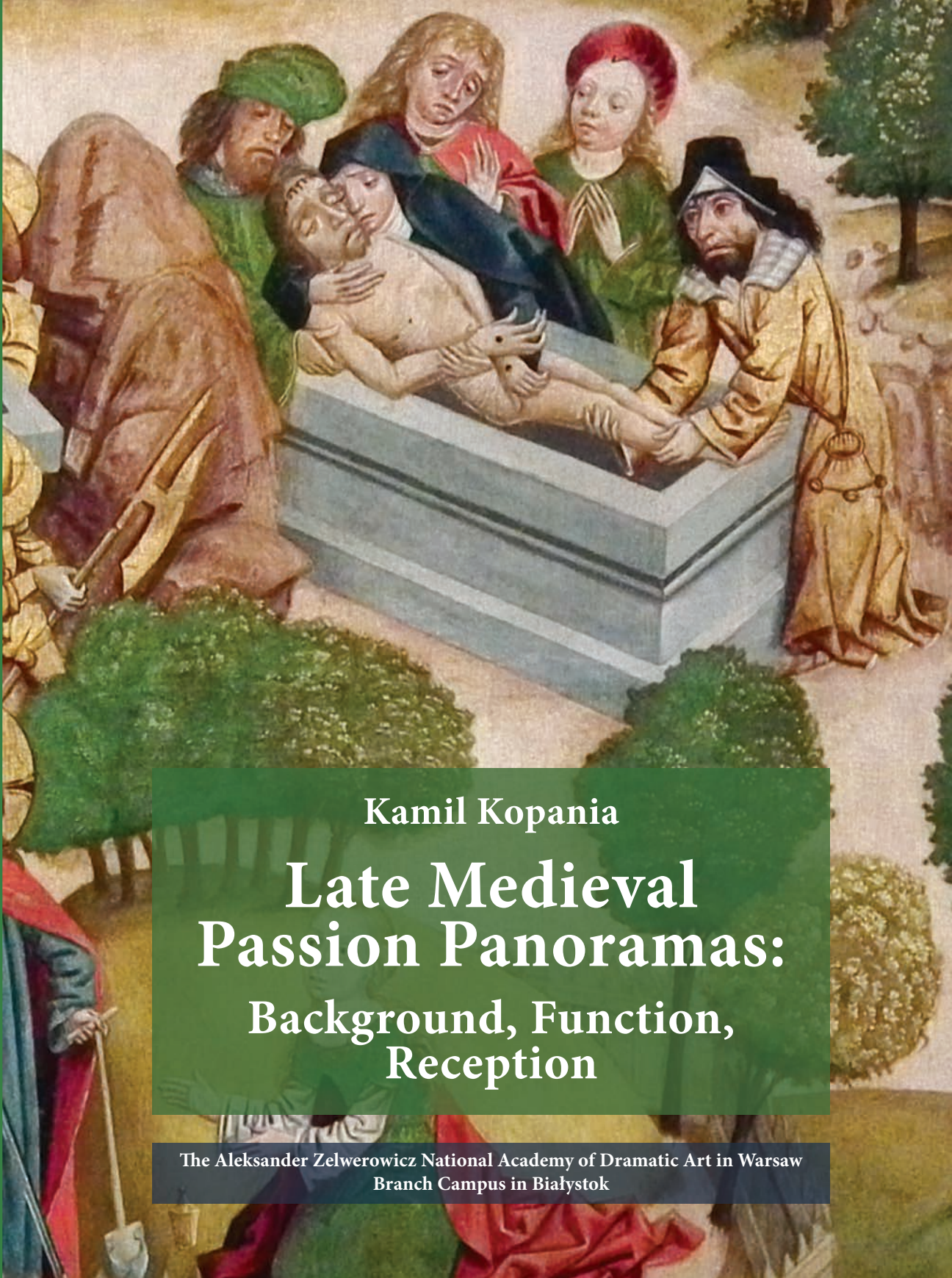


Background, Function, Reception

## Late Medieval Passion Panoramas:



Kamil Kopania

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The Aleksander Zelwerowicz National Academy of Dramatic Art in Warsaw  
Branch Campus in Białystok

Kamil Kopania  
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National Academy of Dramatic Art in Warsaw  
Branch Campus in Białystok**

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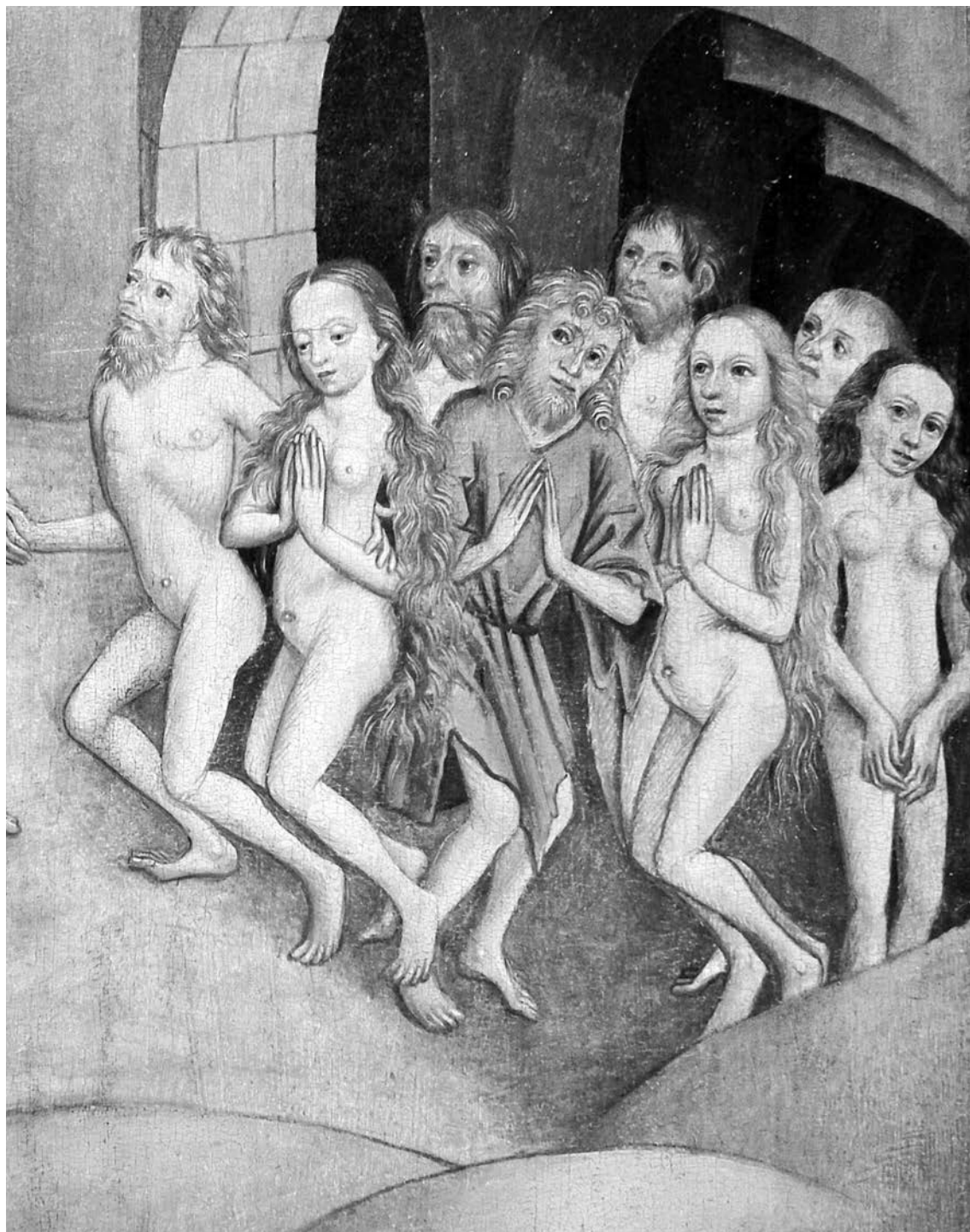
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The idea of this book was born in 2010 during my study trip to London granted by The de Brzezie Lanckoroński Foundation. Research in London libraries and museum collections was the first step towards asking fundamental questions about late medieval passion panoramas. It allowed me to isolate this group of paintings and look critically at the relationship between images of this type and both spiritual pilgrimages to Jerusalem and the medieval stage. Further research was enabled by funding granted by the National Science Center, Poland (*Passion Panoramas in the Culture of the Late Middle Ages*, 2014/13/D/HS2/00999). The funds granted enabled multiple trips to Belgium, Czechia, England, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Spain; on these trips, I collected both iconographic and archival materials.



# Introduction

**T**he aim of this book is to discuss late medieval passion panoramas. This term refers to a small group of panel paintings, created mainly in the last quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, which combine the technique of simultaneously composed passion iconography with a depiction of Jerusalem and its outskirts.<sup>1</sup> Produced mainly by Netherlandish and sometimes Westphalian artists, these pictures represent episodes from Christ's passion in detail, emphasizing the role of Jerusalem, the Holy City in which His mission of salvation was accomplished. All seven works of art belonging to this group and preserved to our time implement the same artistic and ideological concept, although the panels differ considerably from one another. The number of scenes from Christ's passion ranges from a handful to almost thirty; Jerusalem is depicted accurately in some, while in others it has nothing in common with a real view of the Holy City. Some late medieval passion panoramas feature extensive inscriptions, while others lack them. The smallest representation can be held in the hands; the biggest is a huge panel over two meters high and two meters wide.

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<sup>1</sup> My decision to use the term "late medieval passion panoramas" is driven by the conviction that such a coherent group of works of art should be defined precisely and deserves to be referred to by one specific term. The word "panorama" means a picture containing a wide view, the view of a wide area, unobstructed or complete view of the area, in the case of the panel paintings analyzed here: Jerusalem and its outskirts. All panel paintings belonging to this group present numerous episodes from Christ's passion (predominantly the climax of the story, that is, the resurrection, and sometimes important events taking place after it, reinforcing its veracity) simultaneously and in a continuous manner. All of these episodes are presented on the streets, within the buildings or in the environs of the more or less meticulously depicted Holy City. Thus all such panel paintings are passion panoramas. Their iconography is strictly subordinated to the events of the passion. If some passion panoramas include other scenes, these scenes do not refer to events taking place before the passion or after the ascension, or to i.e. Old Testament episodes. They are usually additional and conventional genre scenes whose aim is to show the events of Christ's passion in the context of everyday life. Passion panoramas are a phenomenon of a particular time. Before the second half of the 15th century, such panel paintings were not produced. In the Early Modern era, in the middle of the 16th century, we find just one example of a passion panorama, which can be treated as an instance of artistic backwardness or a willful reference to an older artistic tradition. That is why the term "late medieval passion panoramas" seems appropriate in the context of the panel paintings analyzed here.

To this day, late medieval passion panoramas – as a separate group – have not been the subject of detailed and comprehensive studies. Some of them, such as a famous *Passion of Christ* (1471) painted by Hans Memling and a part of the permanent exhibition of Sabauda Gallery in Turin, have a vast bibliography. The importance of the painter for European culture and his extraordinary position in 15<sup>th</sup> century Netherlandish art have mostly determined the areas of researchers' interest. It is not an exaggeration to say that the fame of Memling's masterpiece overshadowed six other works executed in the same manner. Moreover, other late medieval passion panoramas are constantly compared to the masterpiece from Sabauda Gallery. Even the only study fully devoted to late medieval passion panoramas, written by Julia Gerth and published in 2010, has a revealing title: *Wirklichkeit und Wahrnehmung. Hans Memling Turiner Passion und die Bildgruppe der Passionspanoramen*.<sup>2</sup> The fact that Memling is an outstanding artist, and that his panorama is the oldest known one, somehow justifies such an attitude but still adversely affects our view of this group of paintings.

10 The author of the aforementioned book did a great job gathering the findings and ideas of numerous researchers who discussed late medieval passion panoramas. Drawing on this material, Gerth wrote a useful synthesis focused on relations between Hans Memling's *Passion of Christ* and selected earlier works of art, such as passion tapestries from La Seo in Zaragoza and, above all, various Cologne and Westphalian altarpieces or stand-alone panel paintings. She also chose to present the influence of mystery plays on passion panoramas as well as to stress the importance of *devotio moderna* as a factor determining their emergence. But her synthesis cannot be treated as a complete one, as she did not include one important late medieval passion panorama, known in the literature well before 2010,<sup>3</sup> and she omitted two other examples of such works of art,<sup>4</sup> not to mention that the number of paintings which can serve as useful references for passion panoramas is limited. Gerth discusses almost exclusively paintings from Cologne and Westphalia and does not take into consideration important works of art from other parts of Europe,

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<sup>2</sup> Gerth 2010.

<sup>3</sup> I mean late medieval passion panorama from Pont-Saint-Espirit, see first chapter.

<sup>4</sup> While writing her book, Julia Gerth probably did not know about the late medieval passion panorama held in the collection of Walters Art Museum in Mount Vernon. This small panel painting was discussed by scholars for the first time quite recently, in 2014. Second passion panorama, early modern one, created in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, is mentioned by her only cursorily and treated only as an insignificant copy of Memling's *Passion of Christ*, not worth analyzing at all.



even those of Cologne and Westphalian origin. She also deals only superficially with the problem of spiritual pilgrimages, which well before 2010 were treated as a main factor influencing the emergence of Hans Memling's *Passion of Christ* and other passion panoramas. The short subsection "Das Bild als visuelles Medium für die *peregrination spiritualis*" is based on articles and books published long before 2010. The newest and most important findings and concepts concerning the idea and practice of spiritual pilgrimages in medieval Europe are absent from her study. The lack of references to new literature is noticeable throughout the whole book. Though it was published in 2010, it constitutes a good synthesis of the state of research as for about the year 2002. Given that in subsequent years numerous important studies in that field came out in print, the book cannot be treated as up to date.

Miri Kirkland-Ives's book *In the Footsteps of Christ. Hans Memling's Passion Narratives and the Devotional Imagination in the Early Modern Netherlands*<sup>5</sup> to some extent can also be treated as a kind of a broad reflection on late medieval passion panoramas. The author considers Memling's *Passion of Christ* in the context of broadly understood processional culture. She meticulously analyzes possible ways of seeing and using this panel painting, assuming that the viewer would be able to set all the events depicted in chronological order, like a typical narrative story. By placing the events of the passion simultaneously on the streets of Jerusalem and in the neighborhood of the city, Memling forces the viewer to carefully inspect the painting and to thoroughly analyze its elements. The effort put into this action could be treated as an equivalent to wandering in the footsteps of Christ. With all that in mind *Passion of Christ* can be treated as a useful vehicle for a spiritual pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Several other factors contributed to the impact of Memling's passion panorama. Viewers' mental activation of the story depicted by Memling was possible thanks to religious habits and practices typical of an educated late medieval viewer, who was used to reading devotional narratives of Christ's passion and guides for real and imagined pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Active participation in religious spectacles presented on the city streets of Netherlandish towns, especially *oomegangen*, or frequent contact with i.e. architectural copies of the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem or sculpted or painted Stations of the Cross also facilitated the reception of the *Passion of Christ*.

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<sup>5</sup> Kirkland-Ives 2013.

Outlining the broad context of social, religious and devotional functioning of the Memling's painting, Kirkland-Ives' work significantly complemented Gerth's findings and ideas. The problem, however, is that *In the footsteps of Christ* is in fact devoted to just one panel painting – Hans Memling's *Passion of Christ*. The reader will not find the answer to the question whether other late medieval passion panoramas were used in the same way and functioned in the same social, religious and devotional context or whether differences in composition, details, and dimensions characteristic of this group of paintings made any difference to the viewers. Kirkland-Ives' aim was to write a book on a specific, clearly defined subject, not a monograph on all late medieval passion panoramas. But at the same time, one should bear in mind that Hans Memling's *Passion of Christ* seems to function among art historians as a kind of *pars pro toto* for all late medieval passion panoramas. So the impact of her book on further research in that field may, paradoxically, be problematic. A comprehensive look at all late medieval passion panoramas, not simply in the context of Hans Memling's, is still very much to be hoped for.

12 Apart from the two aforementioned monographs, there exist dozens of articles devoted to late medieval passion panoramas or mentioning them in various contexts. The greatest interest, of course, has been generated by Memling's work. There are not only dozens but hundreds of studies devoted more or less directly to the *Passion of Christ*. It is pointless to summarize them all while many monographs on Hans Memling and different exhibition catalogues published in last fifty years contain such research.<sup>6</sup> Other late medieval passion panoramas have not aroused such interest among researchers. There are a lot of studies concerning *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń, although they are not commonly known to Western scholars. The vast majority of them were written in Polish, and some, mostly from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in German.<sup>7</sup> Those Western scholars who wrote about the painting from Toruń most often used these old, usually outdated studies, and were not equipped to work with Polish ones in which new information on the panel was provided.<sup>8</sup> A solid monography was written on *Passion of Christ* from Lisbon (a chapter in a book devoted

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<sup>6</sup> First and foremost, see: Lane 2009; Vos de 1994. Newer studies (selection): Coleman 2013; Moore 2017, p. 178.

<sup>7</sup> For the literature, see first and foremost: Kopania 2008. Older references were gathered in: Domasłowski 2004, pp. 269–270; Kruszelnicki 1959, pp. 13–50; Kruszelnicki 1968, pp. 87–152. After 2008 some new studies came to light: Gerth 2010, pp. 119–127; Ziembra 2015, pp. 735–740.

<sup>8</sup> See especially: Kopania 2004; Kopania 2008; Ziembra 2015, pp. 735–740.

to the collection of Netherlandish paintings in the Museu Nacional do Azulejo).<sup>9</sup> The painting is also mentioned in numerous books, catalogues and articles.<sup>10</sup> The passion panorama from Leuven was not commonly known among scholars and was introduced into literature quite late, that is in the mid-90s. Few studies of it have been published in recent years.<sup>11</sup> The bibliography concerning the passion panorama from Pont-Saint-Espirit is very modest. In fact in the last few decades, only five scholars have mentioned it in their studies;<sup>12</sup> the only other references are basic notes in the catalogues of the Louvre and Musée d'art sacré du Gard.<sup>13</sup> There is one study devoted to the passion panorama from The Walters Art Museum,<sup>14</sup> and to my knowledge, no scholar has devoted detailed discussion to the *Passion of Christ* from the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Antwerp.<sup>15</sup>

Researchers working on the subject of late medieval passion panoramas have undertaken three crucial issues: the artistic origin, cultural context and interpretation of these paintings. Numerous scholars have made the artistic background of the painters responsible for creating late medieval passion panoramas the main subject of their analysis. Scholars have written at length on stylistic features of paintings, seeking to identify the artistic milieu in which they were produced, and determine the origin of a simultaneous composition or selected iconographical details. To a certain extent all these studies can be classified as traditional studies in art history.<sup>16</sup> Other scholars,

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<sup>9</sup> Lievens-de Waegh 1991, pp. 46–105.

<sup>10</sup> Gerth 2010, pp. 127–144; Borchert 2002, p. 228; Kopania 2008, pp. 92–93; Kopania 2018, p. 314; Rudy 2011, pp. 151–161; *The Image of...* 2000, p. 464.

<sup>11</sup> Before the 1990s. it was mentioned briefly once, at the beginning of the 20th century: *Exposition de l'art...* 1905, no. 1002. Scholars had to wait until the late 1990s for new publications concerning this painting. Maurit Smeyers, Veronique Vandekerchove, Julia Gerth and Kathryn Rudy wrote about it extensively in the following years: Gerth, 2010, pp. 115–119; Rudy, 2011, 162–170; Smeyers 1998, pp. 485–488; Vandekerchove 2002a, pp. 1429–1441; Vandekerchove 2005, pp. 65–57; Vandekerchove 2006, cat. no. 18; Vandekerchove 2008, pp. 26–28; Vandekerchove 2009, pp. 21–26; Vandekerchove, Smeyers, 2006, pp. 159–168. See also: Kopania 2008, p. 94; Kopania 2018, p. 316.

<sup>12</sup> Hoogewerff 1947, p. 29; Koldewey 2000, pp. 232–233; Kopania, 2008, pp. 94–95; Kopania 2018, p. 317; Kruszelnicki 1968, p. 125.

<sup>13</sup> Foucart, Thiébaud 1981, p. 374; Lesné 2004, p. 179; *La Maison des...* 1998.; *Musée du Louvre...* 2002, p. 221.

<sup>14</sup> Rudy 2014, pp. 381–393. Also mentioned by: Kopania 2018, p. 317.

<sup>15</sup> Only M. Lievens-de Waegh (Lievens-de Waegh 1991, p. 85) and K. Kopania (Kopania 2008, p. 95, note 16; Kopania 2018, p. 318) mention that such a painting exists. See also short note in: *Museum Maagdenhuis* 2002, p. 14.

<sup>16</sup> To some extent Gerth's study meets these conditions: Gerth 2010, pp. 37–68.

not only art historians but also historians of theatre, focus on the problem of relations between art and theatre. According to many of them, late medieval passion panoramas directly reflect the reality of medieval mystery plays and stage design.<sup>17</sup> Others point out that many 15<sup>th</sup> century painters were involved in various theatrical activities and that their involvement exerted influence, even if not directly, on their art. Passion panoramas are thought to confirm such processes.<sup>18</sup>

In recent years, it has become increasingly common to link late medieval passion panoramas with the idea and practice of spiritual pilgrimage. Panel paintings showing the passion of Christ in numerous settings simultaneously, both in and outside Jerusalem, on the one hand would evoke the Holy Land, both historical and present, and on the other hand would enable the viewer to make a spiritual journey to the Holy City, giving him an opportunity to literally follow in the footsteps of Christ. In trying to prove their claims, some scholars use arguments deriving from an idea developed by Matthew Botvinick, who in his article *The Painting as Pilgrimage: Traces of Subtext in the Work of Campin and his Contemporaries*<sup>19</sup> argues that Netherlandish paintings were thought to be useful as vehicles for mental journeys. Their composition and numerous details attracted viewers, awoke pious feelings and approximated the benefits of direct contact with the Holy Land, God and the saints.<sup>20</sup>

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Other scholars argue that the sensational view and sensory reception activated by the composition and details of paintings are not sufficient to achieve the goal of mental pilgrimage. In their opinion it was not only the affective piety and emotional, sensual reception of paintings that made late medieval passion panoramas an effective means to complete a mental journey, but other important factors, too. For them this type of works of art functioned in the context of widespread devotional habits originating in the special place the Holy Land occupied in medieval culture and thought. The experience of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, reading pilgrimage narratives, and, most importantly, texts written especially for the purpose of aiding mental journeys, that is, guides to mental pilgrimages, helped believers to use passion panoramas in a proper way. The effectiveness of late medieval passion panoramas was also associated with

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<sup>17</sup> A particularly symptomatic example is Michael O'Connell's article: O'Connell 1996, pp. 22–34.

<sup>18</sup> See: Kopania 2018, pp. 321–322.

<sup>19</sup> Botvinick 1992, pp. 1–18.

<sup>20</sup> Labuda 2002, pp. 543–544. See also: Hull 1988; Hull 2005.



other factors, like the growing popularity of Passion parks or numerous replicas of the Holy Sepulchre.<sup>21</sup> The idea of using passion panoramas as a vehicle for mental pilgrimages was recently discussed by Antoni Ziemba in his monumental work on the art produced in Burgundy and the Netherlands in the Late Middle Ages: *Wspólnota rzeczy. Sztuka niderlandzka i północnoeuropejska 1380-1520* [*Community of Things. Netherlandish and North-European Art 1380-1520*].<sup>22</sup> Ziemba has a rather critical approach to this concept, pointing out that in many cases, Jerusalem as depicted in the paintings is not realistic enough to evoke a real city. What is more, Ziemba emphasizes that the reality shown in passion panoramas differs significantly from the one described by the authors of guides for mental pilgrimages. His study is also important because that he situates late medieval panoramas in the context of various works of art designed to arouse emotions and activate the viewer, as in the concept of the agency of things, so popular in the humanities in recent years. Ziemba's conclusions definitely constitute a significant stimulus towards further research. The author of the present study recently wrote an article summarizing previous studies of late medieval passion panoramas.<sup>23</sup> Pointing out two main interpretations, that is, their alleged connections with mystery plays and spiritual pilgrimages, he proposes to look at them from a different angle. It is rather problematic to claim that *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń, made for a Dominican church in a city located in the Kingdom of Poland, was used in exactly the same way as *The Passion of Christ* by Memling, which functioned in a different geographical, religious, social, and cultural context. Moreover, a number of works of art presenting the Passion of Christ as well as other events, such as episodes from the lives of saints – often made using different techniques, on a different scale, etc., but in the same manner – should finally be included in the discussion of passion panoramas. Given that late medieval passion panoramas do not constitute a homogeneous group of paintings, that they were used in different contexts in various parts of medieval Europe and that there exist a lot of other works of art with similar or different iconography but the same composition, it is plausible to claim that their background and function could be much more complicated and diverse than is generally believed.

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<sup>21</sup> Kathryn Rudy's contribution in the field of research on the practice and shapes of mental pilgrimages, especially in connection with various works of art, including late medieval passion panoramas, is a major one. See especially: Rudy 2000c; Rudy 2006; Rudy 2008; Rudy 2011; Rudy 2014. See also: Beebe 2014a; Beebe 2014b.

<sup>22</sup> Ziemba 2015.

<sup>23</sup> Kopania 2018, pp. 313–329.

To concisely sum up the current state of research:

- the two books devoted to, respectively, four late medieval passion panoramas (by Julia Gerth) and to Hans Memling's *Passion of Christ* (by Miri Kirkland-Ives), due to significant substantive limitations, cannot be treated as comprehensive monographic studies on the subject of late medieval passion panoramas;
- there are several dozen articles entirely or partly devoted to selected late medieval passion panoramas, as well as numerous books in which one can find references to and analysis of the paintings. Apart from discussion of the history or style of the paintings, most studies are devoted to the function of late medieval passion panoramas, identified with the idea of mental pilgrimage, and their relations with medieval theatre. Panoramas are also treated as a kind of interactive works of art, demanding careful attention and mental or even physical engagement from the viewer.

It is not an exaggeration to state that in recent years late medieval passion panoramas have constituted a popular research problem among art historians. Rapid development of research on Jerusalem and the Holy Land in medieval art and thought, real and mental pilgrimages, art and devotion, agency of things and relations between art and theatre, all areas which we have witnessed developing over the last twenty years, have contributed to the increase in the popularity of the topic. Late medieval passion panoramas fit comfortably within the framework of all the issues mentioned above. Yet there exists no insightful analysis of late medieval passion panoramas as a coherent group of paintings. No such comparative study of them has been written yet. Furthermore, the way they were used and perceived by faithful has so far been analyzed only cursorily. Selected panoramas were linked to specific ideas (i.e. mental pilgrimage), and these specific ideas have been mechanically attributed to all panoramas. Up to now, no one has undertaken a thorough analysis of each painting individually, or answered the question whether all late medieval panoramas are really the same in terms of iconography and function, whether they do not differ in some important ways and whether the artistic and social backgrounds of their functioning were always the same. Comparisons to other works of art featuring similar composition and iconography, but executed in different forms or media, are also limited. In the literature on late medieval passion panoramas it is hard to find any references to works of art from Central Europe, where several important panel paintings, altarpieces and

wall paintings similar in terms of composition to passion panoramas have survived to the present day. It seems quite obvious that including them in research could shed new light on a whole group of late medieval passion panoramas. With all of these concerns in mind, my intention is:

- to discuss every single known late medieval passion panorama separately, as an autonomous piece of art. The iconographic and historical analysis of each panel painting will be carried out and all judgments on their genesis and function recounted;
- to include in the discussion works directly related to late medieval passion panoramas (featuring identical composition and iconography) but executed in different media;
- to take under consideration other works of art, such as panel paintings, altarpieces, miniatures, tapestries combining the manner of simultaneously composed and continuous narration with depiction of a city; these works also constitute a reference to the homogenous group of late medieval passion panoramas, as well as to works most similar to them;
- to determine to what extent late medieval passion panoramas constituted a unique phenomenon of 15<sup>th</sup> century art as well as what other works of art similar to them tell us about late medieval passion panoramas themselves, not only in the context of their artistic background but also function and reception;
- to discuss in detail the artistic, cultural and religious background of late medieval passion panoramas. Their relation to broadly understood medieval theatre and the idea of mental pilgrimage will be analyzed. As these panel paintings are considered to have been used in a very active way, requiring special efforts and actions generating pious emotions, they will be analyzed in the context of the idea of the agency of things and various uses of religious works of art in the 15<sup>th</sup> century
- to determine what the function of late medieval passion panoramas was and how they were used at the twilight of the Middle Ages.

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I hope this book will shed a new light on late medieval passion panoramas and challenge some current claims of researchers in the field. And last but not least: I hope it will be a good starting point for further, in-depth studies of these paintings and of late medieval art in general.



## 1.

### **Late medieval passion panoramas: overview of panel paintings combining the manner of simultaneously composed passion iconography with a depiction of Jerusalem**

**L**ate medieval passion panoramas constitute a homogeneous group of completely independent panel paintings which are not part of larger structures such as altarpieces. Composition and iconography constitute the distinguishing feature and the main factor unifying the whole group of paintings. In creating them, painters combined simultaneous narrative and continuous space: all show numerous scenes of Christ's Passion simultaneously in and outside Jerusalem. Another distinctive feature is the artistic milieu in which they were created. The majority of them were painted in the Netherlands; only one in the Rhineland or in the Kingdom of Poland by a Rhenish painter active in the Pomerania region. Most of them (five of seven) were created in the last thirty years of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, although the earliest one is dated 1470 and the latest circa 1540. It seems that their popularity peaked in the last two decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

A characteristic form of composition, approach to narration, iconography, and to a large extent the same artistic milieu and time of occurrence: these are the similarities. Apart from the different artistic quality of each passion panorama, the dimensions of the panel paintings differ significantly and vary from 32,5 x 44,9 cm to 274 x 221 cm. The number of scenes included varies from eight to over twenty. In some passion panoramas, only the series of events from Christ's entry in Jerusalem to his death and burial are shown; in others, episodes which took place after the Resurrection have been added. Some paintings display scenes from daily life, while others present letters or even whole sentences. The way the architecture of Jerusalem is depicted varies fundamentally too. Some views of the Holy City resemble Jerusalem quite accurately, whereas some resemble no existing city, instead consisting of a few poorly

arranged, fragmentary architectural structures. Keeping this in mind, and taking into consideration that to date no researcher has reckoned with all late medieval passion panoramas at once, a thorough description of each painting has to be made. Basic facts about their history, owners, users, and stylistic features should be presented, especially because some of the passion panoramas are not widely known or have not been thoroughly discussed. For the same reason, the current state of research on each passion panorama should be briefly presented. Attending to these tasks will make it easier to draw new hypotheses and conclusions.



## Hans Memling's *The Passion of Christ* from Sabauda Gallery in Turin

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**H**ans Memling's *The Passion of Christ* (*Scenes of the Passion*) [il. 1] is beyond doubt the best known and best executed late medieval passion panorama, with dozens of studies devoted primarily to it. This relatively small panel painting from the Sabauda Gallery in Turin (54,9 x 90,1 cm, oil on panel, inv. no. 358) was commissioned by Tommaso and Maria Portinari and executed around 1470.<sup>1</sup> It was probably intended for Portinari's Chapel in the church of St. James in Bruges, where it remained until at least the first decennium of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, long after Tommaso's death in 1501.<sup>2</sup> In unclear circumstances and at an unknown time, most

<sup>1</sup> Tommaso Portinari (1428–1501) was an Italian banker for the Medici bank in Bruges, where he worked for over forty years. His professional career is hard to describe as extremely successful, which does not change the fact that he was responsible for important artistic commissions; apart from *The Passion of Christ*, he also commissioned *The Portinari Altarpiece* by Hugo van der Goes (Galleria degli Uffizzi, Florence). On his career and activity as a patron see: Lane 2009, *passim*. See also: Roover de 1948.

<sup>2</sup> This is the most widespread theory; see: Lane 2009, p. 315; Vos de 1994, p. 109. Some scholars suggest that the painting was intended for the church of Franciscan Observants and stayed there until 1518, when the church was relocated, see: Nutall 2004, p. 64.



probably a few years after 1510,<sup>3</sup> it was taken to Italy, to Florence, where it must have arrived no later than 1520, when it was used as a model for Gaspare Sacchi's painting showing the Passion of Christ in a simultaneous manner.<sup>4</sup> Its presence in the collection of the Dukes of Medici was recorded in 1550, and this seems to be the first confirmed mention of the presence of *The Passion of Christ* in Italy, although before that date it was, thanks to the donation of Tommaso's son, Francesco Portinari, most likely kept in Santa Maria Nuova.<sup>5</sup> Between 1570 and 1572, Cosimo I gave it to Pope Pius V, who then presented it to the Dominican Convent in Bosco. In 1814 it belonged to the king, Vittorio Emanuele I di Savoia; next it was inherited by Alberto Carlo di Savoia, and since 1832 it has been housed in the collection of the Sabauda Gallery in Turin.<sup>6</sup>

The painting consists of twenty-three vignettes showing consecutive stages of Christ's Passion, combined in one narrative and simultaneous composition of which Jerusalem constitutes a dominant element. Nineteen episodes depict Christ's Passion, one depicts the Resurrection, and three scenes show events taking place afterwards: 1) the Entry to Jerusalem, 2) the Cleansing of the Temple, 3) Judas's Betrayal, 4) the Last Supper, 5) the Agony in the Garden, 6) the Arrest of Christ, 7) the Denial of Peter, 8) Christ before Pilate, 9) the Flagellation, 10) the Crowning with Thorns, 11) the Interrogation by Herod,<sup>7</sup> 12) Ecce Homo, 13) the Making of the Cross, 14) the Carrying of the Cross, 15)

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<sup>3</sup> One fact suggests this. Between 1510–1515, the Master of Bruges painted two paintings partly inspired by Memling's work: *Crucifixion* (Treasury of St. Salvator's Cathedral, Bruges, inv. no. 12) and *Ecce Homo* (London, The National Gallery, inv. no. NG 1087), see: Vos de 1994, p. 109.

<sup>4</sup> Padovani 2008, pp. 140–141.

<sup>5</sup> The first mention of the painting occurs in Giorgio Vasari's *Le Vite de' più...* In the 1550 edition he writes that it was kept in Santa Maria Nuova in Florence ("Ausse [Hans Memling cerato di Rugieri [allievo di Rogier van der Weyden] che fece a'Portinari in Sancta Maria Nuova di Fiorenza un Quadro piccolo, il qual è oggi apress'al Duca Cosimo") Later, in the second edition of his *Le Vite de' più...* from 1568, he writes: "Hausse [Hans Memling], del quale abbiàn, come si disse, in Fiorenza in un quadretto piccolo, che è in man del duca, la Passione di Cristo". Both quotes taken from: Bogers 2008, p. 138. Louis Alexander Waldman writes succinctly that: "In light of the discovery that the patron's son Francesco Portinari bequeathed his parent's triptych [*Portinari Triptych*] to S Maria Nuova, it may be that it was he who brought about the return of Memling's *Passion* and donated it to the hospital under his family's patronage. How the painting come into Cosimo I's hands by 1550 is unknown [...]" ; Waldman 2001, p. 30.

<sup>6</sup> Bogers 2008, p. 138; Lane 2009, p. 315.

<sup>7</sup> The most popular and well established identification of this scene was made by Dirk de Vos, who suggested that it is the Second Interrogation by Pilate (Vos de 1994, p. 49). Erlier Ehrenfried Kluckert (Kluckert 1974a, pp. 41–42) wrote about it as Freeing of Barabbas, and Martin Jäkel (Jäkel 1910, p. 51) defined it as Penitent Judas Reappearing to the Sanhedrin. For sure neither Barabbas, nor Judas was painted by Memling, while, as de Vos stresses, a man being interrogated, standing in front of a seated one, has aureole around his head. What de Vos omitted are white garment of Christ put on his barely visible purple robe and a gold crown on seated man's head. The second one could not be assigned to Pilate,

the Nailing to the Cross, 16) the Crucifixion, 17) the Deposition, 18) the Entombment, 19) the Harrowing of Hell, 20) the Resurrection, 21) Noli me Tangere, 22) the Road to Emmaus, 23) the Appearance before the Apostles on the Sea of Galilee.

There are also motifs that can be defined as genre motifs, that is, people who do not participate in the events directly but watch them: 1) a man with a boy and a dog on the path to Calvary, looking in the direction where the scene of Resurrection is taking place, 2) two women and a child by the walls of Jerusalem, near the city gate from which Christ begins his way of the cross, 3) a man and a woman looking out the window and watching events on the central square of the city. Likenesses of kneeling donors, placed in the lower corners of the panel, also constitute an important element in the *The Passion of Christ*. Tommaso and Maria Portinari are isolated from the space where all events are taking place; their eyes look elsewhere. The last, relatively small but clearly visible motif which should be mentioned is a peacock perching on the city wall in the foreground.

*The Passion of Christ* is remarkable among all late medieval passion panoramas because of the way the painter shows Jerusalem and its surroundings. The elaborate view of the Holy City occupies most of the composition, although the vast, hilly open landscape outside is also a very important component in it. It is not an exaggeration at all to say that Memling was the most skillful artist who authored passion panoramas. His talent and skills resulted in the most advanced, the best and the highest quality work of the whole group. As Barbra G. Lane writes: “Twenty-two<sup>8</sup> scenes of Christ’s

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while he was not a king. In turn, an elegant, white garment fits well to relation of Luke (Luke 23, 6–12): “On hearing this, Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean. When he learned that Jesus was under Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because for a long time he had been wanting to see him. From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform a sign of some sort. He plied him with many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer. The chief priests and the teachers of the law were standing there, vehemently accusing him. Then Herod and his soldiers ridiculed and mocked him. Dressing him in an elegant robe, they sent him back to Pilate. That day Herod and Pilate became friends—before this they had been enemies.” Right next to Christ Nicodemus, a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin, stands too. He is dressed in the same way as in scenes of Deposition and Entombment. It was Mitzi Kirkland-Ives (Kirkland-Ives 2013, p. 14) who, four years ago, correctly and fully convincingly recognized it as Interrogation by Herod. As she wrote: “To the right of this scene [Crowning with Thorns – K.K.], set away from the main plaza, Christ is questioned by a seated man wearing a gold crown who must be identified as Herod” and “Mentioned only in Luke [...] the identification of this episode would clarify the temporary change in Christ’s apparel as well as the chronological order in space. Nicodemus appears here as well.”

<sup>8</sup> Lane does not treat Making of the Cross as a separate event “since this is not one of the episodes of Christ’s Passion;” Lane 2009, p. 170, note 21. Taking into consideration that this scene is visibly separated from the Crucifixion it seems reasonable to treat it as a separate event.

