

THE  
NATIONAL  
GALLERY

LUCAS CRANACH  
THE ELDER

Saints Genevieve and Apollonia  
and Saints Christina and Ottilia  
*(The St Catherine Altarpiece:  
Reverses of Shutters)*

Susan Foister

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Lucas Cranach The Elder  
NG 6511.1 and 6511.2  
Saints Genevieve and Apollonia, Christina and Ottilia  
(The St Catherine Altarpiece: Reverses of Shutters)

## Lucas Cranach the Elder and workshop

NG 6511.1 and 6511.2

### Saints Genevieve and Apollonia and Saints Christina and Ottilia (*The St Catherine Altarpiece: Reverses of Shutters*)

1506

Oil on lime(?) panels, NG 6511.1: 123.0–123.5 x 66.4 cm, painted surface 123.0–123.5 x 64.3 cm; NG6511.2: 121.3–121.5 x 63.8–63.5 cm, painted surface same dimensions

### Provenance

Both paintings are first recorded in the copies of *The St Catherine Altarpiece* made by the Torgau painter Daniel Fritsch, which are dated 1586 and 1596 (now Gotisches Haus, Stiftung Dessau Wörlitz and the Evangelical church (Dorfkirche), Berlin, Alt-Tempelhof, respectively). According to an inventory taken at Schloss Hartenfels, Torgau, in 1610 there was in the 'Schöne Fürstenkammer' an 'alte gemahlte Taffel von Ölfarben darauff die Historien von der Catharina', described in 1601 merely as a 'grosser Flügelaltar mit vergoldetem Rahmen', which can probably be identified with Cranach's altarpiece.<sup>1</sup>

The altarpiece was brought to Dresden from Torgau in 1738 by the court painter Bonaventura Rossi. It can evidently be identified in the 'Specification derjenigen Bilder, so von Monsieur Rossi von dem Schlosse zu Torgau mit nach Dresden genommen worde' that was drawn up in Torgau on 12 July 1738, as number 2, 'Ein Bild, worauff die Historia der Dorothea auf Holz, in 3 Feldern gemahlt'.<sup>2</sup> The whole altarpiece is first recorded in the Dresden royal collection from 1786 in records of paintings to be sold; the wing panels had evidently been sawn in two by this date, as inner and outer panels were listed separately.<sup>3</sup> The two outer wings were sold in 1797 together with one interior wing: the panel with Saint Apollonia (NG 6511.1) was sold on 27/8 July for 2 Thaler 8 Groschen and the Saint Ottilia panel (NG 6511.2) on 2 December for 11 Groschen.<sup>4</sup>

All three panels were acquired at an unknown date, probably via the Dresden painter Ferdinand Hartmann (1774–1842), by Heinrich Wilhelm Campe (1771–1862), a Leipzig businessman and collector, and sold on 24 September 1827 in Leipzig.<sup>5</sup> The National Gallery panels are listed in the sale catalogue as numbers 286 and 287, by Hans Holbein the Elder; number 300, the interior panel depicting Saint Dorothy and her companion, was sold by Hans Baldung Grien.<sup>6</sup> The latter was acquired by the Leipzig collector Maximilian Speck von Sternburg (1776–1856), and remained in the possession of his descendents until acquired by the Dresden Gemäldegalerie in 1996, where it had been on loan since 1931.<sup>7</sup> NG 6511.1 and NG 6511.2 were purchased at the 1827 sale by a Berlin dealer, 'v.d. Laar', perhaps the artist Ferdinand von Laer (active 1828–40), for a

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total of 50 Taler and 4 groschen.<sup>8</sup> By 1875 they were in the collection of the banker and trustee of the National Gallery, Samuel Loyd, 1st Baron Overstone (1796–1883).<sup>9</sup> They were inherited by his descendents and acquired by the National Gallery from the Loyd Trustees through a private treaty sale in 1987.

### Exhibitions

London 1906 (46 and 58); Oxford 1934 (22 and 28); Birmingham 1945–52 (10 and 11); London 1956 (16 and 18); King's Lynn 1966 (14 and 15); long-term loan to the National Gallery, London, 1974–87.

