the appreciative gaze of his fellow citizens in both prints (Figure 5).

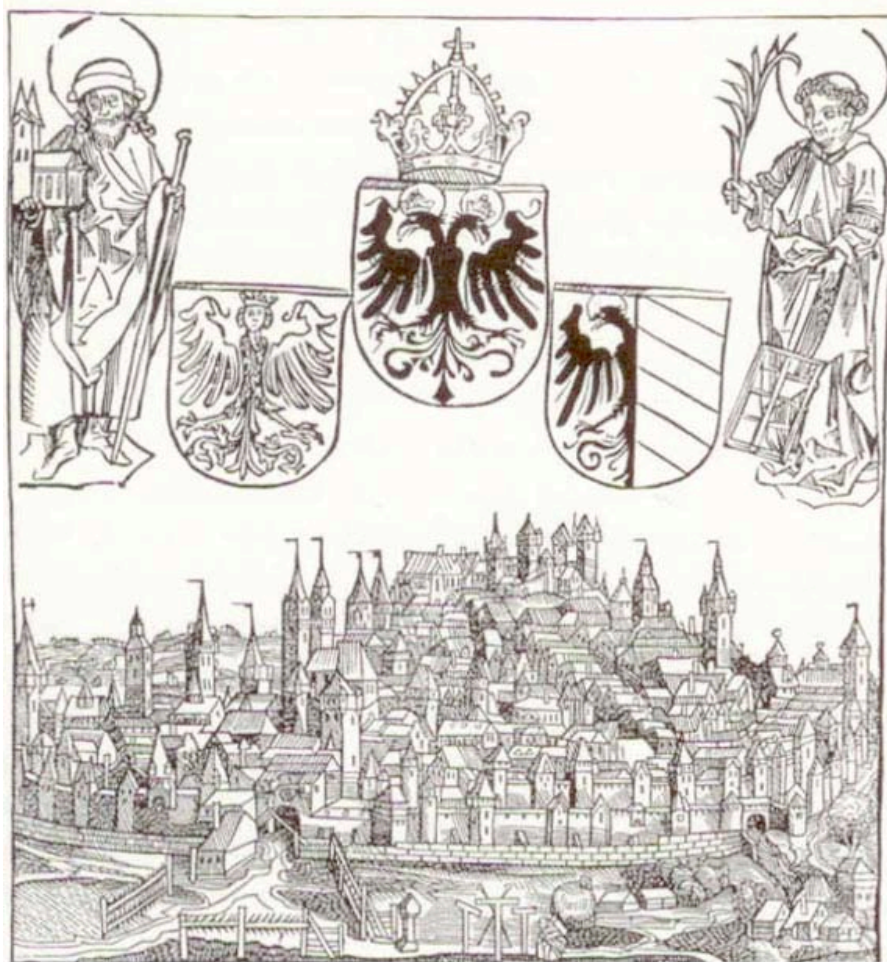


Figure 3. Michael Wolgemut and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff (after), Frontispiece. Woodcut in *Die Reformation der Statut und Gesetze der Stat Nürnberg* (Augsburg: Johannes Schönsperger, 1498) (photo: author)

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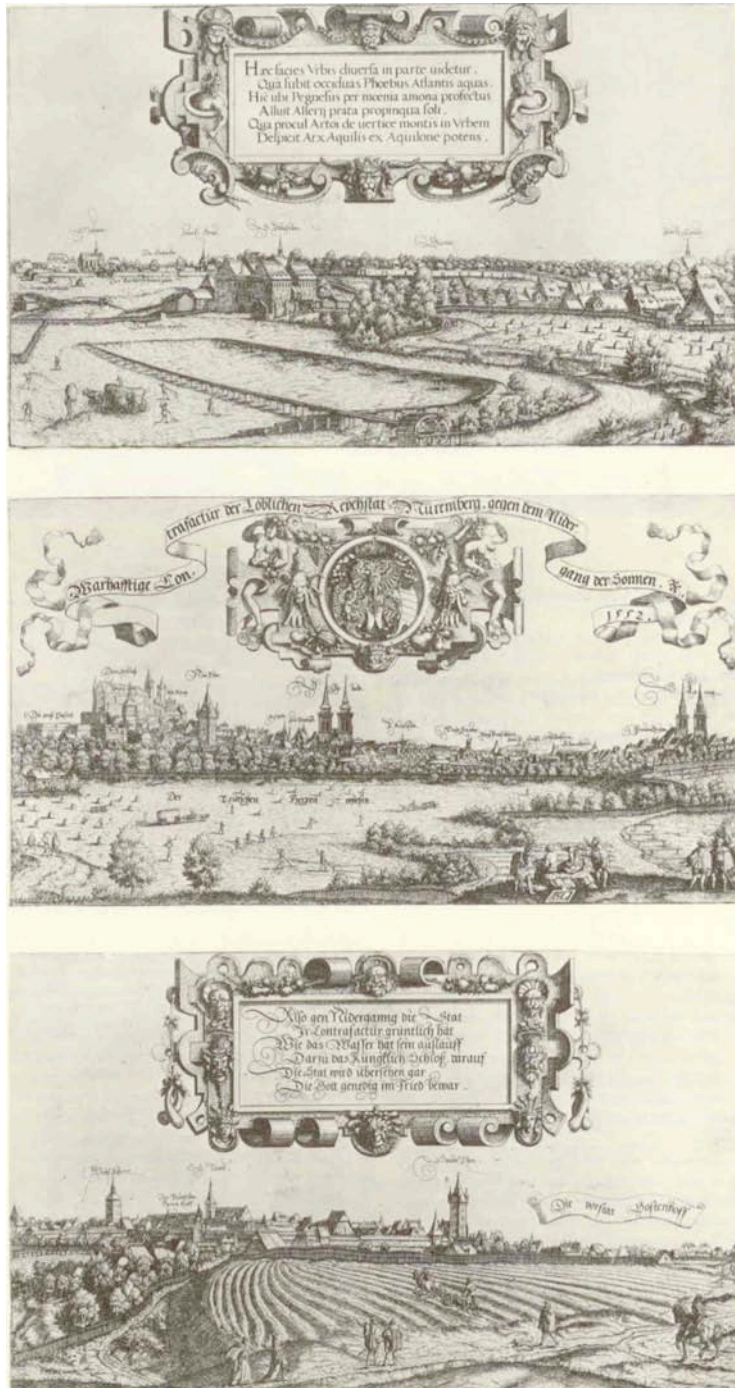