Passion and appearances after the Resurrection are spread throughout an expansive city and surrounding landscape in this remarkable panel. Many of the events occur within the doorways and courtyards of Jerusalem, while others take place in the adjacent hills and valleys. The bird's-eye view of Jerusalem permits the viewer to survey the entire city before embarking on a journey through its individual streets, much as consulting a map enables a present-day traveler to plan a trip.<sup>9</sup> There is no doubt that in terms of depiction of landscape, Memling's work is also one of the most advanced in all Netherlandish painting of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>10</sup>

Jerusalem was represented in *The Passion of Christ* as an ancient, rich city. Memling did not want to depict it with great accuracy. His panorama was not even vaguely intended as a realistic view based on contemporary literary or visual depictions of the city found in i.e. pilgrimage guides to Jerusalem. His idea was to create an atmosphere to build associations: solid, elegant buildings, mostly distinct in shape, evoke the distant and exceptional Holy Land where the sacred story took place. Exoticism and Orientalisation, as well as a kind of a retrospection to the Romanesque style, constituted the main tools employed to achieve this goal. The architectural landscape consists mainly of numerous domes, presenting what the medieval viewer would have found rather untypical forms. The architectural decoration, even if it consists of some familiar elements taken from the vocabulary of the gothic style (traceries), is also rather uncommon, multiplied and arranged in an unusual, strange way (i.e. the cupola made of traceries crowning the tower situated on the right side of the painting). Some buildings resemble Romanesque structures, but it is hard to treat

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<sup>9</sup> Lane 2009, p. 152. Dirk de Vos stresses the unity of the landscape and mastery in the showing of daily and night landscape: "Le point de vue est très élevé: on aperçoit, par-dessus la ville, le mont du Calvaire, et au-dessous, les bâtiments s'inscrivent presque dans une perspective à vol d'oiseau. Bien que les variations dans la situation des édifices rendent impossible une perspective unique, une impression d'unité et de logique s'impose toutefois depuis le premier plan jusqu'au niveau des tours qui occupant une position frontale, à hauteur d'horizon. Ce basculement de la perspective d'une vue générale plongeante au premier plan vers une vue de profil à l'horizon s'apparente à la manière dont les plans de ville étaient conçus à l'époque. À côté de l'unité de perspective apparaissent aussi une unité d'espace pour l'action et une unité d'éclairage. Ce dernier aspect surtout représente un tour de force rarement réalisé dans la peinture de l'époque, du fait que la source de lumière se situe à l'intérieur de la peinture et est associée visuellement avec le soleil qui se lève à l'extrême droite, ce qui relègue dans l'ombre la partie qui lui fait face à l'avant à gauche. Seuls les donateurs qui ont pris place dans les coins devant l'ensemble du spectacle semblent y échapper. Le côté droit de l'architecture jusqu'à une partie des créneaux au premier plan s'éclaire de rose et les premiers rayons du soleil encore bas atteignent les portails de brique au loin à gauche."; Vos de 1994, p. 48.

<sup>10</sup> On the landscape in late medieval, especially Netherlandish art see: Ainsworth, Scott 2000; Falkenburg 1988; Falkenburg 1998, pp. 153–169; Frugoni 1991; Lilley 2009; Mazurczak 2004; Talbot 1982; Wehing 1993; Wintle 2009; Ziemba 2015, pp. 251–264; Zink 1941.

them as accurately painted Romanesque buildings. They are rather variations on this style.<sup>11</sup> Apart from these orientalisised and pseudo-Romanesque buildings, a few late medieval buildings are visible in the foreground, and they mostly constitute part of the city walls. The structures without front walls in which events like the Last Supper, Flagellation and Crowning with Thorns are depicted represent a characteristic feature of the architecture of Jerusalem. In the context of the whole composition, the empty city space in the center is also important, forming a kind of an arena for numerous events, especially *Ecce Homo* and the Making of the Cross.

To this day, research on *The Passion of Christ* has concentrated on three main problems. Apart from the studies devoted to history of the painting, its founders and style, there are numerous analyses that focus on the problem of the relationship between *The Passion of Christ* and medieval theatre. The third field of research is the supposed function of the painting, that is spiritual pilgrimage to Jerusalem. To summarize all the reflections on Memling's painting is almost impossible – the literature devoted not only to his whole oeuvre but to this one painting is extremely rich. While this is not a monographical study of this best and commonly known passion panorama, there is no need to present all references to it.<sup>12</sup>

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Those who are interested in the first group of issues should have in mind Dirk de Vos', Barbra Lane's and Antoni Ziemba's detailed studies, which also include numerous bibliographical references.<sup>13</sup> For our purposes it is crucial to emphasize two things: 1) that Memling was highly influenced by Cologne and Westphalian artists (it is said that he served his apprenticeship in the Stefan Lochner's workshop),<sup>14</sup> who showed inclinations to create altarpieces and panel paintings characterized by multiscenic, simultaneous compositions presenting the Passion of Christ;<sup>15</sup> 2) there are some other

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<sup>11</sup> "Les bâtiments sont principalement des constructions en forme de tours avec des portiques de style pseudo-roman, surmontés de dômes, ce qui évoque le caractère exotique d'une ville orientale et crée en même temps différents environnements scéniques."; Vos de 1994, p. 48.

<sup>12</sup> It seems more rational and justified to concentrate on the state of research on other passion panoramas, most of which have not been analyzed in depth or even if they have, as in the case of *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń, the results of these analyses, because of language barriers, are not widely known.

<sup>13</sup> Lane 2009; Vos de 1994; Ziemba 2011, pp. 541–580.

<sup>14</sup> On Stefan Lochner first and foremost see Julien Chapuis' studies: Chapuis 2004; Chapuis 2014, pp. 225–236.

<sup>15</sup> Julia Gerth analyzed this issue in detail, pointing to numerous works of art from this part of medieval Europe which could be treated as kind of a foretoken of passion panoramas; Gerth 2010, pp. 45–57.

works of art showing the Passion of Christ in the same manner as Memling did, but they were made in different media (scholars usually point to tapestries (1410–1425) in the collection of the Museo de la Seo in Zaragoza,<sup>16</sup> miniature on fol. 210<sup>r</sup> of the *Hours of Saluzzo* from the British Library,<sup>17</sup> *Sobieski Hours* by Betford Master from Windsor Castle (1420–1430)<sup>18</sup> and Netherlandish or Wesphalian altarpiece from Enschede, 1430–1450, now in the Rijksmuseum Twenthe<sup>19</sup>).

The problem of relations between the *The Passion of Christ* and medieval theatre has fallen within the scope of interest of numerous scholars, both theatre and art historians. Opinions on the degree of dependence of Hans Memling's passion panorama on medieval stage have changed over time. In early studies, mostly from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was a common belief that the painter was inspired by it, or rather, copied all he saw attending mystery plays. According to this point of view, prevailing at that time and pertaining to almost all late medieval painting (mostly thanks to the influential studies of Émile Mâle)<sup>20</sup>, the greater part of the elements in *The Passion of Christ* should be linked to theatre, from general composition, resembling mansions placed on the streets of medieval cities and suggesting theatrical narration to costumes, various objects treated as echoes of stage props.<sup>21</sup> This point of view was criticized by numerous scholars in the 1960s, who indicated that possible relationships between both art forms were not as direct in character as many previous researchers had thought. Firstly, this relationship could be a reciprocal one, secondly, one much more complex than many allowed.<sup>22</sup> Theatre historians also started to reject popular claims that medieval paintings present the reality of the medieval mystery stage. As A. M. Nagler observed, referring to Memling's *The Passion of Christ*, paintings, apart from exceptional cases,<sup>23</sup> are simply useless as evidence of theatrical practices.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>16</sup> See i.e.: Gerth 2010, *passim*, esp. pp. 38–45; Hull 2005, pp. 35–36; Smeyers 1997, p. 179.

<sup>17</sup> See next chapter.

<sup>18</sup> See i.e.: Hull 2005, pp. 35–36; Smeyers 1997, p. 180.

<sup>19</sup> Gerth 2010, *passim*.

<sup>20</sup> Especially: Mâle 1922; Mâle 1924.

<sup>21</sup> More on this topic (with bibliographic references): Kopania 2004; Kopania 2008; Kopania 2018.

<sup>22</sup> As above, note 21.

<sup>23</sup> Nagler indicates Jean Fouquet's *Martyrdom of St Apollonia* as an example (*Livre d'Heures d'Étienne Chevalier*, ca. 1445, Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS fr. 71, fol. 39).

<sup>24</sup> "Mâle summarized his ideas at the end of his series of essays: 'Les tableaux, les vitraux, les miniatures, les retables nous offrent sans cesse l'image exacte de ce qu'on voyait au théâtre. Certaines oeuvres d'art sont

Since the 1980s more and more scholars have emphasized the involvement of painters in the production of mystery plays and stressed that they could have influenced theater more than theater was able to influence their art, especially given that the roots of Christian iconography lie in distant times, in Early Christianity or in Early Medieval times. The vast majority of motifs present in medieval paintings were simply shaped before mystery plays appeared. Medieval artists, including Hans Memling, used to copy other artists and surely employed established iconographical patterns, rooted in tradition and required by commissioners. So it has increasingly been emphasized that the basic mistake is to search for direct influence of the medieval stage on works like *The Passion of Christ*.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, Memling's work can give the impression of a medieval stage, can create a reference to it, but that effect is based mostly on loose associations, apparent and clear to a contemporary viewer, but not necessarily to a medieval one. This problem is illustrated in an article by Michael O'Connell, in which one can find i.e. this suggestion regarding *The Passion of Christ*: "The painting may tell us less about the audience, but if the crowd standing before the 'Ecce Homo' can be taken as an audience, then their participation in the drama, their crossing their arms and in the visual metaphor shouting 'Crucify him' may illustrate what critics have frequently intuited from study of texts, that the audiences were enlisted in the action of the drama as, for example, Herod's court in Wakefield, or the crowd in N-Town to which John the Baptist preaches, the people of Jerusalem standing at the foot of the cross, and so on. They were not simply lookers-on, spectators or audience in the modern sense, but were conceived of in emotive and devotional terms as participants, in a quasi-ritual fusion, in the action of the drama. Memling, of course, is not painting an audience but the crowd before Pilate, so we cannot logically take the painting as telling us about audiences for the late-medieval theater. But combined with the theatrical

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des copies plus frappantes encore, car l'action y est simultanée, comme dans les Mystères. Les tableaux de Memling consacrés à la Passion et à la vie de la Vierge – où l'on voit dix scènes différentes se dérouler sur la même fond de paysage, où les acteurs du drame se transportent naïvement d'une mansion à une autre, – nous donnent l'idée la plus exacte d'une représentation dramatique' [Mâle 1904 – K.K.] Gustave Cohen, who confessed that he was wholly of Mâle's faith, likewise mentioned Memling's *Passion*, making the assertion 'que les plus grands artistes ont emprunté aux Mystères le décor simultané' [Cohen 1926 – K.K.]. But an objection must be raised against such visionary notions, for in Memling's *Passion* we have no 'extremely exact' representation of some theatrical performance or other before us, just as we may not trace the *Bayeux Tapestry* back to a lost play depicting the Norman Conquest. In the tapestry, as in Memling's painting [...], a story is told in a Gothic fashion, and the viewer is invited to read off in succession the delineated episodes of a mute drama. Here we are not confronted with influences but with the Gothic period's practice of successive presentation, held in common by both art and theater. Memling's *Passion* is useless as a document for theater history"; Nagler 1976, p. 91.

<sup>25</sup> Though instances of direct influence of theatre on paintings can be found, they are neither frequent nor numerous. See i.e.: Trowbridge 2011a; Trowbridge 2011b.

suggestiveness of the whole, the portrayal of the crowd may seem to illustrate what we understand of audiences from the texts.”<sup>26</sup>

Having in mind these words, it is hard in fact to tell whether associations with the theatre represent the experience of a medieval viewer or just the experience of the 20<sup>th</sup> century art historian or historian of theatre. One can say that after a long period of somewhat enthusiastic belief that medieval paintings simply capture and convey the reality of medieval theatre, scholars began to search for a contact zone where two autonomous kinds of arts, with their own languages and rules, could meet. They found this contact zone located in viewers’ artistic and religious experiences. Martin Stevens provides the best theoretical basis for such an approach to this matter, and, crucially, he does so drawing on example of Memling’s *The Passion of Christ*.<sup>27</sup> According to Stevens, “Memling’s painting is [...] a textual composite. It does not signify an actual performance; rather it represents an idea of performance. As such it induces in the spectator a perpetual act of deconstruction. Time operates at once in opposition and in concord with place. As we look at the scene of the Passion, we see large arena stage of the landscape; as we isolate the mansions, we attend to the individual episodes which are stages in their own right. At the same time, the painting conveys the interactive relation between cycle and pageant. The more we attend to the one, the less we see the other, and yet our perception is constantly redirected by the interplay of the two. The painting finally and perhaps most significantly mediates between the representation of reality and art: between the city as theater and the theater as the city, and the spectator is never allowed to perceive the one in the absence of the other.”<sup>28</sup> Continuing his argument, Stevens emphasized the importance of the fact that the structure of the painting resembles the structure of performance and that the panel’s simultaneity allows the viewer “to read the panel in its four-dimensional signification of performance.”<sup>29</sup> Clearly indicating that *The Passion of Christ* has nothing in common with actual performance and should not be treated as the record of one, he points out that the theatricality of the painting resides in mental associations of the viewer, shaped by his/her experiences of the city and region in which theatrical activity was common and important from the social and religious points of view.

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<sup>26</sup> O’Connell 1996, p. 28.

<sup>27</sup> Stevens 1991.

<sup>28</sup> Stevens 1991, p. 328.

<sup>29</sup> Stevens 1991, p. 329.



In recent years reflections on the sensual sphere, on the sphere of private emotions and experiences of medieval viewers of *The Passion of Christ* have become even more important and have been directed towards new and more specific fields of research. Thanks above all to Mark Trowbridge,<sup>30</sup> Heike Schlie,<sup>31</sup> and Mitzi Kirkland-Ives,<sup>32</sup> a possible way of perceiving the painting in the context of local theatrical practices and traditions has come to the fore. Trowbridge's studies offer insight into the rich practices of organizing the various, often elaborate, theatrical processions which took place in numerous cities of the Low Countries. Being an important part of the social and religious life of local communities, they required the involvement of many agents, among them artists, i.e. painters, and had a profound mental, intellectual and spiritual impact on an audience. Especially the Holy Blood processions organized in Bruges, where Memling lived and worked, constitute an important reference for *The Passion of Christ* and other works by the artist.<sup>33</sup> Trowbridge generally followed in the footsteps of Martin Stevens, but based his analyses on a rich array of archival sources related to medieval performances organized in the Low Countries. These sources confirm the importance and popularity of such activities before and during Memling's life, and provide grounds to claim that, at least in some carefully chosen cases, the painter could even apply some theatrical thinking and solutions while he was organizing the composition of, first and foremost, *Sevens Joys of Mary* from Alte Pinakothek in Munich, but also of *The Passion of Christ*.<sup>34</sup> The author stresses that

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<sup>30</sup> Trowbridge 2000; Trowbridge 2009.

<sup>31</sup> Schlie 2011.

<sup>32</sup> Kirkland-Ives 2013.

<sup>33</sup> "Memling's composition may also have evoked Bruges's annual dramas, where 'Passion' scenes were a regular part of its Procession of Holy Blood. It was among the first scenes to appear in the Procession of the Holy Blood at the end of the fourteenth century, as the complex 'stede van Jherusalem.' This particular *tableau* was also re-used outside the confines of the Procession, perhaps for Philip's 1440 triumphal entry. The 'Jherusalem' was just one of many 'Passions' performed in Bruges, others staged in 1432 and 1449, probably by the local *rederijkerkamer*, 'De Penseeken.' That guild also performed a 'Passion' scene at their guild feast each year, and may have been the group from Bruges that assisted at times in Damme's annual 'Passion' and 'Resurrection' plays. Memling's 'Lamentation' paintings, deriving from Rogier's shop and perhaps relating to Brabantine theater, may also have reminded a Bruges audience of its local dramatic traditions"; Trowbridge 2000, p. 178.

<sup>34</sup> "Memling's three-walled rooms suggest a theatrical inspiration. The painter also manipulated his scenes in a manner similar to dramatists, to advance the narrative and enhance its meaning. Dramatists often relied on repetition and juxtaposition to assure that audiences would follow the action through the sequential scenes, so too did Memling. He re-used the same set for both the 'Nativity' and the 'Adoration of the Magi' in the direct foreground, just as successive processional dramas reproduced the same set. Elsewhere he used the same figural grouping for different episodes, as when each Magus has the same experience seeing the Star of Bethlehem. Later, the eldest Magus bows to Herod as he would later before Christ. A similar sequence seems also to have figured in Bruges's annual Procession of

in the case of the second painting, the way Jerusalem is painted resembles some stagecraft solutions, too. He points to six French drawings representing Jerusalem, one of which has an inscription as follows: “Cy apres s’ensuit le mistere de la vengeance de la mort et ... Jhesuchrist”. In this case the inscription refers to a play performed in Reims in 1531 but based on a text of Eustace Mercadé written in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, which was performed more than a dozen times in Northern France and some Netherlandish cities. As Trowbridge accentuates, Memling’s panorama of the Holy City with its fantastic, quasi-Middle Eastern architecture is strikingly similar to that depicted in those six drawings. The similarity is heightened by the fact that scenes from Christ’s Passion are organized almost in the same way, so the action takes place in and around buildings with figures moving between courtyards and architectural structures without front walls. According to Trowbridge, Memling and the artist responsible for aforementioned drawings “may have arrived at a like solution after seeing similar constructions in mystery plays.”<sup>35</sup> Moreover, the patron of *The Passion of Christ*, Tommaso Portinari, seems to offer an important theatrical clue, in that as a noble citizen of Bruges he witnessed numerous theatrical ceremonies of importance to the local community and was eager to preserve in the painting the spirit of the city which became his second home.<sup>36</sup>

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Local theatrical and religious contexts are crucial for Heike Schlie too.<sup>37</sup> In her article, she discusses in detail various theatrical ceremonies and processions organized in Bruges and proposes to broaden the discussion of the idea of making Bruges, together with Jerusalem, a kind of memorial landscapes (*Erinnerungslandschaften*). Schlie stresses the importance not only of theatrical activities like Holy Blood processions but also of various more or less elaborate efforts to following in the footsteps of Christ in daily life, and to realize pious pilgrimage through life in one’s own environment, in this case – Bruges.

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the Holy Blood, which included separate scenes of ‘Herod’, the ‘Nativity’ and the ‘Adoration of the Magi.’ [...] Memling also set about two dozen scenes into a panoramic landscape in his *Passion*. This work may also relate to mystery play performances, although the artist relied less heavily on theatrical repetitions and juxtapositions. Nowhere did Memling repeat a figural grouping, as he did so often in *Seven Joys*. Some scenes do repeat the same setting, but those few [...] lack the effect achieved in his Munich Panorama. As a result, the sequentiality of this earlier work [...] suffers, showing how the later *Seven Joys* [...] benefited from the painter’s use of theatrical devices.”; Thowbridge 2000, pp. 181–182.

<sup>35</sup> Trowbridge 2000, p. 183.

<sup>36</sup> Trowbridge 2000, p. 183–184.

<sup>37</sup> Schlie 2011, pp. 141–175.

This thread was developed by Mitzi Kirkland-Ives, who offers a somewhat holistic interpretation of Memling's *The Passion of Christ*.<sup>38</sup> According to the author of *In the Footsteps of Christ...* in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Memling's painting could be perceived not only in the theatrical context. Holy Blood processions as well as other theatrical activities were an important component of the awareness of the potential viewer, but the painting functioned within a constellation of many other cultural and religious references. Kirkland-Ives writes on the devotional imagination typical of late medieval Netherlands, stressing that the religious culture of Netherlandish cities was manifested in various processional activities as well as mental journeys. These activities were theatrical in nature or connected with i.e. experiencing the Passion of Christ directly in Jerusalem, on pilgrimages which to some degree enabled experiencing every moment of the Saviour's redemptive mission. In fact Kirkland-Ives's book is a book on the place of Jerusalem in late medieval culture, and on the Holy City which attracted the faithful and was a focal point of reference for them. Theatrical activities, processions, architectural structures commemorating specific places and events (like Holy Sepulchers created not only in the Netherlands but all around medieval Europe), Stations of the Cross, devotional and pilgrimage literature – all these constituted a kind of a theatre of everyday religious life in the context of which *The Passion of Christ* should be considered.

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In 2018 the author of the present study emphasized that cognitive science seems to be a proper methodological tool for analyzing relations between passion panoramas and the medieval stage.<sup>39</sup> A medieval viewer, standing in front of paintings like *The Passion of Christ*, could evoke various religious experiences from his/her past, including participation in mystery plays, as well as other religious activities like praying, reading passion tracts, etc. The faithful, perceiving passion panoramas simply based on their private experiences, adapted them to their own devotional needs.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Kirkland-Ives 2013.

<sup>39</sup> The author made use of research by Theodore K. Lerud and Jill Stevenson: Lerud 2010; Stevenson 2010.

<sup>40</sup> "Zależność średniowiecznego malarstwa od teatru dostrzec można na innej płaszczyźnie, mianowicie skojarzeniowej, pamięciowej, a szerzej: powiązanej z kognitywistyką. Tak, malarze późnego średniowiecza często byli angażowani w aktywności natury teatralnej, odpowiadali za tworzenie kostiumów czy opraw scenicznych różnego rodzaju uroczystości o charakterze teatralnym oraz parateatralnym, wspierali również swym talentem i umiejętnościami twórców misterii. Mogli więc funkcjonować zarówno jako ludzie teatru, jak i jego odbiorcy. Nie da się więc wykluczyć, że w trakcie pracy nad np. średniowiecznymi panoramami pasyjnymi ich kompozycja czy fakt, iż składają się one z wielu scen, mogły powodować w umyśle malarza skojarzenia z religijnym przedstawieniem, w trakcie którego detalicznie, krok po kroku unaoczniano mękę Zbawiciela. Nie zmienia to jednak faktu, że żadna ze scen męki Chrystusa, obecnych

The third field of research on *The Passion of Christ* meshes occasionally with the one discussed above. Some scholars who stress the theatrical connotations of Memling's painting have paid attention to the problem of spiritual journeys. Others simply concentrate on the latter issue and try to prove that *The Passion of Christ* is a work of art whose main aim is to give the viewer the opportunity to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Not physically, but mentally. Among numerous studies on this subject, Vida J. Hull's article is especially important.<sup>41</sup> According to Hull, Memling was the first artist to create fully logical and convincing simultaneous composition which presents events from Christ's Passion in the context of the city where it took place. Hull lists many works of art created in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century whose composition seems to be quite similar to that painted by Memling;<sup>42</sup> she stresses, however, that important differences from Memling's piece do not allow these works to be interpreted as useful tools for undertaking a spiritual trip to Jerusalem. Tapestries, miniatures and some Cologne and Westphalian altarpieces which seem so close to *The Passion of Christ* are, according to Hull, essentially different. Their composition, and above all the architecture shown therein, do not create a convincing view of the city. Looking at them, the potential pilgrim could not freely follow the stages of the salvation narrative with his/her eyes.<sup>43</sup> Illustrating this argument with the example of one of the tapestries from

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na panoramach pasyjnych, scen zredagowanych przecież wedle schematu znanego ze zdecydowanej większości dzieł malarskich późnego średniowiecza, niczym szczególnym nie wyróżniających się pod względem ikonograficznym, nie odwzorowuje realiów teatru misteryjnego. Twórcy panoram pasyjnych, jak też innych dzieł malarskich późnego średniowiecza, w zdecydowanej większości przypadków odwoływali się do określonej tradycji obrazowej, do rozwiązań znanych i stosowanych powszechnie w obrębie ich sztuki. Trzeba też mieć na względzie, że artyści doby średniowiecza w pierwszej kolejności kopiowali innych artystów, nie zaś wykazywali się pełną samodzielnością koncepcyjną, swobodą w dobieraniu źródeł inspiracji oraz inwencją ikonograficzną. W podobny sposób na panoramy pasyjne (jak też inne dzieła malarskie późnego średniowiecza) mogli reagować ich odbiorcy. Problematicznym byłoby twierdzenie, że patrząc na ukazaną na obrazach architekturę widzieli w niej mansjony, a śledząc akcję widzieli w niej odwzorowanie technik oraz rozwiązań scenicznych znanych z misterii. Można raczej domniemywać, że na odbiór panoram pasyjnych wpływała po prostu suma ich religijnych przeżyć, związanych z modlitwą, lekturą, percypowaniem obrzędów religijnych czy właśnie przedstawień misteryjnych, a także szerokość horyzontów poznawczych. Wierni odbierali po prostu konkretne dzieła w oparciu o charakteryzujący ich bagaż doświadczeń. Tak jak w przypadku każdego innego dzieła malarskiego, tak i w przypadku panoram pasyjnych, mogli skojarzyć je w całości bądź części z misteriami, w których mieli okazję uczestniczyć. Nie znaczy to jednak, że same panoramy pasyjne są niejako teatralne z natury, że są od teatru w jakiś sposób intencjonalnie, pod względem ikonograficznym czy treściowym, zależne.”; Kopania 2018, pp. 322–323.

<sup>41</sup> Hull 2005.

<sup>42</sup> Like *Sobieski Hours* (1420–1425) painted by Bedford Master, *Wasserwass Calvary* (1415–1435) in the Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne or the passion tapestries (1410–1425) in the Museo de la Seo in Zaragoza.

<sup>43</sup> “Memling's *Passion of Christ* and *Joys of the Virgin* were new types of compositions, created to enhance

Zaragoza, she states: “The first tapestry represents Jerusalem with crenellated walls and buildings whose front walls open to reveal the figures within, pictorial devices also used by Memling. Unlike Memling’s panel, though, the figures in the tapestry are all the same size, far too large to stand within the rooms they inhabit; furthermore, the architecture lacks spatial recession. The walls of the buildings act as frames to divide and isolate the scenes. Instead of moving easily between episodes, the eye skips up and down to follow the narrative.”<sup>44</sup> Hull insists that the experience of a real pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the desire to mentally evoke it or simply the will to go on a mental pilgrimage to Jerusalem is the main factor enabling understanding of *The Passion of Christ* (as well as *Seven Joys of Mary*). The late medieval viewer, thanks to immanent features of the painting, its composition, the way narration is organized and the architecture shown, had the opportunity to pray and think about Christ’s Passion in a very special manner. Following its stages eagerly with his/her eyes, meditating and thinking about the Holy City, whose streets he/she virtually paces, he/she goes far beyond temporal and geographical conditions to travel through both time and space.<sup>45</sup> Thanks to these qualities, the pious viewer had an opportunity to earn indulgences and seek salvation. In this context *The Passion of Christ* is a metaphor, but also a tool, for the pilgrimage of somebody’s own life.<sup>46</sup>

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Such a point of view has dominated in reflection on Memling’s *The Passion of Christ*. Numerous scholars emphasize the sensual reception of the painting. The high quality of this passion panorama and the painter’s ability to effectively present the city landscape in a realistic way, portraying scenes of the passion in a way that enables fluent reading of the action, are the main arguments for its function as a spiritual pilgrimage

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the spiritual experience of travelling through time and place with the Savior and his mother. Not that the simultaneous representation of different scenes within a single image was unprecedented, but Memling adapter and augmented his predecessors’ examples, combining many more episodes into a single composition. Memling’s expansive panoramas of continuous, believable space offer a world view that adds both geographic and temporal breadth to the experience of spiritual pilgrimage. Memling’s predecessors did not provide the same comprehensive vision of spiritual pilgrimage. Either the observer must visually skip from image to isolated image with little sense of passage between events or the scenes are crowded together, one intermingling with the next in chaotic confusion.”; Hull 2005, pp. 35–36. Hull adds that from all earlier works of art which could be treated as close in composition to *The Passion of Christ* are miniatures from so called *Sobieski Hours*.

<sup>44</sup> Hull 2005, pp. 38–39. Compare with: “Earlier Flemish and German examples of simultaneous representation lack the illusionistic virtuosity of Memling’s work and his ability to combine a multiplicity of separate events within a spacious, believable setting.”; Hull 2005, p. 40.

<sup>45</sup> Hull 2005, see esp. p. 41.

<sup>46</sup> Hull 2005, *passim*.

tool.<sup>47</sup> But some scholars, like Julia Gerth, observe that mental pilgrimage does not constitute the most important context for interpretation of Memling's painting. She does not dismiss the possibility that *The Passion of Christ* could create associations with the Holy Land, especially given that the practice of pilgrimage to Jerusalem and various commonly used texts like itineraries or pilgrims' guides to the Holy Land could enhance them.<sup>48</sup> But the main context for Memling's painting, as well as other passion panoramas, is meditation on the Passion of Christ. Meditation here is understood in more traditional sense, leading to *imitatio Christi*, especially in the context of *devotio moderna*.<sup>49</sup> Gerth's erudite and detailed deliberations on the practice of meditation in the time when passion panoramas were executed gives an excellent insight into the place that paintings like Memling's *The Passion of Christ* occupy in a wide context of late medieval religious practices. *The Passion of Christ* and other panoramas were used to enhance possibilities of salvation through subsequent stages of meditation, for which a painting like Memling's could constitute a starting point. As Julia Gerth observes: "Memlings Bild, das die *peregrination spiritualis* unterstützt und erleichtert, ist folglich kein Bild, dessen Betrachtung Gnaden und Ablässe spendet; vielmehr leitet es den Betrachter auf den rechten Weg von der Reue über das Mitleid zur Nachfolge, auf dem er sich Tag für Tag und Schritt für Schritt die Vergebung seiner Sünden verdienen kann."<sup>50</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Recently, see Moore, both in the context of *The Passion of Christ* and that of *Seven Joys of Mary*: "In both panels by Hans Memling, the coexistence of discrete locations with independent events occurring apparently at different times in a panoramic landscape representing the entirety of the Holy Land suggests the passage of time with the viewer's imagined movement through the image, following the narrative of Christ's life as the pilgrim-viewer traces his footsteps through the same locations"; Moore 2017, p. 178.

<sup>48</sup> "Der Meditierende bereitete sich mit Hilfe der Lektüre von Itinerarien, Reisebeschreibungen und Pilgerführern oder auch speziellen literarischen Anleitungen zur *peregrinatio spiritualis* auf den geistigen Besuch der Leidensstätten vor. Anschliessend sollte er sich die beschriebenen heiligen Orte und die damit verbundenen Ereignisse der Passion samt der handelnden Personen und gesprochenen Worte vergegenwärtigen. Durch narrative Ergänzungen und durch die Projektion der Geschehnisse in die eigene Gegenwart und Alltagswirklichkeit wurden die Stationen der *Via sacra* gewissermassen verlebendigt. Auf diese Weise imaginierte sich der Meditierende nicht nur eine Pilgerreise nach Jerusalem, sondern auch seine Teilnahme an der Passion, die er affektiv nachvollzog"; Gerth 2010, p. 82.

<sup>49</sup> "Methodische Anweisungen zur Meditation, insbesondere zur Passionsandacht, leiten den Meditierenden in verschiedenen Stufen hin zum Ziel, der *imitatio Christi*, d.h. hin zur Nachfolge des leidenden Gottessohnes in allen Lebenslagen und damit, ganz im Sinne der an religiösem Utilitarismus orientierten *devotio moderna*, zum Hinüberwirken der Andachtsübung in den persönlichen Heilungsweg, zum Tugendfortschritt des Einzelnen."; Gerth 2010, p. 83.

<sup>50</sup> Gerth 2010, p. 87.



## *The Passion of Christ*

### from St. James's Church in Toruń

**T**he *Passion of Christ* from St. James's Church in Toruń is widely known among scholars. [il. 2] It is mentioned in many studies on late medieval passion panoramas but has never attracted much attention, generally being treated rather cursorily, usually as nothing more than a kind of a reference to other passion panoramas, especially Hans Memling's. Even when someone writes about it, such as Julia Gerth, the analysis is based on older, mostly German literature from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>51</sup> The main problem with the painting from St. James's Church in Toruń is that it is located in Poland, so most Western scholars are not eager enough to go there and analyze it on the spot, to say nothing of trying to become familiar with the Polish-language literature on the topic. While medieval art, culture

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<sup>51</sup> Gerth 2010, pp. 119–127.



and the history of Central Europe are also vaguely known to them, it was impossible to discuss *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń in any context other than that of other passion panoramas, which functioned in a completely different part of medieval Europe, i.e. the Netherlands. To draw any conclusions on passion panoramas from St. James's Church, without even taking into consideration other works of art from the medieval Kingdom of Poland, especially the region of Pomerania, where Toruń is situated, seems simply pointless. It is also problematic to discuss it without taking into consideration the spiritual and devotional life of that part of Europe in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

The fact is that the passion panorama from St. James's is – after *The Passion of Christ* from the Sabauda Gallery – the most thoroughly analyzed of all passion panoramas. There exist several articles exclusively devoted to it<sup>52</sup> and dozens of studies that reference it,<sup>53</sup> not to mention texts published in daily newspapers.<sup>54</sup> Many of these studies shed new light not only on *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń but also on late medieval passion panoramas generally.

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*The Passion of Christ* hangs on the Northern wall of the choir of St. James's Church in Toruń. It is the biggest of all passion panoramas, measuring 274 x 221 cm. Painted with egg tempera, it is kept in its original red soft wood frame. There are twenty-two scenes of Christ's Passion depicted on it and an additional nine scenes showing the daily life of a medieval village. The depiction of Christ's sacrifice consists of: 1) the Entry to Jerusalem, 2) the Last Supper, 3) the Agony in the Garden, 4) the Arrest of Christ, 5) Christ before Annas, 6) Christ before Caiaphas, 7) Christ before Herod, 8) the Flagellation, 9) the Crowning with Thorns, 10) Judas hangs himself, 11) Pilate washing his

<sup>52</sup> Domasłowski 2004, pp. 269–270; Kopania 2008; Kaemmerer 1919, pp. 36–60; Kruszelnicki 1951; Kruszelnicki 1959, pp. 13–50; Kruszelnicki 1968, pp. 87–152. All articles contain extensive bibliographical references to earlier studies on *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń.

<sup>53</sup> Newest studies or not mentioned by authors of articles listed in previous notes (except some included in: Kopania 2008): Błażejewska 2009, p. 183; Chmarzyński 1934, pp. 46–47; Czarnocka 1996, p. 153; Dobrzeński 1969, p. 74; Dobrzeński 1989–1990, p. 219; Domasłowski 1990, Karłowska-Kamzowa, Labuda 1990, pp. 154–155; Drost 1938, p. 62; Faktor 2016, p. 173; Heise, 1887–95, pp. 313–314; Heuer 1916, pp. 94–101; Hojdis 2000, pp. 62–76; Jagla 2001, p. 180; Jakubek-Raczkowska, Raczkowski 2013, pp. 107–112; Kaemmerer 1919, pp. 36–60; Kardasz 1995, p. 147; Karłowska-Kamzowa 1957, p. 189; Karłowska-Kamzowa 1959, p. 144; Kluckert 1974a; Kluckert 1974b; pp. 290–292; Kobieliński 2005, pp. 79, 91, 104, 118; Kobieliński 2007, pp. 87–95; Kopania 2004; Krantz-Domasłowska, Domasłowski 2001, pp. 73–77; Kruszelnicka 2002, pp. 151–154; Labuda 1986, p. 23; Labuda 2002, pp. 541–544; Lewański 1966, p. 23; Majewski 2005; Makowski 1932, pp. 66–67; Mischke 2004, pp. 139–140; Jakubek-Raczkowska, Raczkowski 2013, pp. 111–112; Stange 1961, p. 176; Turska 1993, pp. 44–45; Walicki 1938, pp. 9–10; Wallerstein 1909, p. 57; Wiesiołowski 1997, p. 696; Ziemia 2015, pp. 735–740.

<sup>54</sup> Kruszelnicki 1956; Sydow 1930.

hands, 12) the Carrying of the Cross, 13) the Crucifixion, 14) the Soldiers Divide Jesus' Clothes 15) the Entombment, 16) the Harrowing of Hell, 17) the Resurrection, 18) Noli me Tangere, 19) the Road to Emmaus, 20) Doubting Thomas, 21) Jesus Sends Out the Twelve Apostles, 22) the Ascension.

Although the main story dominates, numerous scenes of everyday life are conspicuously visible. In the top left part of the painting there are six of them: 1) a man whipping a pair of oxes, 2) a blind beggar being led by a dog, 3) a young woman holding a basket, 4) another person, difficult to identify in terms of sex, holding a basket, 5) a dog sitting on the threshold of the house, 6) a man wearing a habit, standing in front of the door of the small chapel. The second group of scenes, located in the lower right part of the painting, consists of three depictions: 1) a hunter with dogs on lead, following the trail of two does and a deer, 2) a woman cutting the grass in a small garden enclosed by a wicker fence, 3) a man in a boat sailing on a small lake.

The dominant element in the painting is Jerusalem. Its buildings are schematic and simplified, too small in relation to the human figures. Generally they look like buildings of a late medieval Northern European city. The structure of it is rather chaotic; the artist was not skilled enough to show the city's spaces convincingly, though he tried to construct a coherent system of city gates and walls. Apart from the domed gate and the building with a decorative top, where the Last Supper takes place, there are no visual indications of Jerusalem's status as a distant, ancient and Holy City, slightly oriental in character. The landscape does not resemble the reality of the Holy Land either. In fact it fits perfectly among conventional depictions of the world of nature familiar from hundreds of late medieval paintings depicting Passion of Christ.

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Among numerous figures depicted, the patron takes up the most space and is the most visible. Located on the painting's axis, kneeling, with his hands folded for prayer, he is dressed in a habit similar to the Dominican one. There is no indication of who the man is. Kaemerer tries to identify him with Lucas Watzenrode, Prince-Bishop of Warmia, the uncle of Nicolaus Copernicus. According to Kaemerer, Watzenrode was a teacher in Toruń from 1474 to 1478; there, he fell in love with Barbara Teschnerin, the daughter of Albrecht Teschner, rector of St. John's School. The result of their illegal and sinful relationship was a child, Philip, the future mayor of Braniewo (a Hanseatic town in The Prince-Bishopric of Warmia). Barbara ended as a nun in the Benedictine convent in the New Town of Toruń. Kaemerer believes that the woman standing with

her back to the viewer in the Crucifixion scene, dressed in black and holding a child in her hands, is Barbara herself. In his opinion, *The Passion of Christ* was funded as a form of penance by the young cleric that Lucas Watzenrode was at that time.

Kaemerer's suppositions are pure fantasy, or rather, the result of a carefree approach both to written sources and to the painting. Zygmunt Kruszelnicki has proven convincingly that all of the interpersonal relations discussed by Kaemerer, apart from the fact that Lucas Watzenrode was the uncle of Nicolaus Copernicus uncle, are illusory. He also points out that there are no preserved likenesses or portraits of Lucas Watzenrode that would have been produced during his life. The woman with a child in the Crucifixion scene has nothing in common either with the patron of the painting or with Barbara Teschnerin and should rather be treated as the wife of one of the thieves. Thanks to the recent restoration of the painting we also know for sure that the black dress she is wearing was originally green, so it could not be treated as Benedictine habit.