### Copies and versions

1. Copy of the altarpiece by Daniel Fritsch of Torgau at the Gotisches Haus, Wörlitz, Stiftung Dessau Wörlitz (five panels, disassembled), signed DF and dated 1586.<sup>10</sup>
2. Copy of the altarpiece by Daniel Fritsch of Torgau in the Dorfkirche at Alt-Tempelhof, Berlin, dated 1596.<sup>11</sup>

### Technical Notes

#### *Conservation*

The paintings were cleaned and restored, and the panels treated, in 1987–91.

#### *Condition*

In the past several of the joins in the panels have opened and many additional horizontal splits have developed, but these are now mended and secure. The paintings are in fair condition, having suffered some paint loss and wearing. Both pictures have horizontal lines of loss associated with joins and splits in the panels. Paint has also been lost from many of the butterfly keys which secure the joins, especially those near the right edge of each panel. NG 6511.2 also has a larger area of paint loss across the top of Saint Christina's head, continuing across the background to the gold ball in the middle. The light paint of the flesh and drapery in both panels has suffered from fine flaking and widening of the craquelure. The red robe of Saint Apollonia and the black habit of Saint Ottilia are both worn, as is the dark background paint on both panels, particularly at the left of NG 6511.2.

#### *Materials and technique*

The panels of both pictures are made of horizontally joined boards of lime(?) wood. For NG6511.1 nine boards were used and for NG 6511.2 ten. Each of the joins in the panels was aligned with two butterfly keys set into the fronts of the panels before they were painted, located about 7.5 cm in from the left and right edges. All four edges of NG 6511.1 have been cut. NG 6511.2 has also been cut at the top and bottom, but at the left and right it has probably only been trimmed slightly, since there are narrow rather uneven strips of unpainted wood along these edges. Both panels have been reduced in thickness to less than 0.6 cm. There are a number of horizontal splits in the panels, the most severe across the chests of saints Genevieve and Apollonia (NG 6511.1) and 5.0 cm from the top

edge of NG 6511.2. Additional non-original butterfly keys have been set into the backs of both panels after they had been reduced in thickness, to reinforce the splits. During the conservation treatment in 1987–1991 cradles were removed and the panels were built up with balsa and wax resin at the back. The remains of glue and wood of a different type to the original panels were found on the backs after the removal of the cradles, suggesting that either other pieces of wood or a secondary wooden support had been attached to the panels in the past.

The *ground* is chalk, confirmed by X-ray diffraction. Although not visible in the X-ray images, fibres could be seen in the ground in several samples and these seem to be sandwiched between two layers. The ground has been covered with a thin off-white or pale pinkish priming layer consisting of lead white and a little red lead.

There is a free, linear underdrawing in a liquid medium, visible in infrared images of both panels. The presence of black backgrounds, other areas of black paint and of gold leaf means that not all of the underdrawing can be seen by infrared reflectography, but enough is made visible to give a good overall impression. The drawing consists of simple outlines and appears to be freehand, although the heads at least are probably based on the copying by eye of pattern drawings. There are many small changes between the underdrawing and the finished paintings.

In Saint Genevieve's face (NG 6511.1) the eyes are painted slightly lower than where they were underdrawn. The nose that was drawn was rounder, and the ear higher and wider than that finally painted. The eyebrows are indicated with a series of short parallel dashes. The edge of the hair and parting are drawn, and the plait is indicated very freely by a series of interlocking arcs. Similar lines are drawn under the paint of the puff of the sleeve at the shoulder and might indicate that her plait was planned to lie on her shoulder. Both hands were also underdrawn: the fingers of the hand at the top of the candle were painted higher than they were drawn. The outlining of the face of Saint Apollonia has a sketchy quality, and the lines around the eyes and nose are broken, as is the line round the profile. The chin was painted in a lower position than it was drawn. There are some random curving lines to indicate the hair. Slight changes are visible in the position of the arms and the fingers have been moved. The skirt was drawn wider so that it touched the trailing skirt of Saint Genevieve. There are other lines visible at the bottom of the skirt which extend into the foreground. They have the same texture and quality as the rest of the drawing but their purpose is unclear.