Figure 4. Hans Lautensack, *View of Nuremberg from the West*. Etching, 1552, Washington, National Gallery of Art. Rosenwald Collection (photo: museum)



Figure 5. Hans Lautensack, *View of Nuremberg from the West*, detail center. Etching, 1552, Washington, National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection (photo: museum)

He is sketching outdoors or *nach dem Leben* to prove his scrutiny of the actual walls and buildings. A prosperous gentleman, perhaps a patrician member of the city council, tips his hat to the artist in the western view. Others, including the implied viewer a bit farther back, look on in admiration and as witnesses, as if art has opened their and our eyes to Nuremberg's beauty for the first time.

Lautensack's pictorial encomium rivals its great literary predecessors (Schäfer 1896: 4-8; Anders 1960; Cochlaeus 1969: 74-93; Keck 1999; Gebhardt 2002; Büchert 2002; Arnold 2004). He successfully conveys the physical city of towers and walls as well as the ideological city; that is, the face that Nuremberg and its patrician government would like to be publicized. Lautensack's intent is stated in the last two lines of the left hand inscription of the eastern view: 'Here we have drawn the towers and walls of this city; to paint its riches was too great a task.'

Who was Lautensack's audience? Civic records indicate that Lautensack dedicated his prints to the Nuremberg council (Schmitt 1957: 50 and docs. nos. xxxiv-xxxv). They received numerous copies of each print and likely the etched plates. On March 21, 1552, the council rewarded Lautensack in return with a gift of 50 gulden, or roughly equivalent to the annual salary of a printer. The many extant examples of both the eastern and the western views testify to the popularity of Lautensack's prints. Examples, including several impressions still in the city's possession, were probably displayed in the Rathaus and kept in the homes of the city council members. Others likely were given to the emperor and the city's allies. Lautensack's peaceful portrayal of Nuremberg was made less than two months before the outbreak of the devastating Margrave's War of 1552-54, which despoiled the countryside and badly damaged the city's economy. Nevertheless, it was widely copied and served as the basis for most city views well into the

seventeenth century. The visual images matched Nuremberg's desired public face or identity (Smith 2008a).

Civic Artistic identity

Johann Neudörfer, seen at the rear of Wanderer's painting (Figure 1), was not strictly an artist. Rather, he was a noted teacher of arithmetic, geometry, and calligraphy. In Nicolas Neufchâtel's portrait of Neudörfer (Figure 6), commissioned by the Nuremberg council in 1561, he explains the properties of a dodecahedron to one of his pupils (Löcher 1997: 328-30).



Figure 6. Nicolas Neufchâtel, *Portrait of Johann Neudörfer and a Pupil*. Painting, 1561, Munich, Bayerisches Staatsgemäldesammlungen on loan to the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg (photo: Germanisches Nationalmuseum)

At least once he collaborated with Dürer who lived nearby and moved within the same intellectual circles. Neudörfer penned the inscriptions at the bottom of the *Four Apostles* panels, now in Munich (Alte Pinakothek) (Goldberg, Heimberg, and Schawe 1998: no. 14). In 1547 Neudörfer authored the *Nachrichten von*

Künstlern und Werkleuten (Account of Artists and Workmen) (Neudörfer 1875; Kapr 1956: 7-38). His manuscript contains seventy-nine biographies of Nuremberg's artists and artisans. Although the text predates Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Artists* by three years, it was not published fully until the nineteenth century. The manuscript must have been well known since its contents were mined by Joachim von Sandrart, writing in 1675, and other scholars especially from 1730 onward. In the dedication to Georg Römer, Neudörfer recalls a conversation that he had had with this patrician merchant a few days earlier while walking through Nuremberg's main market (Neudörfer 1875: 1). Both men marveled over the remarkable number of highly skilled artisans working in so many different crafts who either currently or recently lived in Nuremberg. Neudörfer concludes that God endowed their praiseworthy city with more 'Künstlern und kunstverständigen Leuten' than any other town.

This conversation inspired Neudörfer to compose his lives over the course of the next eight days, or so he claims. With this text, he initiates a comprehensive history of Nuremberg's art and artists. Here is the first broad record of the city's – indeed of any Germany city's – artistic identity. Neudörfer's *Nachrichten* lacks the master narrative and theoretical apparatus of Vasari's *Lives*. Yet he provides invaluable information about many masters who would otherwise be unknown to us today. Neudörfer's anecdotes chronicle the web of personal associations linking many of the artists with each other. For example, he is the best source for Hans Frey, Dürer's father-in-law who was a bronzesmith noted for his elaborate table fountains and, we are told, his harp-playing skills (Neudörfer 1875: 117-18; Schoch 2008: no. 37).