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The dress of the kneeling founder most closely resembles a Dominican habit. Furthermore, in one of the scenes of everyday life, a man standing in front of the door of a small chapel is wearing a Dominican habit reserved for lay brothers of this order, which seems to argue in favor of linking *The Passion of Christ* with a member of the Dominican convent. Another piece of evidence for Dominican involvement in the creation of the painting is the fact that in the Dominican church of St. Nicolaus in the nearby city of Gdańsk, a huge wall painting showing the passion of Christ, made in the same manner as *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń, was completed in the 1430s. It is likely that the Dominican friar from Toruń was somehow inspired by the wall painting he saw in the oldest and most important church of his order in the Pomerania region. Probably having in mind its iconography and its educational and devotional values, he decided it would be useful to commission the same type of painting but on a smaller scale and executed with a different technique. It is worth pointing out here that it is not clear whether he really commissioned the painting or just bought it when it was finished. The figure of the donor was probably added when the whole composition was ready. It is noticeable that the painter decided to change small part of it. The friar is painted on the surface of the unfinished city walls and occupies the place of a tree, still visible behind him.

All scholars writing on *The Passion of Christ* are convinced that the donor was a Dominican. Does it mean that the painting hung on the walls of the local Dominican

church, that is the church of St. Nicolaus in Toruń? Unfortunately, there are no proofs for such a supposition. In 1820, the Prussian authorities ordered the dissolution of the Dominican Convent in Toruń. The St. Nicolaus church was demolished in 1831. Most of its furnishings were transferred to the church of St. James. There are even detailed lists of works of art which found a new home there. *The Passion of Christ* is not listed amongst them, nor is it mentioned in any documents of canonical visitations either.<sup>55</sup> To sum up: although *The Passion of Christ* was ordered by a Dominican friar, it is not possible to definitively link it with the Dominican church of St. Nicolaus in Toruń. But St. Nicolaus (a Dominican convent) is most probably the place in which it was kept and used.

Most scholars date *The Passion of Christ* to around 1480. Some of them date it more approximately to 1470–1480, others suppose that it was painted in the 1470s; there are also claims that it was produced after 1480 but before 1490. In older studies, *The Passion of Christ* is linked to the Master of Lyversberger Passion or one of his followers,<sup>56</sup> or Jean Tavernier, the painter responsible for the decoration of the *Chroniques de Charlemagne* from Bibliothèque royale de Belgique.<sup>57</sup> The first hypothesis has not been widely accepted, mainly because the similarities between *The Passion of Christ* and works by the Master of Lyversberger Passion are deceptive. Indeed, both works – *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń and the main work by the Master of Lyversberger Passion, two wings of an altar held in the collection of Wallraf-Richartz Museum & Foundation Corboud, reveal characteristic features of Cologne painting of the third quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>58</sup> That does not mean, however, that there are any direct similarities between the two of them in composition or in details. The Master of Lyversberger Passion was a much better artist than the author of *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń. He was able to create reliable perspective and the proper scale of people in relation to the landscape, not to mention more advanced skills in painting human figures, gestures, and details of i.e. dresses. The second hypothesis has been the topic of numerous discussions, mostly because Kaemmerer's ideas are not coherently formulated. He links *The Passion of Christ* to Jean Tavernier, but then points out that it was not Tavernier himself who painted it, but rather his follower.

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<sup>55</sup> Ciesielska 1983.

<sup>56</sup> Heuer 1916, pp. 94–101.

<sup>57</sup> Kaemmerer 1919, pp. 46.

<sup>58</sup> 1464–1466, 92 x 97 cm each, WRM 0143 – 0150.

Trying to find any work of art which would resemble the work of Tavernier and the passion panorama from Toruń, he points to the miniatures of *Miracles de la Vierge* from the Bodleian Library. Drawing on the literature available to him,<sup>59</sup> he writes that the miniatures were made by “Kazimir in Raczyi,” so the painter who was probably of Polish origin. Kaemerer circumspectly proposes that the painter was a member of the Raczyński family, derived from Raczyń near Wieluń. To prove his hypothesis, he also produces some information on inhabitants of the Kingdom of Poland, astronomers, doctors, etc., who travelled to and worked in Bruges in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Finally, the authorship of *The Passion of Christ* has been attributed to an artist who was influenced by northern-Netherlandish art created by Willem Vrelant and his followers, but also visibly by Jean Tavernier’s works. This puzzling, rather chaotic argumentation is supplemented by a reference to *The Siege of Malbork*, a panel painting from the Arturs Court in Gdańsk (destroyed during the Second World War). Knowing the painting from experience, Kaemerer points out that both works are similar in terms of composition, size, and color. He claims *The Siege of Malbork* was painted at the same time, in the 1480s.

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Other scholars writing about *The Passion of Christ* before the Second World War paid little attention to the problem of attribution. Rev. B. Makowski described the painting as a work of art of average range which was probably painted by a local artist who knew about the existence of *Seven Joys of Mary* and *The Passion of Christ* by Hans Memling.<sup>60</sup> Gwido Chmarzyński agrees with Kaemerer and attributes the panel from St. James’s Church to the master, who was artistically closely linked to Jean Tavernier’s workshop, but Chmarzyński admits that it could have been done by a Toruń artist. At the same time, he rejects the hypothesis that the painting was made by a member of Raczyński family, indicating that the only thing that we can be sure about is that *The Passion of Christ* is generally more primitive than most works of art from 15<sup>th</sup> century Western Europe. He also assumes that the author of *The Passion of Christ* was responsible for the wing of the altarpiece from St. John’s Church in Toruń. Willi Drost dismisses Kaemerer’s ideas and writes that the similarities between *The Passion of Christ* and *The Siege of Malbork* are not remarkable and that their stylistic features are in fact completely different. But he admits that the author of the painting from Toruń could be an artist educated in the workshop of Jean Tavernier<sup>61</sup>. Michał Walicki

<sup>59</sup> Mély de 1913, p. 219.

<sup>60</sup> Chmarzyński 1934, pp. 46–47.

<sup>61</sup> Drost 1938, p. 62.

has convincingly proven that the artist who signed his works “Kazimir in Raczyi” did not exist; Walicki leans towards the hypothesis that *The Passion of Christ* is by a local artist influenced by Jean Tavernier.<sup>62</sup> Alfred Stange also mentions the painting in his monumental multi-volume work *Deutsche Malerei der Gotik*,<sup>63</sup> expressing the view that the author of the work was also the painter responsible for *The Siege of Malbork*. According to Stange, this painter had nothing in common with local workshops and came to Toruń from abroad.

In recent decades, the author who has written most often about the authorship of the painting is Adam S. Labuda. In his study devoted to a Westphalian painter, the maker of what is called the Small Ferber’s Altar from Gdańsk, the *Crowning with Thorns* from St. Lawrence’s Church in Toruń and the wings of the altar in St. John’s in Toruń, Labuda expresses the opinion that *The Passion of Christ* is by that artist’s disciple and collaborator (responsible for the motionless wings of the Small Ferber’s Altar), probably a local painter.<sup>64</sup> In a 2002 article, however, Labuda proposes a different attribution: the panel painting from Toruń is, he claims, the work of an artist trained in the Northern Netherlands, in the circle of the artist called the Master of the Feathery Clouds.<sup>65</sup> This time he does not treat him as a local artist and writes that he came to Pomerania with the Westphalian Master of Small Ferber’s Altar.

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Almost all scholars agree with Labuda and argue that the author of *The Passion of Christ* came to Pomerania from Westphalia and was trained in or at least well acquainted with Netherlandish art of the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>66</sup> Only Bohdan Hojdis follows the old Kaemerer theory,<sup>67</sup> and some other scholars use rather vague descriptions like “Pomeranian painter”<sup>68</sup> or “local workshop (Toruń?, Pomerania?) under Netherlandish, Cologne and Westphalian influence.”<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Walicki 1938, pp. 9–10.

<sup>63</sup> Stange 1961, p. 176.

<sup>64</sup> Labuda 1986, p. 23.

<sup>65</sup> Labuda 2002, pp. 541–544.

<sup>66</sup> See i.e.: Kopania 2004; Krantz-Domasłowska, Domasłowski 2001, pp. 73–77; Ziemia 2015, p. 735.

<sup>67</sup> Hojdis 2000, pp. 62.

<sup>68</sup> Wiesiołowski 1997, p. 696.

<sup>69</sup> Turska 1993, pp. 44–45.

It is hard to deny that *The Passion of Christ* was made by a painter well acquainted with Netherlandish art. Even the composition provides strong evidence for such a supposition. The author of the panel painting from Toruń may have been familiar with Hans Memling's *The Passion of Christ*. But it is salient that decades before Memling's famous panel was executed, a huge wall painting similar in composition and iconography had been produced in the Dominican Church of St. Nicholas in nearby Gdańsk. It could have been a sort of inspiration for him too. In this context, the idea that the author of *The Passion of Christ* had a close relationship to the workshop of the Master of the Feathery Clouds should be taken into consideration, especially given that Adam S. Labuda does not adduce any arguments supporting his thesis. The Master of the Feathery Clouds owes his name to the characteristic stylized, ornamental clouds that figure importantly in his illustrations to various manuscripts.<sup>70</sup> Such clouds cannot be seen in *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń. But other characteristic features of works attributed to Master of the Feathery Clouds are to some extent quite similar to the style of the author of *The Passion of Christ*. Comparing the two artists, we see that the perspective of their works is distorted in a similar way, which is particularly clearly visible with regard to architectural and urban structures. The buildings are firm but simplified and give an impression of the architecture of Northern European cities. At the same time, all of them are misshapen, they are too small, perspective is not employed in a proper way and walls are not rendered accurately. All details and architectural ornaments are shaped by wide lines. When the whole city is shown, there is a lack of space within the walls; it seems to be compressed, and almost without streets. Explicit resemblances can be found in the treatment of groups of figures. Master of the Feathery Clouds has a propensity to gather figures in dense groups, hide some of them behind each other and abandon proper scale in relation to both interiors and components of the landscape such as trees, hills or paths. There are a lot of similarities in the treatment of physiognomy and gestures. Also, the depiction of figures in motion is similar in the work of both painters.

To sum up, *The Passion of Christ* could have been directly inspired by Memling's *The Passion of Christ*, which undoubtedly was painted earlier and was available to those who wanted to see it in Bruges. However, it could have also been a reflection of the wall painting painted several dozen years earlier in the choir of the Dominican church in Gdańsk. Regardless of the iconographical and compositional differences,

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<sup>70</sup> Recently on the Master of the Feathery Clouds: Marrow 2018, pp. 199–275.



*The Passion of Christ* from Toruń should be perceived as a work of art by a painter closely tied to the workshop of the Master of the Feathery Clouds.

Recent restoration works have shed new light on both the artistic value of the painting and its history. *The Passion of Christ* was restored three times, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in 1980s, and in 2012. The last works, conducted by Jolanta Korcz and Anna Łojkuć-Celp, with the participation of Adam Cupa (identification of pigments) and Waldemar Grzesik (luminescence UV, infrared IR), represent the most important effort and (quite naturally) the most advanced and comprehensive.<sup>71</sup> The painting was meticulously examined and cleaned; all repainted parts of it (clothes, tree tops, fragments of buildings) were restored to their original state, and abrasions and defects of the painting's surface filled. The painting support was also re-glued.

Thanks to careful analysis of the surface of the painting it was possible to recover all scenes or figures seriously and (most importantly) intentionally damaged. Within the whole panel there are several places that have been scratched, at an unknown time, with a sharp tool. The most severe damage was incurred in the scenes of Flagellation, Crowning with Thorns, Carrying of the Cross, and Judas hanging himself, so in the lower parts of the painting. The two tormentors depicted in the first two scenes mentioned were scratched along their bodies several times and their eyes were gouged out. The eyes of the tormentors were gouged out in the Carrying of the Cross scene too. Curiously, in the scene of Judas hanging himself, Judas was left intact, while the figure of the devil taking the soul out of Judas' belly was scratched several times. The gaps in these scenes were later filled, but without recreating the details.

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Comprehensive restoration works revealed that *The Passion of Christ* is, in artistic terms, a much better painting than was previously thought. After conservation, the colour palette is brighter, the contours more refined and delicate, all elements and details of the painting less rough in perception. *The Passion of Christ's* artistic worth can no longer be disputed. Of course, it does not attain the quality of Memling's work, but in many ways it is more elaborate and harmonious (in the way nature and, for example, clothes are painted) than other passion panoramas.

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<sup>71</sup> Korcz 2012–2013. I would like to thank Mrs Jolanta Korcz for making this documentation available to me.

The issues that have mattered to the scholars analyzing the painting over the years range beyond its provenance, dating, and artistic milieu. In the late 1960s in-depth studies began to appear in which the function of the painting and its relationship to other works of art beyond the immediate milieu of passion panoramas were analyzed. Zygmunt Kruszelnicki's research occupies a special place in the history of studies on *The Passion of Christ*. His two articles, published in 1959 and 1968 respectively, are still fundamental for our knowledge not only of the painting from Toruń, but of all late medieval passion panoramas.<sup>72</sup> Given that both texts are written in Polish and almost unknown to Western scholars, his discoveries and suppositions are worth presenting at some length.

In the first article, entitled *Problem genealogii artystycznej toruńskiego obrazu pasyjnego* [*The Problem of Artistic Genealogy of the Passion Painting from Toruń*] (1959), Kruszelnicki concentrates on a detailed description and analysis of the painting itself, and also summarizes the state of research on it. All this was intended as background to discussion of the relations between *The Passion of Christ* and other works of art. Making use of previous studies, he methodically confirmed its close relationship to Hans Memling's painting from the Sabauda Gallery. He also treated the two paintings as singular phenomena in late medieval painting, in terms of both iconography and composition.

In his analysis of the characteristic features of the composition of both paintings, Kruszelnicki presented a long-standing tradition of making simultaneous compositions. He also pointed out that architectural structures like the ones depicted by the author of *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń and Hans Memling were actually quite popular not only in the 15<sup>th</sup> century but hundreds of years earlier. Openwork structures, sometimes with slender, decorative columns and hanging curtains, often placed in a vast landscape, forming urban space and being a stage for various simultaneously presented events, can be observed in Romanesque painting, as the late 11<sup>th</sup> century wall paintings from St. Clement in Rome demonstrate. One can also find numerous examples of such artistic solutions in 14<sup>th</sup> century art, such as wall paintings from S. Maria Donna Regina in Naples, circa 1308, and various works by Giotto, Bernardo Daddi, and Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Lorenzetti's *The Effects of Good Government* (1338–1339) in particular anticipates some characteristic features of

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<sup>72</sup> Kruszelnicki 1959, pp. 13–50; Kruszelnicki 1968, pp. 87–152.

passion panoramas. Although the composition of Lorenzetti's work is not simultaneous, the way the city is depicted, the narrow urban landscape with buildings without front walls in the foreground and his depiction of commotion on the streets and squares make *The Effects of Good Government* an important proof that passion panoramas are not groundbreaking in their development of certain artistic ideas. Importantly for Kruszelnicki's argument, Lorenzetti's famous wall painting was perceived as an encyclopaedic and didactic work of art, whose aim was to give the viewer rich information about specific issues.<sup>73</sup> According to Kruszelnicki, elaborate compositions in wall paintings were typical for Italy.<sup>74</sup> Kruszelnicki did not suggest that Memling, and, by implication, the painter responsible for *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń, knew any examples of Italian wall paintings. At the same time he allowed for the possibility that Memling could have seen wall paintings inspired by Italian works of art of the same type, made in Northern or Central Europe.<sup>75</sup>

Kruszelnicki admitted that his idea was simply to show general roots and trends of European art and that he did not exclude the possibility that Memling was inspired by completely different works of art. What is more, he treated Memling not only as a well-trained artist but also as an individualist, skillful enough to invent new compositional schemas. The artist's own invention could be crucial in developing passion panoramas composition and details, too. Obviously Kruszelnicki tried to link Memling's *The Passion of Christ* and *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń with earlier Netherlandish paintings; amongst those known to him, he listed *Triptych with Scenes from the Life of the Virgin*, painted by an anonymous artist, probably from Utrecht or Westphalia, dated to circa 1435–1450, held in the collection of the Rijksmuseum Twenthe in Enschede.<sup>76</sup> Kruszelnicki treats this painting not as a direct inspiration

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<sup>73</sup> "Godzi się wreszcie podkreślić, iż całość *Skutków dobrych i złych rządów* posiada wyraźnie charakter encyklopedyczno-dydaktyczny, stara się jak najwszechstronniej pouczyć widza – co stanowi znamienne cechy również i obu cykliw pasyjnych"; Kruszelnicki 1959, p. 34.

<sup>74</sup> He also draws attention to Andrea di Bonaiuto da Firenze's *Glorification of Dominican Order* from Spanish Chapel in Basilica of Santa Maria Novella in Florence (see: Schüssler 1980, pp. 251–274) and frescoes from Campo Santo in Pisa.

<sup>75</sup> As he stresses: "probably not preserved". "Trudno, rzecz jasna, wobec braku jakichkolwiek konkretnych danych o pobycie Memlinga na terenie Włoch, podejmować próby określenia sposobu, w jaki mogło by odbyć się zetknięcie brugijskiego mistrza z obiektami włoskiego malarstwa ściennego. O ile nawet takie bezpośrednie zetknięcie nie miało miejsca – można przypuścić, że Memling miał chyba niejednokrotnie okazję obejrzenia jakichś, może niezachowanych do dnia dzisiejszego dekoracyjnych malowideł ściennych, powstałych pod wpływem włoskim na terenie północnej czy środkowej Europy"; Kruszelnicki 1959, p. 34.

<sup>76</sup> See next chapter.

for Memling or the author of the panel from Toruń, but as a pregnant proof that in Netherlandish art one can find earlier examples of paintings whose composition resembles that of passion panoramas. Westphalian art also seems important for him, in that he points out similarities between *Mount Calvary of the Wasservass Family* from Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Cologne and works like *The Passion of Christ*.

An essential part of Kruszelnicki's article is devoted to the relationship between Memling's *The Passion of Christ* and *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń. Having analyzed and compared both panels, he arrives at the conclusion that the author of the passion panorama from St. James's Church could have seen Memling's painting i.e. during his apprentice's journeys. Being less artistically gifted, he could not create a panel as elaborate as Memling's, but still executed the main ideas of the initial concept. Kruszelnicki does not preclude the possibility that the painting was painted somewhere on the Baltic coast, possibly even in the region of Pomerania, especially because in Gdańsk the painter could see a wall painting, dated around 1430, located in the lower storey of the tower of St. Mary's Church, which shows procession to the Golgotha and the Crucifixion, while its left part is occupied by an extensive and detailed view of Jerusalem.<sup>77</sup>

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Kruszelnicki also considers the supposed lack of popularity of passion panoramas in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. In this case we should keep in mind that the article was published in 1959, when, in fact, art historians interested in such works wrote almost exclusively about Hans Memling's *The Passion of Christ*. Other works of art of this type were not within the scope of interests of such scholars or were simply unknown. The traditional way of perceiving the history of styles and epochs also influenced his arguments. According to Kruszelnicki, Memling simply painted *The Passion of Christ*, as well as *Seven Joys of Mary*, later than would have been timely. Simultaneous composition did not fit with the new ideas of the Renaissance which were then flourishing all over Europe. It was not realistic enough for the time of the creation of both paintings. *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń, painted by a minor, provincial painter, was just a reflection of outdated artistic solutions.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> See next chapter.

<sup>78</sup> Kruszelnicki 1959, p. 42.

An important part of Kruszelnicki's article is devoted to the problem of the relationship between the two passion panoramas and the medieval theatre. Kruszelnicki recounts Emil Mâle's opinions, which were very popular among art historians in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to Mâle, almost all medieval paintings were directly dependent on reality and were manifestations of mystery plays. Kruszelnicki did not uncritically follow Mâle's ideas. He noted the many similarities between the two phenomena, and the fact that many of their details and motifs could be compared, but concluded that it was irrational to trace late medieval iconography directly to the medieval stage. According to Kruszelnicki, Memling and the author of Toruń's *The Passion of Christ* did not paint any specific elements of set design or costume known from medieval productions representing Christ's Passion, nor did they present scenes typical only for the mystery stage. As he stresses, it is hard to emphasize these motifs [according to Mâle, strictly theatrical, and depicted in *The Passion of Christ*, such as the presence of St. Veronica in the scene of the *Carrying of the Cross*, or the broken lantern in the scene of the *Arrest of Christ* – K. K.] while in almost every case we are dealing rather with the general influence of the medieval stage on medieval painting than any direct instance. Kruszelnicki also pointed out that the author of Toruń's work may have been inspired not by any specific mystery play but simply by other paintings he had seen earlier. He is also skeptical about the idea that the rich garments shown in these paintings have much in common with medieval theater, writing that the "rich and varied selection of clothing, in which almost all scenes featured in both passion cycles abound, are related, though also not necessarily directly, to the medieval theatre."<sup>79</sup> Kruszelnicki finds particularly notable the overall impression of theatricality permeating both passion panoramas. Kruszelnicki admits that this impression is rather general and subjective, since it was difficult to prove the existence of aforementioned theatricality, but that does not change the fact that the characteristic feature of both passion panoramas is "dramatic verve"<sup>80</sup> and suggestiveness of narration. In the case of *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń, the impression of theatricality is intensified by the architecture of Jerusalem, which, in the case of the Toruń's painting, is simplified and archaic in its presentation.

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<sup>79</sup> "W pewnym, również zresztą niekoniecznie bezpośrednim związku z teatrem średniowiecznym pozostaje niewątpliwie bogata i zróżnicowana galeria strojów, w które obfituje każda niemal scena obu omawianych cyklów pasyjnych"; Kruszelnicki 1959, p. 47.

<sup>80</sup> "Wpływ teatru na oba cykle pasyjne zaznacza się jednak przede wszystkim w inny sposób, trudniejszy może do uchwycenia i sprecyzowania, ale jednocześnie bardziej głęboki i zasadniczy. Zarówno w dziele Memlinga, jak i w *Pasji toruńskiej* wyczuwa się silne zacięcie dramatyczne"; Kruszelnicki 1959, p. 47.

Kruszelnicki compares it with stages typical for mystery plays, especially the ones in the type familiar in Germany. According to Helmut Niedner, whom Kruszelnicki cites,<sup>81</sup> the stages in German towns were rather irregularly placed in market squares. The placement of scenes in *The Passion of Christ* is similar. For Kruszelnicki all such comparisons lack the value of strong evidence. He repeatedly emphasizes the absence of any serious available evidence that passion panoramas were in any way dependent on medieval theatre. All such suggestions are, in fact, only impressions.

48 Nine years later (1968) Zygmunt Kruszelnicki published his second study on *The Passion of Christ* from St. James's Church.<sup>82</sup> This time he concentrated on the tradition of depicting panoramic views of cities, with a special interest in those renderings which contained simultaneous narration or groups of people involved in various activities. His idea was to present a wide range of such works of art, not only medieval European art, but also Christian art from Late Antiquity or, for instance, Chinese art, rooted in completely different cultural and artistic traditions. By showing numerous examples of works of art, he convincingly proves that the concept of paintings combining panorama of the city and its outskirts with narrative scenes cannot be treated as particular to late medieval art. Noting the popularity of such compositions in China, and highlighting Italian Catholic missions to China as well as mutual trade relations in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, he posits that such compositions may have been brought to Europe, particularly given that in Italian art of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries one can find a lot of examples of multi-scenic wall paintings featuring these same components.<sup>83</sup> Even if their composition is not exactly identical to the composition of passion panoramas they anticipate, their main features fit into the schema passion panoramas represent (for example, all of them gather closely together independent, autonomous scenes comprising one specific story). For Kruszelnicki, the Dominican contribution was especially important in this context; the Dominicans were responsible for both engagement with China and the production of multi-scenic wall paintings like those mentioned, sometimes containing obvious Chinese motifs, like the exotic faces of people portrayed or Far Eastern attire. He writes about the "Dominican spirit" permeating such compositions, and their encyclopedic character,

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<sup>81</sup> Niedner 1932.

<sup>82</sup> Kruszelnicki 1968, pp. 87–152.

<sup>83</sup> Kruszelnicki lists, among others: 1) Ambrogio Lorenzetti's wall paintings in Palazzo Pubblico, Siena, 2) Francesco Traini's (?) *Life of Hermits in Thebaid*, mid-14<sup>th</sup> c., in Campo Santo, Pisa, 3) Gherardo Starina *Life of Hermits in Thebaid*, 1404, in Uffizzi, Florence.

which demands rich spoken commentary. All these features pave the way towards explicitly panoramic compositions like passion panoramas. He also points out that in all such multi-scenic Italian wall paintings, the architecture is conventional, and small in scale compared with the people in and around the buildings depicted.

The last part of the article is devoted to Northern European art. According to Kruszelnicki, tendencies visible in 13<sup>th</sup>- and 14<sup>th</sup>-century Italian art spread in the 15<sup>th</sup> century to France, the Netherlands and other parts of Northern Europe. Multiple scenes gathered in a wide landscape containing a view of a city and its outskirts, though not popular, were nonetheless present in Northern European art. On the pages of illuminated manuscripts, one can find numerous such compositions, some containing Chinese motifs too. Other works of art, like paraments (parament from Narbonne, ca. 1375)<sup>84</sup> or decorative fabrics furnish examples of such tendencies. The fabric displayed in the Wawel Cathedral in Krakow, now lost, is worth mentioning; this work of art was made around 1460 by Jakub of Sącz, a painter active in Lesser Poland. This fabric, showing the passion of Christ in and outside Jerusalem, could be treated as an important reference for Toruń's *The Passion of Christ*.<sup>85</sup> Kruszelnicki complements his arguments with additional examples of late medieval maps and views of Jerusalem containing scenes of Christ's Passion.

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As in his 1959 article, Kruszelnicki pays close attention to the problem of late medieval theatre. This time he emphasizes that in the Netherlands, such an important milieu for the development of passion panoramas, mystery plays were hugely popular and varied a great deal in their stage design (according to Kruszelnicki, different traditions of the medieval religious stage – French, Italian, German and English – met on the territory of the Netherlands). The widespread practice of organizing Passion plays created an opportunity to actively think about and experience Christ's passion, to do so in a process of motion through the everyday space of the city where most of the audience lived. Kruszelnicki assumes that all those who participated in Passion plays were linking events of Christ's life with the city where the Passion play was taking place and thanks to such connotations they thought about the mystery of salvation in a wholehearted way. Moreover, such an association – of a real Netherlandish city

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<sup>84</sup> Kruszelnicki emphasizes the presence of Chinese figure in the *Crucifixion* scene. On this work of art, see: Nash 2000, pp. 77–87.

<sup>85</sup> See next chapter.



with Jerusalem from Passion plays – could affect art, that is, passion panoramas. For Kruszelnicki, the painters who painted them could be influenced even more by the stage design and reality of mystery plays than by the tradition of painting multi-scenic compositions like the ones he discussed in his 1959 article. With some hesitation, he also discusses works of art directly depicting the reality of medieval theatre: a woodcut from Terence's edition dated 1496,<sup>86</sup> showing the schema of movements of actors on stage, and illuminations in the manuscript of a Passion play from Valenciennes, 1547.<sup>87</sup>

The researcher's entire arguments are formulated with a high degree of caution and without firm conclusions. Presenting a rich history of multi-scenic and simultaneous compositions and suggesting that the mystery stage might have influenced painters directly, he still tries to find such works of art of Netherlandish origin which could be treated as a starting point for the tradition of passion panoramas. Closing his considerations with a probable genesis of such paintings, Kruszelnicki names one especially important work of art, that is *The Passion of Christ* now in the Musée d'art sacré du Gard in Pont-Saint-Esprit, then held in a private collection and dated ca. 1450, which, in his view, was the work of the Master of St. Elisabeth. Considering that early dating, *The Passion of Christ* became a particularly important argument for the idea that painters like Memling or the author of *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń could use an existing artistic formula in the process of making passion panoramas. Significantly, however, Kruszelnicki does not treat *The Passion of Christ* from Musée d'art sacré du Gard in Pont-Saint-Esprit as a passion panorama. Its rather inconsistent and simplified architecture testifies, for him, that this panel is not a passion panorama but rather a painting freely juxtaposing scenes from Christ's passion. Kruszelnicki emphasizes the "lack of the consistent vision uniting architecture and landscape"<sup>88</sup>, a crucial factor for isolating the group of late medieval passion panoramas.

The rest of the article is devoted to similarities between *The Passion of Christ* from Turin and *Seven Joys of Mary* from the Alte Pinakothek in Munich. Kruszelnicki briefly recapitulates the state of research on the second painting and concentrates on the innovative aspects of both paintings. From today's viewpoint, his way of perceiving the history of medieval art seems strongly traditional, since he consistently compares

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<sup>86</sup> Recently on such illustrations: Torello-Hills, Turner 2015.

<sup>87</sup> Recently on its miniatures: Weigert 2016, pp. 107–128.

<sup>88</sup> "Brak tu bowiem jednolitej wizji architektoniczno-pejzażowej;" Kruszelnicki 1968, p. 125.

North European art of the 15<sup>th</sup> century with what he finds to be the more developed and innovative Italian art of the same time. Stressing the uniqueness of both panels and their importance for late medieval European art, Kruszelnicki asserts that in Italy such compositions would not have been up to date, as Italy's Renaissance artists were focused on showing reality in a fully realistic manner, with unity of space, time and action.<sup>89</sup> According to Kruszelnicki, Memling's paintings should be treated as somewhat archaic or even considered "neogothic" in style and composition. They were "medieval in content" and unrealistic in their simultaneity but possessed some features which could be specified as Renaissance or Early Modern: proportional, convincing perspective view, anatomical correctness in depicting human beings, and manifestations of chiaroscuro, which could be attractive to Italian viewers, particularly the Portinari family, the owners of *The Passion of Christ*. As Italians, they saw in Memling's painting now presented in the Sabauda Gallery a work of art which was modern enough to please educated, knowledgeable viewers, and at the same time intriguing because of its medieval spirit and somewhat archaic but riveting artistic tendencies.

The last part of the article consists of additional remarks on similarities and differences between Memling's *The Passion of Christ* and *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń. Kruszelnicki also adds some speculations on the probable sources of inspiration for the author of the second painting. He stresses the fact that *The Passion of Christ* was intended for a Dominican church and assumes that, as in the case of Italy, some indirect influences from Chinese art could be taken into consideration, probably via Italian brotherhoods, with which Dominicans from the Kingdom of Poland were in constant communication.

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Prior to 2008, numerous studies were published in which *The Passion of Christ* is mentioned or cursorily described.<sup>90</sup> There are also some studies devoted to specific

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<sup>89</sup> "Z drugiej strony podkreślić należy, iż 'nowatorstwo' dwu symultanicznych obrazów Memlinga było nowatorstwem szczególnego typu, nowatorstwem, które – jak to już poprzednio podkreślano – było w owym czasie zupełnie nieaktualne na terenie Italii. We Włoszech bowiem pracowano w tym okresie nad ukształtowaniem takiej wizji malarskiej, jaka by odtwarzała w sposób adekwatny widok, dający się w rzeczywistości ogarnąć przez widza jednym rzutem oka. Wszelkie natomiast przedstawienia typu panoramicznego ukazywały właśnie ex definitione znacznie więcej aniżeli można w realnym świecie jednym rzutem oka ogarnąć. Tym bardziej nie do pogodzenia pozostawała średniowieczna koncepcja ukazywania obok siebie w przestrzeni zjawisk rozgrywających się kolejno w czasie – z realistyczną postawą Odrodzenia włoskiego, wprowadzającego jedność nie tylko akcji, ale także przestrzeni i czasu"; Kruszelnicki 1968, p. 131.

<sup>90</sup> See note 52.

issues related directly to the passion panorama from Toruń. Amongst them one can find some reflections on the composition of the painting, especially in comparison to Memling's works,<sup>91</sup> but also i.e. so called *Jerusalem Triptych* from the National Museum in Warsaw,<sup>92</sup> or *The Dominican Reflections*, a late medieval devotional manuscript on Christ's Passion (1532). Analyses of selected scenes, like the one with Judas hanging himself, are also available.<sup>93</sup> No doubt the most influential and important study was written by Adam S. Labuda, who was the first to perceive *The Passion of Christ* as a tool enabling mental journeys to Jerusalem.<sup>94</sup> Labuda's intention was to show that the composition, as well as particular details of the painting, compel viewers to follow in the footsteps of Christ and create an imaginative view of the Holy City. The author does not analyze or cite any written sources, such as pilgrimage guides, etc., concentrating primarily on the idea that the painting itself offered an opportunity to create mental visions and stimulate the viewer to active, emotional perception of Christ's Passion. According to Labuda, in *The Passion of Christ* the patron of the painting is particularly important, in that he is shown observing Jerusalem and the events taking place in and around the city. The Dominican monk's act of looking at the Holy City and particular scenes constitutes a kind of an invitation to do the same thing he is doing.<sup>95</sup> Labuda also stresses that the *Road to Emmaus* scene is depicted very close to the patron, which could be treated as a reference to the act of pilgrimage.<sup>96</sup> Apart from Labuda's contribution, an article by Monika Jakubek-Raczkowska and Juliusz Raczkowski should be mentioned, in which these scholars propose an important new interpretation of the iconography of the painting. To some extent they agree

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<sup>91</sup> Kluckert 1974b, esp. pp. 290–292.

<sup>92</sup> Dobrzeński 1989–1990.

<sup>93</sup> Hojdis 2000, pp. 62–76.

<sup>94</sup> Labuda 2002, pp. 541–566.

<sup>95</sup> “Centralne umieszczenie postaci fundatora sprawia też, że nawiązuje ona wyraziście kontakt z widzem realnym, stojącym przed obrazem. Postać ta wprowadza widza w obraz, ‘podpowiada’ mu, że ma czynić to, co i ona czyni: oglądać przedstawienie na obrazie jako akt pobożności. Jest to dobitnie wyrażona zachęta do przejścia tej drogi, którą fundator obejmuje swym spojrzeniem, a więc drogi męki Pana, miejsc, w których się ona dokonała”; Labuda 2002, p. 544.

<sup>96</sup> “Zwraca przy tym uwagę obecność w pobliżu fundatora trzech wędrowców w strojach pielgrzymich – Chrystusa i dwóch apostołów, którzy napotkali go w drodze do Emmaus. Być może motyw ten stanowi wskazówkę, że właśnie pielgrzymka – jako ważna instytucja życia religijnego – stanowi kontekst owego ‘zaproszenia’. Nie wszystkim ludziom dane było udać się do Ziemi Świętej, a ten cel miał najwyższą rangę w pielgrzymkowym programie ówczesnego Kościoła, również jako zasługa na drodze do zbawienia wiecznego. Można ją było odbyć w myśli, w formie zastępczej (pielgrzymka duchowa) – obraz był tutaj środkiem pomocniczym i zapewne jedną z intencji fundatora było stworzenie wiernym takiej możliwości”; Labuda 2002, p. 544.

with the opinion of Bohdan Hojdis that the passion panorama from Toruń has much in common with *The Dominican Reflections*. They write however, that the parallels do not represent a direct connection; in both works only the desire for the viewer or reader to contemplate Christ's Passion is important. Jakubek-Rackowska and Rackowski point out that late medieval devotion was focused on reflection on the Passion of Christ. They are convinced that this conclusion is crucial for understanding *The Passion of Christ*. The passion panorama from Toruń should be interpreted as a material record of pious late medieval practices focused on the Passion of Christ, such as reading passion tracts. Scholars indicate that the painting should be treated as a reflection of the increasing popularity of the service of the Stations of the Cross at that time, especially in the region of Pomerania, where it was promoted by Dominicans.<sup>97</sup>

In recent years, three studies by the author of the present book were published, in which *The Passion of Christ* was examined from three angles. The first article is mainly devoted to *The Dominican Reflections*, a richly illustrated manuscript dated to 1532, originally made for Dominican friar from Kraków congregation.<sup>98</sup> This devotional text narrating the Passion of Christ was decorated with 117 full-page miniatures depicting events from the *Entrance to Jerusalem* to the *Entombment*. While there existed a hypothesis that this narrative and the miniatures accompanying and complementing it had something in common with *The Passion of Christ*, more attention should be paid to the painting from Toruń. According to Bohdan Hojdis, who asserts a link between the two works, *The Dominican Reflections* and *The Passion of Christ* are both highly dependent on the mystery stage; in his view, they are a reflection of it, and the type of narration used in these works is therefore quite similar.<sup>99</sup> Given that there are no direct connections between *The Dominican Reflections* and *The Passion of Christ*, and there is no evidence that either piece deliberately evokes the stage design typical of mystery plays, the argument that such connections exist is unsubstantiated.

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The second article is a monographic study of *The Passion of Christ*,<sup>100</sup> the first in which the painting is compared with other late medieval passion panoramas:

<sup>97</sup> Jakubek-Rackowska, Rackowski 2013, pp. 111–112.

<sup>98</sup> Kopania 2004, pp. 7–48.

<sup>99</sup> According to Hojdis, the didactic, homiletic potential is also important in both works. For that reason, *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń is treated by him as a useful tool for a preacher's work, which can be used i.e. during the sermon as a visual aid.

<sup>100</sup> Kopania 2008, pp. 91–112.

in this article, the passion panoramas from Leuven and Lisbon are discussed, new information on *The Passion of Christ* from Pont-Saint-Espirit is provided, and the passion panorama from Antwerp is mentioned. These four pieces are not discussed in the context of *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń. Apart from these panel paintings, two other works of art are analyzed: a tapestry (dated 1541) commemorating the journey of the palatine Ottheinrich to Jerusalem in 1521, and a xylographic print, recently discovered at the time of the article's writing, depicting the Passion of Christ set against a panorama of Jerusalem (dated 1460).

The third study is devoted to the problem of correspondences between the arts.<sup>101</sup> *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń, together with other similar paintings also widely seen as dependent on the reality of the medieval stage and the idea of mental pilgrimages, are analyzed from a different angle. According to the author, passion panoramas were not directly influenced by the medieval theatre, and not all of them were intended as a vehicle for mental pilgrimage to the Holy Land. *The Passion of Christ* from St. James's Church seems to be more useful for those seeking to experience Christ's Passion in detail than for those desiring to experience the Holy Land. In the case of the passion panorama from Toruń, the view of Jerusalem and its outskirts is rather far from any truth and does not serve well as a starting point for an imaginative journey. It could be associated with such practices, as easily as it could be associated with the medieval stage, but only vaguely, and it is hard to treat the painting as a direct reference to them. First and foremost it is a painting suitable for stimulating devotion focused on the successive stages of Christ's Passion.

To sum up, *The Passion of Christ* from St. James's Church in Toruń is, apart from Memling's masterpiece, the best researched passion panorama. Especially numerous studies written in Polish are important. These articles are particularly valuable as they contain a wealth of information on *The Passion of Christ* itself; their authors offer an overview of other works of art from the territory of Pomerania and discuss relationships between these works and the painting from St. James's Church. All these materials and conclusions, generally unknown to Western scholars, provide an opportunity to push research on late passion panoramas forward in a new direction.

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<sup>101</sup> Kopania 2018, pp. 313–329.