Saint Christina's eyes (in NG 6511.2) are drawn looking to the right, not directly at the viewer as painted. A large ear was drawn under the hair, but it was not painted. A line across the left hand at the position of the knuckles could either be an indication of the anatomy, or the position for the cuff of an inner sleeve that was not painted. There are small adjustments to the position of Saint Ottilia's right eye, which was painted lower

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than it was drawn. There are parallel curved lines below the lower eyelids in the areas painted as shadow. The outlines of the saint's veil are underdrawn and this guide was followed in painting. The folds of the headdress over her shoulder are sketched with considerable freedom, which was not always followed at the painting stage (for further discussion of the underdrawing and its changes see Attribution below).

### *Gilding*

The swags at the top of each panel, Saint Genevieve's bodice, jewellery and the bands of brocade on her skirt, Saint Apollonia's necklace, Christina's robe and Ottilia's book are all mordant-gilded. The adhesive (mordant) for the gold leaf is brownish-yellow in colour and consists mainly of yellow earth, with a little lead white, red earth and verdigris. When this last pigment is found in mordants it is usually considered to be present as a drier, which implies an oil-based binder, although this has not been confirmed by analysis. The swags are modelled with black lines and a more translucent brownish paint. Similarly, on the gilded garments a translucent warm brown has been used to model the forms, for example the shadows under Christina's arms and the folds in her skirt. This is in addition to the pattern on her robe in red lake and what appears to be black but is in fact darkened copper containing green. In contrast, the pattern on her bodice is intended to be black.

There is no medium analysis.

### *Pigments*

In the black background paint some verdigris has been mixed with the black pigment, probably as a dryer. The same mixture was used for the black pattern on Apollonia's collar, applied on a pale orange layer composed of lead-tin yellow and red lead. In cross-section, this base colour is more strongly orange at the bottom of the layer and paler nearer the surface, suggesting that there may have been some lightening of the red lead pigment, and that the scarf may originally have been deeper in colour. The paint of her red dress is based on vermilion and red lake, mixed with some black in addition in the shadows. Genevieve's candle and the haloes of all the saints are painted in lead-tin yellow.

Red lake was used for the ribbons on Genevieve's sleeves. The deep velvety purple of her underskirt is created with a base layer of black (again containing some verdigris as a drier), on to which deeper or lighter translucent pink mixtures of red lake mixed with varying amounts of lead white have been applied. Her bright green skirt is based on verdigris mixed with varying amounts of lead-tin yellow, as is the green of the grass in the foreground.

## **Subjects**

NG 6511.1 depicts Saint Genevieve and Saint Apollonia. Saint Genevieve (422–512)

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was the patron saint of Paris and protector of the Parisians during the invasions of the Huns and Franks. She holds the candle that miraculously relit after being extinguished by the devil when she was praying alone in church at night. Her pendant may be intended to represent the Greek letters for alpha and omega, the beginning and end of the Greek alphabet, symbolising God or Christ. Her skirt is a rich green, with bands of gold damask, and is worn over a purple underskirt. Her gold bodice bears the letters GSE and is worn over a white shirt with red lacing on the sleeves and a red frontlet with black lacing; her lower left-hand sleeve is of gold damask while her lower right-hand sleeve is a grey textile striped with red. She wears a gold chain around her shoulders and a narrower gold chain with a pendant looped once around her neck. Her brown hair is bound in plaits, one of which can be seen curling around the back of her right arm, and she wears a narrow black headband. Saint Apollonia of Alexandria (died 249) holds a pair of pincers (also represented on the pendant of her necklace); her teeth were extracted during her martyrdom. She wears a bright red dress with a semi-transparent black chequered shawl around her shoulders. Her fair hair falls in curls over her shoulders.

NG 6511.2 depicts Saint Christina and Saint Ottilia. Saint Christina of Bolsena (third century AD) stands on the millstone to which she was tied when thrown into the Lake of Bolsena; she miraculously floated. Her shoulder-length curling hair is brown and she wears a dress of gold damask patterned with red and black, with a black diaper-patterned bodice. Around her neck is a heavy gold chain and a gold pendant from which hangs pearls. Saint Ottilia (died c.720) holds a book on which rest a pair of eyeballs, a reference to the blindness miraculously cured at her baptism. She wears the black habit of a Benedictine Abbess (she was the abbess of the convent of Hohenburg and patron saint of Alsace).