Neudörfer arranged his lives according to profession rather than chronology or any hierarchy of fame. Thus he does not herald anyone as the *Urmeister* or founder of Nuremberg's artistic tradition in the way that van Mander will credit the van Eycks. Neudörfer includes only recent or current masters rather than any noted artisans from earlier in the fifteenth century. With a few exceptions, the ordering proceeds from master masons to brass and bronze smiths, gun and armor makers, locksmiths, sculptors, goldsmiths, painters, illuminators, glaziers, woodblock cutters, makers of organs and precision instruments, publishers, eyeglass makers, and paper makers, among others. The next to last entry is the famed shoemaker, poet, and *Meistersinger* Hans Sachs.

Let us consider Neudörfer's remarks about Peter Vischer the Elder and Dürer, the two central protagonists in Wanderer's picture. To paraphrase Neudörfer, he tells his readers that Vischer had a friendly personality and was most knowledgeable in the natural [creative?] arts (Neudörfer 1875: 21-30). It was rare that visiting princes and powerful people did not stop by his workshop because of his fame as a brass caster. He remarks that Vischer's art is best seen in the *Shrine of St. Sebaldus* (Figure 7), which he made with his five sons between c. 1488 and its formal placement in the church on July 19, 1519.

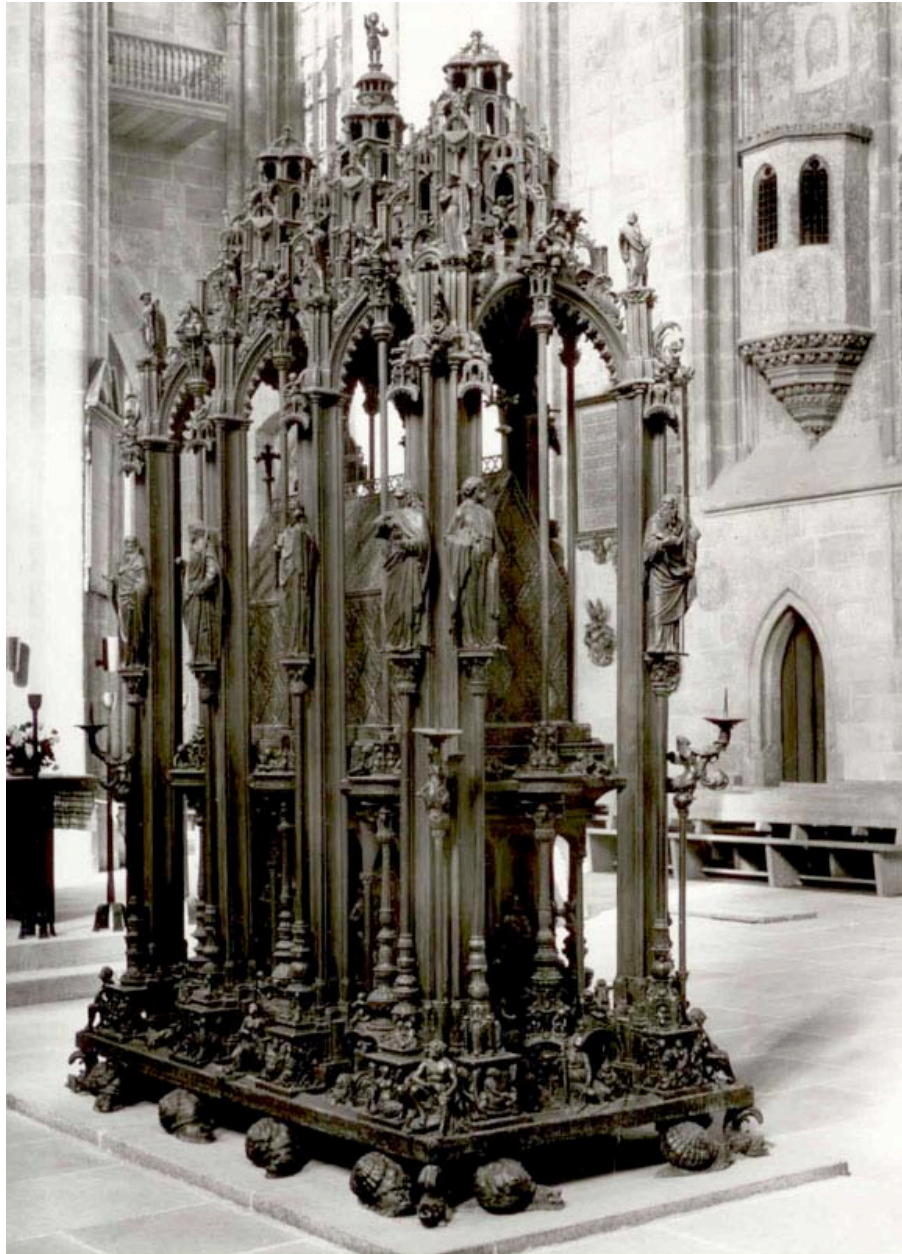


Figure 7. Peter Vischer the Elder and Workshop, *Shrine of St. Sebaldus*. Cast brass, completed in 1519, Nuremberg, St. Sebaldus Church (photo: author)



Figure 8. Peter Vischer the Elder and Workshop, *Self-Portrait of Peter Vischer the Elder*, detail of the *Shrine of St. Sebaldus*. Cast brass, completed in 1519, Nuremberg, St. Sebaldus Church (photo: author)

Neudörfer informs us that Vischer portrayed himself as the apron-clad figure standing at the east end of the shrine (Figure 8; Pilz 1970: 54, 61). This statue originally held a hammer and chisel. According to Neudörfer, Peter the Elder's sons and their families all lived with him. His own work could be viewed in the cast fountain in the Herren Schiessgraben. Most of his castings, however, are found in Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, or were made for electors and princes throughout the Holy Roman Empire (Hauschke 2006). He notes that Vischer's monumental brass grille that first belonged to the Fuggers of Augsburg was then displayed in the Nuremberg Rathaus (Cat. New York 1986: no. 199).