## *The Passion of Christ* from the M-Museum in Leuven

**T**he *Passion of Christ* from the M-Museum in Leuven is not a widely known example of the passion panorama. [il. 3] Until 1998 the painting was in private hands (the collection of H. Duquenne in Embourg), inaccessible to scholars for detailed examination, and the only public presentation of it took place in 1905.<sup>102</sup> It was rediscovered in 1998 when it was exhibited in the Dominican Church in Leuven on the occasion of the exhibition *Dirk Bouts, een Vlaams primitief te Leuven* (*Dirk Bouts, a Flemish Primitive in Leuven*).<sup>103</sup> The same year it was bought by the Leuven City Council and included in the permanent exhibition of late medieval art in what was then the Vander Kelen-Martens Museum, a few years later renamed M-Museum.

<sup>102</sup> *Exposition de l'art* 1905, no. 1002.

<sup>103</sup> Held in Sint-Pieterskerk en Predikherenkerk te Leuven, 16 september – 6 December 1998.

*The Passion of Christ* consists of twenty-one scenes: 1) Entry to Jerusalem, 2) Christ driving the Money Changers from the Temple, 3) Judas receiving thirty pieces of silver for betraying Jesus, 4) The Last Supper, 5) the Agony in the Garden, 6) the Arrest of Christ, 7) Christ before Annas, 8) Christ before Caiphas, 9) Christ before Herod, 10) Serving Maid Revealing Peter as one of Christ's Followers 11) Christ before Pilate, 12) the Flagellation, 13) the Crowning with Thorns, 14) Ecce Homo, 15) the Carrying of the Cross, 16) the Crucifixion, 17) the Deposition 18) the Harrowing of Hell, 19) the Resurrection, 20) Noli me Tangere, 21) Doubting Thomas. The view of Jerusalem, in the space of which most events take place (the area on the outskirts of the city is greatly reduced), is the dominant motif in the painting. That does not mean that the Holy City is depicted in a realistic manner. On the contrary, the panorama of Jerusalem seen in the painting from Leuven is defined by imaginary architectural structures which have nothing in common with real buildings, whether of late medieval northern European cities, or the historical or contemporary 15<sup>th</sup> century Jerusalem. Far in the background one can see a tiny fragment of a much more realistic panorama of the city, resembling views of prosperous Netherlandish towns. Still, neither in the foreground nor in the background is it possible to find any building in oriental style, or somehow uncharacteristic and suggesting that the action takes place in a distant land. From the artistic point of view, almost all the buildings depicted are imaginative and strongly dependent on the tradition of miniature painting. There is no doubt that the artist did not copy any more or less realistic panorama of Jerusalem; nor did he think about creating a logical, convincing city view. What he was able to do was to copy some elements he knew from illuminated manuscripts. Openwork, delicate, very ornamental and decorative structures are typical for the miniatures produced in the Netherlands at that time (and the same applies to rich and colorful garments<sup>104</sup>). It is also worth stressing that Jerusalem is clearly subordinated to the twenty scenes of the passion and cannot be treated as an independent motif or equal in importance to them. The Holy Land is more like a stylized background for the crowded stages of Christ's passion, which explicitly dominates and organizes the viewer's perception of the painting. Apart from that, one motif seems to be superior to the rest. Placing the Flagellation almost in the center of the composition seems to inform the viewer that the tormented body of Christ is the primary point of reference for those who

<sup>104</sup> At first glance the garments seem not only rich, but also diverse in style and cut. A more careful view allows us to state that the painter had a rather poor artistic imagination. He multiplied various motifs, and used the same embellishments in various figures. He was certainly more an imitator than an independent artist able to create innovative or high quality works.



look at the painting and pray in front of it. A series of golden letters, from A to U but without J and K, placed in close vicinity to each other or in subsequent scenes, arrest the spectator's attention. Their aim is to organize the narration and guide the viewer. They may also be a reference to an unidentified text that accompanied the painting. In the barely visible, small scene representing the Serving maid revealing Peter, the letter is omitted.

Kept in private hands for over ninety years, the painting has never been analyzed by researchers. In the catalogue accompanying the 1905 exhibition, only a short, descriptive note was published in which *The Passion of Christ* was vaguely described as the 15<sup>th</sup> century work linked with Mosan School.<sup>105</sup> The first author who wrote a more extensive commentary on the painting, on the occasion of the aforementioned exhibition opened in 1998, was Maurits Smeyers.<sup>106</sup> This renowned scholar specializing in late medieval Flemish art established basic facts concerning the provenance of the painter and compared the passion panorama from Leuven to other late medieval works of art. According to Smeyers, *The Passion of Christ* is the work of a Brabant master probably active in Brussels. Some motifs, like openwork architectural structures and figures within them, or the distinctive horizontal pose of Christ in the Deposition scene, derive from carved retables produced in Brussels at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. With reference to the letters accompanying each scene, he draws connections to the Last Judgement panel from Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Antwerp, dated ca. 1500, in which the system of letters is similar to the one seen in *The Passion of Christ*. He points out that the pose of Mary in the Crucifixion scene is distinctly influenced by Rogier van der Weyden. With regard to the iconography and function of the panel, Smeyers stresses its similarities to other late medieval passion panoramas, from Lisbon, Turin and Toruń, which emerged in the period in which the idea of mental pilgrimage was popular and the desire to visit the Holy Land widespread. Associating *The Passion of Christ* from M-Museum with the mental pilgrimage does not contradict the important remark that Christ himself and his willing sacrifice is the main subject of the painting, which is strongly emphasized by placing his naked body, seen in the scene of Flagellation, in the center of the panel.

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<sup>105</sup> *Exposition de l'art* 1905, no. 1002.

<sup>106</sup> Smeyers 1998a, pp. 485–488.

Reflection on *The Passion of Christ* from the M-Museum, initiated by Smeyers, was further developed by Veronique Vandekerchove. Before her sudden, unexpected death,<sup>107</sup> she managed to write<sup>108</sup> or co-wrote<sup>109</sup> six short articles concerning this passion panorama, intended as preliminary studies to a full-length monograph. Her contribution to our knowledge of this work of art includes a detailed physical and iconographical description of it, as well as an analysis of its stylistic features and probable function. Regarding the issue of the artistic milieu in which the panel was produced, she follows Smeyers' suppositions but provides more details,<sup>110</sup> particularly in the matter of technique, which suggest that the panel was done by one painter.<sup>111</sup> In discussing the unusual composition of the painting and the letters accompanying each scene, Vandekerchove advances the idea that *The Passion of Christ* was intended to serve as a vehicle for spiritual journeys to Jerusalem. The visual perception of the painting was combined with reading, and the letters accompanying successive scenes must have referred to a specific written source, probably a manuscript with prayers: "The successive episodes are labelled with golden Gothic letters. [...] These must refer to a manuscript with prayers relating to Christ's Passion or to a guide for the completion of a spiritual pilgrimage."<sup>112</sup> According to Vandekerchove, in completing such

<sup>107</sup> Campbell, Stock, Reynolds, Watteuw, Billinge 2012, p. 365.

<sup>108</sup> Vandekerchove 2002, pp. 1429–1441; Vandekerchove 2005, pp. 65–67; Vandekerchove 2006, cat. no. 18; Vandekerchove 2008a, pp. 26–28; Vandekerchove 2008b, pp. 79–83; Vandekerchove 2009, pp. 21–26.

<sup>109</sup> Vandekerchove, Smeyers 2006, pp. 159–168.

<sup>110</sup> "The painting shows resemblance to Brabant sculpted altarpieces and to the work of anonymous Brussels painters at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century as the Master of the Legend of Saint Barbara, the Master of the Legend of Saint Catherine and the Master of the Orsoy Altarpiece. They include the use of open-work buildings to break the story up into its separate elements as well. The elongated figures also recall the Brabant and Brussels masters of the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. The men's footwear and headgear are a further indication that this painting was, indeed, produced between around 1470 and 1490"; Vandekerchove 2002, p. 1435.

<sup>111</sup> "The entire composition is underdrawn with a brush and a liquid medium. The lines vary in width and density, with a drop at the end of a stroke. The style of the underdrawing suggests that the same hand has worked throughout the whole panel"; Vandekerchove 2009, p. 23. Vandekerchove carefully describes the way the painter made the underdrawing and the characteristic features of the paint layer. She stresses that "Changes both in underdrawing and painting are minor and their impact is limited. The compositional details are fully worked up in the drawing. The artist had obviously planned the composition carefully with preliminary drawings on paper, since the underdrawing is direct and confident. [...] There is no evidence of mechanical copying, so it is unlikely that the panel was copied after an existing painting"; Vandekerchove 2009, p. 25.

<sup>112</sup> Vandekerchove 2002, p. 1435–1436. Compare: "A particular feature of the Passion painting is the gold Gothic lettering labelling each episode. It must refer to a manuscript or another medium relating to the Passion or to a guide for the completion of a spiritual pilgrimage."; Vandekerchove 2009, p. 23. Vandekerchove does not explain what she has in mind when referring to "another medium relating to the Passion or to a guide for the completion of a spiritual pilgrimage." See also: Vandekerchove, Smeyers 2006, pp. 164–165.

a pilgrimage, the view of Jerusalem and the need to go from one place to another are crucial.<sup>113</sup> The author also notes the possibility that the panel from Leuven “can be related to the Passion plays, to the Way of the Holy Cross and to prayer books, all of them instruments for experiencing Christ’s Passion.”<sup>114</sup>

According to Vandekerchove *The Passion of Christ* should be linked with the passion panoramas from Lisbon and Turin.<sup>115</sup> She also points to the importance of *La Grande Passion* in the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris, a color woodcut dated 1480–1500. Its composition is similar to the composition of *The Passion of Christ*, and consists of thirteen scenes of Christ’s Passion, depicted simultaneously, most of them located in architectural structures.<sup>116</sup>

Such a way of presenting Christ’s Passion is intended to let viewers themselves enter the passion, to experience every step of it through imaginary but familiar architectural frames. Unified space and “rooms” in which subsequent episodes take place facilitate the process of perceiving the passion and enable viewers to feel it in a more intensive way.<sup>117</sup> Some features, like a panoramic view of Jerusalem in the distance, composed of late medieval northern European buildings; the variety of faces; and the individual cuts and decoration of clothing bring the passion panorama closer to everyday life.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> “The Holy City itself is a central constituent. To visit the place where Christ’s suffering and sacrifice took place was the supreme goal of every Christian pilgrim. Paintings such as this helped the viewer to make an imaginary journey; entering the pictured space as in a real world, participating in the sequence of events, walking in Christ’s footsteps, experiencing the Passion; each event takes on its full meaning in the context of the whole”; Vandekerchove 2009, p. 22.

<sup>114</sup> Vandekerchove 2009, p. 23.

<sup>115</sup> In the article co-written with Katharina Smeyers there are some references to other works of art, featuring the motif of a foal in the scene of the Entrance to Jerusalem. This rare iconographic theme is present in the passion panel from Leuven and has become a subject of analysis in the context of various medieval practices and ceremonies connected with Palm Sunday. See: Vandekerchove, Smeyers 2006, p. 159–167, especially pp. 166–167.

<sup>116</sup> See next chapter.

<sup>117</sup> “Ook de *Grote Passie* is een mooi voorbeeld van een *Gesamtbild* of een *continuous narrative*, waarbij een aantal gebeurtenissen die zich op verschillende tijdstippen voordoen met telkens ongeveer dezelfde personages, in één ruimte worden samengebracht en meestal vanuit een iets hoger gelegen gezichtspunt worden bekeken. Een dergelijke techniek voegt tijd en ruimte samen; hij vergemakkelijkt het de toeschouwer om deze gebeurtenissen als het ware zelf te beleven. Door de beweging die de kijker maakt bij het volgen van de cyclus doorheen de afbeelding, maakt hij of zij als het ware deel uit van de actie. Omdat Jeruzalem is uitgebeeld al seen West-Europese stad en de cyclus is gestoffeerd met voor de toeschouwers bekende elementen voelden zij zich daarenboven ongetwijfeld nog meer betrokken bij Christus’ lijden”; Vandekerchove 2008b, p. 81.

<sup>118</sup> Vandekerchove 2009, p. 25; Vandekerchove, Smeyers 2006, p. 162.

Vandekerhove's studies have influenced numerous scholars writing about the passion panorama from Leuven. Most of them summarize her findings and opinions, occasionally adding new facts and interpretations. The author of the present study mentions the painting and places it in the context not only of the best-known passion panoramas, like the one from the Sabauda Gallery, but also those from Toruń and Pont-Saint-Espirit.<sup>119</sup> There is no doubt, however, that in recent years, Kathryn Rudy and Antoni Ziemba have made the largest contribution to research on the genesis and function of the passion panorama from M-Museum.

In her book *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*<sup>120</sup> Kathryn Rudy underscores that we do not have any information on the artist who made the painting, its provenance, ownership or commission. Focusing on Netherlandish female convents, she writes that "the possibility that the painting was made for a convent cannot be firmly established, although it cannot be ruled out, either."<sup>121</sup> Rudy also stresses that the painting, characterized by visual cacophony, overstuffed and claustrophobic, does not allow the viewer a chance to track the action freely. The created space is severely disjointed and the architecture shown divides, isolates and frames subsequent scenes more than uniting them in one visual story. But there are the golden letters arranging the scenes of the passion in the proper order; they simplify the work of perceiving the whole story. Rudy compares them to pilgrimage diaries.<sup>122</sup>

Discussing the successive stages of Christ's Passion, Rudy also points out that one scene, *Serving maid revealing Peter as one of Christ's followers*, is peripheral, not easy to spot, and not marked with a letter. She links it with the chickens depicted on the right of the main city gate. Chickens, according to Rudy, are a kind of an anecdotal detail "which forms the glue between the various events."<sup>123</sup> Furthermore, she adds that "Peter and the nimbed figure before him – probably John – serve as proxies for the

<sup>119</sup> Kopania 2008.

<sup>120</sup> Rudy 2011, pp. 162–170.

<sup>121</sup> Rudy 2011, p. 164.

<sup>122</sup> Rudy also refers here to the passion panorama from Lisbon. "The paintings in Lisbon and Leuven overcome this problem [troubled, problematic organization of both paintings – K.K.] by providing the viewer with alphabetical signposting, whereby letters direct the viewer through a meandering course. These small bits of text carefully structure the viewer's experience. These new genres of imagery are analogous to pilgrimage diaries: they show progression from station to station and cogently present sequential events of the Passion."; Rudy 2011, p. 169.

<sup>123</sup> Rudy 2011, p. 166.

viewer, who can follow them through the scenes. The figures therefore adopt pastoral role. The function of the painting as a whole is to allow the viewer to reconnect the disjointed scenes, pausing to witness Christ's multiple brutalizations, and simultaneously manufacture an ardent compassion."<sup>124</sup>

Rudy admits that the Leuven passion panorama has little in common with actual views of Jerusalem, and it is hard to treat it as dependent on i.e. contemporary maps. But she insists that, thanks to numerous artistic devices, such as the aforementioned letters, and small details uniting action, the painting could create a proper atmosphere to visualize the Holy Land in one's mind, especially when the user was well-versed in pilgrimage literature guiding him in his mental journey to Jerusalem. Also, motifs like the women dressed in 15<sup>th</sup>-century robes, selling goods from a booth, depicted in the lower right part of the painting, close to the city gate, should be treated, according to Rudy, as a reference to real pilgrimages, during which pilgrims functioned in two realities – the historical reality of Christ's Passion, and the reality of the contemporary, everyday life of the traveler to the Holy Land.

Rudy concludes that *The Passion of Christ* from Leuven is, like other passion panoramas, a painting which marries a multi-episodic passion landscape with cartography and printed Passion narratives or pilgrimage guides/diaries. Writing that such images "turn cartography into an object of devotion," she perceives them as a vehicle for spiritual journeys. Enabling the viewer to feel Christ's Passion deeply, in the context of Jerusalem, *The Passion of Christ* could be especially useful for nuns and religious women.<sup>125</sup>

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In 2015 Antoni Ziemia added some important remarks on *The Passion of Christ* from M-Museum.<sup>126</sup> First of all, he points out that all buildings in the foreground, architectural scenery consisting of openwork, delicate, rich and ornamental structures,

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<sup>124</sup> Rudy 2011, p. 166.

<sup>125</sup> "Indeed, multi-episodic Passion landscapes marry cartography and Passion narratives in paint. Just as the text with which this chapter began privileges a certain bird's-eye view of Jerusalem and calls it an image for contemplation, and from which indulgences could be gleaned (the two increasingly went hand-in-hand), these images turn cartography into an object of devotion. They make reference to Jerusalem topography and depict the Holy City as a walled enclosure that the viewer can penetrate, where she can join Christ on the *via crucis*. Nuns and religious women took this invitation to join Christ to ever-higher levels that stimulated the eyes, the ears, and [...] the sense of touch."; Rudy 2011, pp. 169–170.

<sup>126</sup> Ziemia 2015, pp. 747–748.

were typical of the Netherlandish painting of the third quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, especially for artists active in Brussels (Master of the Legend of St. Barbara, Master of the Legend of Saint Catherine; Master of the Orsoy Altarpiece, Master of the View of Saint Gudula). Local workshops producing manuscripts used the same motives. So there is no doubt where the painting was produced and there are no convincing arguments that the architecture depicted in it has anything in common with Jerusalem's architecture. The buildings in *The Passion of Christ* are imaginative, and based on common artistic patterns of the region. The artist who made this painting simply copied other artists. He focused less on Jerusalem itself than on how scholars would like to see it, or perhaps he did not have enough talent and invention to add something extraordinary of his own. However, regardless of the painter's lack of invention, his lack of interest in the real face of Jerusalem did not hinder the viewer from seeing specific sacred places while looking at the panorama. In identifying successive scenes, he or she could associate the architecture with the Golden Gate, the Houses of Annas, Caiphas or Pilate, the Temple of Solomon, Golgotha, and so on. Still, he or she would do it on the basis of their knowledge of the Bible, passion tracts or pilgrimage literature more than drawing on the painting itself.

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Ziembra's most important remark concerns the composition of the painting, especially its focal point. He notes that Christ's body, clearly highlighted in the scene of the Flagellation, is the most important, dominant motif in the painting. The naked Christ acts as a devotional figure who hinders narration, removing the viewer from the rhythm of arraying scenes in chronological or topographical order, and leading him or her towards an act of meditation. Christ's body functions here as an object of worship. In this context, Ziembra emphasizes the importance of the feast of *Corpus Domini*, so popular and crucial for medieval piety from the 13<sup>th</sup> century on.<sup>127</sup> In Ziembra's opinion, meditations on Christ's body seem to constitute a better reference for *The Passion of Christ* than mental pilgrimages to Jerusalem.

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<sup>127</sup> "[...] tu ośrodkiem całej kompozycji staje się dewocyjna figura – naga postać w scenie Biczowania. Narracja zatrzymuje się na akcie dewocyjnej medytacji i kultowej adoracji. Ciało Zbawiciela prezentowane jest tu jako przedmiot kultu *Corpus Domini*, rozwiniętego wraz z rozpowszechnieniem się święta Bożego Ciała. Od XIII wieku obchodzono to święto jako procesję z czterema stacjami, której od XV wieku towarzyszyły czasem dramatyczne spektakle. Łączyło to tę uroczystość z procesją drogi krzyżowej i ideą wędrówki duchowej po trasie Męki Pańskiej, choć święto *Corpus Domini* miało triumfalny, nie dylatoryczny, charakter i nawiązywało do uroczystości Wielkiego Czwartku jako momentu ustanowienia Eucharystii"; Ziembra 2015, p. 747.

Recently, the author of the present book followed up on Antoni Ziemia's query whether only pilgrimage literature and the tradition of pilgrimages to the Holy Land, whether real or mental, constitute the proper frame of reference for *The Passion of Christ*.<sup>128</sup> Having in mind the composition of the painting, with the body of Christ as its focal point, and the lack of accuracy in the portrayal of Jerusalem, it seems legitimate to ask whether the golden letters accompanying the main episodes of Christ's Passion, depicted in *The Passion of Christ*, indeed refer to unspecified texts emphasizing the fact that the redemption took place in Jerusalem. They could as well refer to any text, without any special references to the Holy Land, focused on the episodes of the passion.

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<sup>128</sup> Kopia 2018, pp. 326–327.



## *Passion of Christ*

from the Musée d'Art Sacré du Gard  
in Pont-Saint-Esprit

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**T**he *Passion of Christ* from the Musée d'art sacré du Gard in Pont-Saint-Esprit is a passion panorama measuring 95 cm high and 185 cm width, painted at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century (oil on wood panels) [il. 4]. It is customarily attributed to the so called Master of the Saint Elisabeth Panels (Meester van de Heilige Elisabeth-Panelen), an anonymous painter probably from Dordrecht, whose only known works are four panels from the collection of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, showing scenes from the life of Saint Elisabeth and what are known as scenes of the St. Elizabeth's Day flood of 18–19 November 1421.<sup>129</sup> Occasionally it is ascribed to the artistic milieu of Lübeck. Nothing is known about the provenance of the panel or its owners. The first certain information on it comes from the late 1930s and 1940s; it appeared on the art market in Paris in 1938. Being a part of the collection of Alberto d'Atri, one of Parisian art dealers,<sup>130</sup> it was bought in 1941 for 230,000 Francs by

<sup>129</sup> Inv. no.: SK-A-3145, SK-A-3146, SK-A-3147-A, SK-A-3147-B.

<sup>130</sup> Alberto d'Atri was active as an art dealer at least from the late 1930s. In 1938 he lent one of Domenico Tiepolo's works for an exhibition in The Art Institute of Chicago (*Paintings, Drawings...* 1938, cat. no. 28). In OSS (USS Office of Strategic Services) Art Looting Intelligence Unit (ALIU) Reports 1945–1946 and



Walter Andreas Hoffer for Hermann Göring. Until the end of the Second World War, *The Passion of Christ* was in his collection.<sup>131</sup> During the air raids on Berlin it was transferred from the general headquarters of the Luftwaffe in Potsdam to Burg Valdenstein, where in 1945 it was found by the Allies. From Burg Valdenstein it was sent to the Central Collecting Point in Munich,<sup>132</sup> and then to France. In 1953, thanks to l'Office des Biens et Intérêts privés, it was incorporated into the collection of the Louvre.<sup>133</sup> In 1998, after restoration works conducted in 1996–1997, it was deposited in the Musée d'art sacré du Gard in Pont-Saint-Esprit and put on display as a part of museum's permanent exhibition.

The depiction of Christ's Passion in the painting consists of eighteen scenes: 1) the Entry into Jerusalem, 2) the Washing of the Feet of Apostles, 3) the Last Supper, 4) the Agony in the Garden, 5) the Arrest of Jesus; 6) Jesus examined by Caiphas, 7) Christ before Pilate, 8) the Flagellation, 9) the Crowning with Thorns, 10) Ecce Homo, 11) the Carrying of the Cross, 12) Jesus Stripped of his Garments, 13) the Crucifixion, 14) Soldiers Playing Dice for Christ's Robe, 15) the Deposition, 16) the Entombment, 17) the Resurrection, 18) the Three Marys going to the Tomb, 19) Noli me Tangere.

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The view of Jerusalem is definitely schematic and does not represent any convincing city structure. The main architectural element is placed in the foreground. It is a big building without a front wall, with a relatively spacious interior, with a decorative, ornamental floor, in which the Flagellation and Crowning with Thorns take place. Illogically and contrary to the rules of perspective, it seems to be a part of two city gates flanked by smooth turrets with battlements. Lack of knowledge and

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*ALIU Red Flag Names List and Index* one can find some basic information on him: "d'Atri. Paris, 23 rue de la Boetie Rome, 28 via Lima. Italian dealer and middleman, resident in Paris for many years. Dealt with Hofer and Muehlmann, and was in contact with G F Reber in Switzerland" (*OSS... 1945–1946*). Very keen on the art of Amadeo Modigliani, he planned to write his biography (d'Atri 1920–1962) for which he collected a lot of materials now in Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution (<https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/research-material-amadeo-modigliani-6555> – accessed February 1, 2019).

<sup>131</sup> RM 751. *The Passion of Christ* was not the only work of art Roberto d'Atri sold to Göring, see: [http://www.dhm.de/datenbank/ccp/dhm\\_ccp.php?seite=6&fld\\_1=5361&fld\\_3=&auswahl=6&fld\\_4=&fld\\_4a=&fld\\_5=&fld\\_6=&fld\\_7=&fld\\_8=&fld\\_9=&fld\\_10=&suchen=Suchen](http://www.dhm.de/datenbank/ccp/dhm_ccp.php?seite=6&fld_1=5361&fld_3=&auswahl=6&fld_4=&fld_4a=&fld_5=&fld_6=&fld_7=&fld_8=&fld_9=&fld_10=&suchen=Suchen) (accessed February 1, 2019).

<sup>132</sup> Mü-Nr.: 6375. "Le tableau a ensuite dû être transporté au quartier général de la Luftwaffe à Potsdam et de là au château de Burg Veldenstein quand les bombardements ont frappé la région de Berlin. C'est là que le tableau a été trouvé par les alliés, qui l'ont amené au collecting point de Munich où il a été enregistré sous le numéro 6375. Ce numéro est toujours visible au revers du panneau aujourd'hui (partiellement effacé)."

<sup>133</sup> INV. – M.N.R. 971.

a meagre idea of how to construct a proper architectural landscape resulted in the depiction of a strange multi-functional structure which creates the impression of the ground floor for a whole city located above. In this upper level of Jerusalem there are two much smaller, richly decorated buildings without front walls, narrow city gate and a free space, a (mostly empty) square. To the left of the city walls there is an additional building without a front wall in which the Last Supper takes place. The outskirts of Jerusalem are depicted in a simplified way. The hilly landscape is almost completely devoid of trees and consists only of pale grass and some greyish paths. Only in the background there is a more elaborate view. Hills, mountains, a lot of trees, a lake and a town with numerous towers are visible.

All figures in the painting are definitely too tall compared with the scale of the buildings and the landscape. This applies equally to the patrons of the painting, kneeling in front of the turrets flanking the interior in which the Flagellation and Crowning with Thorns take place. Because of the lack of any i.e. heraldic shields, nothing precise can be said about this couple.

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The painting is not preserved in perfect condition. At an undefined time it was severely damaged. The surface was rubbed in many parts, so numerous scenes are only partly visible (especially the Last Supper, as well as the Crucifixion and Deposition in which the crosses and the figures of the thieves are barely preserved). It could be an effect of poor storage conditions or improper restorations. Beneath the scene of the Carrying the Cross there is a trace of a candle flame, too, which could be a proof that the painting was used as an altarpiece. There is also some intentional, deliberate damage. In the central scenes of Flagellation and Crowning with Thorns, someone scratched the figures of the tormentors with a sharp tool. Also, the man pulling Christ with a rope in the scene of the Carrying of the Cross is lightly scratched.<sup>134</sup> As in the

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<sup>134</sup> “Le tableau présente des lacunes importantes qui peuvent s’expliquer par plusieurs facteurs:

- Des actes de vandalism.
- Des traces d’usage (brûlures de cierges)
- Des pertes de matière résultant de mauvaises conditions de conservation
- Des usures ou pertes de matière résultant des restaurations abusives (nettoyages, travaux du support, mauvais refixage ou même grattage des soulèvements).

Les actes de vandalism concerne surtout les personnages dans la partie inférieure du tableau. Il semble que il sont déroulés sur plusieurs périodes puisque les facteurs motivants (piété, démarches antisémite ou irrégulières) et les types de dégâts (lacerations et enfoncement des yeux avec un objet pointu, enlèvement des plages de peinture avec un objet plat) ne sont pas semblables. Il existe trois brûlures de cierges qui témoignent que le tableau était utilisé comme retable”; Description of the restoration works of the painting held in 1997, typescript in the Musée d’art sacré du Gard in Pont-Saint-Esprit, MNR-971.

case of the passion panorama from Toruń, such scratches targeted at the tormentors could be seen as an expression of piety and strong emotions accompanying meditation on the Passion of Christ. Some figures, like Nicodemus, Simon of Cirene, Zacchaeus, and the Jews accompanying Christ in his entry to Jerusalem have their eyes gouged out with the use of a sharp tool. Taking into consideration the fact that all of the above figures are in fact sympathetic, such treatment of them could be interpreted as a manifestation of anti-Semitism. Also the figures of the bad thief and the devil taking his soul are severely damaged, almost completely picked out. These instances of damage vary greatly and have been perpetrated with various tools; we may thus assume that the attacks were made at different times.<sup>135</sup>

The panel from Musée d'art sacré du Gard has so far not attracted wide attention among art historians. Apart from the Louvre and the Musée d'art sacré du Gard catalogues, in which only basic information is given, even without any bibliographical references,<sup>136</sup> only four shallow mentions of it can be found in various types of publications. The first to analyze this panel was Godfried Joannes Hoogewerf. In the fifth volume of his *De Noord-Nederlandsche Schilderkunst* (1947) readers learn that the panel appeared on the art market in Paris in 1938, that its colors are vivid, and that its composition is similar to that of *The Passion of Christ* by Hans Memling, who, however, executed his panel much more skillfully, not in such a naïve manner. In Hoogewerf's opinion the painter was strongly influenced by Netherlandish miniature painting, and each scene of Christ's Passion can be treated as an enlarged book illumination considered separately, for some unknown reason put amid incongruously quotidian

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<sup>135</sup> Compare: "L'enlèvement des repeints effectué avant l'arrivée du panneau à Marseille a révélé de nombreuses lacunes, plus ou moins importantes, qui peuvent s'expliquer par plusieurs facteurs: - des actes de vandalisme relevant de démarches de piété (lacerations des visages et corps des bourreaux ou des juifs, enforcements de leurs yeux, laceration et arrachage du mauvais larron et du diable enlevant son âme) - des actes de vandalisme relevant de démarches irréligieuses (visages du Christ ou des apôtres) ou antisémites (lacerations de personnages positifs de la Passion tels que Nicodème, Simon de Cyrène, Zachée, Juifs de l'entrée à Jérusalem) - des traces de brûlures de cierges tous ces accidents sont anciens et appartiennent à l'histoire ou à l'usage du panneau alors que celui-ci conservait sa fonction première, ils sont minoritaires - des lacunes et pertes de matières résultant de mauvaises conditions de conservation - des usures (présence de la préparation originale) ou lacunes (absence de la préparation originale) résultant de restaurations abusives (nettoyages provoquant des usures, redressement et amincissement du panneau pour un parquetage, traitement 'de choc' ayant dû provoquer des soulèvements de couche picturale et de préparation, mal refixés sinon grattés, joint central mal rejointoyé). Ces accidents sont majoritaires."; Description of the restoration works of the painting held in 1997, typescript in the Musée d'art sacré du Gard in Pont-Saint-Esprit, MNR-971.

<sup>136</sup> Foucart, Thiébaud 1981, p. 374; Lesné 2004, p. 179; *La Maison des...* 1998; *Musée du Louvre...* 2002, p. 221.

scenery. Moreover, all figures in the work are too big in comparison to the landscape, which makes them appear rather sluggish. Finally Hoogewerf attributes the panel to a follower of the Master of the Saint Elisabeth Panels; he also points out that the author of the Pont-Saint-Espirit passion panorama was likely a disciple of the Master of the Saint Elisabeth Panels.<sup>137</sup>

In 1988 Edwin Buijsen mentioned the painting in a footnote to his article on the Master of Rhenen and the Master of the Saint Elisabeth Panels. Although several dozen years earlier Hoogewerf pointed out that the passion panorama now in Pont-Saint-Espirit was probably related to the workshop or a follower of the Master of the Saint Elisabeth Panels, Buijsen does not include it in his short but thorough analysis of three panel paintings which he attributes to these two painters. He only mentions that the relations between the works of both artists and the passion panorama from Pont-Saint-Espirit should be further investigated.<sup>138</sup>

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Readers had to wait until the year 2000 for a more elaborate examination. A. M. Koldewey then devoted further study to the painting from Pont-Saint-Espirit, the location of which was unknown to him (he described it as a panel painting which appeared on the art market in 1938). The reason Koldewey was interested in this passion panorama was its possible relationship to late medieval spiritual pilgrimage practices and especially devotion offered to the Stations of the Cross. According to Koldewey there are fourteen scenes depicted in the painting. He connects them with the fourteen Stations of the Cross, suggesting that the painting is a proof that even though the number of Stations of the Cross was fixed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, some manifestations of such an approach to Christ's Passion are in fact noticeable as early

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<sup>137</sup> "Typisch voorbeeld van een Noord-Nederlandsch miniatuurschilder, die zijn best doet op paneel iets goeds tot stand te brengen, is de hier afgebeelde groote „tafel“ met voorstellingen uit de Passie (94 x 184 cm), die zich in 1938 in den kunsthandel te Parijs bevond. De bestellers, man en vrouw, zijn op den voorgrond knielend voorgesteld. Het geheel is van een kleurige aanschouwelijkheid. Ieder taferel is als een vergroote boek-verluchting afzonderlijk bezien en behandeld en het gansche paneel op naïeve wijze in elkander geknutseld. Op dergelijke wijze heeft Memlinc dit gedaan; doch niet zoo naïef. Juist doordat vergrootend te werk is gegaan, zijn de vormen schraal geworden. Eenige atmosfeer beproeft de kunstenaar niet aan te brengen. Van den Meester van St. Elisabeth zou hij de leermeester kunnen geweest zijn"; Hoogewerff 1947, p. 29.

<sup>138</sup> "Hopelijk kann het hier voorgestelde onderscheid tussen de twee noodnamen een aanzet geven tot de verdere samenstelling van het oeuvre van beide meesters. In *Catalogue...* wordt een groot paneel met *De passie van Christus*, dat tot dan toe werd aangeduid als *L'École de Lübeck du XVe siècle*, toegeschreven aan *Maître des panneaux de sainte Elisabeth*. De relatie van dit schilderij met de St.-Elisabeth-panelen enerzijds en de *De inneeming van rhenen* en *Christus aan het volk getoond* anderzijds, zou nog nader onderzocht moeten worden."; Buijsen 1988, pp. 133–138, note 11.

as in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The author does not analyze the painting in detail at all; he simply discusses some late medieval or, more accurately, 16<sup>th</sup>-century examples of the use of works of art as tools for spiritual journeys to Jerusalem and reflection on the Passion of Christ. He also points to the tradition of creating Passion Parks as helpful for understanding the work from Pont-Saint-Espirit. His remarks and observations seem intuitive rather than based on hard facts or deeper analysis of the work itself.<sup>139</sup>

The problem of the painting's authorship seems worth discussing. In the aforementioned publications, the panel painting from Pont-Saint-Espirit is usually described as the work of the Master of the Saint Elizabeth Panels, an anonymous artist who owes his name to four panels in the collection of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, dated ca. 1490–1495, which originally were part of the altarpiece produced for the Grote Kerk in Dordrecht.<sup>140</sup>

The inner wings contain scenes from Saint Elizabeth of Hungary (also known as Elisabeth of Thuringia)'s life. The first scene of the left panel shows Elizabeth, accompanied by her servants Guta and Isentrudis, making a vow to her first counsellor, Rüdiger. In the foreground, the wedding feast of Elizabeth and Louis IV of Thuringia can be seen. On the right, Louis goes off on a crusade, leaving Elizabeth alone. At the same

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<sup>139</sup> “Vrij centraal is op de voorgrond een stichtersechtpaar neergeknield voor een landschap met veertien kruiswegstaties, het vaste aantal sinds de achttiende eeuw, maar dato ok al veel eerder voorkwam, zoals we hier zien. Onder invloed en op initiatief van Heilige-Land-reizigers en vooral ook door inspanningen van de franciscanen die de heilige plaatsen daar veelal beheerden, ontstonden vanaf de vijftiende en zestiende eeuw op tal van plaatsen kruiswegstaties: het voor een geestelijke pelgrimage bestemde lokale alternatief voor de barre en dikwijls niet te realiseren werkelijke tocht. Zo liet bijvoorbeeld rond 1505 de Leuvense geestelijke Petrus Sterckx, die een bedevaart naar Jeruzalem had gemaakt, in de openlucht een *cruysganck* van acht levensgrote staties oprichten, waarvan de eerste twee bouwsels – met respectievelijk Christus in de Hof van Olijven en Christus voor Pilatus – nog bekend zijn omdat ze werden afgebeeld op een schilderij uit ca. 1579. Het volgen van deze monumentale staties bood concreet houvast voor een geestelijke pilgrimage, in feite zelfs lijfelijk, in het openbaar, in weer en wind. Daartegenover is er de werkelijke privé-devotie, de persoonlijke gebedstocht, die helemaal geestelijk kon worden volbracht oft och met enige visuele of tastbare aanknopingspunten. Gebedssnoeren en –ringen voor strikt persoonlijk gebruik boden eenzelfde houvast in het abstracte, al dan niet aangevuld met enkele afbeeldingen als hangers, figuratieve kralen, medailles of reliëfs. Op dit kleine formaat kon dit echter ook weer gedetailleerder en dus concreter worden. Bijvoorbeeld zien we dit bij de buitengewoon kostbare laat-vijftiende-eeuwse rozenkrans uit Yorkshire met zevenenvijftig geëmailleerd gouden kralen, waarin niet alleen de voorstellingen van tal van heiligen staan gegraveerd, maar ook – in de grotere kralen – scènes uit het leven van Christus. Vergelijkbaar met deze rozenkrans is een reeks van gegraveerde lovertjes, uit de late vijftiende of het begin van de zestiende eeuw, met voorstellingen van scènes uit het leven van Christus, van de apostelen en van bloemetjes.”; Koldewey 2000, pp. 233–234.

<sup>140</sup> Inv. No. SK-A-3145, SK-A-3146, SK-A-3147-A, SK-A-3147-B. Originally the altarpiece probably stood on the altar of St. Lambert.

time, Elizabeth is making a second vow to another of her counsellors, Master Conrad of Marburg. She decides that if Louis dies, she will observe conventual celibacy. On the right wing, in the top left part, there is a depiction most probably of the expulsion of Elizabeth from Wartburg after Louis's death. In the foreground on the left, Elizabeth is taking care of the sick, gathered in the hospital she founded. On the right, one can see her lying on her deathbed. Among those present in the room, Master Conrad can be recognized. Above the deathbed, two angels carry Elizabeth's soul up to heaven. The last episode of her story is the scene of her burial by Franciscan monks.

On the outer wings, scenes of the Saint Elizabeth's Day flood of 18-19 November 1421 are depicted. On the night of 18 to 19 November 1421, thus on the day of Saint Elizabeth's feast (19<sup>th</sup> of November), a huge flood hit the city of Dordrecht and its surroundings. Twenty-three villages were completely flooded and over two thousand people were killed.<sup>141</sup> M. Wolters depicts both wings in the following way: "The right wing [...] shows the breaching of the dike near Wieldrecht. In the center of the left wing [...] is Dordrecht, to which people are fleeing with their belongings, although some have died as they tried to escape the rising waters. Several villages and rivers are labelled with their names in the landscape, which extends over both panels. Near the village of Houweningen, halfway up the left panel, there is a depiction of the legend about a little girl called Beatrijs, who supposedly survived the flood because a cat kept her cradle balanced in the water.