### **The Original Ensemble: *The St Catherine Altarpiece***

The two National Gallery panels once formed the outer faces of the shutters of Cranach's *St Catherine Altarpiece*, signed and dated 1506. The central panel showing the martyrdom of the saint and the inner faces of the shutters are in the Gemäldegalerie, Dresden. Two copies of the altarpiece were made in 1586 and 1596 by Daniel Fritsch of Torgau (see Copies).<sup>12</sup> The altarpiece was evidently brought to Dresden from Torgau in 1736, but by 1786 the fronts and reverses of the shutters had been separated (see Provenance). The inner shutters depict Saints Dorothy, Agnes and Cunigunde, and Saints Barbara, Ursula and Margaret; there has been some debate concerning which shutter was originally fixed to the left of the centre panel and which to the right (see below).

*The St Catherine Altarpiece* was one of Cranach's first and most important commissions after becoming court painter in 1505 to the Electors of Saxony, Frederick the Wise and Johann the Steadfast (see NG 6538). It depicts the high drama of the events preceding

the martyrdom of Saint Catherine of Alexandria (c.287–c.305). According to legend, she defeated 50 philosophers in theological argument, prompting them to convert to Christianity and consequently to be condemned to death. Refusing to marry the Roman emperor, she was herself tortured and condemned to be killed by being attached to a spiked wheel. Through divine intervention the wheel broke apart, its splinters killing some of the spectators. On witnessing this miracle 200 soldiers converted to Christianity and were instantly beheaded, before Catherine herself was herself executed by beheading with a sword.

The two spectators on the left of the scene depicted in the central panel of the altarpiece have been identified as portraits of the elector Frederick the Wise (on the left) and, less certainly, Johann the Steadfast (see NG 6538); an alternative identification proposed for the second figure is Duke Joachim I of Brandenburg.<sup>13</sup> It is notable that the underdrawing of the heads of the central panel that may represent the electors shows very little change, whereas that for the other heads has undergone many alterations, suggesting that they did not need to follow the specific patterns which portraying the rulers would have necessitated.<sup>14</sup> The small boy with Saint Dorothy on the shutter is possibly intended to be a portrait of Johann Friedrich, the son of Johann the Steadfast and nephew of Frederick the Wise (see NG 6539).<sup>15</sup> Other portraits have also been proposed, for which the evidence is more tenuous; the vividness of the representation of the heads of the figures in the altarpiece may be the result of Cranach's use of lifelike models rather than reflecting an intention to include a range of portraits.<sup>16</sup> Cranach may have drawn inspiration from Dürer for facial as well as figural and compositional models.<sup>17</sup> Dürer's woodcut of the same subject of around 1497/8 has generally been identified as his compositional starting point.<sup>18</sup>

Two castles feature in the background, one in the centre panel and one in the shutter with Saint Barbara. It has been argued that they are Coburg and Torgau, or two views of Coburg, which the buildings seem most closely to resemble. Coburg stands on a hill, unlike Torgau, which is situated on a plain next to a river. While it seems certain that the castle in the shutter is Coburg, that in the centre panel might represent another of the castles or hunting lodges owned by the electors of Saxony, such as their favoured hunting lodge of Lochau. However, no certain representation survives for comparison, although it might possibly be shown in the background of Cranach's woodcut of 1506 representing a deerhunt.<sup>19</sup>

Of the saints grouped on the inner shutters, Saint Dorothy (died c.311) is represented with a small boy carrying a basket of flowers. According to her legend, she sent such a child to the unbelieving lawyer Theophilus as a sign of her heavenly destination after he challenged her faith on the way to her martyrdom, asking her to send him flowers and fruit from the garden of heaven. Next to her is Saint Agnes, with her attribute of a

lamb, and Saint Cunigunde (died 1033), wife of the Emperor Henry II. When the latter was accused of infidelity, she walked on red-hot ploughshares or coals, which she is shown holding. In the other group of saints is Saint Barbara, represented as the patron saint of the dying and holding a chalice with the sacrament which would be conferred as one of the last rites; Saint Ursula, who was martyred with arrows at Cologne; and Saint Margaret, who escaped alive from being swallowed by Satan in the form of a dragon.