Neudörfer's comments on Dürer are somewhat longer and begin with information about his parents (Neudörfer 1875: 132-33). Again to paraphrase Neudörfer, he notes that Albrecht the Elder originally planned to apprentice his thirteen year-old son with Martin Schongauer. With the latter's death, the young Dürer entered Michael Wolgemut's shop in 1486. [In actuality, Schongauer died in 1491.] After three years, he then traveled through Germany to Colmar and Basel where Schongauer's four brothers [each correctly named] proved helpful. For his art Dürer wandered widely making portraits of people, landscapes, and cities. He painted a pretty picture [the *Feast of the Rose Garlands*, now Národní Galerie in Prague] in Venice. In Antwerp he was the honoured guest of 100 painters. For Emperor Maximilian, who gave him 100 gulden yearly, Dürer made the *Triumphal Arch*, the *Theuerdank*, and many other figures and paintings. The king of England honoured him highly, as did the electors and princes whom he portrayed. The Nuremberg Rat appointed him to the Greater Council in 1509 where his speech was so wise and lovely that he became a *Ratsfreund*. He painted an *All Saints* panel [the *Adoration of the Holy Trinity Altarpiece*, now divided between Vienna (Kunsthistorisches Museum) and Nuremberg (Germanisches Nationalmuseum)] and, to honour the lords of the council, four life-size images [the *Four Apostles* in Munich (Alte Pinakothek)] now in the Upper Regimentsstube. These show the sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic, and melancholic. Neudörfer claims he penned the biblical inscriptions at the bottom of this painting (Neudörfer 1875: 158-59). The books that Dürer made in 1515 [sic - 1525] on measurement and in 1528 on human proportions as well as his prints bring his art before our eyes. Although there is a great quantity of his prints, one can scarcely find any for less than 9 florins. In 1494 Dürer came back home and in the same year married Agnes, Hans Frey's daughter. He died on April 6, 1528. His paintings and prints carry his AD sign.

Most of the above comments about Vischer and Dürer are familiar today and usually can be corroborated from other sources. Only Neudörfer's reference to the honour paid to Dürer by the king of England, presumably Henry VIII, cannot be verified. In the winter of 1523 the artist did paint the portrait of Henry Parker, Lord Morley and then the chancellor of England, when he stopped in Nuremberg (Anzelewsky 1991: no. 171 Z and fig. 148). Many of these biographical statements were introduced into the literature for the first time by Neudörfer, who was

personally acquainted with most of the artists about whom he wrote. Sometimes a few statements are incorrect, as in the case about the plan to send the teenage Albrecht to study with Schongauer. His remarks are based on the prevailing oral history and, in this instance, perhaps upon claims made by Dürer himself. In the journal of his trip to the Netherlands in 1520-21, Dürer noted that on August 5, 1520, two days after arriving in Antwerp, the local painters held an elaborate banquet in his honour at their guild house. 'And as I was being led to the table the company stood on both sides as if they were leading some great lord.' (Rupprich 1956-69: vol. 1: 151; Goris and Marlier 1971: 57-58). Nowhere in his lengthy remarks about this evening did Dürer specify the number of painters present. So when Neudörfer claims there were 100 painters at the meal he is likely relying on his conversations with Dürer or with one of their mutual friends or he invented a nice round number.

Neudörfer stresses certain common themes, such as the great knowledge and positive personalities of Vischer and Dürer; the quality of their art including the listing of specific works that best reveal their skills; the many honours and the fame that both enjoyed; the powerful patrons for whom they worked; and, critically, the international distribution of or demand for their art. These traits will characterize much of the art historical writings about Dürer and Vischer from the sixteenth to the twenty-first centuries.

Neudörfer first identifies the standing figure on the eastern end of the Sebaldus Shrine as a self-portrait of Vischer just as he informs his readers that the stone sculptor Adam Kraft carved himself kneeling beneath the sacrament house in the Lorenzkirche. He does not mention any of Dürer's self-portraits but he stresses the many monogrammed paintings and prints. Neudörfer considers the reader's ability to recognize their respective works to be important. In addition to his monogram, Dürer occasionally signed his major creations with 'Albrecht Dürer Noricus' (or of Nuremberg) beginning with the *Adam and Eve* engraving of 1504 and quite prominently in the *All Saints Altarpiece* mentioned by Neudörfer. While Dürer may have had various personal and humanistic motivations for identifying himself with his native city, he also consciously linked himself with Nuremberg's international reputation for craft of the highest material and artistic quality (Eser 2002). Peter Vischer and his sons adopted a similar form of signature ('PETRI FISCHERS NORMBERGE') in several of their most consequential creations including the epitaph of Cardinal Albrecht von Brandenburg (1525), today in Aschaffenburg's Stiftskirche (Merkel 2004: 22, 75, figs. 1 and 35).

Although Neudörfer does not present a master narrative progressing chronologically, his text stresses Nuremberg as an artistic center of international significance. It is a city whose present greatness can be credited partially to the vibrancy of its art and artists. Repeatedly he extols the city's ability to attract highly talented artists from other distant towns and countries, such as goldsmiths Albrecht Dürer the Elder from Hungary or Wenzel Jamnitzer from Vienna (Neudörfer

1875: 126, 132). In some respects, his biographies stand as flesh and blood counterparts to the visual encomium of the physical city portrayed in Lautensack's etchings.