"The scenes on the two panels appear at first sight to show a continuous landscape looking from Dordrecht to the east and south-east. The left wing is a view along the river Merwede, with places like Papendrecht and Sliedrecht. Further back are Almkerk, Waspik, Raamsdonk and, in the top right corner, Geertruidenberg. Although the topography of the left wing is fairly accurate, a great deal of license was taken with that on the right wing. The artist shifted his vantage point, folded the landscape in like a fan, and looked more towards the south. As a result, places like Wieldrecht, Cillaarshoec, Strijen, Maasdam and Puttershoek, which are all south-west of Dordrecht, have ended up on the right edge of the panel. The horizon is also closer to the viewer than in the other painting. The artist adopted a certain cartographic approach in the left panel, but in the other one he modified the landscape in order to show as much of the Grote

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<sup>141</sup> Amongst them was the village of Wieldrecht. Many flood victims had to move to Dordrecht and settle there. The descendants of flood victims commissioned the altarpiece for Grote Kerk.

Waard polder as possible. It is possible that Wieldrecht was also moved to a position at top right to show the course that the water took as it drove the donors' ancestors towards the safety of Dordrecht. The depiction of the St Elizabeth's Day flood is a remarkably early record of such an event from the recent past."<sup>142</sup>

Nothing is known about the Master of the Saint Elizabeth Panels. For years, the painting called *The Conquest of Rhenen by John of Cleves in 1499*, another panel painting in the collection of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam,<sup>143</sup> as well as *Christ Shown to the People*, which appeared on the art market in the Galerie Hoogsteder in Hague,<sup>144</sup> were attributed to him. But in 1988 Edwin Buijsen convincingly demonstrated, on the basis of detailed and careful analysis, that the stylistic features of the St. Elizabeth panels are clearly different from those which are characteristic of both of the other paintings,<sup>145</sup> whose author since then has commonly been described as Master of Rhenen.<sup>146</sup> Nevertheless, the rather shallow commentaries of Hoogewerf

<sup>142</sup> Wolters (no date).

<sup>143</sup> Oil on panel, 182 x 143 cm, no. inv. SK-A-1727. Further literature: Boschma 1961, pp. 91; Deelen 1967, pp. 91–93; Dijkstra et al. 2002, pp. 74–75; Hoogewerff 1936, pp. 508–509; Schooten van, Wüstefeld 2003, pp. 66–68, no. 13; Riemsdijk van 1899–1900, pp. 11–13.

<sup>144</sup> Buijsen 1988, pp. 133–138.

<sup>145</sup> “Door vergelijking van de *St.-Elisabeth-panelen* met *De inneming van Rhenen* en *Christus aan het volk getoond* kan worden nagegaan of ook deze toeschrijving aan dezelfde meester gerechtvaardigd is. Wat direct opvalt is dat de weergave van figuren en architectuur op de twee zijluiken veel grover en minder zorgvuldig is. Talrijke details maken een nogal onbeholpen indruk, zoals de stapel broden die gedragen wordt door één van de mannen op de voorzijde van het rechter paneel. De decoratieve patronen op de gewaden zijn vrijwel niet aangepast aan de plooi. De baard van de vader van Elisabeth, die op het linker paneel tweemaal is afgebeeld, bestaat uit een beperkt aantal dikke haren. De baard van Pilatus wordt daarentegen gevormd door talrijke dunne lijntjes, die dicht naast elkaar zijn geplaatst. De gezichten op de *St.-Elisabeth-panelen* zijn zeer eenvormig en weinig expressief. Het overheersende gezichtstype, gekenmerkt door een lange, rechte neus en grote, bolle ogen, vindt men niet terug op de beide andere werken, waar de gelaatstreken een grotere variatie vertonen. De figuren zijn star en vrijwel beweging loos. Het repertoire aan verschillende lichaamshoudingen is beperkt. Zo tonen beide voorzijden een rugfiguur in een vergelijkbare houding. De taferelen uit het leven van St.-Elisabeth zijn weinig verhalend weergegeven; anekdotische nevenscenes ontbreken. De afgebeelde gebouwen waarvan de details gebrekkig zijn uitgevoerd, maken een platte en onvaste indruk. De figurale scènes lijken zich eerder vóór dan in de ondiepe decors af te spelen. Iedere illusie van ruimte tussen de achter elkaar geplaatste bouwwerken ontbreekt. De toepassing van het lineair perspectief is, in tegenstelling tot de beide andere werken, zeer beperkt en weinig overtuigend. Zowel op *Christus aan het volk getoond* als *De inneming van Rhenen* is de mogelijkheid benut om een gedeelte van een gewelf, te schilderen; op de *St.-Elisabeth-panelen* is dit niet gebeurd. Evenals de taferelen uit het leven van St.-Elisabeth op de voorzijden, is ook de voorstelling van de St.-Elisabeth op de achterzijden eenvoudig van opzet en uitvoering. Opvallend is vooral de wanverhouding tussen de figuren en hun omgeving.”; Buijsen 1988, pp. 135–136.

<sup>146</sup> In the literature both names – Master of the Saint Elizabeth Panels and Master of Rhenen – were sometimes even used interchangeably. The first who noticed some similarities between these two masters was Frederik Schmidt-Degener, see: Schmidt-Degener 1934, pp. 19–21.

and Buijsen on the relationship between the paintings of Master of the Saint Elizabeth Panels and the passion panorama from Pont-Saint-Espirit have to be considered.

According to Hoogewerf, the author of the passion panorama in the collection of the Musée d'Art sacré du Gard was a follower of the Master of the Saint Elizabeth Panels. Hoogewerf even assumes that the author of four panels in the Rijksmuseum was likely his teacher. He adds that the painter responsible for the passion panorama was strongly dependent on the tradition of Netherlandish illuminated manuscripts or simply was an illuminator. For Hoogewerf, each scene in the passion panorama from Pont-Saint-Espirit is rendered in such a way that it resembles an independent, separate book illumination, rather roughly placed in the landscape. As he emphasizes, the situation was analogous with Hans Memling, who painted his simultaneous composition in the same way but to far better effect. Buijsen only mentions that some relationship may appear to exist between the two works but does not examine the possibility in any way.

The very general supposition that the author of the passion panorama on permanent display in the Musée d'Art sacré du Gard was an illuminator or that he drew directly from the tradition of making illuminated manuscripts in the Netherlands in the 15<sup>th</sup> century is not well-substantiated. In fact all of the scenes in this panel painting are typical and conventional in iconographic terms.





## *The Passion of Christ*

from the Walters Art Museum in Mount Vernon,  
Baltimore

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The discourse on passion panoramas grew more complex when in 2014 Kathryn Rudy wrote an article in which she drew attention to an unpublished panel painting in The Walters Art Museum in Mount Vernon, Baltimore.<sup>147</sup> [il. 5] Not much is known about this small passion panorama (32,5 x 44,9 cm, oil on panel, inv. 37.776), especially about its provenance. Purchased at an unknown time by Henry Walters, it was included in the collection of Walters Art Museum after his death in 1931.<sup>148</sup> The previous history of the work is unknown.

<sup>147</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 384.

<sup>148</sup> “Henry Walters, Baltimore, [date of acquisition unknown] by purchase; Walters Art Museum, 1931, by bequest.”; see: <http://art.thewalters.org/detail/22554/passion-of-christ/> [accessed: July 14, 2017]. About William and Henry Walters, their art collection and the foundation of the Walters Art Museum, see first and foremost: Johnston 1999. See also: Price 1996, pp. 127–132.

The stylistic features of this panel, as well as its composition and iconography, allowed scholars to connect it with two artistic regions of Northern Europe, that is the Netherlands and Rhineland.<sup>149</sup> The latter region, and in particular Cologne, boasts a rich tradition of panel painting at the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and was one of the leading artistic centers of Northern Europe, with its own clearly recognizable artistic language.<sup>150</sup> What is more – as is commonly accepted and has been convincingly proven – the first experiments with combined simultaneous narrative and continuous space in panel painting started there.<sup>151</sup> Consequently, Rhenish painters had a strong background of their own artistic tradition to use while working on panel paintings in the type of passion panoramas. But at the same time, in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Netherlands quickly started to set the tone in Northern European painting, achieving exceptional results in the field of realism. The way of shaping perspective, the ability to focus on details and depict them with extraordinary precision, as well as the ability to render varied physiognomies: all this was much more elaborated and advanced than in Rhineland. Artists active in Rhineland in the second and third quarters of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, being really close to a leading artistic center of Northern Europe, adopted a lot from Netherlandish masters but still were strongly dependent on and immersed in their own artistic tradition.

*The Passion of Christ* of Baltimore is neither homogenous in stylistic terms nor of really high quality. The painter was not able to properly determine the scale of people in relation to the landscape and architectural structures. The landscape itself is simplified and devoid of character, and looks more like a backdrop for rather stiff actors playing their parts. These features (as in the case of the much bigger *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń) could lead to the conclusion that the painting was produced not in the Netherlands but in the Rhineland. The colors, especially of clothing, are strong and expressive; headgear and ornamental elements of costumes are rather bizarrely shaped, which may also lead us to attribute the painting to a Rhenish artist active in the second quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. On the other hand, all the stiff figures, with

<sup>149</sup> On the web page of the Walters Art Museum one finds the information that the artist responsible for this painting was “Netherlandish (?)”, but at the same time in the section “Geography” is written: “Germany, Wsetphalia (Place of Origin); Belgium, Bruges (Place of Origin)”; <http://art.thewalters.org/detail/22554/passion-of-christ/> [accessed on July 14, 2017]. Kathryn Rudy treats this painting without hesitation as a work of Netherlandish origin. Rudy 2014, p. 384.

<sup>150</sup> Amongst many studies, see first and foremost: Corley 2000.

<sup>151</sup> It is worth stressing here that Hans Memling was trained in Cologne and most likely took the idea of the passion panorama from there. See first and foremost: Gerth 2010; Lane 2009, pp. 43–61.

their characteristic, expressive gestures, are arrayed in a way that resembles Rogier van der Weyden's paintings.<sup>152</sup> To conclude: although at first glance *The Passion of Christ* of Baltimore may seem to be the work of a Rhenish artist, it is possible that it was painted in the Netherlands, where the tradition of making simultaneous compositions of this type was also known. While to some degree such stylistic features can also be spotted in, for example, Brussels in the 1480s, an artist working in the Netherlands probably authored the panel in Baltimore.

There are eight scenes from Christ's Passion depicted: 1) the Agony in the Garden, 2) Christ before Pilate, 3) the Flagellation, 4) the Crowning with Thorns, 5) the Carrying of the Cross, 6) the Crucifixion, 7) the Deposition, 8) the Entombment. Although the path is not linear but circuitous, the arrangement of scenes is clear and placing them in chronological order poses no problem. All of them take place in a rather simplified landscape. *The Passion of Christ* of Baltimore is not an accurate view of the Holy Land. A few empty hills, a gate and fragments of the walls of an unidentified city deep in the background, the fence of the Gethsemane garden, and above all, the three architectural structures in the foreground do not resemble Palestine and Jerusalem in any convincing way. It is particularly hard to treat these three simple architectural structures as components of a larger whole, that is, a city. What we can see on the left is a flat niche with a decorative gable preceded by stairs. Against this niche, Christ, held by two armed men, is presented to Pilate. Next to it, on the right, a simple building with a cutaway façade is visible, in which, or rather, in and outside of which, Flagellation takes place. The main element of this structure is a column supporting two arcades. Further on the right, between the Crowning with Thorns and the Carrying of the Cross, a slender tower and a city gate, with a small fragment of tiny city walls, can be seen. These elements do not constitute a logical city structure; all three instead form a background and a frame for four events, that is Christ before Pilate, the Flagellation, the Crowning with Thorns and the Carrying the Cross. It would be more accurate to say that they organize the narration than that they evoke Jerusalem.

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Kathryn Rudy, the only author to analyze *The Passion of Christ* of Baltimore, stresses the important features of the whole composition and its parts, linking them with a deliberate way of telling the sacred story: "Between the dramatic entrance and the assisted exit, the protagonist undergoes a series of changes as he progresses through

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<sup>152</sup> See i. e.: Vos de 2000.

a circuit defined by walls and arches and by little paths that connect the vignettes. The paths are essential to this composition. One is meant to walk through this painting, as Christ does, not simply look at a series of disconnected narrative images. The route is meandering yet fixed. The image belongs to a genre of Passion painting that present cutaway façades, recognizable characters reappearing, and little paths linking events while separating them conceptually into different moments in time. The effect on the viewer is an almost uncontrollable urge to reconstruct the chronological narrative, to trace the path and use the vignettes to imagine the narrative unfolding, possibly filling in details where possible. The viewer draws upon the familiar narrative in order to set the figures in motion.”<sup>153</sup>

According to Rudy, *The Passion of Christ* is a painting intended for private devotion. This is because the aforementioned composition and arrangement of scenes draw the attention of the user, but also because of the small dimensions of the panel, perfect for intimate, direct contact with Christ depicted in the course of his passion.<sup>154</sup> That leads to the question of who was the painting’s owner. Rudy supposes that the painting “might have been used in female convent in the Netherlands or in one of its semi-monastic religious houses at the end of the fifteenth century,”<sup>155</sup> especially given that the painting lacks a portrait of a donor, coat of arms or other motifs which could identify the owner and “sisters in such convents were often self-effacing and rarely signed the manuscripts they wrote or included pictures of themselves in images they used.”<sup>156</sup>

Taking into consideration the iconography of the painting, it is perfectly suited to the Holy Week. What is more, “the Baltimore painting only covers events from Good Friday and Holy Saturday, which were possibly the only days when this painting was used.”<sup>157</sup> For other times of the liturgical year, other images were probably used. Such a conviction results from the idea that religious works of art intended for private devotion were probably much more related to the liturgical year than was acknowledged in previous studies of late medieval art. Some evidence for

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<sup>153</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 384.

<sup>154</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 385.

<sup>155</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 385.

<sup>156</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 385.

<sup>157</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 385.

this supposition is provided by what we know of practices of using, for example, books of hours.<sup>158</sup>

For Rudy, a tiny passion panorama from Walters Museum of Art is also nicely designed for mental pilgrimage: “The image presupposes a clear understanding of the Passion narrative because it requires that the viewer read it in a particular way. In other words, it demands an experienced virtual pilgrim – such as a convent sister steeped in Passion literature – to reconstruct the narrative from the slightly jumbled vignettes. Doing so fulfils part of the goal of taking this painting in, as well as leading to a viewer’s devotional (and aesthetic) satisfaction with it. The viewers of this painting were not only steeped in imagery but were highly experienced virtual pilgrims, especially after having completed this circuit many times.”<sup>159</sup>

An important factor in such a mental pilgrimage is the view of the Holy Land itself. For Kathryn Rudy it is not accurate at all, and does not resemble Jerusalem or its outskirts in a direct way. As she emphasizes, its purpose is, first and foremost, to organize the narration. But at the same time, Rudy suggests that we are dealing here with a view of Jerusalem, albeit an idealized one: “The artist has arranged these vignettes, as if they still occupied vertical octavo-size pictures, onto a ‘map’ of Jerusalem. I put this word in inverted commas because the arrangement has little to do with actual topography of Jerusalem, but rather responds to the demands of the narrative panel so that the viewer can connect the dots, as it were, to forge a path based on his (her?) expertise and knowledge of the Passion narrative. The artist uses an idealized version of the city’s architecture to organize space, placing some features (such as mountains) outside the city and other key events (the judicial trial) inside. The ‘Mountain’ of Olives, and the ‘Mountain’ of Calvary must appear as promontories outside the city walls. Just as important as the events inside the city (Christ before Pilate, the Flagellation and Crowning with Thorns) are the events outside: the Agony in the Garden, the exit from the city, the Crucifixion, Deposition and Entombment. The imagery invites one to penetrate the city and its surroundings, to move in, out, though, and above it.”<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Recently on the use of Book of Hours: Reinburg 2012.

<sup>159</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 385.

<sup>160</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 385.

In the course of her argument, Rudy analyzes *The Passion of Christ* in the context of other works of art. She compares it with Hans Memling's *The Passion of Christ*, which is interpreted as an excellent vehicle for spiritual journeys, and was probably ordered to fulfill the commitment of going on a real pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Rudy suggests that Tommaso Portinari, who ordered the painting, may, although it is impossible to prove, have been sentenced by a Bruges court to such a Jerusalem pilgrimage as a penalty for nefarious acts. By commissioning the passion panorama, he could go to Jerusalem spiritually. Rudy points to other works of art, too: a triptych held in the Williams College Museum of Art (c. 1515), which is a copy of Memling's work, a large print, *The Passion of Jesus in Jerusalem*, from the Hood Museum of Art (1450–1475) and a miniature on fol. 210<sup>r</sup> of the *Hours of Saluzzo* from the British Library (1462–1472). All these works enabled spiritual pilgrimage to Jerusalem too, or could act as a visual remembrance of an actual journey to the Holy Land completed by those who used them.<sup>161</sup>

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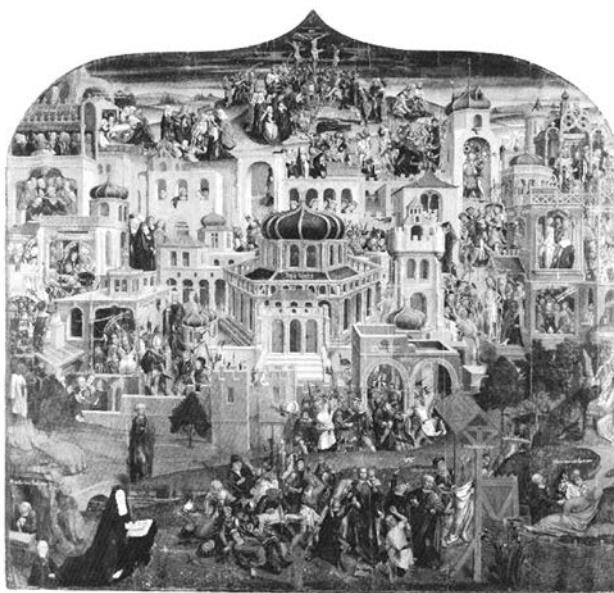
There is one more element which simultaneously connects these pieces of art and enables spiritual journeys: the strategy of activating the viewer. While some works of art, such as the *Roermond Passion* from the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam (1435),<sup>162</sup> were designed for rather less dynamic, close-up views, passion panoramas and works of art related to them demanded an active way of perceiving painted reality. As Rudy points out: “While one strategy was to bring the subject closer to the viewer with a dramatic – even imploring – close up, as with the *Roermond Passion*, another strategy was to provide visual structures into which a viewer might imaginatively climb. Some of these were solo pursuits, such as the Saluzzo miniature. Some hovered between private devotion and public display, such as the Baltimore panel, Memling's Turin Passion, and its copies.”<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 385–392.

<sup>162</sup> Analyzed thoroughly by Rudy: Rudy 2014, *passim*.

<sup>163</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 393.



## *The Passion of Christ* from the Museu Nacional do Azulejo in Lisbon

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**T**he *Passion of Christ* from the Museu Nacional do Azulejo in Lisbon measures 200 cm x 200 cm and is the biggest and most sophisticated (in terms of composition and details) late medieval passion panorama. [il. 6] Painted between 1495–1497<sup>164</sup> or later, 1500–1515,<sup>165</sup> or even ca. 1517,<sup>166</sup> the painting is of Netherlandish origin.<sup>167</sup> It is said that the painting was a gift from the Emperor Maximilian to Queen Eleanor of Portugal, depicted kneeling, with an open book in front of her, in the lower left part of the panorama.<sup>168</sup> Those scholars who identify the person accompanying Queen Eleanor as Isabella de Trastámara date the painting

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<sup>164</sup> Lievens-de Waegh 1991, p. 86.

<sup>165</sup> Ziemba 2015, p. 749.

<sup>166</sup> AP/AC 2010, p. 394.

<sup>167</sup> Some scholars describe the painter as active in Southern Netherlands, while some allow the possibility that the picture was created by a Netherlandish artist working in Portugal.

<sup>168</sup> On Queen Eleanor see: Curvelo 2003, pp. 138–140 (with further bibliographical references).



to 1495–1497.<sup>169</sup> Other researchers pay more attention to stylistic features of *The Passion of Christ* from Lisbon and stress that they prove a rather later date for its production.<sup>170</sup> There is no doubt that the passion panorama was in the possession of Queen Eleanor, who upon her death left it to the Madre de Deus Convent of Poor Clares in Lisbon where it was used by nuns until the closing of the monastery in 1871. In recent years, the idea that the painting found its way to Portugal around 1517, and was commissioned by Queen Eleanor herself, has gained more attention. According to Alexandre Pais and Alexandra Curvelo, “Based on a text of 1639 – *Notícia da Fundação do Convento da Madre de Deos de Lisboa* (pp. 19v–20) – tradition has it that the painting was given to the Queen by Emperor Maximilian. It probably reached Portugal in 1517 with other gifts such as the relics of Santa Auta, one of the eleven thousand virgins.”<sup>171</sup> That does not mean that the most widespread belief, according to which *The Passion of Christ* was a gift from Emperor Maximilian, is true. Technical examination of the painting has shed some new light on this problem: “In the lower left hand corner was a reserved area and in Portugal the female image of a woman wearing widow’s weeds was added, with very similar characteristics to those of another figure in a painting at the convent, ‘Chegada das reliquias de Santa Auta à Madre de Deus.’ [...] Generally, portraits included in paintings at that time, corresponded to the person who had commissioned the work or its patron. Curiously, it is not Emperor Maximilian we see here but the Queen. From laboratorial studies made we know that the area of the painting in which she appears was already reserved and that the surrounding landscape had to be extended. This can be seen in the x-rays from the lesser density of the paint applied. One possibility is that the Queen commissioned the painting through her cousin and that it came to Portugal with the gifts that Maximilian sent for the convent. Although not a gift from the Emperor the fact that it came with the other gifts may have given rise to the confusion and explained D. Leonor’s presence in the painting, if it was she who commissioned the work.”<sup>172</sup>

The story of Christ’s Passion begins with the Last Supper and ends with the Entombment. It is not easy to determine the precise number of scenes depicted, while in the case of the Lisbon panorama the narration is dense, consists of numerous

<sup>169</sup> Ziemba 2015, p. 749.

<sup>170</sup> Ziemba 2015, p. 749.

<sup>171</sup> AP/AC 2010, p. 394.

<sup>172</sup> AP/AC 2010, p. 394.



additional motifs complementing the main thread, and is crowded on a massive scale (the overall number of people shown in the painting is more than three hundred). Moreover, there are also dozens of letters, descriptions and titles on or above almost every scene, building and group of people. So in many studies of *The Passion of Christ* from Lisbon, the number of scenes varies; some scholars simplify the action, writing only on the major events and not separating their components, while others try to refer to as many scenes as possible.<sup>173</sup>

Let's have a look on the Last Supper. Christ and his disciples are not depicted during the culminating moment of the institution of the Eucharist. The prediction of Judas's betrayal is much more important in this case. Both the moment depicted and the inscriptions concentrate on this event. The two-story Cenacle enriches the narration. The prediction of Judas's betrayal takes place in the upper story while in the lower Christ is shown washing the feet of Apostles; both scenes are marked with inscriptions explaining the moment depicted. So we deal here with the Last Supper, which, as a whole, is implied by the building itself, not by the most popular iconographical motif of the institution of the Eucharist. At the same time, other events are depicted in a direct way: the prediction of Judas's betrayal and the Washing of Feet. So it is possible to say that the Last Supper constitutes an element of the Lisbon passion panorama narrative; it is advisable however, to add that it consists of two scenes not directly connected with the moment of the institution of the Eucharist.

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The most detailed description of the painting was penned by Marie-Léopoldine Lievens-de Waegh, whose book is the most essential and comprehensive study devoted to the painting from Museu Nacional do Azulejo. Lievens-de Waegh identifies all of the scenes and matches them with the letters and inscriptions which she transcribes; she also identifies the locations of the action and the main participants in each episode. There is no need to copy out her detailed, thirteen-page description of every scene in the painting, with all of the successive motifs, inscriptions, etc. Those interested in should refer to Lievens-de Waegh's book.<sup>174</sup> A simplified list of scenes is sufficient for our purposes: 1) Jesus predicts his betrayal, 2) the Washing of the Feet of Apostles, 3) the Agony in the Garden, 4) the Arrest of Jesus, 5) Christ before Annas, 6) Christ before

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<sup>173</sup> Alexandre Pais and Alexandra Curvelo write that there are sixty seven independent scenes in the painting; AP/AC 2010, p. 394.

<sup>174</sup> Lievens-de Waegh 1991, pp. 51–64.

Caiphas, 7) Christ before Herod, 8) Peter denying Christ for the first time, 9) Peter denying Christ for the second time, 10) the cock crows, 11) Peter's repentance, 12) Christ before Pilate, 13) Judas throwing money into the temple, 14) Judas hangs himself, 15) the Flagellation, 16) the Crowning with Thorns, 17) Ecce Homo; 18) the Carrying of the Cross, 19) the Nailing to the Cross, 20) the Crucifixion, 21) Soldiers Playing Dice for Christ's Robe, 22) the Deposition, 23) the Entombment.

Apart from the paintings from the Sabauda Gallery and Toruń, *The Passion of Christ* from the Museu Nacional do Azulejo in Lisbon is the passion panorama which has been analyzed the most. Up to now, the main source of information on this work of art remains the aforementioned book by Marie-Léopoldine Lievens-de Waegh, a monographical study of the collection of panel paintings held in the collection of the Museu Nacional do Azulejo.<sup>175</sup> The elaborate chapter on *The Passion of Christ* consists of subsections devoted to various aspects of its history, iconography, function and state of preservation. Lievens-de Waegh describes in detail the architecture, costumes and natural world depicted there, the plants, shrubs and trees, colors used, etc. A significant part of her work is devoted to the history of the painting, the history of its restorations and the state of research on the topic. Some archival sources are also cited and paintings similar in composition listed.<sup>176</sup>

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Lievens-de Waegh's discoveries and interpretations concerning the iconography and function of the painting are especially important. First of all, she suggests that there exists some correspondence between *The Passion of Christ* and the mystery stage, but she does so in a very cautious manner, writing that the matter is not settled – some scholars think that medieval iconography was influenced by the mystery stage, while others assert precisely the opposite.<sup>177</sup> Referring mainly to old studies from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, she draws out some resemblances between scenes from mystery plays and *The Passion of Christ*, stressing that the type of narration in both cases seems to be similar and rooted in the same literary sources, that is the New

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<sup>175</sup> Lievens-de Waegh 1991, pp. 46–105.

<sup>176</sup> All passion panoramas except the one from Baltimore.

<sup>177</sup> “Ce tableau révèle de grandes affinités avec le Théâtre des Mystères: il s’inspire des mêmes sources littéraires, il adopte une mise en scène semblable. Selon certains auteurs, le peintre fait ainsi passer son message de Rédemption à un public habitué au théâtre, alors que, pour d’autres, les Mystères ont pu être eux-mêmes influencés par l’iconographie”; Lievens-de Waegh 1991, p. 69.

Testament, apocrypha and devotional literature. Also, the huge number of characters intensify the action and render each scene more vivid and theatrical in character, especially since many of the figures depicted are presented frontally to the viewer, as if on a stage. Other arguments include the fact that Queen Eleanor seems to perceive the action, to look at all of the characters and places like a spectator watching a mystery play, that the scene of the Crucifixion looks like a huge spectacle, and that all events take place during the night by the light of torches. Lievens-de Waegh also draws attention to the inscriptions defining various places of action, and the openwork architectural structures, which resemble mansions.<sup>178</sup> Generally she presents arguments based more on impressions and vague connotations than verifiable historical data.

The second important issue considered by Lievens-de Waegh is the relationship between *The Passion of Christ* and late medieval pilgrimages.<sup>179</sup> She points out that the composition of the painting, particularly the architectural landscape, is strongly influenced by an engraving by Erhard Rewich called *Panorama of Jerusalem*, an illustration of *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam* by Bernhard von Breydenbach, published in Mainz a few years before the painting was made, in 1486. She also indicates that *The Passion of Christ*, with all its inscriptions defining each place, enables the viewer to explore the Holy City. The primacy of the place – Jerusalem and its outskirts – is strengthened by compositional features. For example, in the Lisbon panel, Golgotha, as a place, is at least as important as the narration itself. In other passion panoramas, such as Memling's or the panel from Leuven, consecutive events are presented separately, scene by scene, each time repeating Golgotha's landscape. The distinctive feature of *The Passion of Christ* from Lisbon is that three events – the Nailing to the Cross, the Crucifixion and the Deposition – are shown in the same space, being somehow subordinated to the place of action, which could be an indication that the intention of the painter was to stress the importance of Golgotha.

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Since 1991, when Lievens-de Waegh's book was published, few researchers have shown any interest in *The Passion of Christ* from Lisbon. Apart from minor references that do not contribute anything new to our knowledge of this work, only Alexandre Pais and Alexandra Curvelo have shed new light on the painting.<sup>180</sup> Some of their

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<sup>178</sup> Lievens-de Waegh 1991, pp. 69–70.

<sup>179</sup> Lievens-de Waegh 1991, pp. 65–69.

<sup>180</sup> AP/AC 2010, pp. 394–395.

findings are mentioned above, others include reflections on the iconography and function of the painting. According to Pais and Curvelo, the Passion of Christ shown in and outside a carefully and realistically rendered Jerusalem has a great deal in common with the idea of pilgrimage. They agree that the view of Jerusalem is a fairly accurate copy of Erhard Rewich's engraving, which is an argument for treating *The Passion of Christ* as a work of art useful for recalling the real Jerusalem. But first and foremost, they accentuate the painting's potential as a tool for or a component of spiritual journeys.

Pais and Curvelo link *The Passion of Christ* with the idea of *peregrinatio*, arguing that such a connection results from the influence of medieval theatre. They do not, as Lievens-de Waegh does, enumerate motifs potentially dependent on the reality and practice of mystery stage, mostly Netherlandish or French. On the contrary, they see the painting in the local context, not even Portuguese but more immediate – in the context of the Convent of Madre de Deus, where *The Passion of Christ* was kept. According to Pais and Curvelo: “The concern with accurate representation [of Jerusalem – K. K.] accentuates this painting's proximity to a *peregrinatio*, a fact that is related with a theatrical scenography that is linked to the so-called ‘mystery plays’. These were normally performed in the hallowed spaces of churches and included a number of elements usually found on site (altars, paintings and sculptures). One example is found in some of the plays by Gil Vicente, whose patron was D. Leonor. Of his various plays ‘Auto da Sibila Cassandr’ was written expressly to be performed in the church of Madre de Deus, commissioned by Queen D. Leonor. The queen's patronage of various plays with the characteristics of ‘mystery plays’ demonstrate her liking for this type of artistic expression. It is obvious that in such a complex painting as the one analyzed here this type of scenography should be crystallized in the manner that the cycle of the passion of Christ is narrated. We should also not forget that the actual convent itself acted as a huge stage for a series of *peregrinatio* performed not only at Easter, but actually started from the ‘Panorama’ itself. So the ‘Panorama’ was the starting point and also the script of a journey that could be mentally reproduced, in the *contemplation* of the painting, emphasized by the presence of the Queen.”<sup>181</sup>

<sup>181</sup> AP/AC 2010, pp. 394. Having in mind this theatrical context, crucial for understanding the function of the painting and the way it was used by nuns, it is worth stressing that *The Passion of Christ* was customised to local needs in another way too. Restoration works conducted in 1937 revealed that some inscriptions on the painting (eleven captions distinguishing scenes) were original, from the time of its creation, while others were added later (sixty seven Latin captions), on the spot, in Portugal. This may

A year later, Kathryn Rudy published her book *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...* in which one subsection is devoted to the passion panorama from Lisbon.<sup>182</sup> Rudy concentrates on the issue of spiritual pilgrimages, treating the painting as a tool enabling mental journeys to the distant city in which the Passion of Christ took place. She stresses that *The Passion of Christ* is exceptional because the iconographic program is supported by text and signs, in this particular case, golden crosses indicating places where indulgences were available. She also pays close attention to Rewich's engraving, to which she compares the painting, arriving at the conclusion that "Rewich's image is descriptive, while the anonymous painter's is narrative."<sup>183</sup> While Rewich presents contemporary view of Jerusalem, with 15<sup>th</sup>-century figures, the author of *The Passion of Christ* focuses on showing historical figures in their historical context. Presenting rich action consisting of several dozen scenes, he simplifies the view of Jerusalem, showing only the central part of the Reuwich's woodcut map, does not portray 15<sup>th</sup>-century figures and modifies some architectural structures and buildings to improve the narrative potential of the painting. To get the viewer to contemplate the pious story, the painter omits some disturbing motifs present in the woodcut, its curiosities. And to get him closer to the real Jerusalem, he uses rather atypical iconographical motifs, as in the scene of the Entombment, showing the body of Christ being put not into the sepulcher but into a cave hewn into rock, and thus into a structure similar to that described by pilgrims in their accounts.

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Rudy describes how scenes were arranged according to the alphabet, emphasizing that they were not only an overview of the events of Christ's Passion. The arrangement suggests that receiving the Eucharistic message was also considered an important element of its reception. Rudy draws attention to the fact that the story begins with the Last Supper and ends with the Entombment, which was depicted directly above the Cenacle. It indicates that "The story forms a circuit that connects the Entombment and the Eucharist, thereby visually underscoring the congruity between the sacrament and the body of Christ."<sup>184</sup>

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indicate that the latter were added to strengthen the potential impact on its users, who could thereby be better prepared for pious theatrical experiences; AP/AC 2010, pp. 394.

<sup>182</sup> Rudy 2011, p. 153.

<sup>183</sup> Rudy 2011, p. 153.

<sup>184</sup> Rudy 2011, p. 159.

Analyzing the way the painting could be perceived by viewers, she emphasizes the presence of the letters as well as complicated, at first glance even chaotic, narration: “The letters also underscore the idea that the events unfold in time. Consequently, they make the painting, and its viewer, aware of the impossibility of ‘taking in’ the image in a single glance. The image is a complicated narrative, whose complexity exceeds the organizational possibilities of its visual structure alone, and relies on alphabetic order to give it shape and meaning. It follows then, that the painter assumes a literate viewer, for what good would alphabetic order do for someone who did not know the alphabet? The textual and visual layers of the painting, therefore, are not simply two different ways of making meaning, but are independent. The viewer must toggle between the text, which exists in the uppermost layer of the painting, and the imagery, which recedes into a fictive three-dimensional space. This, coupled with the contemplation of the images, many of which fall outside standard iconography of the Passion, and the gobbets of text, which rely on comprehension of Scripture, prayer culture and Passion plays, make the contemplation of the image slow, methodical, and time-consuming.”<sup>185</sup>

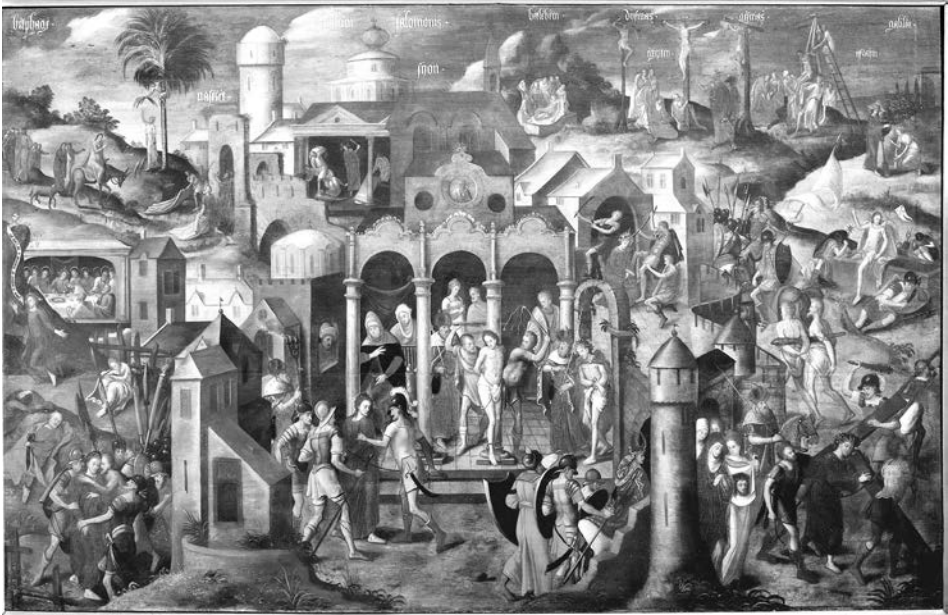
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Since 2011 no articles or books which analyzed *The Passion of Christ* in depth have been published. Some studies exist in which the passion panorama from Lisbon is mentioned, and basic relevant historical facts recalled, but no new important discoveries or interpretations concerning this painting have emerged.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Rudy 2011, p. 159.

<sup>186</sup> Kopania 2018, p. 314; Ziemia 2015, pp. 749–750.



## *The Passion of Christ* from the Museum Maagdenhuis in Antwerp

**T**he passion panorama from the Museum Maagdenhuis in Antwerp was not within the scope of interests of the scholars who wrote about the other paintings from this group. [il. 7] Marie-Léopoldine Lievens-de Waegh just listed it in her study on the passion panorama from Lisbon,<sup>187</sup> as did Kamil Kopania.<sup>188</sup> Only recently did a longer catalogue note appear, but still without any suggestions as to the function of the painting, its relationship to other works of art, or the tradition of depicting the Passion of Christ simultaneously in and outside Jerusalem.<sup>189</sup>

<sup>187</sup> Lievens-de Waegh 1991, p. 85.

<sup>188</sup> Kopania 2008, p. 95, note 16.

<sup>189</sup> *Museum Maagdenhuis...* 2002.

*The Passion of Christ* in the collection of the Museum Maagdenhuis in Antwerp (oil on panel, 111 x 173 cm; no. inv. 136) is attributed to Hiëronimus Cock (1518–1570), a painter and etcher from Antwerp, and also a very active and important Netherlandish publisher of prints.<sup>190</sup> This is not the only attribution of this painting, however. In the documents concerning it, held in the Maagdenhuis Museum – mainly short handwritten notes and some cuttings from old catalogues of Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen – it is said that it should be linked with Hiëronimus Bosch, Jan Mandijn or Gillis Mostaert the Elder.<sup>191</sup> It is hard, however, to discuss such propositions of attribution when there are no arguments in favor of any of them. Usually only the title of the painting and the name of the painter are listed. The most extensive catalogue entry informs us that *Les différents épisodes de la Passion du Sauveur*, work of Jérôme Bosch (dit Van Aken, 1450–1518), “[...] est provenu de l’hôpital S<sup>te</sup> Elisabeth. Jérôme Bosch, dit Van Aken, est décédé en 1516, comme l’a établi, en 1888, M<sup>r</sup> J.-C.-A. Hezenmans, archiviste de la ville de Bois-le-Duc, lieu d’origine du peintre.”<sup>192</sup>

At first glance *The Passion of Christ* could not have been produced before 1518. Taking into consideration its stylistic features – it is not a late medieval painting at all. It fits well into the tradition of Netherlandish art of the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, so the suggestion that it could have been made by Jan Mandijn (c. 1500–c. 1560) seems much more likely. This painter, trained in Haarlem, worked in Antwerp beginning in 1530 and trained some important local artists, such as Gillis Mostaert.<sup>193</sup> The problem is that Mandijn’s *oeuvre* is apparently inspired by the art of Hieronimus Bosch. The best evidence for this is Mandijn’s only signed work, *The temptation of Saint Anthony* from the collection of the Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem, as well as many other works attributed to him.<sup>194</sup> His style (intense colours, rather dynamic lines) and preferred iconography differ fundamentally from what we see in the panel painting from Maagdenhuis. So Hiëronimus Cock seems to be the most likely author of *The Passion of Christ*.