*The original location of the altarpiece*

*The St Catherine Altarpiece* was almost certainly made for the chapel of the electors of Saxony at Wittenberg Castle, which was dedicated to All Saints. The rebuilding of the chapel began in the 1490s and was completed in 1511.<sup>20</sup> Following near destruction it was rebuilt in 1760–70 and restored in the nineteenth century.<sup>21</sup> The chapel contained thirteen altars: the dedications included those to Sigismund, Wenzel and Elogius, which date from the fourteenth century; and those to All Saints (the high altar, dedicated in 1506), Maria, the Holy Cross and Anne.<sup>22</sup> Catherine was the patron saint of the philosophical faculty of the University of Wittenberg, founded by the electors of Saxony in 1502. Since the castle chapel also served as the university chapel from 1507, it is reasonable to suppose that Cranach's altarpiece depicting the saint's martyrdom was made for this location.<sup>23</sup> As well as being rich in altarpieces and church vessels, the chapel also housed the numerous relics collected by the electors.<sup>24</sup> The female saints represented on the inner faces of the altarpiece all reflect reliquaries of the saints owned by the electors; these were represented by Cranach in woodcut illustrations to the catalogue of the relics published in 1509, the *Wittenberger Heiligthumsbuch*. Of the saints shown on the outer faces, the electors owned a reliquary of Saint Ottilia, a relic of 'ein partickel' of Saint Christina, seven pieces of the leg of Saint Apollonia and some of her teeth, but nothing, it appears, of Saint Genevieve.<sup>25</sup>

The fact that the altarpiece is likely to have been at Torgau when it was copied in 1586 and 1596 by Daniel Fritsch (see Copies), and that it is first certainly recorded at Torgau in 1610 and is probably to be identified there in 1601 (see Provenance), has led to the alternative suggestion that it was originally made for the chapel of the elector's castle of Schloss Hartenfels at Torgau; some have suggested that this is represented in the background of the altarpiece.<sup>26</sup> This seems less probable, not only because Torgau is unlikely to be represented (see above). The small chapel at Torgau was dedicated to Saint Martin and had no evident connection to Saint Catherine. *The St Catherine Altarpiece*, if created for Wittenberg, might have been removed to Torgau at any point from 1525 onward when, with the advent of the Reformation, some of the contents of the Wittenberg chapel were removed and taken to the castle itself. Later, between 1547 and 1552, when the Elector Johann Friedrich was the prisoner of the Emperor Charles V (see NG 6538), Cranach himself removed works including precious metal objects from the castle, some of which were melted down, others later sold off by the

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heirs of Lucas Cranach the Younger (1515–1586).<sup>27</sup> The first copy of the altarpiece by Daniel Fritsch of Torgau was made during the year of the death of the Elector Augustus in 1586 and the accession of his son Christian I, who ruled until 1591, and its original location is unknown.<sup>28</sup> The second copy was made in 1596 during the rule of Christian II, elector until 1611, evidently commissioned by Katharina von Brandenburg (1549–1602), wife of Johann Friedrich, Elector of Brandenburg, for the church in Alt-Tempelhof, Berlin, where it remains today.