Neufchâtel's painted portrait of Neudörfer was commissioned by the city council for the Rathaus. The inscription on its frame, which is original, celebrates Neudörfer's talents as a teacher, his knowledge, his incomparable industry, and his European-wide fame. It refers to him as a 'great ornament' of Nuremberg ('magnum ornamentum patriae, Reipublicae Norimbergensis'). The council's honoring of Neudörfer, just like his own praise for Nuremberg's artists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, typifies a broader local civic identity. Nuremberg's reputation, its economy, and its recent history are inextricably linked with its fame as the preeminent German artistic center. In 1471 the astronomer Johannes Regiomontanus wrote to Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary and Bohemia, explaining why he moved to Nuremberg (Maué and others 2002: 11 and 13). He states that the city was the 'quasi centrum Europae.' Here he could find the highly skilled artists to construct his precision scientific instruments and publishers to print his writings. Nuremberg had long enjoyed its lofty summit atop the landscape of artistic centers of the Holy Roman Empire. By the mid-sixteenth century, the city government identified with and promoted Nuremberg's artistic reputation.

One manifestation of the emergence of Nuremberg's civic artistic identity may be observed in the creation, albeit somewhat haphazardly, of the town's art collection in the Rathaus. A thorough discussion of this is beyond the scope of the present paper and has been dealt with by others (Schwemmer 1949: 97-103; Christensen 1965: 140-72; Kubach-Reutter 2002). By the mid-sixteenth century, the city possessed Dürer's *Self-Portrait* of 1500, *Emperors Charlemagne and Sigismund* panels, and *Four Apostles*, among other pictures (Anzelewsky 1991: nos. 66, 123-24, 183-84; Goldberg, Heimberg, and Schawe 1998: nos. 6 and 14). In 1538 Georg Pencz, who in 1532 was appointed the official city painter, was paid by the council to gild the frame of Dürer's *Four Apostles*. This picture and, most likely, several other Dürer paintings hung in the Regimentsstube, where the council met. Cloth covers were placed over these pictures to protect them from smoke. It is uncertain precisely when the city obtained the *Self-Portrait* of 1500 (Goldberg, Heimberg, and Schawe 1998: 340-41). Either this or another likeness of the artist was acquired in 1555 for 50 florins. Endres Dürer, our artist's younger brother, died in this year, so the picture may have been purchased from his estate. When Karel van Mander visited Nuremberg in 1577, he toured the Rathaus. He remarks seeing the paintings listed above as well as a portrait of Dürer's mother. This indicates that art in the Rathaus was accessible to guests and some visitors. Van Mander offers a detailed description and notation of the date of the *Self-Portrait* of 1500. Alas, he does not specify in which rooms he viewed the pictures. In 1611 the *Self-Portrait* hung in the upper Ratsstube, a more intimate chamber used by the

city's leaders. The Rathaus collection also included Neufchâtel's portrait of Neudörfer, as well as paintings by Pencz and Paul Lautensack, among others, illuminated manuscripts, a city model, and large-scale prints, such as Niklas Meldemann's *Turkish Siege of Vienna in 1529* and Lautensack's two etched city views of 1552. Most items were given by the artists to the city in hope of receiving some financial compensation in return. The majority of objects were by Nuremberg masters, though the city owned several paintings by Lucas Cranach the Elder and his shop given by the Saxon electors. Prints, manuscripts, and goldsmith works were kept in the Losungerstube or treasury, the room adjoining the Ratsstube.



Figure 9. Wenzel Jamnitzer, *Merkel Table Decoration*. Goldsmith work, 1549, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (photo: museum)

In 1549 Wenzel Jamnitzer sold his *Mother Earth (or Merkel) Table Decoration* (Figure 9) to the city council (Pechstein 1974; Cat. Nuremberg 1985: no. 15). They paid him the stunningly high price of 1,230 gulden, reflecting the preciousness of the materials, plus another 80 gulden for an ornate leather case. Nuremberg had long been one of the empire's foremost goldsmith centers. It was common practice for the council to present particularly fine goldsmith works as gifts to visiting emperors, nobles, and important guests. The blank coats of arms suggest that the council initially may have had similar plans for Jamnitzer's table decoration. The unique form and technical virtuosity of Jamnitzer's creation prompted the council to keep it for its own display at banquets and other ceremonial occasions. With its mimicry of nature, especially its castings in silver of grasses and flowers, the table decoration offers a microcosm – the best of both nature's and human artistry in miniature. It serves too as an outstanding demonstration of (and advertisement for) the creative skills of Jamnitzer and other Nuremberg goldsmiths.

The city's leaders gradually recognized that the city's buoyant artistic identity had both economic and historical significance. It is not surprising to learn that when the opportunity arose in 1600 the council purchased Neufchâtel's *Portrait of Wenzel Jamnitzer* (1562-63; Geneva, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire) from the artist's son and heir, Hans (Hauschke 2003: 127-28). The portrait hung in the council chambers until it, like many other works of art including *Mother Earth*, was sold in the early nineteenth century.

Civic Historical Identity

Dürer becomes the face of Nuremberg, the personification of the city at its moment of greatest historical ascendancy. In 1553 Lautensack painted a view of the western skyline of Nuremberg (Figure 10; Wolfson 1992: no. 34; and Mende 2000: 157). The exact vantage point and details differ somewhat from his far more accurate etchings of 1552 (see Figure 4). In the foreground stands Albrecht Dürer of Nuremberg ('ALBERTVS DVRERVS NORICVS') holding a large cartellino. The portrait and sign type derive from the *Adoration of the Holy Trinity Altarpiece*, then in the Landauer Chapel in Nuremberg. The inscription gives his birth and death dates though the former is incorrectly written as 1472 rather than 1471. Was the painting commissioned by one of the deceased artist's friends to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of his death?