<sup>190</sup> On Cock, see first and foremost: Bakker 2007/2008 pp. 53–66; Heuer 2007, pp. 96–99; Heuer 2009, pp. 387–408; Peters, 2014, pp. 219–224; Serebrennikov 2002, pp 187–215.

<sup>191</sup> The author of this study would like to thank Daniel Christiaens, Senior Curator at the Museum Maagdenhuis in Antwerp, for enabling him to work with all these materials.

<sup>192</sup> KMSK 1959.

<sup>193</sup> Mai 2005.

<sup>194</sup> Silver 2012, *passim*.



Hiëronimus Cock was first mentioned as the author of this passion panorama in 1959. In the catalogue note, one can find a brief description of the painting, a biography of the artist and short arguments for such an attribution.<sup>195</sup> The authorship of Hiëronimus Cock was maintained in the catalogue *Museum Maagdenhuis. A selection from the art patrimony of the OCMW (Public Center of Social Welfare), Antwerp*, published in 2002. The arguments for Cock's authorship were repeated: "This piece is the work of an Antwerp artist, or of an artist living in Antwerp, in the years 1530–1560. The shape of the hands and feet, especially the shape of the foreheads and noses, the whole appearance of the figures, which are too long and too skinny, remind us of the Cock we know from the copper print *The Temptation of Christ* and many other prints we may attribute to Hiëronymus Cock."<sup>196</sup> Indeed, closer comparisons reveal striking similarities between *The Passion of Christ* and many of Cock's prints, so treating him as the author of the work from Maagdenhuis seems reasonable.

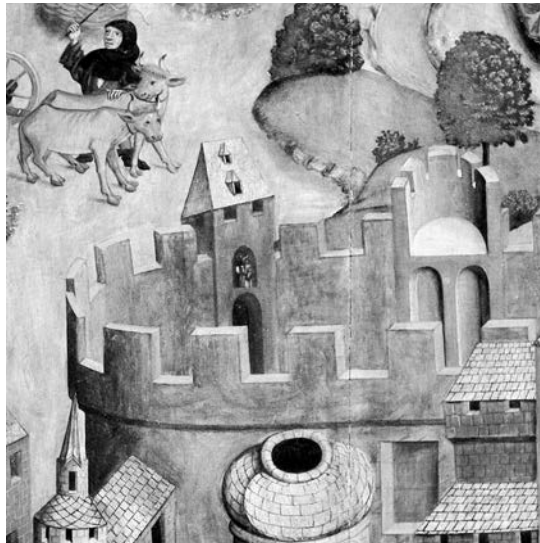
*The Passion of Christ* contains nineteen episodes: 1) the Entry to Jerusalem, 2) the Cleansing of the Temple, 3) the Last Supper, 4) the Agony in the Garden, 5) the Arrest of Christ, 6) Christ before Pilate, 9) Christ before Annas, 10) the Flagellation, 11) the Crowning with Thorns, 12) Ecce Homo, 13) the Carrying of the Cross, 15) the Crucifixion, 16) the Deposition, 17) the Entombment, 18) the Resurrection, 19) Noli me Tangere. An important element in the painting are the inscriptions referring to selected places of the Holy Land (like *Bethfage*, *Sijon*, *Bethlem*, *Galilea*, etc.), one of the main buildings of Jerusalem (*Templum Salomonis*), and the names of the Good and Bad Thieves (*Dysmas*, *Gismas*). In the scene of the Agony in the Garden there is also a banderole next to the head of Christ with an excerpt from Matthew 26:39 (*Pater si possibile est transeat a me calix iste*). With reference to Jerusalem, one can see that the view of the city is more an imaginary than a realistic one. Given that the picture is believed to date to the second quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the number of buildings resembling real structures present in Jerusalem at that time, known thanks to numerous widely distributed descriptions and depictions, is scant. In fact, only the Temple of Solomon adheres to the traditional presentation of that edifice in various media.

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<sup>195</sup> "Dit stuk is het werk van een Antwerps of te Antwerpen verblijvend kunstenaar uit de Jaren 1530–1560. De vorm van handen en voeten, vooral van voorhoofden en neuzen, de gehele verschijning van de te lange en magere figuren, herinnert, aan Hieronymus Cock, zoals men deze leert kennen uit de koperprent *De Verzoeking van Christus*, en vele andere prenten die wij aan Hieronymus Cock menen te mogen toeschrijven"; KMSK 1959, p. 55.

<sup>196</sup> *Museum Maagdenhuis...* 2002, p. 15.

The three-arched structure preceded by stairs, shown in the center of the painting, also appears in general views of the Holy City, such as Erhard Reuwich's map of the Holy Land, and the tower close to the Temple of Solomon may refer loosely to the Church of the Sepulcher. Most of the buildings are northern European in shape, detail and material, late medieval or – definitely less often – early Renaissance in style (the portico in front of the Temple of Solomon). As a congeries of architectural structures, the buildings of Jerusalem do not constitute a compact city view. Even walls and gates do not unify the city space. Most buildings function as single and independent edifices in which, or in front of which, selected events take place. The city is not spacious, and gives the impression of a compressed one, with numerous crowded scenes confined in or in front of buildings which are not properly scaled.





## 2.

### **Works of art related to late medieval passion panoramas**

**S**cholars writing on late medieval passion panoramas mostly treat them as an independent and exceptional group of panel paintings. Their characteristic composition and iconography, as well as a small number of items preserved, seem to overshadow the fact that there are many other works of art to which passion panoramas could be compared. Of course, some studies exist whose authors raise questions about the origin of passion panoramas and their relations with other works of art, but they are scant in number or not commonly known.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, none of these studies have determined whether earlier works of art – characterized by simultaneous composition and (usually) passion iconography – change our knowledge of the function of passion panoramas, or provide a broader view of not only their stylistic and geographic, but also their religious background. Even works of art created in times where passion panoramas were being produced seem not to fall in the scope of interests of scholars writing about panel paintings like these from Louvain, Lisbon or Toruń.

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<sup>1</sup> Two studies written by Zygmunt Kruszelnicki (Kruszelnicki 1959; Kruszelnicki 1968) are worth mentioning here as an example.

It is commonly assumed that Memling developed his own schema for presenting Christ's Passion and was the first to apply it to panel painting. This supposition seems to close any discussion on the origin of passion panoramas.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, it is hard to find studies whose authors would be interested both in all existing passion panoramas and in numerous related works of art produced not only before but also after Memling's *The Passion of Christ*. This situation needs to be changed. There exists a considerable number of works of art which unfortunately have never been taken into consideration in the context of passion panoramas. Their characteristic features shed a new light on the origin, background, function, and perception of the latter.

94 The works of art which should be listed and compared with late medieval passion panoramas can be divided into two main groups. The first consists of works of art directly related to late medieval passion panoramas but executed in different media. In their case, the iconography and composition are exactly or almost exactly the same as in passion panoramas. Among them one can find two wall paintings, two tapestries, one painted stone plaque, two woodcuts, and a painting on canvas. All were made between the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century and the second quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The second group consists of works of art featuring simultaneous composition, which, however, is not always combined with iconography typical for passion panoramas. In some cases narration is focused on the passion of saints or events from the lives of various biblical characters, most of which do not take place in Jerusalem. In other cases it is concentrated on Christ's Passion, depicted in the geographical reality of the contemporary Holy Land. While works from the first group were made in different media but on a single, undivided surface, the works belonging to the second group are not as homogenous. Among them there are a few independent panel paintings, but most of them are more complicated in terms of construction. This means that whole altarpieces fall within the scope of our interests, as well as miniatures that belong to illuminated manuscripts. As in the case of the first group, all were produced in between the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and mid-16<sup>th</sup> century.

Two truly exceptional works of art from the first group are wall paintings from Czechia and Poland. Both have been omitted from the discussion on passion panoramas. Their characteristic features, as well as early date of production, make them especially important for further discussion of late medieval passion panoramas.

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<sup>2</sup> First and foremost see: Hull 2005.

The first one, painted around 1390, is located in the parish church of St. Nicholas in the small village of Lažiště, northwest of Prahatic, in South Bohemia.<sup>3</sup> [il. 8, 9, 10] It was discovered by František Martinů and Jan Vincík, along with two other wall paintings, in 1935, and restored two years later.<sup>4</sup> This piece is so important because it directly implements the composition and iconography typical for late medieval passion panoramas, which means that the narrative consists of numerous scenes of the Passion of Christ painted simultaneously in and outside Jerusalem. In the case of these wall paintings, the Passion of Christ is not their only subject. There is one scene from the childhood of Christ shown too, and two scenes taking place after the Resurrection.

It is difficult to write an in-depth account of the original state and iconography of the composition, given that it is not in good condition, parts of it are damaged, the surface is worn, and many elements are simply unclear. But the general idea of the whole structure is readable – with the central part occupied by the view of Jerusalem and numerous scenes of Christ's life, mainly the Passion, in and outside the city walls. The city is painted with a great thoroughness; both architectural structures and their distribution in space contribute to a convincing view of the urban landscape. The scale of the buildings and their dense arrangement in the small area limited by monumental city walls and gates make the city landscape less than wholly realistic. Moreover, considering the whole composition, the scale of Jerusalem's outskirts is definitely too small. Placed exactly in the middle of the work, favored compositionally, it constitutes a prominent part of the whole, but looks tiny in comparison to the figures and surrounding landscape. Difficulties in setting the appropriate scale of elements may have resulted from the fact that the painter was evidently used to painting compositions in a more traditional manner. He produced a simultaneous narrative but at the same time built this composition from framed compartments. His inclination to use such a schema is clearly visible, while the wall painting from Lažiště is not consistent either in terms of simultaneous composition or in terms of the traditional manner of depicting scene by scene in framed spaces. The simultaneous manner of presenting the events of Christ's Passion is hindered by traces of an approach of treating the composition as a repertory of independent motifs, presented chronologically, one

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<sup>3</sup> They are located on the wall of the chapel situated on the North side of the church.

<sup>4</sup> The wall paintings in Lažiště have fallen within the scope of interest of few scholars. They are mentioned in: Kliš 2006, pp. 18, 19, 56, 77, 80, 87, 88, 91, 92, 94, 95, 125, 141, 159, 161, 165, 166, 248, 295, 362; Kopania 2018, p. 328; Všecková 1993, p. 184. A few years ago, the first in-depth study was written on the subject of these wall paintings: a still unpublished Ph.D. thesis by Ondřej Faktor: Faktor 2016.

after the other. Obviously the painter was not skillful enough to leave his established artistic habits behind. However, all these considerations do not change the fact that in terms of composition, the multi-scenic *Passion of Christ* from Lažiště can be treated as surprisingly advanced in comparison to even much later passion panoramas like the ones from i.e. Baltimore or Pont-Saint-Esprit.

The Passion of Christ dominates as a theme of the whole composition, but in the lower parts of it we find one fragmentarily preserved scene from the childhood of Christ.<sup>5</sup> Chronologically, it constitutes the beginning of the whole cycle. There are no figures remaining, but it is easy to detect an architectural structure resembling a shed, which indicates that the artist depicted 1) the Nativity or the Adoration of the Magi. The middle part of the wall painting is divided into three sections by the view of Jerusalem placed in the center and forms a kind of a strip. The motifs depicted there are clearly visible and in most cases recognizable. From left to right one can notice the following scenes, three of which take place inside the city walls: 2) the Agony in the Garden, 3) the Arrest of Christ, 4) Christ before Annas or Caiaphas, 5) the Flagellation, 6) highly damaged, unidentified passion scene with three figures, 7) the Carrying of the Cross. In the upper part of the wall painting, from the left, two scenes can be identified which relate to the time after the Resurrection: 8) the Ascension, 9) the Descent of the Holy Spirit.<sup>6</sup> As in later passion panoramas, figures in the space of the city are placed in archways or inside simplified architectural structures without a front wall. Because of the condition of the whole composition, it is hard to provide a detailed description of the landscape around Jerusalem. It is evidently simplified, and it would not be an exaggeration to say that the urban landscape was outside the scope of particular interest of the artist. Figures of Christ, the Apostles, tormentors etc. clearly dominate the surrounding space.

<sup>5</sup> Taking into consideration the width of the wall in the lower section, at least one more scene could originally have been painted there.

<sup>6</sup> Over the described wall painting, as well as in other parts of the church, on the vaults, there are figures of angels with banderols (now empty). According to Faktor, the banderols might originally have contained texts praising the glory of God, as in the case of the angels painted in the church in the nearby village of Záblatí, where the painter responsible for the decoration in Lažiště was also active. Alternatively – they might have contained Marian antiphones. “Z každé z dvanácti kápí klenby presbytáře na nás hledí jedna polopostava anděla vždy vystupující z oblaku. Křídla většiny andělů jsou pokryta velkými pavími oky, některé z tuctu postav nesou dnes již prázdné pásky, které původně mohly být popsány oslavnými verši velebícími Boha, jak tomu je na klenbě sakristie kostela v blízkém Záblatí (1391–1405), kde tvořil tentýž malíř jako v Lažišti. Případně mohly nést mariánské antifony, jak to známe z pozdější doby z Křištína (kol. 1500).”; Faktor 2016, pp. 170–171.



The wall paintings in St. Nicholas in Lažiště, commissioned by the royal chamberlain Sigismund Huler, the patron of the church, were probably made by a painter from Prague who was familiar with the newest artistic conceptions, that is, the early Beautiful Style. Huler was also responsible for ordering the decoration of the interior of the church of St. John the Baptist in Záblatí. According to Ondřej Faktor, the wall paintings in Záblatí, preserved in much better condition than those from Lažiště, were painted by the same artist.<sup>7</sup> In the latter case, the artist was able to break with dominant artistic practices and propose a truly new conception, fully developed decades later by Hans Memling or the painter responsible for *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń.<sup>8</sup>

The painter responsible for the wall paintings in Lažiště violated the most common rules for making such compositions, in that he tried omitting lines dividing the surface of the wall into independent panels containing independent scenes. But he did not fully achieve the effects he intended. His work was completed by two other artists active in Gdańsk, then under the rule of Teutonic Knights, in the second quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The first wall painting was destroyed during the Second World War. A poor quality photo of it is available in Willi Drost's book *Danziger Malerei vom Mittelalter bis zum Ende des Barock. Ein Beitrag zur Begründung der Strukturfor-*

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<sup>7</sup> "Objednavatelem výzdoby kostela sv. Mikuláše v Lažišti byl královský podkomoří Zikmund Huler, doložený na přelomu 14. a 15. století jako mecenáš kostela zde a v záhumenním Záblatí. Ten do obou lokalit pravděpodobně z Prahy (?) přivedl malíře obeznámeného jak se starší tradicí dvorského umění (Emauzy), tak s nejnovějšími výtvarnými proudy pramenícími z raného krásného slohu. [...] Pašijové výjevy v kapli se víceméně shodují s těmi v Záblatí. Pouze s tím rozdílem, že v Lažišti malíř zvolil drobnější měřítko a méně expresivní, klidnější pohyb a pózy figur.;" Faktor 2016, p. 173 (detailed description and analysis of wall paintings from Záblatí, pp. 237–247).

<sup>8</sup> "Z hlediska slohového a též ikonografického je zajímavé, jak malíř znázornil trýznění Krista ve třech po sobě jdoucích výjevech uvnitř Jeruzaléma, čímž o sto let předznamenal "simultánní" zobrazení Turínských pašijí Hanse Memlinga (kol. 1480, Turín, Galleria Sabauda) a dalších návazných děl (např. Toruňské pašije, 1480–1490), kde jednotlivé události přicházejí po sobě krok za krokem v jednotném obrazovém prostoru.;" Faktor 2016, p. 173.

<sup>9</sup> Drost 1938, pp. 31–36.

of Christ, there are two thieves shown in the foreground (their nakedness emphasized by the painter) as well as numerous horsemen forming a kind of procession to Golgotha. The next scene is the Crucifixion, placed in the upper right corner of the composition and consisting of Christ on the Cross with Mary and St. John standing on either side of it, and crucified thieves slightly in the background. Almost the entire left part of this piece is occupied by a detailed and elaborate, albeit conventional, view of Jerusalem, above which a giant ship on the sea, protruding beyond the composition, is shown. The spatial values of the painting are not particularly strong; the figures are relatively high, slender and flat but their clothes elegantly draped. All these features are distinctive of the Beautiful Style, which was the main artistic reference for the painter and which was still popular in Gdańsk at that time.<sup>10</sup> The skill of showing figures in motion, which empowered the narrational aspect of the piece, should be emphasized too.

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Scholars who have shown interest in *The Passion of Christ* from St. Olaf Chapel have pointed out that it was probably made by a local artist well-acquainted with tendencies typical for Netherlandish and Burgundian art of that time or simply by a Western painter who came to Gdańsk and worked there for some period of time.<sup>11</sup> The problem of the origin of such a composition as well as of the provenance of its author was always treated vaguely, unsurprisingly given the fact that this work of art is damaged and its existing reproductions are of poor quality. The only substantive supposition in that matter was made by Jerzy Domasłowski who, making use of Zygmunt Kruszelnicki's ascertainments,<sup>12</sup> suggested that such compositions as the one from St. Olaf's Chapel were popular in Netherlandish art at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Netherlandish artists were inspired in that field by Italian artists who used similar schemas in the previous century.<sup>13</sup> Regarding iconography, the giant ship fell within the scope of interests of scholars writing on *The Passion of Christ* from St. Olaf's Chapel. It was always linked with the idea of the triumph of the Church, whose helmsman is Christ.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Domasłowski 1984, p. 132.

<sup>11</sup> Domasłowski 1984, pp. 132–133; Domasłowski 1990, p. 38.

<sup>12</sup> Kruszelnicki 1959; Kruszelnicki 1968.

<sup>13</sup> Domasłowski 1984, p. 143.

<sup>14</sup> Domasłowski 1984, p. 143. Compare with: Labuda 1979, pp. 123–124.

The non-existent wall painting from St. Olaf Chapel was not the only huge-scale composition produced in the second quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> century that combined the simultaneous manner with passion iconography. The composition painted on the northern wall of the choir of the Dominican Church of St. Nicholas in Gdańsk is much more important for our considerations. [il. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15] This huge wall painting, dated 1430–1440,<sup>15</sup> is the first wall painting which in all aspects realizes compositional principles identical to the later compositional principles of panel paintings like that by Hans Memling. In its case, only different technique and incomparably greater scale of the composition make it impossible to assign it to the group of late medieval panoramas.

It is impossible to decipher all the scenes originally painted on the northern wall of the choir of Dominican church in Gdańsk. The surface of the wall painting is severely damaged in many parts. Clearly visible are the following scenes: 1) the Agony in the Garden, 2) the Arrest of Christ, 3) the Carrying of the Cross, 4) the Crucifixion, 5) the Entombment. Apart from the main scenes of the passion, one genre scene is present, of a sheep in a pasture. Considering the dimensions of the whole composition and the fact that almost fifty percent of it is damaged, it is not an exaggeration to argue that originally over a dozen of scenes from Christ's Passion were painted therein, not to mention additional genre motifs. The remains of the city landscape as well as the outskirts of Jerusalem allow us to claim that the painter was skilled enough to present in one consistent space various events taking place at different times. Simultaneity in this case is fully implemented; there are no reasons to assume that in case of this composition any dominant, especially central motif was present.

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Jerzy Domasłowski, who writes about *The Passion of Christ* from the Dominican Church in Gdańsk at length, points out that it was painted by an artist showing an inclination to use sharp, rather thin, “graphic” lines, an artist who was able to create a spacious landscape. He also notes that the ornamental frame of the composition is an important element in it. Both these features, along with simultaneous composition, may lead to the conclusion that the painter was somehow related to Netherlandish workshops.<sup>16</sup> In this case, Domasłowski repeats his suppositions about the earlier wall paintings from St. Olaf Chapel in St. Mary's church, and claims that such type

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<sup>15</sup> Domasłowski 1984, p. 133, 143; Domasłowski 1990, p. 44.

<sup>16</sup> He also suggests that details of garments and architectural structures resemble those known from Netherlandish art of the first decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

of composition came to the Netherlands from Italy. He also points out that simultaneous compositions are found in 15<sup>th</sup> century Pomeranian art, including frequent experiments with using them both in wall paintings and panel paintings.<sup>17</sup>

The three wall paintings discussed above are not commonly known among scholars interested in late medieval passion panoramas. The one from Lažiště in fact has never been discussed in the context of such panel paintings, their function and history (apart from a marginal mention in Ondřej Faktor's Ph.D. Thesis). The two others from Gdańsk aroused moderate interest among Polish scholars writing mainly on *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń and pointing out that the time of their production anticipates this type of panel paintings.<sup>18</sup>

Two tapestries from the San Salvador Cathedral or La Seo in Zaragoza have aroused much greater interest.<sup>19</sup> In this impressive collection of sixty-three tapestries there are two, the oldest ones, that were probably gained by Don Dalmacio de Mur, the bishop of Zaragoza, their first confirmed owner. The lack of archival records makes it difficult to say whether he was the first owner, but it does not change the fact that both tapestries must have been in Zaragoza before 1456, the year of his death. It is also hard to determine the precise time of their production. Scholars concordantly date them between 1410–1430. Some of them point out that the tapestry with the main motif of the Crucifixion and Resurrection was probably produced earlier than the second one, representing only the Passion of Christ. It is thought that they were produced in Arras. However, there are also suppositions that they might have been made in another South Netherlandish weaving center.<sup>20</sup>

There is no doubt that their composition evokes associations with late medieval passion panoramas.<sup>21</sup> In the case of the earlier tapestry, usually titled *Crucifixion and*

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<sup>17</sup> Domasłowski 1984, p. 143; Domasłowski 1990, p. 44.

<sup>18</sup> See also: Kopania, 2018, p. 328.

<sup>19</sup> Exhibited in Museo de Tapices de La Seo de Zaragoza.

<sup>20</sup> For a detailed study on both tapestries, see: Ghyselen 1995. The author also provides rich bibliographic references for both works of art, among them one especially important study, that is: Torra de Arana, Hombria Tortajada, Domingo Pérez 1985. For more recent publications or those not mentioned by Ghyselen, see: Ágreda Pino 2013, pp. 273–330; *El Ceremonial* 2015; Gerth 2010, pp. 38–45; Llompart 1969, pp. 181–209; Reynolds 2013, p. 52; Smeyers 1997, p. 179.

<sup>21</sup> See first and foremost: Gerth 2010, pp. 38–45; Smeyers 1997, p. 179

*Resurrection*, [il. 16] similarities with later panel paintings are in fact scant, while the composition is simultaneous but with a clearly established dominant motif in the center of the composition, that is, the Crucifixion. Simultaneity is achieved by means of five scenes depicting the following stages of the passion: 1) the Carrying of the Cross, 2) the Crucifixion, 3) The Three Marys at the tomb, 4) the Harrowing of Hell, 5) *Noli me tangere*. Most scenes are conceived as epic in character, with numerous figures and diverse actions. Only in the case of the Crucifixion can we list numerous quasi-independent sub-scenes such as the Swoon of the Virgin, the Soldiers casting dice for Christ's robe, or a devil and angel taking the souls of the bad and good thief. All scenes are embedded in a well-thought-out spatial landscape refined in details. Although Jerusalem does not constitute a focal point here, and none of the stages of Christ's Passion takes place within the city, the suggestiveness of the view of the Holy Land is somehow maintained. It is not a historical or realistic view, but successfully renders the episodes of the story of Christ's Passion, death and resurrection in a vast and varied landscape.

The second tapestry, [il. 17] showing the Passion of Christ, consists of the following scenes: 1) the Entry to Jerusalem, 2) the Agony in the Garden, 3) the Arrest of Christ, 4) Christ led to Annas, 5) Christ before Annas, 6) Christ before Caiaphas, 7) Christ before Pilate, 8) the Crowning with Thorns, 9) the Flagellation, 10) the Making of the Cross. This time composition is fully simultaneous, without any dominant, central motifs. Much more attention was paid by the artists responsible for this tapestry to the view of Jerusalem. In fact, the whole action takes place within Jerusalem, surrounded by a cohesive line of city walls. The architectural structures do not resemble buildings typical for either the real, historical Jerusalem or any northern, Netherlandish city. They are rather conventional structures without front walls located next to one another to present in the best possible way actions taking place inside them.

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Apart from stylistic matters, both tapestries have been analyzed in terms of their composition, iconography, and function. The first is quite commonly compared to passion panoramas,<sup>22</sup> and treated as a proof that Memling made the first painting of this type, being inspired by earlier and less advanced works of art, tapestries included.<sup>23</sup> The second is discussed with reference to unusual motifs, such as Mary

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<sup>22</sup> See especially detailed descriptions and comparisons by Julia Gerth: Gerth 2010, pp. 38–45.

<sup>23</sup> Meaning without so many scenes as in case of *The Passion of Christ* from Sabauda Gallery and without such an elaborate and detailed view of Jerusalem and its outskirts.

Helping Jesus in Bearing the Cross on His Way to Golgotha, which implies the idea of *Compassio Mariae*,<sup>24</sup> and the Making of the Cross. The presence of the motif of the Making of the Cross is particularly emphasized and analyzed in detail by Greet Ghyselen, who points out that this rare iconographic theme is present both in the tapestry in the collection of Museo de Tapices de La Seo de Zaragoza and in Memling's *The Passion of Christ*. He concludes that this is another proof that Memling was inspired by art of the first part of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. As he writes: "Around 1400 the tapestries of Saragossa seem to be the only example where the motif of the Making of the Cross is taken from the context of the Legend of the Cross and inserted into a Passion cycle. A few generations later however, the theme turns up again in painting, and even in the work of Hans Memling, in his painting *Scenes of the Passion*. One man holds the cross and another adzes the wood. An auger and round hammer are lying next to him on the ground. Furthermore, in Memling's painting the overall design of the first tapestry with the location of the Passion in a town is pursued. It is unlikely that Memling was directly influenced by the first weaving, because archival sources prove that both tapestries were certainly in Saragossa in 1456. But without any doubt, Memling reaches back to an iconography that had been present ever since the early fifteenth century and of which no other examples are known".<sup>25</sup>

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The third problem, the function of tapestries, has rarely been examined by scholars. In fact only Spanish authors have paid close attention to the way tapestries were used during the liturgical year. Apart from their obvious function, the decoration of the cathedral's interior which served to emphasize the power and importance of the Church, they were used as a kind of scenography for various theatrical ceremonies organized on the feast of Corpus Christi or during the Holy Week. Unfortunately, almost all archival sources concerning such activities in Zaragoza refer to the Early Modern Period.<sup>26</sup>

Two tapestries from Zaragoza are treated as the most obvious reference for late medieval passion panoramas. Their composition and iconography fit coherently with *The Passion of Christ* by Hans Memling, who is treated as an innovator, responsible for adapting them to panel painting. That does not mean that the

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<sup>24</sup> Ghyselen 1995, p. 404.

<sup>25</sup> Ghyselen 1995, p. 407.

<sup>26</sup> Ceremonies with the use of tapestries were widely analyzed by: Ágreda Pino 2013, pp. 273–330; Llompart 1969, pp. 181–209.

tapestries exhibited in the Museo de Tapices de La Seo de Zaragoza are the only ones capable of being compared to late medieval passion panoramas. Both tapestries are certainly the oldest pieces combining simultaneous manner and passion iconography or, more precisely, numerous scenes of Christ's Passion. It is worth stressing that apart from them, throughout the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, many other tapestries showing Christ's Passion in simultaneous manner were produced, a good example of which is a tapestry with scenes from the Passion of Christ, dated 1400–1425, in the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London.<sup>27</sup> In their case, however, a basic difference is that they do not present as many scenes from Christ's Passion and they have a central, superior scene.<sup>28</sup>

But there exists one more 15<sup>th</sup>-century fabric which should be mentioned both in the context of the two tapestries from Zaragoza and late medieval passion panoramas. In 1460, a painter known under the name of Jakub z Sącza (Jacob from Sącz) accepted a commission from Jan Długosz<sup>29</sup> for a *cortina* depicting Christ's Passion against a view of Jerusalem. A record from *Acta actorum* held in the Chapter Library in Kraków states as follows: “Jacobus pictor de Sandecz cum venerabili viro domino Johanne seniore Długoss canonico cracoviense talem inter se depingenda cortina confessi sunt fecisse contractum, quod ipse Jaacobus pictor depingere debebit in hujusmodi cortina pasionem nostri Salvatoris cum Jerusalem operis et picture similis, sicut est depicta cortina per reginam Francie hic missa, et subtilioris, pro quo labore ipse dominus Długoss dare debebit sibi quatuor florenos et telam; hujusmodi autem cortinam novam cum antiqua predictus Jacobus sub paena excommunicationis hinc ad festum S. Michaelis proximum restituere se obligavit, praesentibus Casper vicecustode et Nicolo psalterista ecclesie cracoviensis.”<sup>30</sup> Unfortunately, the *cortina* does not exist anymore, and there are no other archival sources concerning this view of Jerusalem with scenes of Christ's Passion. One should doubtless bear in mind that this rather enigmatic piece is another work of art from the territory of the Kingdom of Poland which probably was made in the same manner as late medieval passion panoramas, especially the one from Toruń.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Wingfield–Digby 1980, cat. no. 1.

<sup>28</sup> Julia Gerth listed and described some of them: Gerth 2010, *passim*.

<sup>29</sup> (1415–1480), priest, chronicler, and diplomat. A secretary to Bishop Zbigniew Oleśnicki of Kraków.

<sup>30</sup> Sokołowski 1898, pp. 93–94.

<sup>31</sup> Zygmunt Kruszelnicki drew attention to this work of art in the context of his considerations on *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń: Kruszelnicki 1968, p. 118.

Amongst the works of art which should be treated as a reference for late medieval passion panoramas, there are more besides the wall paintings, tapestries and fabrics discussed above. One of the most intriguing examples of simultaneity combined with Passion iconography is the so called *Steinplatte mit Passionsszenen*, formerly from Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne. [il. 18]. The current location of this unusual picture, painted on a slate by Nicolaus Alexander Mair, is unknown. In 1943, the Wallraf-Richartz Museum sold it to Galerie für Alte Kunst (Walter Bornheim) in Munich.<sup>32</sup> This rather small painting (32 x 25,8 cm) painted on limestone in the fourth quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, is a unique work of art; it is difficult to find any comparable objects.<sup>33</sup> Lack of good quality photos of the work and scant literature on it render research on *Steinplatte mit Passionsszenen*[ital.] difficult.<sup>34</sup> In terms of iconography, we deal here with a work of art presenting the following scenes from Christ's Passion in and outside Jerusalem: 1) the Agony in the Garden, 2) the Arrest of Christ, 3) Ecce Homo, 4) the Carrying of the Cross, 5) the Crucifixion, 6) the Resurrection.

What is extraordinary in the case of *Steinplatte mit Passionsszenen* is that many iconographical motifs do not adhere to the most common and established traditions of presenting the scenes of Christ's Passion. The Agony in the Garden and the Resurrection are shown in a typical way, but the Arrest of Christ does not take place in the garden of Gethsemane. Christ is led away on the streets of Jerusalem, surrounded by tormentors and watched by many spectators standing in the windows. Such spectators are also seen in the scene of the Carrying of the Cross. The most unconventional aspect is the way Ecce Homo is shown. It takes place on a huge architectural structure organizing the whole composition of the panel and at the same time serving as a kind of a background and base for the Crucifixion, represented not in a narrative but rather a symbolic manner.<sup>35</sup> The lack of direct contact in this scene between Christ and the crowd gathered beneath a huge terrace is stunning. Moreover, there are many tormentors and knights visible who are disengaged from the main action, just wandering around.

<sup>32</sup> It appeared on the art market once after that, in the 1960s (information from Wallraf-Richartz Museum).

<sup>33</sup> Recently Christopher J. Nygren published an article on a similar work of art, but painted in a completely different artistic milieu, Titian's *Ecce Homo* in the collection of Museo del Prado, Madrid: Nygren 2017.

<sup>34</sup> *Steinplatte mit Passionsszenen* is mentioned cursorily in: Albrecht Altdorfer... 1938, cat. no. 602; Gerth 2010, p. 130.

<sup>35</sup> There are no spectators; Mary and John, present on either side of the cross, are shown in a rather hieratical manner; the composition features also huge angels with chalices gathering Christ's blood.



The depiction of Jerusalem is also quite extraordinary. On the one hand, the artist painted streets and a kind of a square; on the other, he makes one building stand out – a huge architectural structure making the composition symmetrical and at the same time giving the impression of a monumental stage. Taking into consideration all of the iconographical anomalies and rare motifs characterizing *Steinplatte mit Passionsszenen*, we may assume that Nicolaus Alexander Mair was indeed subject to influence by some of the theatrical conceptions and solutions he saw while attending passion plays.<sup>36</sup> But keeping in mind the whole composition, especially the symmetry-accentuating figure of Christ on the Cross (with the whole eucharistic potential it represents, accentuated by huge angels bearing chalices) and the Ecce Homo scene, which involves the presentation of Christ (and thus his eucharistic body too), we may assume that the main reference to *Steinplatte mit Passionsszenen* is the Eucharist.

The same situation occurs in the case of *The Passion of Christ*, a colored woodcut by the artist called Meister der Apokalypsenrose<sup>37</sup> from the collection of Bibliothèque nationale de France (49 x 35,3 cm).<sup>38</sup> [il. 19] Dated around 1490, it is much more elaborate in terms of composition, number of scenes and details. The story of Christ's Passion is presented as follows: 1) the Entry to Jerusalem, 2) the Last Supper, 3) the Agony in the Garden, 4) the Arrest of Christ, 5) Christ before Annas, 6) Christ before Caiaphas, 7) Christ before Pilate, 8) the Crowning with Thorns, 9) the Flagellation, 10) Ecce Homo, 11) the Carrying of the Cross, 12) the Crucifixion, 13) the Entombment. The problem with this xylographic print is, however, that arranging scenes of Christ's Passion in chronological order is, in this case, pointless. The course of events seems not to be crucial for the viewer. The same is true of Jerusalem.

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In 2015 Antoni Ziemba analyzed *The Passion of Christ* from Bibliothèque nationale de France in detail.<sup>39</sup> He compared it – because of the character and iconography of the composition – with late medieval passion panoramas. But at the same time he

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<sup>36</sup> Julia Gerth suggests cursorily that Nicolaus Alexander Mair could have been influenced by the mystery stage: Gerth 2010, p. 130. It is worth emphasizing that Ecce Homo scenes in a noticeable number of works of art from the 15<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of 16<sup>th</sup> century are characterized by what are probably theatrical elements. See especially interesting example: *Ecce Homo*, 1505/1506, Herzog–Anton–Ulrich–Museum, Braunschweig (Brockhoff, Dünninger, Henker 1990, pp. 308–309). See also: Kopania 2004, pp. 10–13.

<sup>37</sup> See: Nettekoven 2004.

<sup>38</sup> Białostocki 1972, no. 182; Thiébaut, Lorentz, Martin 2004, pp. 106–107.

<sup>39</sup> Ziemba 2015, pp. 744–747.

strongly opposed the claim that such a print could be used for spiritual pilgrimage. Ziemba points out that though its composition is simultaneous, it is impossible for the viewer to follow in the footsteps of Christ, to arrange the scenes in chronological order fluently. This situation is an effect of two things. First, the way Jerusalem is depicted precludes viewers from trying to chronologize. Although the artist created a continuous line of city walls, within them there are no streets or squares. Instead, there are tightly arranged, simplified architectural structures without front walls, set geometrically in single file. Both these buildings with scenes of Christ's Passion taking place inside and other scenes around Jerusalem are subordinated to a geometrical schema that makes the whole composition seem dependent on the composition of the winged altarpieces with their numerous panels. Ziemba also draws attention to the fact that the composition of the print is in fact symmetrical. The motifs in the central part, that is, the Flagellation and the Crucifixion, are the most important ones. Both lead the viewer to associate them (and also all surrounding scenes) with the Body of Christ – clearly visible, even emphasized, put to the fore. So *The Passion of Christ* should be treated as a devotional print whose aim was to help the viewer contemplate the Passion itself and linking it with the idea of the *Corpus Domini*. Jerusalem in this case is only a kind of a sign, an obvious and unimportant suggestion of where the action took place. That the idea of spiritual pilgrimage was not the background for creating the print is evinced by the fact that the geography of Jerusalem shown in the print has nothing in common with the reality of the Holy Land. Even the titles present close to every scene, informing the viewer of what is displayed, do not facilitate moving from one scene to another, and in particular do not familiarize him/her with the real, historical Jerusalem which a pilgrim on a spiritual pilgrimage should aim to visit.

Among late medieval prints there is, however, one, called *Passion of Jesus in Jerusalem*, which was definitely used for the purpose of spiritual pilgrimage or, at least – to give an account of Jerusalem and the Holy Land (The Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College). [il. 20, 21] Preserved up to the present time as two fragments of a larger whole, originally it was a huge print with hand coloring and xylographic inscriptions on paper, measuring around 120 x 112 cm.<sup>40</sup> These fragments were found in the beginning of 1990s pasted into the binding of Hartmann Schedel's *Liber Chronicarum*, printed in Nuremberg in 1493. The first researchers who studied this print and wrote an erudite, detailed article on it, André Jammes and Henri D. Saffrey,

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<sup>40</sup> It probably consisted of twelve folios, each measuring 30 x 42 cm.

dated *Passion of Jesus in Jerusalem* to the 1460s and established its provenance.<sup>41</sup> Drawing on stylistic analysis, watermarks and linguistic studies of inscriptions written in German, they propose the Rhine region as its place of origin. They also point out that inscriptions present in the *Passion of Jesus in Jerusalem* show similarities to Felix Fabri's itineraries and pilgrimage guides to the Holy Land, written twenty years later. The point is not that Fabri, a Dominican friar from Ulm, was somehow inspired by the work, but rather that these similarities prove that the *Passion of Jesus in Jerusalem* was strongly dependent on pilgrimage literature of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, which in fact is quite homogeneous in its descriptions of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. In any case, Felix Fabri was not chosen arbitrarily. Jammes and Saffrey wanted to emphasize that the print they analyze could have fulfilled the same functions as Fabri's works, conceived as tools and aids proper for spiritual pilgrimage. It is not without significance, too, that Fabri used to give lectures for nuns, talking to them about his journeys and all the important places of Christ's Passion that he had seen with his own eyes. According to scholars, such an enormous print could have been a good visual aid during those lectures. Glued or pinned to a hard surface, it would resemble panel paintings like those in the Sabauda Gallery or St. James's Church in Toruń.<sup>42</sup>

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Kathryn Rudy recently published some remarks on the *Passion of Jesus in Jerusalem*.<sup>43</sup> Generally, Rudy agrees with James' and Saffrey's opinions, pointing out that "[...] this complex and enormous woodcut offers the opportunity for multiple viewers to participate in the virtual procession through the city."<sup>44</sup> She also pays close attention to the text which was an important element in the original composition, but not easy to decipher: "[...] the woodcut contains text (in German) to label the buildings, gates, and urban features, some with an explanation describing what happened at those locations in sacred history. This texts also make one wonder how votaries used the sheets. They are xylographically printed, like blockbooks, with many of the letters difficult to decipher. Did votaries interpret the texts and move along

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<sup>41</sup> Jammes, Saffrey 1994. See also: Kopania 2008, p. 106.