### *Reconstruction: The arrangement of the shutters*

The joins of the National Gallery panels and those of the Dresden panels match exactly. The National Gallery panel depicting saints Genevieve and Apollonia matches the Dresden panel with saints Dorothy, Agnes and Cunigunde; and the National Gallery panel with saints Christina and Ottilia, matches that with saints Barbara, Ursula and Margaret.<sup>29</sup> While the correspondence of the joins makes it clear which inner face belonged to which outer face, this does not elucidate the problem of which shutter was on the left and which on the right. The arrangement which prevailed in the Dresden Gallery in the nineteenth century and earlier in the last century placed the shutter with saints Barbara, Ursula and Margaret on the left. (The other shutter, representing saints Dorothy, Agnes and Cunigunde, had been sold (see Provenance) and was acquired by the Gemäldegalerie, Dresden, in 1996.<sup>30</sup>) There is no certainty that the original altarpiece was assembled in this way, and the obvious compositional objection is that this arrangement places the two castles adjacent to each other, which seems unlikely to have been Cranach's original intention. Against this, however, it might be argued that the position of the boy giving the basket of roses to Saint Dorothy is more logically placed turning inwards towards the centre panel (when placed on the right) rather than outwards (when on the left). The altarpiece is currently assembled to avoid the conjunction of castles, with Saint Dorothy and her companions on the left-hand shutter, leaving the other saints with the castle in the background to form the right wing. This arrangement is reflected in the copy by Daniel Fritsch of 1596 at Berlin, but again there can be no certainty that the triptych was always assembled in this way (the Wörlitz copy is dismembered and the backs and fronts of the shutters split). In this arrangement the closed shutters would show saints Genevieve and Apollonia on the left, and saints Christina and Ottilia on the right. No evidence remains concerning the original frame of the altarpiece, which may have included a predella, as well as a carved upper portion including figures.<sup>31</sup>

### **Attribution**

The National Gallery panels were attributed to Hans Holbein the Elder when in the Campe collection before 1827 (see Provenance) and later in the nineteenth century to Altdorfer. The Dresden panels were briefly associated with Martin Schongauer in 1835, but in 1837 they were catalogued as the work of Lucas Cranach the Elder, while the separated inner shutter was catalogued as the work of Hans Baldung Grien when in the

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Campe collection with the National Gallery panels.<sup>32</sup> The National Gallery panels were first catalogued as the work of Cranach in 1906 when they were exhibited at the Burlington Fine Arts Club and dated around 1516 (see Exhibitions), but Friedländer in his review of the exhibition compared them to the Saint Catherine altarpiece and in 1911 drew attention to the Fritsch copy of 1586 at Wörlitz.<sup>33</sup> Modern critical opinion (from the Dresden catalogue of 1905 onwards) has agreed that *The St Catherine Altarpiece* is the work of Cranach.

The quality of most of the painting of the inner faces of *The St Catherine Altarpiece* is very high indeed. This is particularly evident in the detail of the hat and jewellery, for example, that is worn by Saint Cunigunde, or the damask and jewelled bodice and sleeves worn by Saint Ursula, as well as in the many details of plants, animals and landscape. However, less care has been taken in parts of the figures on the inner faces: for example, the damask band trimming Saint Margaret's dress as well as other details of her bodice,<sup>34</sup> the head of the long-nosed bald man in the central panel, or the arms of Saint Dorothy and of Johann Friedrich. The damasks in the National Gallery panels are simpler in design than most of those shown in the inner faces of the altarpiece and they are painted in a less elaborate, less painterly manner. They are created by simple outlines of red and green (now black) paint over gold leaf, whereas the damask of Saint Ursula's skirt, for example, is painted with well-defined black outlines and areas filled in with red or blue paint. Paint rather than gold is used to create the glittering effect of her bodice. The figures of the National Gallery panels are also slightly more elongated; generally they appear flatter, and lack the colourful opulence and three-dimensional effect of those in the inner faces, as well as the hesitancy and delicacy evident in the painting of parts such as Saint Catherine and her jewels.

Examination of the underdrawing made visible with the aid of infrared reflectography serves to illuminate some of the methods of production of the altarpiece. It can be deduced, for example, that the heads of all the female saints in the altarpiece were based on stock patterns or drawing which were copied or transferred to the panel, and subsequently adjusted. The head of Saint Ursula on the inner face of the altarpiece was underdrawn turned to the right, her head inclined and eyelids lowered. The underdrawing is similar to the finished head of Saint Christina, also bent to the right with downcast eyes. The contour of Christina's left cheek, as originally drawn, is narrower, but has been adjusted to become slightly wider. A similar outline is used for the head of Saint Ottilia, but in reverse. Similarly, the painted head of Saint Ursula resembles the underdrawing for Saint Apollonia: the outlined shapes of the open eyes of the pattern lie in the underdrawing of Apollonia just above the closed eyes with which it has been decided to provide her, the original contours being partly re-used in the outlining of the closed position. Again, a similar stock pattern has provided the basis for the heads of both Saint Barbara and Saint Genevieve: the adjustments to the