The pictorial formula of symbolically linking a figure or figures with a city view has religious and political precedents. In the 1540s and 1550s, the Cranach workshop in Wittenberg created several compositions in which Christ's baptism, set before the backdrop of a German town, is watched by Lutheran reformers and princes. An anonymous woodcut, printed in 1559, shows Nuremberg and the Pegnitz River as the stage for Luther and others witnessing Christ's baptism (Cat. Nuremberg 1979: no. 89; Smith 1983: 35, fig. 28). This signals the city's Protestant

affiliation, a position that it officially adopted in 1525. Lautensack also authored portrait etchings in which the subject is juxtaposed with a specific and personally relevant setting. For instance, Nuremberg burgomaster Hieronymus Schürstab (1554) is shown by a window with a view of a church, later labeled St. Leonhard, just southwest of Nuremberg (Smith 1983: no. 166). He served as the council's overseer of this and, earlier, St. Peter's, another extramural church. Thus Lautensack's painting explicitly links Dürer with his native city. His fame bolsters that of Nuremberg.



Figure 10. Hans Lautensack, *Landscape with a Portrait of Albrecht Dürer*. Painting, 1553, Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum Hannover – Landesgalerie (photo: museum)

In about 1601-02 Emperor Rudolf II (r. 1574-1612) commissioned an elaborate gilt-silver pitcher and basin (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) from Christoph Jamnitzer, Wenzel's grandson (Irmischer 1999: esp. 153-54, figs. 36-38). The pitcher is decorated with Petrarch's *trionfi* or triumphs linked with the six stages of life (love, chastity, death, fame, time, and eternity). Fame's elephant-drawn chariot is set against the backdrop view of Nuremberg as seen from the west. Nine men stand beside the chariot as the embodiments of artistic fame. From left to right are portraits of Raphael, the cardinal and poet Pietro Bembo, Giambologna, Petrarch, Michelangelo, Dürer, Hans von Aachen(?), who was Rudolf's court painter, Wenzel Jamnitzer, and Johann Neudörfer. The profile likenesses of Michelangelo and Dürer face each other as if in conversation. On the opposite side

of the chariot are Julius Caesar and a few other classical rulers in keeping with Petrarch's theme of fame being attainable through military and artistic achievements. Jamnitzer modified his source, an anonymous woodcut illustrating *Sechs Triumph Francisci Petrarche*, Daniel Federmann's German translation published in Basel in 1578 (Irmischer 1999: 66-67, fig. 48). For Christoph Jamnitzer, Nuremberg, a city that nourished Dürer, Wenzel Jamnitzer, Neudörfer, and, by implication, himself, is the fitting locus or centre of artistic fame.

This association of Dürer and his native city is more explicit and more publicly accessible in Wenzel Hollar's engraved *Plan of Nuremberg* (c. 1657; Figure 11).



Figure 11. Wenzel Hollar, *Plan of Nuremberg with a Portrait of Albrecht Dürer*. Etching, c. 1657, Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum (photo: museum)

The laurel wreath-bedecked tablet is inscribed 'Civitas Norimbergæ Vera Descriptio geometrica.' This true description of Nuremberg includes the topography of place in the form of lines describing walls, streets, and notable buildings. The inclusion of the profile portrait of Dürer, based on Hans Schwarz's medal of 1521, identifies Nuremberg explicitly as Dürer's city. Hollar did not even bother to inscribe Dürer's name since he assumed, probably correctly, that the artist's likeness was universally recognized at least within the Holy Roman

Empire. As far as I know, no other German town was so fundamentally linked with an individual, let alone an artist, at this time. Dürer stands as the embodiment of Nuremberg's artistic patrimony. Paradoxically, the ascendancy of the historical Dürer and his links with Nuremberg occurred at a time when fewer and fewer of his original paintings remained in the city. The aggressive acquisitions of his oeuvre by Emperor Rudolf II and Maximilian I, Duke and later Elector of Bavaria (r. 1597-1651), stripped his art from several local churches and private collections, notably that of Willibald Imhoff (Hess 2002).

Dürer remains the face of Nuremberg and its art. In 1628, the hundredth anniversary of Dürer's death, his portrait appeared on the beautifully crafted silver medal by the distinguished goldsmith Hans Petzolt (Petzoldt) (Figure 12; Mende 1983: no. 65). The likeness is based upon the medal that Dürer himself commissioned from Hans Schwarz in 1520 and cast in the following year (Mende 1983: 57-68, nos. 14-17). The obverse displays the portrait accompanied by the inscription 'ALBERTI DURERI PICTORIS GERMANI APELLIS EFFIGIES' ('Portrait of Albrecht Dürer, Painter, the German Apelles'). The lengthy text on the reverse praises the artist: '... his bones are covered by the grave / his spirit fills the heavens / his fame appears as a triumphal chariot pulled by white horses / ... the Muse of History as everyone knows does not let great men die. Born on 20 May 1471 in Nuremberg / died in the same place on 6 April 1528 at the age of 57 years / C[hristoph]. H[oefflich]. N[uremberg].' Hoeflich, the text's author, was a young local poet. Who commissioned this medal is not known but it is reasonable to ask whether it was ordered by the city council. Other than a brief stint in Emperor Rudolf II's service in Prague, Petzolt worked continuously for the council throughout his career (Tebbe, Timann, and Eser, eds., 2007: vol. 1.1: 303-06). He made at least eighty cups and other goldsmith objects at its request. Most of these were presented as gifts by the council to distinguished visitors and political allies. Petzolt served also as a member of the Greater Council and, in 1611, he was named a *Ratsherr*. Even if the medal was commissioned by someone else, some councilors likely received examples. Dürer's fame transcended Nuremberg yet efforts frequently were made to bind together the reputations of the artist and his city. Prior to the nineteenth century, the initiative came primarily from individuals, such as Joachim von Sandrart. In composing his *Teutsche Academie der edlen Bau-, Bild- und Malerei-Künste*, published in Nuremberg in 1675, von Sandrart devoted his lengthiest biography to Dürer, whom he described as the 'painter, sculptor, engraver, and architect [*Baumeister*] of Nuremberg' (Sandrart 1994: vol. 1: part II, Book III, 222-29). Drawing upon primary documents available in Nuremberg as well as the writings of Neudörfer, Vasari, and van Mander, among others, he constructed an almost superhuman textual portrait of the artist.