<sup>42</sup> It is worth noting that in the case of this print, certain scenes of Christ's Passion (Christ before Caiaphas and Christ before Herod) are visible in their entirety. Considering the size of the print, we may assume that originally at least a dozen other scenes were shown. The architecture of the town is oriental in character. The topographical, geographical verve of the print's creator is viscerally impressive. Some genre motifs, such as a running dog, strengthen the impression of looking at the view of a real city, the real Jerusalem.

<sup>43</sup> Rudy 2014, pp. 391–393.

<sup>44</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 392.

the city in groups? The size of the image and difficulty of the texts would suggest that navigating the urban terrain might have relied on a group effort.”<sup>45</sup> Stressing that the *Passion of Jesus in Jerusalem* is a print, she draws attention to its mass accessibility. Hundreds or even thousands of prints of this type could have been distributed to many places, particularly convents, in which they were eagerly used.<sup>46</sup>

In fact, the works of art discussed above are the only ones which could be directly compared to late medieval passion panoramas. Although of different scale and made in different techniques, they all form a compact group of independent, single depictions of the Passion of Christ taking place in and around Jerusalem and shown in simultaneous manner. Nevertheless, one more piece should be mentioned here – *Scenes from the Life of Christ* by Gaspare Sacchi from Museo di Palazzo Vecchio in Florence.<sup>47</sup> [il. 22] Although it contains several scenes from the time before the Passion, mostly from childhood, it follows the scheme of passion panoramas. What is more, it was directly inspired by Hans Memling’s *The Passion of Christ*.<sup>48</sup>

Sacchi’s work, painted between 1517 and 1536,<sup>49</sup> consists of twenty scenes: 1) the Nativity, 2) the Journey of the Magi, 3) the Adoration of the Magi, 4) the Baptism of Jesus, 5) the Miraculous Catching of Fish, 6) the Last Supper, 7) the Agony in the Garden, 8) the Arrest of Christ, 9) Christ before Caiaphas, 10) Christ before Pilate, 11) the Mocking of Christ, 12) the Flagellation, 13) the Carrying of the Cross, 14) Christ

<sup>45</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 392.

<sup>46</sup> “Considering that a woodcut could yield hundreds if not thousands of prints, one could imagine that a multitude of German-speaking convents mounted this multi-plate poster in an accessible place for communal devotion. Perhaps the reason that only these two fragments survive is that the poster was understood as ephemeral, to be hung and used during Passion Week but then removed in time for a joyous Easter celebration. Were the twelve plates hung with nails? With gobs of hot sticky wax? Or glued to the wall? In any of these scenarios, the means of public display would also be the means of destruction. The two small fragments that survive might not signal the prints’ lukewarm reception but rather the opposite: their enthusiastic consumption through use.”; Rudy 2014, pp. 392–393. The *Passion of Jesus in Jerusalem* was also cursorily described by Elisabeth Ross: Ross 2014, p. 133.

<sup>47</sup> Oil on canvas, 93 x 170 cm, inv. MCF–LOE–24a.

<sup>48</sup> See i.e.: Waldman 2001, p. 30. Stressing the similarities with *The Passion of Christ*, Waldman, who treats *Scenes from the life of Christ* as a work from the workshop of Bachiacca, writes: “The Florentine artist (or artists) who produced this little-known painting translated the design of Memling’s prototype, in a very loose and approximate manner, into an idiom coloured by increasingly stiff and laboured recollections of the Florentine *maniera*.”

<sup>49</sup> On *Scenes from the Life of Christ*, see first and foremost: Padovani 2008, pp. 140–141. On Gaspare Sacchi: Mazza 1991; Roio 1988 (with extensive bibliographical references).

standing with the Cross, 15) the Crucifixion, 16) the Harrowing of Hell, 17) the Resurrection, 18) One of Three Marys at the Tomb of Jesus (in the presence of an angel), 19) *Noli me Tangere*, 20) Christ Reveals Himself to Mary.

It is hard to say that the scenes listed above take place in and outside Jerusalem, because instead of a view of the city, the Italian artist painted a single fantastical architectural structure in the form of a ruin. It is hard to treat these remains of a huge building, organizing the whole composition and constituting its axis, as a view of Jerusalem. It is also hard to find any arguments in favor of the notion that Sacchi's idea was to present Christ's life in such a way as to enable viewers to shift their gaze easily and fluidly from scene to scene. All of the episodes are scattered rather freely about the landscape, which has nothing in common with the geographical realities of the Holy Land either.<sup>50</sup> In fact, we may treat Sacchi's work more as a pure artistic (Renaissance, in stylistic terms) variation on Hans Memling's *The Passion of Christ* than a well-thought-out painting effort to enable the viewer to study the Passion in a way somehow similar to the way passion panoramas were probably perceived.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Serena Padovani describes the painting and its main features in a very convincing way: "Il racconto Passione di Cristo, ambientato in un vasto paesaggio, si articola in una sequenza ricchissima di episodi, che illustrano con diversa enfasi le fasi della Sua vita terrena. A sinistra in secondo piano in alto, sul pendio della collinetta conclusa dalla città turrita, serpeggiano figurine a piedi e a cavallo, nonché due cammelli, probabili frammenti del viaggio dei magi, anche se in direzione opposta rispetto all'edicola classicheggiante che ospita una miniaturistica *Adorazione del Bambino*. Più avanti e più sotto, in un'altra edicola è raffigurata l'*Ultima Cena*, e accanto, sul poggio erboso, la *Preghiera nell'orto*, seguita dalla *Cattura di Gesù*. Entro la fantastica architettura in rovina, si svolgono le scene dei tribunali: in alto al Centro, *Cristo davanti a Caifa*; sotto al Centro, *Cristo davanti a Pilato*, a sinistra *Cristo deriso*, a destra la *Flagellazione*. Sulla destra, disseminate in lontananza sulle rive del lago si distinguono appena le scene del *Battesimo di Gesù* e della *Pesca miracolosa*, nonché un piccolissimo, isolato Cristo con la croce; più avanti, uscendo dall'edificio, si susseguono da destra scendendo in primo piano verso sinistra, l'*Andata al calvario*; la *Crocefissione*; l'*Annuncio dell'angelo ad una delle Marie al Sepolcro*; il *Noli me tangere*; la *Resurrezione*; *Cristo al limbo*; l'*Apparizione di Cristo alla Vergine dopo la resurrezione*"; Padovani 2008, p. 140.

<sup>51</sup> Compare: "In effetti la connessione di questo dipinto con il capolavoro di Memling non è certo di evidenza immediata. La composizione di Memling affollatissima ma ben strutturata entro le predominanti, spettacolari architetture della città, qui si allarga e si stempera in episodi di piccole dimensioni, dove le storie sacre si colorano di spunti fantastici e grotteschi. A cominciare dallo spaccato dell'improbabile edificio al centro, dove le fasi del giudizio e della condanna di Gesù sono inserite con grande abilità negli spazi complicati da loggiati, absidi, arcate, pilastri e colonne, e sono animate da eleganti figurine dall'espressività vivacissima. Intorno, legati dall'incerto filo conduttore dei cavalli in corsa, in riposo, impennati o caduti, si distribuiscono gli altri eventi della Passione, sparsi (ma con attenta simmetria) sulle collinette dalle strane forme arrotondate. Un risalto particolare viene però dato alla *Resurrezione* e alla *Discesa al limbo*, di dimensioni maggiori e collocate in primo piano; e quest'ultima scena offre l'occasione per popolare le prode erbose e gli strati rocciosi della grotta infernale con ibride creature diaboliche dall'aspetto innocuo di giocattoli. Ben poco resta insomma del modello di Memling, peraltro indiscutibile: in particolare l'*Ultima Cena*, che nel prototipo con un'idea stupenda è collocata nell'interno illuminato di un nobile edificio aperto su un cortile, qui è inserita nel pendio collinare entro una surrealistica scatoletta architettonica"; Padovani 2008, p. 140.

It is also hard to find any deeper justification for mixing barely visible scenes from Christ's childhood and mission period with visually emphasized episodes of the Passion,<sup>52</sup> especially since there are other motifs which clearly disrupt the narration and distract the viewer's attention.<sup>53</sup>

The various works of art described and analyzed above do not complete the list of references to late medieval passion panoramas, though these works are the most closely related to them. They are independent works of art, not part of a larger whole, simultaneous in composition and (predominantly) focused on Christ's Passion, taking place in and outside Jerusalem. But apart from them, there are numerous other works of art which should be taken into consideration while analyzing late medieval passion panoramas. Some of them have already been carefully examined: mostly Cologne and Westphalian painting from the first decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Among the most important such works, *Mount Calvary of the Wasservass Family*, dated 1420–1430, from Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Cologne should be mentioned.<sup>54</sup> This panel painting, whose main, central theme is the Crucifixion, includes two other scenes, the Carrying of the Cross and the Nailing to the Cross. The view of Jerusalem, presented as a distant, oriental city, is also particularly important. Similar general trends can be observed not only in the practice of painting that city and region but throughout all painting of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, especially Netherlandish. The many examples include not only single panels but also winged altarpieces. In each case, the main motif, usually the Crucifixion, functions in the context of several other scenes of Christ's Passion, scattered in a vast landscape with the view of Jerusalem, resembling the historical city to varying degrees. In some cases not only scenes from Christ's Passion are showed, but also from i.e. his childhood. Sometimes characters who did not take part in New Testament events, such as certain later saints, are present too. Simply to recall a few examples, consider an early *Retablo de la Pasión de Cristo* (about 1415) in Museo de Bellas Arte in Seville, with the dominant motif of the Carrying of the Cross,<sup>55</sup> [il. 23] *Calvary* (1470–1480) painted by Master of the Death of Saint Nicholas of Münster in the collection of The National Gallery of Art in Washington, *Christ's Crucifixion*

<sup>52</sup> Apart from the obvious connotation that Passion was an effect of the Incarnation.

<sup>53</sup> A single, more symbolic than narrative scene of Christ standing with the Cross is one of these motifs. But the course of events is disturbed mainly by groups of horsemen riding in different directions and dominating the central architectural structure.

<sup>54</sup> 131 x 180 cm, inv. no. WRM 0065. See i.e.: Gerth 2010, pp. 45–57.

<sup>55</sup> Moreno Mendoza 1991, p. 28.

(around 1480) by Meister der Ursula-Legende from Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Cologne,<sup>56</sup> *Crucifixion with Saint Jerome and Saint Dominic, and Scenes from the Passion* (turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> century) by a follower of Geertgen tot Sint Jans, displayed in the Scottish National Gallery in Edinburgh,<sup>57</sup> or *Scenes from the Passion of Christ* (about 1510) by Master of Delft in the National Gallery, London.<sup>58</sup>

There is no need to analyze all of the works of art listed above in detail. Most of them simply emphasize the Crucifixion, and thus the redemptive mission of Christ, at its crucial moment in which the sacrifice of Savior was fully revealed to the whole world. Closer examination of just one altarpiece will suffice to convey what they change in our view of late medieval passion panoramas. In the collection of the Museo Nacional del Prado, a triptych with *Scenes from the Life of Christ*, dated ca. 1445–1450, is held, sometimes referred to as the *Triptych of Eximén Pérez de Corella*. [il. 24] This piece (oil on oak, 78 x 134 cm, inv. no. P-2538) is frequently mentioned in the literature on late medieval painting because of Louis Alincbrot, the alleged author of the work. Alincbrot, a painter from Bruges who moved to Valencia in 1439 and worked there till his death in 1463, has for decades been regarded a significant example of the presence of Netherlandish artists on the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>59</sup> Not a single work was attributed to him with certitude, including *Scenes from the Life of Christ*.<sup>60</sup> In fact, archival sources concerning his life and work are scant and indicate that his position in the Valencian artistic milieu was not as secure as many scholars have suggested it was.<sup>61</sup> Thanks to a careful analysis by Susie Nash, who in 2014 published an article titled *The Myth of Louis Alincbrot: relocating the ‘Triptych with Scenes from the Life of Christ’*

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<sup>56</sup> Zehnder 1989, pp. 329, 720.

<sup>57</sup> Acres 2011, pp. 595–621; Hand, Metzger, Spronk 2006, cat. no. 11; Luttikhuizen 2011, pp. 199–226.

<sup>58</sup> Grössinger 1992, cat. no. 48.

<sup>59</sup> Nash 2014.

<sup>60</sup> “The attribution of this triptych to Louis Alincbrot is very firmly embedded in the literature, but, as noted above, it is not based on any documentary evidence, nor on a stylistic relationship with another documented work by him. Indeed, there is scarcely any record of any work this painter undertook, let alone any that survive”; Nash 2014, p. 77.

<sup>61</sup> Nash 2014, pp. 77–78. As Susie Nash points: “[...] archival evidence does not, then, evoke an artist who had a substantial and significant career in Valencia, employed extensively in important commissions for local patrons and feted for his knowledge of Netherlandish panel painting. Even though he lived next door to Reixach, a key figure in Valencian artistic production of the period, there is no indication that he had anything to do with the group of artists, patrons and merchants who seem to have been at the centre of artistic and cultural life of the city [...]”; Nash 2014, p. 78.

in the Prado,<sup>62</sup> the work is now attributed to the *oeuvre* of the so called The Collins Master, a painter and illuminator active in northern France or the Southern Netherlands in the 1440s, responsible for, amongst other works of art, the book of hours (*Collins Hours*) from the Philadelphia Museum of Art (MS 45-65-4).<sup>63</sup> Close examination of the Prado triptych revealed clear similarities to his works, and showed how deeply this painting is rooted in Netherlandish art, especially the art of Jan van Eyck and his milieu as well as that of the artist called the Bedford Master. According to Nash, it seems highly improbable that *Triptych with Scenes from the Life of Christ* was made in Valencia or anywhere in the Iberian Peninsula, especially given that many technical features of this triptych, for instance, boards of Baltic oak used as a support, the way they are combined, and the style and construction of the frame, are typical for early Netherlandish works.<sup>64</sup> The patron of the Prado triptych, Eximén Pérez de Corella, one of the most important figures at the court of Alfonso V of Aragon, probably ordered it directly from the Netherlands, through his agents operating there.

On the wings of the triptych, the Annunciation is depicted *en grisaille*. Mary stands there, with an open book in her hands, and Gabriel approaches her from the right, holding a scroll with his angelic salutation written on it. On the left wing, the Circumcision, and on the right wing, the Pietà are depicted. The first takes place in the elaborate interior of a northern gothic church, equipped with massive organs set on the wall, just above the choir stalls, and a lamp hanging from the roof boss, as well as a partly visible sculptural decoration which consists of figures of Apostles holding books. Apart from the little Jesus, the Virgin, Joseph and Simeon, there are several witnesses, both men and women. Some of them hold candles; one woman holds a basket with doves; those materials are necessary for the Purification ritual. One man sitting in the choir stalls is depicted writing in a book, which may refer to the moment of the recording of the name of Jesus, a part of the rite of Circumcision. There are also three men playing organs. Two relatively small elements of the decoration of the choir stalls are nonetheless important. As Nash writes: "The choir stalls [...] are carved at either end with Old Testament scenes: at the nearside is the Sacrifice of Isaac a prototype for the Crucifixion and the sacrifice of Christ, the first blood of which is spilled

<sup>62</sup> Nash 2014.

<sup>63</sup> His contemporary description as "The Collins Master" comes from the name of the 19<sup>th</sup> century owner of the manuscript held in the collection of Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philip S. Collins.

<sup>64</sup> Nash 2014, pp. 78–79.



at the Circumcision; at the far end, partially obscured by the candle, Samson opens the jaws of the Lion, referring to the salvation gained by the sacrifice, prefiguring the resurrection and the opening of Hell's maw by Christ at the Harrowing."<sup>65</sup> The whole scene is completed with an unusual motif present in the foreground, that of a sitting dog.

On the right wing, in the foreground, Mary holds Jesus's body on her lap and kisses His left hand. Christ's head is supported by John, who cries heavily and wipes tears away. At the feet of Christ, Mary Magdalene sits, with her hands folded in a gesture of deep grief. Behind them stands a marble tomb whose lid is being removed by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, in the presence of three soldiers. Deeper into the composition, exactly on the axis of it, a cross is shown on a hill. Just behind it, a vast landscape dominated by the motif of the Holy City and its surroundings is present. Jerusalem is depicted in great detail, with dozens of buildings; among them, the Tower of David and the Holy Sepulchre can be identified. As on the left wing, on the right we can spot unusual motifs too. On the left, behind the cross, on the rocky hill, three owls are present, which probably refer to the fifth penitential psalm (102, 7), "a lament of sorrow and loneliness, an apt association given the focus of the triptych on the sorrows of the Virgin."<sup>66</sup>

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The most crowded, dense and expanded part of the work, in terms of narration, is the central panel, showing three main scenes: 1) Christ Disputing with the Doctors in the Temple, placed on the left, 2) Christ Carrying the Cross, emerging in the company of the huge crowd from the city gate and heading towards Golgotha, on the right, and 3) the Crucifixion, somewhat in the background, in the middle of the composition. The central panel is described in great detail by Nash.<sup>67</sup> Amongst dozens of additional motifs present in it, the architecture of Jerusalem is notably composed of Orientalized structures, like onion-domed, central-circular buildings with additions in the shape of Islamic gold crescent finials. These structures are mixed with buildings of European, northern origin and style. In all three scenes the Virgin Mary appears as an important figure. Her presence in the events of Christ's life, her sorrow, grief, and emotional pain are clearly emphasized.

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<sup>65</sup> Nash 2014, pp. 72–73.

<sup>66</sup> Nash 2014, p. 74.

<sup>67</sup> Nash 2014, pp. 73–74.

Apart from both wings and the central panel, the frame is important for understanding the iconography of the triptych, while inscriptions on it complement the depicted scenes. All inscriptions “are in Latin [...] and only clearly legible along the top section, which reads: ‘*Juxta crucem stabat dolorosa / Mater virgo multum lacrimosa*,’ a phrase [...] of the opening lines of the *Stabat Mater*, a hymn that focused on the Virgin’s suffering at the Crucifixion, which should read ‘*Stabat Mater dolorosa / Juxta crucem lacrimosa*’ [...] The inscriptions along the lower register are very fragmentary, but enough survives to indicate that they are not simply a continuation of the *Stabat Mater*. The few words that can be made out do not feature in any part of that prayer, nor are they one continuous text, but seem instead to be individual formulations that relate to the scene directly above: below the Circumcision the words ‘*sang [...] funditur*’ can be identified; below Christ in the temple, ‘[...] *doleat em ceram*’; beneath the way to Calvary, the phrase ‘[...] *virginis filius / [...] pedem beata virgo proximus*’; below the Pietà, only the word ‘*dolens*’ is decipherable. These, too, would seem to relate to the Virgin’s role in these events and her sorrow.”<sup>68</sup>

114 As noted, the *Triptych with Scenes from the Life of Christ* has quite often been analyzed by scholars. Its provenance and authorship were within the scope of interests of many researchers. It has occasionally been mentioned in the context of late medieval passion panoramas, too, but usually cursorily, simply to stress that manifestations of simultaneous manner in the Netherlandish painting were present and widespread in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. No studies of the relationship between its iconography, function or reception and the iconography, function or reception of passion panoramas have been made. And some remarks on the view of Jerusalem in the right wing of the triptych would seem useful for our further analysis, because the Holy City as depicted gives an impression of being viewed as an accurate representation, based, in this case, on the tradition of Jan van Eyck’s art. Even more importantly, the triptych from the Prado, which at first glance may be treated as concentrating on the life, and especially Passion, of Christ, is in fact primarily devoted to Mary, her *compassio* and her participation in the history of Salvation.

The triptych *Scenes from the Life of Christ* in the collection of the Museo Nacional del Prado provides a proof of the importance of additional motifs, referring to other stages of Christ’s life, for the meaning of paintings showing the Passion of Christ

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<sup>68</sup> Nash 2014, pp. 74–75.

in simultaneous manner. The same is true in the case of the *Crucifixion with Saint Jerome and Saint Dominic, and Scenes from the Passion* by the follower of Geertgen tot Sint Jans, mentioned earlier.<sup>69</sup> [il. 25] This small panel, originally half of the diptych,<sup>70</sup> shows Christ on the Cross in the presence of the Virgin Mary and St. John the Evangelist. Beyond, in a vast landscape with Jerusalem in the distance, are scenes from Christ's Passion – events leading to the Crucifixion, and the empty tomb referring to the Resurrection and the victory of Christ over death. Especially important are the figures of St. Jerome and St Dominic, kneeling in the foreground, and with a dead body lying below them. St. Dominic holds up a rosary. In the case of the *Crucifixion with Saint Jerome and Saint Dominic, and Scenes from the Passion* the contemplation of subsequent scenes of Christ's Passion and the hope for resurrection and eternal life represent only a part of the essential content.<sup>71</sup> One should have in mind that the second part of this diptych is crucial for understanding the meaning of the panel from Edinburgh. In fact the viewer is obliged to think not only of Christ's mission, but also of the Mother of God's involvement in the act of Salvation, and her triumph over sin.<sup>72</sup>

Creating a wide background for late medieval passion panoramas, one more work of art should be analyzed more carefully – the work called *The Jerusalem Triptych* in the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw. [il. 26] This intriguing winged altarpiece has figured within the scope of interests of Polish scholars writing on late medieval passion panoramas,<sup>73</sup> but been constantly ignored by Western researchers. Its rich iconography and elaborate composition make *The Jerusalem Triptych* a particularly important reference for panel paintings like the one in the Sabauda Gallery.

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*The Jerusalem Triptych* is a sizable winged altarpiece (central part: 138,5 x 396,8 cm, left wing: 133,5 x 99,7 cm, right wing: 133,5 x 99,9 cm, predella: 25 x 197,5 cm).<sup>74</sup> According to the latest findings, it was created in two stages by two artists. Quoting Antoni Ziemba: "The work was probably created in ca. 1497–1500, and, as its most

<sup>69</sup> 24,40 x 18,40 cm, oil on panel, inv. no. NG 1253.

<sup>70</sup> The second part of the diptych is in the Boijmans Museum, Rotterdam. It depicts the Virgin in Glory.

<sup>71</sup> Henry Luttikhuizen tried to prove that the panel, because of its composition and simultaneity, was used as a tool for spiritual pilgrimage to Jerusalem. See: Luttikhuizen 2011, pp. 199–225.

<sup>72</sup> The Dominican cult of the Rosary should also be mentioned here.

<sup>73</sup> First and foremost: Ziemba 2015, pp. 680–686 (with extensive bibliographical references).

<sup>74</sup> Inv. no. Śr.38/1–4 MNW. *The Jerusalem Triptych* has a rich bibliography which was gathered in: Benesz, Kluk 2016, p. 81.

recent conservation shows, in two stages. First, an unknown Netherlandish or North German master from the Netherlands-Germany border area or from the Rhineland, who worked in the sphere of influence of Dirk Bouts and his sons, painted its wings and the landscape background of the central panel. Then, one of his associates or a different master of the Rhineland or Westphalian stylistic idiom completed its main panel by filling in the figural scenes.”<sup>75</sup> It was ordered for the Jerusalem Chapel of Saint Mary’s Church in Gdańsk, which was managed by the Congregation of Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, who were also responsible for supervising the whole parish.

As the name of the altarpiece suggests, Jerusalem – in the form of an orientalisised, but slightly late-gothic city – is an important element of the whole composition. In and around the city, as well as more distant parts of the Holy Land, events from Christ’s Childhood, Ministry and Passion are represented in a simultaneous narrative. The sequence of events is organized clearly: the story starts on the left inner wing, continuing through the central panel and finishing on the versos of the wings. Busts of Christ and the Twelve Apostles are present on the predella. The entire composition consists of the following scenes: 1) the Massacre of the Innocents, 2) the Miracle of the Corn during the Holy Family’s Flight to Egypt from The Holy Land, 3) the Flight to Egypt, 4) Christ among the Doctors, 5) Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well, 6) the Baptism of Jesus, 7) the Apostles carrying Bread and Wine, 8) the Three Temptations of Christ, 9) Christ’s Entry to Jerusalem, 10) the Cleansing of the Temple, 11) the Last Supper, 12) the Agony in the Garden, 13) the Arrest of Christ, 14) Christ before Caiaphas, 15) the Flagellation, 16) the Crowning with Thorns, 17) the Carrying of the Cross, 18) the Crucifixion, 19) the Entombment.

Both composition and iconography, as well as the context in which *The Jerusalem Triptych* functioned, that is, the interior of the Jerusalem Chapel in use by the Congregation of Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, place this work of art in the center of the discussion of late medieval passion panoramas. For years, the altarpiece from Gdańsk was treated as a work of art subordinated to the needs of well-educated members of the Congregation, whose main aim was to conduct various pastoral activities. It was emphasized that the priestly ministry was based on religious teaching, an openness to nonbelievers, and on

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<sup>75</sup> Ziemia 2013, p. 285.

the ideological platform of baptism and the Eucharist, the effect of the Passion of Christ, who is the divine-human Savior. The aspect of temptations lurking for priests was also noticed. All these issues are suggested by the scenes painted on the altarpiece.

Recently, however, Antoni Ziemba proposed new interpretations of *The Jerusalem Triptych*, which in fact do not conflict with the previous one. Apart from erudite studies on time in relation to narration,<sup>76</sup> his analysis concentrates on a problem which in recent years has frequently interested researchers working on late medieval passion panoramas, that of spiritual pilgrimages. Underlining general similarities between *The Jerusalem Triptych* and Hans Memling's *The Passion of Christ* or *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń as well as other passion panoramas, he tries to answer the question whether and to what extent the work of art in the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw could be used as a vehicle for such a journey. He also reflects on the accuracy of the topographical vision of Jerusalem and Judea presented in *The Jerusalem Triptych*. It is worth quoting from his study at some length: "This situation [Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria as places in which subsequent events take place – K.K.] allows the triptych's creator to display the panorama of Jerusalem and its environs for his audience, as a scaffolding for the imagination: a network of topographic points to serve as the destination of the pilgrim's imaginary voyage. This voyage to places of memory (*loca*), which join together into a route of meditative stages, takes place in the spectator's soul as he follows it standing before the painting, instead of in real, distant space. The triptych's unique topographic vision of the Kingdom of Jerusalem makes it allude to the institution of the great pilgrimages, those to the Holy Land, Rome or Santiago de Compostela, present in the literature of pilgrimages. But it is certainly not an 'illustration' of itineraries, guidebooks or accounts of travel to the Holy Land. Its choice of scenes does correspond to the holy places and events described in those writings, but their order is inconsistent with them. The closed triptych shows pilgrimage destinations in Jerusalem [...]. After the triptych is opened, we see on its left wing the pilgrimage route to Bethlehem [...]. On the central panel we return to the City (as instructed by the system of itineraries set by the Jerusalem Franciscans who directed the pilgrim traffic) [...]. We then take two new journeys outside Jerusalem. The first, to Samaria, to the place where Jesus met the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well [...], on the route to Galilee, in the direction of Nazareth, Cana, Capernaum and Lake Tiberias; this route was rarely taken, and then only by

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<sup>76</sup> Ziemba 2013, pp. 285–304.

the robust, outside the standard pilgrimage, but Jacob's well was closer to Jerusalem, at mid-point, and it could be included in the journey to the River Jordan. The second excursion outside Jerusalem was this very road to the Jordan, the place where Jesus was baptized, a standard itinerary for pilgrims. On the way, their stops would of course include the Mount of Temptation, which we see in the trifold representation of *The Temptation of Jesus*. Finally, on the right wing, [...] we return one more time to Jerusalem, at the same time going back to the beginnings of the Passion in Jerusalem. It is significant that the painting shows neither all the important stages of the standard pilgrimage to the Holy Land nor a full topographic logic (Jerusalem appears in several places), although it does retain the division of pilgrimage routes and principal areas. [...] Therefore the purpose of the triptych's presentation was not direct illustration. Instead, it was the overall context of the place, which could link the painting to the function of the chapel.<sup>77</sup>

Indicating that *The Jerusalem Triptych* does not show the Holy Land in accordance with various itineraries or accounts of travel to Jerusalem and is devoid of topographical logic, Ziemba reaches some important conclusions. He was the first scholar to point out that altarpieces of the type found in Gdańsk or late medieval passion panoramas<sup>78</sup> were neither straight, literal cartographic or topographic tools for learning about the realities of the Holy Land, nor reflections of actual pilgrimages. Referring to the idea of spiritual pilgrimage, Ziemba admits that *The Jerusalem Triptych* could be used as a tool for a journey to the Holy Land. At the same time, he emphasizes that such an activity was based more on intuitive connotations, and general religious knowledge and experiences, than on any particular method of analyzing the altarpiece; especially with the aid of carefully chosen texts explaining the life of Christ in the context of the places in which subsequent stages of His mission happened.<sup>79</sup> In his conclusion, Ziemba points out that works of art such as *The Jerusalem Triptych* enable the viewer first and foremost to find themselves in a timeless reality of religious experience: "This was the goal of the segmented and simultaneous narrative, which 'atomized' the time of the story. Space – which was also conceived in segments but in a cohesive, continuous,

<sup>77</sup> Ziemba 2013, pp. 301–302.

<sup>78</sup> Ziemba 2013, pp. 303–304.

<sup>79</sup> Ziemba compares the process of perceiving and experiencing *The Jerusalem Triptych* and late medieval passion panoramas to the process of perceiving and experiencing various imaginary reconstructions of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, like Jeruzalemkerk in Bruges or the Jerusalem Chapel in St. John's Church in Gouda. See: Ziemba 2013, pp. 302–303.

integrated order – became its link and its glue. The skipping order of episodes stems from the artist's desire to direct the viewer's imagination to the pilgrimage routes to Jerusalem, onto the roads to Bethlehem, Nazareth and the River Jordan. It is the sacred space, the sacred topography that integrates the morsels of time, the episodes of history dispersed in a continuum. Much like in the thinking of Nicolaus Cusanus, the horizontal axis of earthly events is bonded with the vertical, sacred axis, which connects the faithful, the viewer, to Christ the God and his theophany from biblical history, with the imaginary participation in sacred happenings and holy places, as they are achieved in meditation and prayer. Cusanus's central metaphor of a man as a wanderer and a pilgrim finds space to fulfil itself: the viewer's space of the here and now is transformed in his mind into the ideal place of time on earth destined to satisfy the time of Incarnation, the time of Jesus Christ as intermediary between God and the world, God and man, eternity and the time on earth. This is the time and the space, which through contemplation lead his soul outside space and time, to Salvation, to *visio Dei*, to communion with God in the eternal Heaven, which has no roads, no motion, no variability and no action."<sup>80</sup>

Ziemba's reflections on *The Jerusalem Triptych* have been significantly developed and completed by his analysis of one of the most popular panel paintings which fall within the scope of interests of scholars working on late medieval passion panoramas, the painting known as *The Seven Joys of Mary*, painted by Hans Memling.<sup>81</sup> [il. 27] This panel, dated 1479,<sup>82</sup> is treated as one of the most obvious examples of works of art conceived as a tool for spiritual pilgrimage.<sup>83</sup> The broad panoramic landscape, depictions of cities of the Holy Land, simultaneous composition and twenty-five scenes from the life of the Virgin<sup>84</sup> have led to frequent comparisons of this panel

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<sup>80</sup> Ziemba 2013, p. 304.

<sup>81</sup> 81 x 189 cm, Alte Pinakothek, Munich. First and foremost see: Lane 2009, pp. 155–162 and no. 45. See also: Ziemba 2015, pp. 750–752. Both studies cite extensive bibliographical records.

<sup>82</sup> According to records of an inscription on the non-existent original frame, it was donated in 1480 by Pieter Bultnyc and his wife Katharina van Riebecke to the Chapel of Our Lady in Bruges, which was the chapel of the tanner's guild. Until the 18<sup>th</sup> c. *The Seven Joys of Mary* served as an altar panel.

<sup>83</sup> Hull 2005, pp. 29–50. Apart from the idea of spiritual pilgrimages, some scholars have tried to prove that the medieval stage and mystery plays provided the inspiration for *The Seven Joys of Mary*, see: *Alte Pinakothek Munich* 1986, p. 350.

<sup>84</sup> It is worth emphasizing that the scenes in *The Seven Joys of Mary* do not include those depicting the childhood, manhood and Passion of Christ. Memling concentrates on events prior to and shortly after the birth of Christ and those taking place after His death on the Cross. For a detailed description of scenes present in this widely known painting, see: *Alte Pinakothek Munich* 1986, pp. 348–350.

painting not only to *The Passion of Christ* from the Sabauda Gallery, but also to other passion panoramas.

Ziembra's idea was to have a closer look at what Memling actually shows in the panel, his method for organizing the landscape of the Holy Land. Ziembra provides a detailed geographical and topographical description of *The Seven Joys of Mary* and compares it to Memling's presentation of the Holy Land a few years earlier in *The Passion of Christ*. He notices that in each panel, the Holy Land is shown in a completely different way.<sup>85</sup> It can therefore be concluded that Memling – working on both simultaneous compositions, usually linked by scholars with the idea of spiritual pilgrimage – was not interested in presenting the Holy Land accurately. The painter shapes the view of the Holy Land in a completely free manner, and in fact creates a somewhat fantastic landscape, which in both cases is simply subordinated to the needs of the story the painter seeks to show.<sup>86</sup> Ziembra also accentuates the genesis of *The Seven Joys of Mary*. The discussed painting was commissioned in order to be used during prayers for the souls of the dead, for whom each day special masses were to be celebrated. So Pieter Bultnyc and his wife Katharina van Riebecke, the patrons of the painting, had different intentions regarding the function of the painting.<sup>87</sup>

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There are other works of art related to late medieval passion panoramas and important in the context of the functions of such panoramas. Their composition and iconography adhere to the schema of passion panoramas, but, as in the case of *The Jerusalem Triptych* or *The Seven Joys of Mary*, it is not obvious that they fulfilled the same or even similar roles. Among many works of art discussed by researchers working on late medieval passion panoramas, illuminated manuscripts play an important role.

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<sup>85</sup> "Imaginowana tu topografia zupełnie nie zgadza się z tą, którą Memling wykreował w *Pasji Turyńskiej*, w tym, że sam Syjon wchodził w obszar zabudowy Jerozolimy, tu zaś stał się odrębnym miastem. Niby utrzymał tę samą sekwencję wzgórz okalających miasto: Golgota, Syjon, Góra Oliwna, ale w panoramie monachijskiej wszystkie one, zamiast otaczać Stare Miasto, znalazły się po jednej jego stronie. Powtórzył w obu obrazach także motyw identycznej, zaopatrzonej w uszakowe lukarny and bębniem, kopuły w budowlu na Wzgórzu Świątynnym, ale innych nie starał się nawet upodobnić"; Ziembra 2015, pp. 751–752.

<sup>86</sup> "Ten sam malarz zupełnie swobodnie podchodził do topografii Ziemi Świętej, kształtował ją wedle uznania, całkowicie fantastycznie, zależnie od tego, jaką historię i w jakim układzie chronologicznym chciał przedstawić"; Ziembra 2015, p. 752.

<sup>87</sup> The aims of the sponsorship are confirmed by the archival records of tanners guild in Bruges. The inscription on the original frame is another proof that the intentions of the funders of the painting were far from the idea of promoting spiritual pilgrimage.



There have been suggestions that panel paintings like *The Passion of Christ* from Leuven, Toruń or Turin owe a lot to the tradition of miniature painting, while there is a considerable number of manuscripts with scenes of Christ's Passion presented in simultaneous manner. Among many examples, we may cite the so called *Sobieski Hours*, from the workshop of the Master of the Bedford Hours (c. 1430–1440),<sup>88</sup> in which numerous full-page miniatures are multi-scenic and simultaneous in composition, or the miniatures in *Vita Christi* [et] *La Vengeance* in the collection of The Princes Czartoryski Library in Kraków, created in times contemporaneous to Memling's *The Passion of Christ* and *The Seven Joys of Mary*, that is in 1478.<sup>89</sup> These works have been treated as a less important reference for late medieval passion panoramas. Works executed in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century were simply treated as a proof that simultaneous composition mixed with passion iconography was applied to art earlier than when Memling did it (and that he may have been inspired by them to a certain degree). Works made after the time when *The Passion of Christ* from the Sabauda Gallery was produced did not usually fall within the scope of interests of scholars writing on late medieval passion panoramas. Rather, the opposite seems true – those who analyzed these illuminated manuscripts mentioned late medieval passion panoramas as an important visual reference and proof for the vitality of certain artistic tendencies.<sup>90</sup> It is also worth noting that in the case of miniatures resembling late medieval passion panoramas in composition and iconography, we usually deal with much simpler compositions, usually containing a small number of scenes (1–3) and taking place not in elaborate architectonical structures comprising a view of the city but in single edifices, sometimes placed side by side, geometrically.

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However, there is one illuminated manuscript which seems to be a really important reference for late medieval passion panoramas – the so called *Hours of Saluzzo* from The British Library, commissioned by Aimée de Saluces, the countess of Polignac, and executed in Savoy around 1462–1472 (London, British Library, MS Add. 27697).

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<sup>88</sup> Manuscript on vellum, 234 folios, 28,6 x 19,7 x 6,5 cm, The Royal Collection, London. Among many scholars, Maurits Smeyers lists *Sobieski Hours* as an illuminated manuscript proving that simultaneity was used as an artistic manner long before Memling: Smeyers 1997, p. 180.

<sup>89</sup> Manuscript on velum, 40 x 27 x 10 cm, The Princes Czartoryski Library in Kraków, Ms. Czart. 2919. Katarzyna Płonka-Bałus, who analysed the manuscript in depth, compared its miniatures to Memling's passion panorama: Płonka-Bałus 2004.

<sup>90</sup> Katarzyna Płonka-Bałus, who analyses the aforementioned Ms. Czart. 2919 in depth, compares some of its miniatures to Memling's passion panorama: Płonka-Bałus 2004, passim.

[il. 28, 29] We are talking about only one full page decoration of fol. 210<sup>r</sup>, presenting nineteen scenes of Christ's Passion (as well as six genre motifs) in and outside of a carefully depicted Jerusalem. Apart from them, the miniature consists of three separate scenes portraying the time after the Resurrection. Close to the composition of late medieval passion panoramas, fol. 210<sup>r</sup> aroused the interest of Kathryn Rudy, who devoted considerable space to discussing it in her article *Virtual Pilgrimage Through the Jerusalem Cityscape*.<sup>91</sup>

Kathryn Rudy provides basic information about the manuscript<sup>92</sup> and fol. 210<sup>r</sup> but above all analyzes the iconography of the latter, emphasizing that main scenes of the Passion are separated from events of the Resurrection, which, for her, is a proof that the artist wanted to show that they occur at a different time.<sup>93</sup> Comparing the miniature with *The Passion of Christ* from Baltimore, she points out that simultaneous composition in fol. 210<sup>r</sup> was designed for a single viewer, who should have good eyesight, considering the size of the depiction. The viewer should also be eager to follow subsequent scenes, and should be involved deeply in this activity.