contours of Genevieve's mouth show that the lines indicating the first, slightly more upwardly curving, positioning of the mouth used for Saint Barbara were adjusted in the case of Genevieve to create slightly more horizontal lips. There is also some similarity between the patterns used for Saint Genevieve and Saint Margaret, although in reverse, with the latter shown slightly more in three-quarter view. Saint Dorothy is similar to Saint Christina in reverse, both having the same large ear visible in the underdrawing. Saint Apollonia resembles Saint Agnes with an adjustment made to her nose. The National Gallery shutter panels do not show major changes to figures on the inner faces such as Saint Ursula, originally drawn in profile, or the small boy with Saint Dorothy, also shown at first in profile. Only small adjustments were made between underdrawing and painting (see Technical Notes).

Some scholars have suggested that Cranach was assisted in the making of the altarpiece, and that the National Gallery panels might be the work of assistants.<sup>35</sup> Heydenreich has noted adjustments to Saint Margaret's headdress and argued that this represents Cranach himself correcting the work of an assistant.<sup>36</sup> Cranach employed workshop assistants at the time of the painting of *The St Catherine Altarpiece*: in 1505 he paid a 'Christoph Maler' from Munich, as well as an unnamed journeyman.<sup>37</sup> Studies of the techniques of Cranach's paintings have suggested that on occasion the painting of the whole of the exteriors of the shutters of large altarpieces may have been delegated to assistants, and that there are also instances of collaboration on single panels.<sup>38</sup> Christoph may well have assisted in the painting of the National Gallery panels. Schade observed a disparity in quality between the left and right faces of the shutters.<sup>39</sup> There is certainly some compositional disparity: saints Genevieve and Apollonia are placed further away from the viewer and hence higher up the panel than Saints Christina and Ottilia; the feet of the former pair of saints are visible but not those of the latter.<sup>40</sup> The figures of Saints Christina and Ottilia are perhaps painted with slightly more vigour and refinement than Saints Genevieve and Apollonia, although the underdrawing of all four heads is of equally high quality and is probably by Cranach himself. It is conceivable that the shutter with Saints Christina and Ottilia received more attention from Cranach himself than the other, but the differences in quality are not great. The painting of both National Gallery panels can be plausibly attributed to Cranach himself with workshop assistance.

## Date

*The St Catherine Altarpiece* is dated 1506.

## General References

Friedländer 1911, pp. 25–6; Posse 1936, pp. 243–8; Friedländer and Rosenberg 1978, no. 15; Parris 1974, p. 48ff., p. 756, note 40; NG Annual Report, 1985–7, pp. 32–4; Marx 1996; Marx and Mössinger 2005; Heydenreich 2007.