Figure 12. Hans Petzolt, *Portrait of Albrecht Dürer*. Silver with partial gilt medal, obverse and reverse, 1628, Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum (photo: museum)

Dürer was neither a sculptor nor an architect, even though he authored the *Treatise on Fortifications* in 1527. This mattered little to von Sandrart who fashioned the Nuremberg master into the German counterpart to Michelangelo and Bernini. His account includes testimonies to Dürer's celebrity by Erasmus and by Willibald Pirckheimer. Other Nuremberg masters including Michael Wolgemut, Peter Vischer and his family, Peter Flötner, Veit Stoss, Veit Hirsvogel, Georg Pencz, the Beham brothers, and Virgil Solis, among others, also are prominently featured.

In 1662 von Sandrart was the intellectual force behind the creation of Germany's first art academy, a group that met in his nephew's house in Nuremberg. In 1674 he moved permanently to Nuremberg from his estate near Eichstätt. Von Sandrart's fascination with Dürer prompted him to purchase the Dürer and Frey family funerary plot in the St. Johannis cemetery outside of the western walls of Nuremberg. With the demise of both family lines, the plot had become public property. Only a small brass plaque placed in 1528 by Pirckheimer marked the site. Von Sandrart restored the plot and added two much longer bronze inscriptions, one in Latin and one in German, on the tomb.



Figure 13. Tomb of Albrecht Dürer (with students from the University of Texas), brass and bronze plaques, 1528 and 1681, Nuremberg St. Johannis Cemetery (photo: author)

In translation the Latin text reads, "The ornament of Germany is dead. / ALBERTUS DURERUS / Light of the arts, sun of the artists. / Decoration of Noris, his native town, / Painter, Graphic artist, Sculptor / Without model because omniscient, / Found worthy by foreigners who / recommended to imitate him. / Magnet of magnates, / grindstone for talents. / After one and half hundred years /

no one having been equal to him / he must here repose alone. Traveler – strew flowers. / In the year of Salvation 1681 / J. De S' (Bialostocki 1986: 72). Von Sandrart bequeathed the tomb to the Nuremberg academy, which the city council had transformed into a formal school for training artists in 1670-71. The members used Dürer's tomb as a burial place for foreign artists who died in Nuremberg.

Von Sandrart's writings and his activities in Nuremberg institutionalized and further localized Dürer. He praises him as the foremost of all German and Nuremberg artists. Critically, too, he remarks that Dürer's 'exceptional artistic merits which provided such a wonderful guiding light to his successors would furnish enough subject matter and material for a book devoted to his works alone' (Bialostocki 1986: 71). That is, Dürer becomes the supreme model for German artists to emulate. The activities of the academy certainly included discussions about Dürer as well as about the past greatness of Nuremberg as an artistic center. Finally, von Sandrart's restoration of Dürer's tomb created a fixed site for paying homage to the Renaissance master.

By the nineteenth century, Nuremberg had fully embraced Dürer as the embodiment of its past fame. Occasionally Peter Vischer the Elder or, less often, Veit Stoss appear as sidekicks but the focus is always clearly on Dürer. Images linking artist and city together, as if some of his genius could rub off on the contemporary town and its current artists, proliferated especially during the Dürer jubilees of 1828 and 1871. Scholars have carefully analyzed the ephemeral events staged during these occasions, which included processions, plays, concerts, banquets, and countless orations (Bialostocki 1986: 91-143; Cat. Nuremberg 1971; Hinz 1971; Mende and Hebecker 1973; Blumenthal 2001). Contemporary artists created temporary Dürer shrines around the city, while others illustrated episodes of his life, often making distinctly Christological parallels.

While these activities certainly reinforced the association between Dürer and his city for the broad public as well as for Germany's artistic elite, many of whom participated in the 1828 gathering, I am struck by the community's pioneering efforts at creating permanent physical sites honouring its most famous native son. Artists and art lovers traveling to Nuremberg were offered three distinct places where they could pay their respects to Dürer or perhaps to commune with his spirit: his tomb, his house, and his over-life-size memorial statue. All of these were maintained either by the city or a local arts society. Dürer's tomb was the setting for private visits and organized events. Members of the Albrecht-Dürer-Verein (society) met at his grave annually from 1823 to 1826 (Blumenthal 2001: 18). Dürer's death day, April 6, coincided with Easter Sunday in 1828. The jubilee participants trekked to the St. Johannis cemetery and held a sunrise celebration at the tomb. Ludwig Emil Grimm, who later made an etching of the occasion, remarked, 'At six o'clock we were all gathered around Dürer's grave. Large numbers of artists from all parts of Germany, arranged in picturesque groups, were united around this tomb on which had been placed a large wreath of

ivy, and a solemn silence had fallen. Suddenly it was broken by the mighty sounds of tubas reverberating around us, sublime and deeply moving, as they announced the high solemnity of the hour and the day. The wind abated, the clouds parted, and the sun in all its glory rose over the old castle, illuminating the lovely churchyard and our large solemn gathering' (Bialostocki 1986: 117 and fig. 47).

Dürer's house figured prominently in the jubilee events of 1828 (Figure 14).