## Notes

1. Findeisen and Magirius 1976, p. 167; Marx 1996, p. 39.
2. Marx und Mössinger 2005, p. 380 and p. 387, note 2; and Marx 1996, p. 40 and p. 60, note 35. Transcript made by Dr Hans Posse in Archiv der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen, Dresden, Posse Archive, vol. XXII, after documents formerly in the Staatsarchiv Dresden, Cap VII, no. 8, *Verschiedene Verzeichnisse von Gemälden*, loc. 18212. I am most grateful to Katrin Kolb of the Gemäldegalerie, Dresden, for discussing with me the archival evidence concerning the altarpiece at Dresden in the eighteenth century and providing a copy of relevant parts of her transcript of Dr Posse's notes.
3. Kolb 2005, p. 380.
4. *Ibid.*; Posse 1936, p. 246; Posse transcript in the archives of the Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen, Dresden, after Staatsarchiv Dresden, Cap VII, no. 25 no. 15, sold on 27/8 July 1797: 'Die heil. Utilia ein Buch in der Hand haltend, worauf zwey Augen liegen, dabei noch eine Heilige' and 'nicht zur Auction übergeben worden'; catalogue no. 88, 'Die Enthauptung der heil. Catherina ...'; no. 139, 'Die heil. Utilia dabey noch eine Heilige von L. Cranach'; under 'ver auctionert' no. 140, 'Die heil. Appollonia, dabey eine Heilige so ein Licht in der Hand halt von L. Cranach 2 Thaler 8 Gr.'; and no. 141, 'Die heil. Agnes ... dabey die hl. Dorothea ...'. The panel with Ottilia was sold on 2 December for 11 Groschen.
5. Information kindly provided by Dr Dieter Gleisberg: correspondence in NG files. See also Kolb 2005, p. 381, note 12 (citing Gleisberg 2000, p. 116). The presence of the Cranach panels in the Campe sale in Leipzig in 1827 was first noted in Trautscholdt 1957, p. 244.
6. See Kolb 2005, p. 381.
7. *Ibid.* For Maximilian Speck von Sternburg see further Gleisberg 1998, pp. 22–40, esp. p. 23 (I am grateful to Katrin Kolb for this reference).
8. Kolb 2005, p. 381.
9. Parris 1967, p. 13.
10. First recorded there in 1818: see Melzer 2005, pp. 44–58), esp. pp. 50–1; it is illustrated on p. 49, with a reconstruction of the original disposition of the panels on p. 51, fig. 3. The panels were separated by 1786, with the separated insides and outsides hanging as nos 2 to 5, the martyrdom hanging in the library. They were brought together again in 1918. The copy does not appear in earlier inventories of the ducal collections in Dessau, but was evidently acquired by Duke [Furst] Friedrich Franz (1740–1817), an enthusiast for Cranach's work.
11. Kugler 1837, p. 128: 'Ein Werk aus Cranachs früherer Zeit, dergleichen nicht häufig gefunden werden, befindet sich über dem Altar der Kirche zu Tempelhof bei Berlin. Es ist mit der Jahrzahl 1506 versehen und stellt auf dem Mittelbilde das Martyrthum der heil. Katharina, auf den Flugelbildern die Gestalten einzelner weiblicher Heilige dar.'
12. Pouncing was used to create the copies: see Heydenreich 2007, p. 308.
13. Koepplin and Falk 1974–6, [vol. II], p. 268; Marx 2005, pp. 103–5.
14. I am grateful to Christoph Schölzel of the Gemäldegalerie, Dresden, for showing me the infrared reflectograms of the altarpiece and discussing them with me.
15. Marx and Mössinger 2005, p. 110, notes that the underdrawing of the boy shows a face in profile and links this to a drawing of an angel by Schongauer known in two versions, one formerly in the Koenigs collection and one today in the Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin.
16. See *ibid.*, pp. 98–105 and Heydenreich 2007, pp. 303–11. Posse 1936 proposed that other male heads were portraits.
17. See Marx 1996, pp. 34–8 and Marx and Mössinger 2005, pp. 98–105.
18. Marx 1996, pp. 34–8.
19. Kolb 2005, pp. 382–3.
20. Bellmann 1979, pp. 91–2.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 90–3.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 246.
23. Marx 1996, p. 38.
24. Bellmann 1979, pp. 245–53, p. 257ff. The chapel probably housed Dürer's *Adoration of the Magi*.
25. Marx and Mössinger 2005, pp. 38–9; see nos vii, xii and xiii in the *Wittenberger Heiligthumsbuch*.
26. Friedländer and Rosenberg 1978, no. 15; Marx 1996, p. 38.
27. Bellman 1979, p. 242.
28. It is suggested that this copy was originally made for a church in Anhalt which was reformed in 1596: see Melzer 2005.
29. Giebe and Schölzl in Marx 1996, pp. 63–88, esp. p. 63.
30. It was loaned to Dresden from 1931; see Kolb 2005, pp. 381–2.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 382.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 380–1.
33. *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, Bd XXIX, 1906, p. 588; Friedländer 1911, p. 25.
34. Heydenreich 2007, pp. 292–3.
35. Schade 1974, p. 382, note 266; Marx 1996, p. 33 and further comments on the unusually elongated figures and their placing, *ibid.*, p. 34.
36. Heydenreich 2007, pp. 292–3 and 308–9.
37. *Ibid.* p. 310 and p. 406, document no. 5, September 1505.
38. Heydenreich 2007, pp. 289–98.
39. Schade 1974, p. 382, note 266; also Schade, oral communication at the National Gallery, confirming his opinion.
40. Marx 1996, p. 34; Kolb 2005, pp. 386–7.