Figure 14. Albrecht Dürer's House by the Tiergärtnerort Gate in Nuremberg. 1420 ff. (photo: author)

In 1825 the city acquired the house in which the artist lived from 1509 until his death in 1528 (Mende 1989; Mende 1991; 11-50). The building was restored in a Gothic-revival style and rented to an art society. In anticipation of the jubilee of 1871, the house was refurbished and transferred to a new foundation, which opened it as Europe's second(?) public museum dedicated to a single artist. The first was the Casa Buonarroti, a private museum, which was bequeathed to the city of Florence in 1858. Dürer's house has been restored on several occasions and, after World War II, partially rebuilt. As a museum, it has long sponsored exhibitions, including shows of contemporary art that respond inventively to Dürer's oeuvre (Mende 1980). The house functions, too, as a surviving surrogate for the deceased Dürer. Nineteenth and twentieth-century artists drew inspiration from the building. In the commemorative *Stammbuch* of 1828 in which German artists contributed drawings honouring Dürer, Mathias Christoph Hartmann portrayed himself and his two sons standing before a marble bust of Dürer (Mende and

Hebecker 1973: no. 30 and cover illustration). A view of Dürer's house appears just behind Hartmann as he lectures to his sons about the Renaissance master. The Scottish artist and later Dürer biographer William Bell Scott traveled to Nuremberg in 1853. Stimulated by his visit to Dürer's house, Scott created a painting (Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland) a year later showing the Nuremberg master, brushes in hand, looking down from his balcony at the crowds passing through the Tiergärtnerter, the city gate across the square (Christian 1973: 57-58, 79; Białostocki 1986: 243; Mende 1991: 30). The castle looms on the hill above. In *Dürer's Studio* (Paris, Musée d'Orsay), the French painter Adolphe Charles Edouard Steinheil (1850-1908) evokes Dürer's creative presence through his physical absence (Andrews 1973: 99-100, fig. 38 [labeled incorrectly]). The setting is a corner of a room with the artist's worktable placed before a bay of windows. A sketch, presumably unfinished, rests on the drafting-board. The chair is pushed back and the nearby door is ajar. In this surreptitious glimpse into the Nuremberg master's workspace, Steinheil hints that Dürer is merely on break. Since his spirit lingers, the room alone suffices to convey the locus of creativity. Recently, the Dürerhaus was re-installed to enhance the visitor's experience of how the house might have looked and functioned during the artist's lifetime (Grossmann and Sonnenberger 2007).

Unlike the tomb and house, with their direct historic associations with Dürer, the bronze statue of the artist erected in 1840 in the Milk Market (Figure 15), which was renamed the Albrecht-Dürer-Platz, signals Nuremberg's official efforts to commemorate him in a fitting fashion (Simson 1996: nos. 161-63; Goddard 1988: 118-19).



Figure 15. Christian Daniel Rauch, *Albrecht Dürer Monument*. Bronze cast by Jakob Daniel Burgschmiet, c. 1828-40, Nuremberg, Albrecht-Dürer-Platz (photo: author)

In 1826 King Ludwig I of Bavaria (r. 1825-48) proposed the idea to Nuremberg's councilors as they planned for the Dürer-jubilee of 1828. Since Nuremberg and

the rest of Franconia had become incorporated into the new kingdom of Bavaria in 1805, Ludwig's support had both artistic and political motivations. Members of Nuremberg's Albrecht-Dürer-Verein and the Munich Academy commissioned the noted Berlin sculptor Christian Daniel Rauch, Ludwig's choice, to design the statue. Participants attending the jubilee witnessed the ceremonial laying of the monument's foundation stone on April 7, 1828. Each received a bronze medal cast by Jakob Daniel Burgschmiet displaying the obverse portrait of Dürer, modeled after Petzolt's medal, and on the reverse the *Jungfrauenadler*, Nuremberg's heraldic symbol, who holds an inscription tablet ('ZU SEINEM GEDÄCHTNISS [to his memory] VI APRIL MDCCCXXVIII NÜRNBERG') (Mende 1983: no. 78; Bialostocki 1986: 117). One impression of the medal was buried beneath the foundation stone. The attendees that day had to content themselves with Rauch's scale model, the wooden mockup of the base, and various prints of the statue. The temporary base bore the text, 'Father Dürer, give us thy blessing, that like thee we may truly cherish German art; be our guiding star until the grave!' Because of funding problems, Burgschmiet's bronze cast after Rauch's full-size model was completed only in 1840. Dürer stands holding his brushes. The likeness is modeled after the artist's self-portrait in the *Adoration of the Holy Trinity Altarpiece*. This was Europe's first public memorial honouring a past artist. It predates Antwerp's statue of Peter Paul Rubens (May 1840) and Amsterdam's statue of Rembrandt (1847).

Over the centuries Nuremberg and its officials embraced Dürer and, to a lesser degree, the rest of the pantheon of great artists celebrated in Friedrich Wanderer's painting (Figure 1). For reasons of local pride mixed with economic opportunity, Nuremberg has long defined itself and continues to market itself as a city of art. Indeed the city is often dubbed *Dürerstadt Nürnberg*. Visitors stepping off the train in Nuremberg's Hauptbahnhof in 1971, another jubilee year, were greeted by a colossal iconic portrait of Dürer (Bialostocki 1986: 377, fig. 152). Or in 2003, one encountered Ottmar Hörl's 7,000 rabbits filling the Hauptmarkt in a slightly belated 500-year homage to Dürer's *Large Hare* (1502).

Nuremberg's civic identity is fully allied with the fame of its artists. Knowingly and willingly, we, like our predecessors, embrace the topographies of expectation, a story of place, artists, and legacy crafted piecemeal in the late-1400s and early-1500s, and presented as a master narrative in later centuries. This canonical account of Nuremberg's golden age has proven enduring. Unintentionally, however, it has overshadowed and largely marginalized the subsequent chapters in the city's artistic heritage (Smith 2008b).

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