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Such activity, that is, analyzing subsequent scenes of the Passion, was, according to Rudy, closely related to spiritual pilgrimage, which is suggested by some iconographic details as well. As she writes: "Another striking difference between Baltimore painting and the Saluzzo miniature is the presence of pilgrims. The miniaturist portrays several modern pilgrims who walk along the city roads. While the figures from sacred history wear floor-length robes, the modern figures are easily distinguishable in their half-length tunics. Two women and two men, dressed in fifteenth-century garb and wearing wide hats and carrying staffs, are pilgrims who follow a path down the left side of the image to begin a journey within the city walls. They are about to join Christ, who rides a donkey toward the gate represented at the lower left corner, to quite literally walk in his footsteps. A fifth contemporary figure stands inside the portal near the Betrayal; this pilgrim points to the Flagellation, as if to draw our attention to it. A sixth figure,

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<sup>91</sup> Rudy 2014, pp. 385–387.

<sup>92</sup> Among other studies on *Hours of Saluzzo* and its maker, see: Avril 1989, pp. 9–34; Avril 1990, p. 54; Avril 2006, pp. 352–354; Avril, Reynaud 1993, pp. 213, 216; Bachelin-Deflorenne 1867; Backhouse 1985, p. 9; Backhouse 1997, pp. 186–187; Backhouse 2004, pp. 98; Caldera 2006, pp. 333–355; Edmunds 1990, p. 216; Griseri 1997, pp. 693–694; Lorentz 1999, p. 31; Millar 1933, p. 37; Quasimodo 2002, pp. 20, 27–28, 37–38; Romano 1996, pp. 190–209; Saroni 2004, pp. 52, 98, 117–119, 201; Sterling 1972, p. 20.

<sup>93</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 386.

most likely another pilgrim to judge from his wide-brimmed hat, stands at the lower right corner, about to pass through the open wall to be with Christ, who looks intently at him while buckling under the weight of his cross. The pilgrims appear either walking along Christ's path or witnessing his torments first-hand. They create a spatial link between the sites – the Mount of Olives and the interior of the city, connected by the Golden Gate – and, at the same time, they mediate between the fifteenth century and the sacred virtual reality. The contemporary pilgrims stand as proxies for the viewer.”<sup>94</sup>

Among other arguments that fol. 210<sup>r</sup> was created with the intention of using the miniature as a tool for spiritual journeys to Jerusalem, there are also architectural units which “function as tiny theatres [...]. These theatres conform to recommendations in treatises of the *ars mnemonica* because they carefully organize the visual information, which seems bustling and haphazard at first. The viewer retraces her steps through a series of rooms holding memory triggers from, or rather images of, the Passion. As she does so, she can embroider the images – which function as mnemonic tags – with a detailed account of Christ's suffering.”<sup>95</sup> Rudy emphasizes the vertical axis of the composition, which accentuates the most important events of Christ's Passion; she also addresses another particularly important issue, the placement of the miniature within the book as a whole. According to Rudy, the miniature in fol. 210<sup>r</sup> initiates a text particularly associated with pilgrimage.<sup>96</sup>

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Bearing in mind the issue of pilgrimage in relation to late medieval works of art, another group of objects should be included into the discussion of passion panoramas: works of art which documented real pilgrimages to the Holy Land that were undertaken and completed by their patrons. First and foremost, a panel painting from the collection of Foundation Schloss Friedenstein Gotha and the tapestry *The Holy Places of Jerusalem (Die heiligen Stätten Jerusalems)*, in the collection of the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich, deserve special attention. In both works, Christ's Passion is represented simultaneously in and outside Jerusalem. Apart from passion iconography, both works feature some motifs and figures relating to the events which took place in the Holy Land.

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<sup>94</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 387.

<sup>95</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 387.

<sup>96</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 387.

*The Passion of Christ* kept in Schlossmuseum Gotha is particularly interesting in this regard. [il. 30] An engrossing image crowded with numerous details and inscriptions places in front of viewers' eyes a depiction of Jerusalem, pushed back to the left, in the surrounding landscape of the Holy Land captured from a bird's eye perspective. The painter combined the contemporary view of the city and the Holy Land with historical scenes of Christ's Passion. Jerusalem is depicted with the utmost care. The town is surrounded by city walls; its vaulted roofs, cupolas and some tower-like structures, more elaborate and ornamented, are rendered in such a way as to give an image of an oriental, or in any case remote, place. The rendering of the architecture suggests that we deal here with a depiction inspired by visual or textual sources and not by pure imagination. Scenes of Christ's Passion are depicted in and outside the city walls. Those set within the walls represent various Stations of the Cross, leading to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The way the local topography is rendered is far from conventional or imaginary. The artist convincingly depicts the hills, mountains and especially greenery, which give the impression of natural surroundings. He captures various holy sites, identified by inscriptions. In the background, one may see Bethlehem, the Jordan River, Mount Sinai and the Mount of Olives. The painting is crowded with figures entering the town, walking around and engaged in everyday business. The viewer's attention is seized by a Venetian galley depicted on the right. It is approaching the shore, with pilgrims traveling to Jaffa aboard. On the left, one may see a kneeling figure, Frederic the Wise, the Elector of Saxony, who is identified by an inscription and his coat-of-arms. With his hands in the gesture of prayer and his helmet on the ground, he is immersed in contemplation. The painting constitutes a memorial to Frederic's pilgrimage to the Holy Land, which he completed in 1493 with a large entourage. His route is one of best documented travels of the representatives of German lands to the Holy Land.<sup>97</sup> The painting was based on the map of Palestine included in the *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (published in 1486) by Bernhard von Breidenbach.

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<sup>97</sup> It is worth mentioning that the reverse side of the panel features likenesses of the members of the wealthy family of Ketzl from Nuremberg. The artist shows eight members of this noble family, who undertook a pilgrimage to Jerusalem between the years 1389 and 1503. Among them was Wolf Ketzl, who was one of the pilgrims accompanying Frederic the Wise. While the patron and the painter of this panel are anonymous, it is supposed that the painting was commissioned by some member of the Ketzl family and presented to Frederic the Wise as a commemoration of his pilgrimage and Wolf Ketzl's participation in this adventurous journey.

The tapestry commonly known as *The Holy Places of Jerusalem* has been the subject of detailed study by Heim Goren.<sup>98</sup> [il. 31] The fabric, measuring 4.25 x 5.17 m, was commissioned by Otto Heinrich, alias Ottheinrich, as a commemoration of his pilgrimage to the Holy land in 1521. Ottheinrich, then an heir to the throne of Palatinate, ordered the tapestry twenty years later, in 1541. It must be noticed here that at the same time, he also commissioned another fabric – a tapestry representing *The Places of the Holy Land* (*Die Stätten des Heiligen Landes*), now in the collection of Schlossmuseum Neuburg. This one has been described by scholars as a cartographic picture of the country as seen from West to East, a narrated map of the Holy Land.

As Heim Goren convincingly proves, the representation of Jerusalem depicted in the fabric under consideration might be treated as a ‘cartographic picture’ of the sacred town. He discusses the fabric in the context of maps, manuscripts and illustrated books produced by those who went on pilgrimages to the Holy Land. The scholar pays particular attention to the map documenting the pilgrimage of Bernhard von Breidenbach, a Mainz clergyman, and his painter Erhard Reuwich, published in the abovementioned *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam*. He points to similarities and differences between both representations, concluding that they resulted from different intentions: von Breydenbach’s aim of producing a useful guide, and Ottheinrich’s of producing an artistic commemoration.

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The artist responsible for the production of the fabric, Matthias Gerung, joined together two temporal planes, one historical and one contemporary, in it. The image presented consists of more than twenty scenes, representing the events before and after the death of Christ. These scenes are placed inside and outside the very meticulous depiction of the town of Jerusalem. We deal here with an extremely detailed depiction of the town, rendering numerous architectural details that allow precise reconstruction of the topography of Christ’s Passion. Moreover, the artist includes nine figures of pilgrims: bareheaded, armed and presenting their coats-of-arms. On the right side, at the very beginning of this kneeling procession, one may observe Ottheinrich himself, leading the group of courtiers and servants who accompanied him on his seven-month journey to Jerusalem. Those who had passed away before the tapestry was woven are shown with a red Jerusalem Cross over their heads. This depiction of Jerusalem, based on available visual and textual sources, and probably on Ottheinrich’s diary and

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<sup>98</sup> Goren 2007; Goren 2014.

sketches (since lost), represents a ‘documentary commemoration’ that reveals much about early modern notions of the Holy City.

The previously described work of art, the one in the Schloss Friedenstein collection, did not escape Goren’s attention either. The scholar sees a close relationship between the two works, originating from their status as documents of completed pilgrimages to the Holy Land.

All of the works of art discussed above are focused on Christ’s Passion; sometimes also present events from His childhood or the time after Resurrection. In all of them, the view of Jerusalem and the Holy Land is an important feature, not to mention simultaneous composition. But there are also paintings in which simultaneous composition, numerous events, and a depiction of the city are present, but neither Jerusalem nor scenes from Christ’s life are shown. Up to now, scholars interested in late medieval passion panoramas have not included such paintings into their studies. What we have in mind are paintings with the life story of i.e. saints or biblical figures other than Christ or the Virgin Mary. Such works of art link simultaneity and numerous scenes with the view of a city, but this city has nothing in common with the Holy Land.

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One especially interesting and less commonly known painting that should be included in the group of pieces combining the manner of simultaneously composed and continuous narration with a depiction of the city is *The Martyrdom of Saints Crispin and Crispinian*.<sup>99</sup> [il. 32] This altarpiece, authored by Aert van den Bossche, active in Brussels between the years 1490–1494, unfortunately does not exist as a single piece. Its panels became dispersed at some unknown point in time and in unknown circumstances, and are now kept in different collections. The main part is housed in the National Museum in Warsaw, while the right wing is in Musée de la Ville de Bruxelles, and the right wing reverse side, featuring portraits of the donors, is in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow; the whereabouts of the left wings are unknown. The retable was commissioned in 1490 by a Brussels-based brotherhood of shoemakers; finished in 1494, it was placed in the brotherhood’s splendid chapel in the Franciscan church (later St. Nicolaus’s Church) in Brussels.

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<sup>99</sup> Ziemia 2015, pp. 677–680; Benesz, Kluk 2016, p. 81. For further reading, see bibliography listed by Ziemia 2008b, pp. 390–393, and note 656.

The painting narrates the story of Crispin and Crispinian, a tale of long-lasting torment consisting of numerous episodes. The subject of the painting was not recognized until the year 1965, when Krystyna Secomska published a meticulous study on the iconography of the altarpiece.<sup>100</sup> Drawing on a close reading of medieval hagiography, Secomska rejected the previous identification of the theme – the Martyrdom of the Thebes Legion – in favor of the narrative of suffering of Crispin and Crispinian. The two saints, whose story dates back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, enjoyed great popularity in the Late Middle Ages. The narrative of their passion was written down in the 13<sup>th</sup> century by Vincent de Beauvais in his *Speculum historiale*.

The twin brothers Crispin and Crispinian originated from a noble Roman family. They converted to Christianity and left for Gaul to preach, settling in what is now Soissons. They worked as shoemakers and gave shoes for free to all who became Christians. Their activity was denounced to the Emperor Maximilian, who was passing by the town. Having refused to renounce their faith, the two brothers were placed in the hands of the prefect Rictiovarus and subjected to a set of sophisticated tortures. Some of these were directly related to their handicraft. Consecutive episodes were located in a vast landscape. The viewer may observe here at least three levels: the foreground with huge figures, the middle part of rocks, and the background with an urban landscape – a town covered in fog depicted on the left, with a frozen river where several figures slide, a vale and mountains. The artist was meticulous as far as depicting the narrative of martyrdom was concerned. Starting from the left, one may observe two naked men tied to the tree as well as the tormentors, one of whom is raising a whip while the second is engaged in preparing a tool of flagellation. In the background one may see the tormentors inserting needles or awls under the martyrs' nails, which seems a literal reference to their occupation. The central part is reserved for the crucial moment of martyrdom. Here, the flaying of Crispin and Crispinian is depicted. The myrmidons take off the straps of skin from the brothers' backs. In the foreground, between these two consecutive scenes, the painter shows Rictiovarus with his assistants. On the right, one may see the emperor together with his forces. The author also included those episodes and motifs mentioned in the narrative of torment which proved the presence of divine powers. One of the tormentors is crouching on the ground and his body bristles with needles which miraculously "jump out" of the victims' bodies. Prefect Rictiovarus is touching his eye because of a drop of hot lead

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<sup>100</sup> Secomska 1965. For all research results previous to Secomska's conclusion, see references in her article.

which has dropped inside it. This motif is another reference to the suffering of Crispin and Crispinian: one of the stages of their torment was a bath in hot, melted lead.

Researchers emphasize the painter's great attention to details. Some of them perceive its "tissue" – that is, multiple motifs, elements and figures crowding the space – as somehow related to the tradition of rich tapestries produced in Brussels at that time. While the high level of realism, the sophistication of the drawing, the colour palette and meticulous rendering of all the elements of the world depicted are considered typical of Netherlandish painting in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century, the composition of the landscape – expanded, divided into levels, and spacious – is considered a novelty. Similarly, the well-planned narrative rendered with dramatic verve is considered quite extraordinary.

In his excellent 2015 study of Netherlandish painting, Antoni Ziemba devotes some passages to *The Martyrdom of Crispin and Crispinian*.<sup>101</sup> First of all, he traces how the depiction of the martyrdom narrative is organized and how the viewer's eyes move to follow the consecutive episodes. What he actually identifies is a "zigzag" path of looking determined by the chronology of the torment, jumping from the background to the foreground. He concluded that the painter created a well-thought-out composition in terms of both narrative and spatial relations. "The narrative is continuous, though simultaneous," Ziemba writes.<sup>102</sup> The painter is faithful to a single plane, he recounts only "history," "the present time for Crispin and Crispinian," and does not escape to the future (the viewer's present time) or to the past.

Ziemba points out the theatricalization of the scene, the consecutive episodes of which are rendered in a way similar to the structure of mystery plays performed in numerous mansions. The dependence of the composition and structure of the narrative on the theatrical stage, that of mystery plays, is indeed crucial in this painting. Researchers had previously discussed this issue. Some of them even link it directly to the practice of performing mystery plays in the space of an urban landscape. According to Emil Mâle, the iconography of this legend owed its popularity to the text of the 15<sup>th</sup> century plays. Moreover, *The Mystère de Crispin and Crispinian* was performed by the brotherhood of shoemakers in Paris in the years 1458–1459.

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<sup>101</sup> Ziemba 2015, p. 678–680.

<sup>102</sup> Ziemba 2015, p. 679.



*The Martyrdom of Saints Crispin and Crispinian* is a significant proof that simultaneity, multi-scenic-narration and panoramic landscape with a city view are not features that appeared in their full scale only in late medieval passion panoramas. Paintings presenting the lives and deeds of saints or biblical figures like Job were being made in the same way in the last quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. *The Martyrdom of Saints Crispin and Crispinian* is not the only example; in fact, such compositions were quite popular at that time. Evidence for this is found in better commonly known works like the *Triptych with scenes from the life of Job* from the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Cologne (1466–1500)<sup>103</sup> [il. 33], *St. Sebastian Altar* by Meister der Heiligen Sippe (1493–1494),<sup>104</sup> also from the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Cologne, *The Life and Miracles of St. Godelieve* (1475–1500) by Master of Saint Godelieve Legend, in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York,<sup>105</sup> [il. 34] or *The Legend of the Holy Hermit Anthony* (1500–1510) by Meister der HI Sippe, displayed in the Alte Pinakothek, Munich.<sup>106</sup> [il. 35] Especially the last painting, characterized by complex multi-scenic narration and a vast landscape, is a good proof that late medieval passion panoramas functioned in a broad visual context, broader than is generally claimed.

It will not be an exaggeration to write that all works of art discussed above significantly affect our understanding of late medieval passion panoramas. Contrary to widespread analyses and interpretations, there are a lot of panel paintings, winged altarpieces, wall paintings, woodcuts, illuminated manuscripts, and tapestries produced before and after the first known passion panorama. Some of them are characterized by analogical composition and iconography, some are characterized by analogical composition with divergent iconography. What is particularly important is that most of them, while made in various media and functioning in varied, sometimes highly diverse communities and regions of medieval Europe, must have been used in a different way than late medieval passion panoramas. As we shall see in the third chapter, these facts should be taken into consideration while thinking of the background, function and reception of paintings such as those from Pont-Saint-Esprit or Baltimore.

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<sup>103</sup> Hiller, Vey 1969, pp. 82–86; Syfer d'Olne et. al 2006, pp. 217–218.

<sup>104</sup> Teplitzky 1996.

<sup>105</sup> Clason Sperling 1998, pp. 29, 125–128, 400; Falque 2018, passim, esp. pp.199–200; Wehle, Salinger 1947, pp. 84–88.

<sup>106</sup> *Alte Pinakothek Munich* 1986, pp. 325–326 (with an excellent description of the iconography of the painting). See also: Gerat 2013, passim.



### 3.

## **Background, function and reception of late medieval passion panoramas**

**R**eflection on the background, function and reception of late medieval passion panoramas should start from a thorough comparison of all seven paintings. As we saw, the panels belonging to this group that have been preserved up to our time vary considerably. The smallest, from Baltimore, can be held in the hands. The biggest, from Toruń, is a huge panel painting over two meters high and two meters wide, definitely intended for public presentation and for a wider audience.

The number of scenes of Christ's Passion ranges from eight (the passion panorama from Baltimore) to twenty-three (the passion panoramas from Lisbon, Toruń and Turin). There is no doubt that the story of Christ's Passion is the main theme of all late medieval passion panoramas. However, the narrative based on Biblical accounts and i.e. Passion tracts does not always constitute the main reference point for the viewer. In the panels from Antwerp, Leuven, and Turin, the scene of the Flagellation is put in the center of the composition, with emphasis on the Body of Christ. To some extent, this is also true of the panel from Pont-Saint-Esprit. The Flagellation is not exactly in the center of the composition, but has a prominent location, that is, in the interior of the biggest and most impressive architectural structure, flanked by massive towers. Moreover, the fact that donors seem not to be looking, as in the passion panoramas from Turin or Toruń, at all of the events taking place in and around Jerusalem, but are concentrated precisely on the Flagellation (and, close behind it, the Crowning with Thorns) indicates that the whole story of Christ's Passion depicted in the panel should be perceived through the prism of the tormented, Holy Body of the Savior – an object of veneration.

The fact that in four out of seven late medieval passion panoramas, the Body of Christ is noticeably emphasized and treated as crucial to the meaning of the whole composition should be explicitly underlined. For decades, the panels belonging to this group were analyzed with the initial assumption that arranging scenes in chronological order was intended as the most important element in the process of reception of such paintings by their viewers, and that the Passion itself was the focal point of pious contemplation. The effort put by the viewer in correctly reconstructing the course of the story was treated as the main act leading to the spiritual benefits to be had from late medieval passion panoramas. The viewer's attention and the story were not generally understood to be subordinated to the adoration of Christ's body.<sup>1</sup>

In the passion panoramas from Antwerp, Leuven, Pont-Saint-Esprit and Turin, the Body of Christ, emphasized compositionally, is incontestably their dominant element. On the other hand, Jerusalem, with its central motif of the Temple of Solomon, is central to the passion panorama from Lisbon. In this case, the whole narrative is subordinated to the area where the Passion of Christ took place. All painted scenes and all events from the Savior's salvific mission are important not only as a story that ensures the prospect of an eternal life, but first and foremost as a story which should be analyzed and experienced in its geographical and topographical context, as real pilgrims going to the Holy Land would do.

In fact only the panels from Baltimore and Toruń do not feature any central scene or motif that could organize the whole content and represent its essence. In these two cases, the story depicted is the most important, and all its components are of equal value. But still one must remember that the composition of the passion panorama from Baltimore, which consists of only eight scenes, enables the viewer to look at each scene separately, especially given that the view of Jerusalem is rather abstract in character, architectural structures are scant and all scenes are clearly visible, functioning in the foreground. The number of scenes and the scheme of their arrangement make it easier to array the story of Christ's Passion in chronological order too. Artistic solutions enabling the viewer to mentally create a linear narrative of Christ's Passion are not in fact typical for late medieval passion panoramas. Apart from the one from Baltimore, only *The Passion of Christ* painted by Hans Memling is conceived in a way which is, so

<sup>1</sup> In fact only Antoni Ziemia addresses the problem and explicitly writes that the iconography of the passion panorama from Leuven is subordinated to the Body of Christ and its adoration, see: Ziemia 2015, pp. 746–747.

to speak, user-friendly. Memling's artistic skills were good enough to present successive scenes of Christ's Passion in and outside Jerusalem in a convincing way. Spatial relations, proper proportions of human figures in relation to the urban structures of the Holy City, and a well-thought-out perspective make it relatively easy to arrange scenes of Christ's Passion in chronological order (which does not change the fact that the story was subordinated to the motif of the Body of Christ). Other panoramas, quite similar in terms of the number of events from Christ's Passion depicted, are not as elaborate and advanced in their composition. As a result, in all of them the narration is chaotic and difficult to arrange in chronological order. For example *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń, painted by an artist who had evident problems with fixing the scale of objects, plants, trees, human figures and other elements in the painting, does not give viewers an opportunity to follow in the footsteps of Christ, or analyze His Passion closely and in accordance with the narration of the New Testament. The viewer stands in front of a painting in which numerous scenes of Christ's Passion are arranged chaotically in the space of Jerusalem and the surrounding area. The illusive nature of the belief that scenes of Christ's Passion depicted in late medieval passion panoramas were intended to be experienced by viewers in chronological order is evident from *The Passion of Christ* from Lisbon. In Marie-Léopoldine Lievens-de Waegh's book, in which she writes about this painting extensively, we find a graphic diagram with a line arranging successive scenes of Christ's Passion in chronological order.<sup>2</sup> Its tangled, sophisticated and complicated form should be treated as the best proof that the idea of arraying depicted scenes in chronological order was not as important for those responsible for the creation of late medieval passion panoramas as is commonly assumed.

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The way the Passion itself was perceived by viewers obviously must have had a lot in common with the way Jerusalem is shown in late medieval passion panoramas. The Holy City is an important motif but is depicted accurately, in a way resembling the real, historical city (as in the passion panorama from Lisbon), or is imaginative in character, combining Orientalized structures and decorations with buildings resembling Romanesque or late gothic structures in style (as in the passion panoramas from Turin and Antwerp). In one case (the passion panorama from Toruń), Jerusalem is simply depicted as a late gothic northern European city. Although the panel from Leuven presents a view of Jerusalem, generally depicted as a late gothic northern

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<sup>2</sup> Lievens-de Waegh 1991, p. 260, plate 4.

European city too, that view only takes up a small part of the background. The vast majority of space is taken up by decorative, independent architectural structures which have nothing in common with real buildings. These structures are mainly frames for single acts of Christ's Passion; they constitute a kind of background for episodes rather than giving an impression of a real or even imaginative panorama of the Holy City. This tendency is strengthened in the passion panoramas from Pont-Saint-Esprit and Baltimore, in which it is even hard to tell whether the architectural structures depicted create any convincing view of Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup> It seems unrealistic to think that widely divergent depictions of Jerusalem, sometimes not resembling any realistic city structure and having nothing in common with a real urban landscape, always pictured the Holy City and emphasized its importance in Christian thought and religious practice with the same intensity or in the same way.

Some late medieval passion panoramas feature extensive inscriptions, while others lack them. The passion panorama from M-Museum in Leuven has only letters accompanying each scene, probably referring the viewer to an unspecified text, which remains an enigma. *The Passion of Christ* from Lisbon has independent inscriptions, that is, describing scenes, actions and places shown in it. It is highly unlikely that they were referring the viewers to any text to be consulted while watching the painting. *The Passion of Christ* from Antwerp has only short indications informing the viewer which parts of the Holy Land are shown. In the panels from Turin, Toruń and Leuven, the Passion of Christ is enriched by numerous genre scenes, showing the daily life and activities of inhabitants of Jerusalem (Memling's panel) or various activities of dwellers on its outskirts (Toruń).<sup>4</sup> In the first case these people are involved in the main action, since Memling presents them as witnesses of Christ's Passion; in the second, they seem to be taken from the present, that is, from the time when the painting was produced. The artist responsible for the passion panorama in St. James's Church depicts laypeople and a Dominican monk who are not involved in the story of the Passion at all and who

<sup>3</sup> Also, the landscape and the world of nature in all late medieval passion panoramas are depicted conventionally. Apart from the panel held in the collection of the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Antwerp, in which at least one palm tree is painted accurately, there are no parts which even slightly evoke landscapes and i.e. plants of the Holy Land. In the most elaborate passion panorama, from Lisbon, wherein a topographical, historical view of Jerusalem is shown, the plants, trees and flowers, presented in a very detailed way, are European.

<sup>4</sup> In the passion panorama from Leuven only one such motif is depicted, close to *The Carrying of the Cross* scene. Two women selling goods from a booth and gesticulating expressively are shown close to the city gate. It is hard to say whether they take an active role in the action, commenting on events, or belong, as in the case of *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń, to the contemporary world of the viewer.

are busy with everyday, ordinary activities, associated more with the realities of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Europe than with the biblical or 15<sup>th</sup> century Holy Land.

In fact, the seven late medieval passion panoramas which have endured to our time do not form a consistent, homogeneous group of works of art. What links all these panels are: a) simultaneous composition, and b) Passion iconography. Their places of origin constitute another distinguishing factor of the group. Six out of seven are Netherlandish, and the seventh was produced by a Westphalian painter, trained in a region with a rich tradition of making simultaneous compositions and one influenced, in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, by the art of the Low Countries. Yet what is even more important than their region of origin is the fact that not all of them functioned or were used in their local context. If we can assume that the passion panoramas from Turin, Pont-Saint-Esprit, Baltimore, Leuven and Antwerp were originally in use in the Low Countries, the passion panoramas from Lisbon and Toruń definitely functioned and were used in different parts of Europe, namely, the Kingdoms of Portugal and Poland, respectively. It would be irrational to think of late medieval Europe, from the Iberian Peninsula to the vast territories of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, as a place where religious habits and traditions, as well as new religious trends, were the same or occurred at the same time with the same intensity. The context of the functioning of late medieval passion panoramas had to be different depending on where they were used. It varied beyond the broad, pan-European context. Even if we assume that most late medieval passion panoramas functioned primarily in the Low Countries, where they were produced, it is unlikely that all fulfilled the same function in the same way. Scholars have mostly paid attention only to works of art which were produced in the Low Countries or have pointed out that such compositions appeared for the first time in neighboring territories of North-Western Germany, with Cologne as the focal artistic center. At first glance, such a point of view seems fully plausible, since all late medieval passion panoramas were produced within this particular region. Furthermore, this part of medieval Europe had a strong and varied tradition of organizing mystery plays,<sup>5</sup> commonly treated as a point of reference for paintings like the one from Toruń or Lisbon. Apart from a rich variety of theatrical activities, specific manifestations of devotion and pious acts, usually linked with the idea of spiritual pilgrimage, were

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<sup>5</sup> See first and foremost: Butterworth, Normington 2014, Hüsken 1997, Linke 1993, Muir 1997, Nijsten 1997, Strietman 1993, Strietman 2008, Trowbridge 2000, Tydeman 2001.

typical for these regions throughout the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup> The relative concentration of the area in which similar tendencies occurred more or less at the same time fostered the idea that late medieval passion panoramas should always be linked with the art and religious culture of the Low Countries and surrounding regions. Nonetheless, this coherent and widely disseminated concept only applies to a limited number of works of art whose main feature is simultaneous composition and multi-scenic Passion iconography, combined with a more or less elaborate view of Jerusalem. However, it is important to bear in mind that there are dozens of works of art, made in different techniques and different dimensions, which should be included in our reflection on the background, function and reception of late medieval passion panoramas. Some of them are, in iconographical terms, really close to the panels we are interested in; some present stories enriched with scenes from earlier stages of Christ's life; some concentrate on the life of Mary or various saints; and there are also works of art commemorating or depicting real pilgrimages to the Holy Land, containing scenes typical for passion panoramas. The number of such works of art gives us reason to rethink the concept of passion panoramas' uniqueness.

First of all, the works of art discussed in the previous chapter are the proof that the practice of linking simultaneous composition with Passion iconography was much more widespread than is commonly accepted, and was applied not only to single-panel paintings but also to wall paintings, woodcuts and altarpieces throughout the whole 15<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Exactly the same subject, that is, subsequent stages of Christ's Passion taking place in and outside Jerusalem, but executed in different techniques, should be the starting point for reflection on whether all such compositions were intended to fulfill the same functions and to what extent the most widespread theories and ideas concerning late medieval passion panoramas are justified. Did the wall paintings from St. Nicholas' Church in Gdańsk, whose composition and iconography are almost exactly the same as in Memling's *The Passion of Christ* or *The Passion of Christ* from Pont-Saint-Esprit, fulfill the same function as these late medieval passion panoramas? Was this huge composition, painted in the choir of the Dominican church in Gdańsk, the largest city in Pomerania, several dozen years earlier than the oldest passion panorama known, dependent on the mystery stage and intended for spiritual pilgrimage? Or was the local cultural, historical and

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<sup>6</sup> Beebe 2014a, Beebe 2014b, Bredow-Klaus 2009, Dansette 1979, Gelfand 2006, Gelfand 2008, Gibson 2011, Kemper 2006; Rudy 20011.



religious context different, and were these wall paintings, even if dependent on the Netherlandish artistic tradition, made by an artist from the Low Countries, intended to serve different purposes? What to do with the even earlier wall painting from Lažiště? Can the woodcut held in the collection of Bibliothèque Nationale de France, with the motif of the Body of Christ exactly in the center of the composition, be compared with the print from the Hood Museum of Art, also presenting the Passion of Christ, but this time definitely in the context of contemporary Jerusalem and pilgrimages to the Holy Land? What do both have in common, in terms of substance, with late medieval passion panoramas? Were the winged altarpieces, in which simultaneous composition and Passion iconography are mixed, used in the same way as late medieval passion panoramas? Were they used the same way in different places? Finally, if late medieval passion panoramas, as is commonly stressed, were a tool for spiritual pilgrimage, then what to do with panels which differ from them only in terms of iconography, showing not the Passion of Christ but, for example, the legend of the Holy Hermit Anthony?

Regarding the origin of late medieval passion panoramas it is worth stressing that the number of works of art in which simultaneous composition and passion iconography are combined is higher than scholars usually claim.<sup>7</sup> Most of them did not fall within the scope of interest of those writing on late medieval passion panoramas because of the fact that medieval art from Central Europe is scarcely present not only in studies of the paintings we are interested in but also in general studies of the art of the period. And works of art from the territory of Central Europe correct and revise our knowledge of the genesis and functions of late medieval panoramas. It would be highly problematic to omit or minimize the fact that in Gdańsk alone, one can find two wall paintings that appear to reference such panoramas directly and which predate them significantly, both made in the second quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The one from Lažiště in Czechia is even earlier and predates all examples of works of art mentioned above in the context of the oldest passion panorama by Memling. Furthermore, the *cortina* depicting Christ's Passion against a view of Jerusalem, commissioned by Jan Długosz in 1460, and made by the painter known under the name of Jakub z Sącza (Jacob from Sącz), confirms that the popularity of compositions similar to late medieval passion panoramas extended beyond the Low Countries. An overview of the

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<sup>7</sup> It is also important to recall Zygmunt Kruszelnicki's articles, in which he points out that the very idea of simultaneous compositions can be associated with 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century Italy, especially wall paintings. The practice of making such compositions could have spread to other parts of Europe, including the Low Countries and Germany, e.g., in Cologne. See the first chapter.

current state of research on late medieval passion panoramas and a brief presentation of works of art related to them impel us to ask a number of questions concerning those panoramas and invite us to re-examine the problem of the background, function and reception of paintings like the one painted by Memling. It seems that their role in medieval art and religious culture, as well as the context in which they functioned, were a bit different than is commonly assumed.

As was stressed in the first chapter, late medieval passion panoramas were for decades discussed in relation to the mystery stage. There is no need to review in detail all of the arguments against the suppositions that painters simply copied the reality of the medieval stage, a hypothesis first presented in the context of late medieval passion panoramas by Zygmunt Kruszelnicki.<sup>8</sup> In his articles, Kruszelnicki tries to be cautious in formulating broad conclusions, and does not rule out the possibility that there are some reflections of the mystery stage in *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń or Hans Memling's panel from Sabauda Gallery, but he stresses that these are rather impressionistic in character. First of all, simultaneity is not a sufficient argument for linking passion panoramas with the medieval theatre, especially that of the Low Countries or Germany. Kruszelnicki convincingly showed that simultaneity was a concept implemented in medieval painting much earlier than it was in medieval theatre practice. What is more, there are many examples of early simultaneous compositions in i.e. Italian art, and therefore from areas with practices not strictly comparable to those of the Low Countries or Westphalia, where passion panoramas were produced decades or centuries later. In fact, the popularity of simultaneous composition in late medieval Northern Europe could well be an effect of the influence of Italian art on Northern European art, a result of the transferring of iconographical patterns.

Kruszelnicki points out, too, that the composition of late medieval panoramas could not be a recreation of the reality of the medieval stage, since medieval painting and medieval theater were much more separated from each other than scholars like Émile Mâle or Alfred Rohde thought. And there was in fact no need to apply motifs known from medieval plays to painting, because the language of painting was at that time autonomous. Kruszelnicki is not entirely consistent in his arguments, since he writes that scenes like *The Arrest of Christ*, with the motif of Malchus whose lantern

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<sup>8</sup> Kruszelnicki 1959; Kruszelnicki 1968.

falls out of his hands, and *The Carrying of the Cross*, with St. Veronica holding the veil in her hands, could have roots in the medieval stage. The motifs known from late medieval passion panoramas which, according to Kruszelnicki, could have something in common with the mystery stage too, include their “rich gallery of garments”. In fact, Kruszelnicki does not give any specific arguments for such suppositions. On examining the iconography of all seven late medieval passion panoramas, it is reasonable to assert that it is typical for late medieval art. Amongst dozens of scenes of Christ’s Passion presented in them, there is not even a single one that could be found to deviate from established iconographical schemata. Moreover, all of them appeared in art and were codified much earlier than the emergence of the mystery stage.<sup>9</sup> In many cases, the portrayal of certain events from Christ’s salvific mission was shaped in early medieval times, a century or more before mystery plays were staged on the streets of Northern European cities. For these reasons, it is pointless to look for any direct influence of theatre on the painters responsible for panels like the one from Toruń. The direct influence of theatre on medieval painters represents a kind of myth. That does not mean that such influence did not exist at all, but it was sporadic and is relatively easy to decipher. When the painter or sculptor went beyond the usual way of presenting particular iconographical themes or motifs, one can assume that it was due to the adaptation of theatrical practices used during various theatricalized religious ceremonies or on the mystery stage. There is no doubt that fol. 14 of Ms. Lat. 166 from Bibliothèque Nationale de France by Jean Limbourg, showing *The Ascension*, was inspired directly by the practice of staging the ceremony of the Ascension, during which a wooden sculpture of the Resurrected Christ was hoisted up over the church’s vault.<sup>10</sup> The event does not take place outdoors, as usually shown in medieval art, but inside a church building. In comparison with one of the late medieval passion panoramas, the one from Toruń, here the Ascension is painted in a more typical way. A partially visible figure of Christ disappears in the clouds, Christ’s footprints are visible on a grassy hill, and Mary and the Apostles are gathered beneath. If this scene were set in a church interior, one could assume that the painter responsible for this passion panorama had in mind a theatricalized religious ceremony he attended. All other scenes in the passion panorama from Toruń are conventional in iconographical terms. The same applies to other passion panoramas. The only passion panorama

<sup>9</sup> Kopania 2004, pp. 10–13; Kopania 2008, 96–104.

<sup>10</sup> Haastrup 1987, p. 159; Kopania 2004, pp. 11–12 (with further bibliographical references). See also: Kopania 2017, pp. 10–11.

which may be treated as unconventional is the one from Lisbon, because of the great intensity of the scenes of Christ's Passion, achieved through the sheer number of people participating in the action. Still, it is hard to prove that this crowd should be linked with the theatre, actors and audience of mystery plays. There are medieval works of art which evoke associations with the mystery stage: for example, paintings showing the Ecce Homo scene, with dozens of people gathered not only in front of Christ and Pilate, but also standing along the street, sitting in the windows and waiting for successive stages of the action to occur.<sup>11</sup> Such iconographical aberrations, or rather, additions, do indeed give the impression of being inspired by the mystery stage.<sup>12</sup>

In the case of *The Passion of Christ* from Lisbon, it is questionable to claim that the iconography of each scene deviates substantially from the most widespread and common artistic solutions of the period in which this panorama was made. All scenes are crowded, all were thought to be elaborate and spectacular in terms of narration. This effect may, however, have been conceived by the painter, who wanted to present Christ's Passion in a remarkable way. Still, we have to bear in mind that this panel accentuates the scene of action, and the action itself is not clear or easy to arrange chronologically. There are no direct visual traces or suggestions of participants in a mystery play in the painting. One can say that the viewer could be treated as a potential spectator of such a play. But in this special case the painter has done everything possible to draw the spectator's attention to the Holy City, painting it in a highly realistic way. There are also detailed representations of places and actions.

<sup>11</sup> See: Kopania 2004, p. 12. Recently Laura Weigert has meticulously described and analyzed late medieval and renaissance French works of art whose iconography owes a lot to the medieval stage. *The View of Jerusalem*, the first canvas of the Vengeance series from Musée des Beaux-Arts in Reims (ca. 1500–1530, distemper on linien/flax cloth, approx. 3 x 3 meters), is particularly interesting from our perspective. Linked directly with the text of a mystery play, it shows a completely different reality than that presented in any late medieval passion panoramas. See: Weigert 2016, pp. 161–188. See also an article by Weigert in which she concentrates on relations between medieval tapestries and theatre: Weigert 2010, pp. 225–235.

<sup>12</sup> This could be true in the case of *Steinplatte mit Passionsszenen*, formerly from Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne [il. 18]. Scenes of Christ's Passion take place on the streets, squares, and on a balcony of the huge architectural structure in the center, which creates independent areas for each scene rather than a convincing view of Jerusalem. There are also numerous gaping onlookers sitting in windows as well as participants shown waiting for their turn to join the action. All these iconographic aberrations, and numerous details deviating from common artistic practice, could result from the influence of the mystery stage, especially since what we see in *Steinplatte* resembles the German practice of staging mystery plays, using existing architecture, elements of the buildings of the city and mansions set in the space of i.e. the market square. On German medieval theatre see: Butterworth, Normington 2014; Linke 1993; Michael 1971; Muir 1997; Tydeman 2001.

It is much easier to analyze *The Passion of Christ* from Lisbon as a topographical, geographical picture enriched with elaborate, independent narrative scenes than as a composition accentuating Christ's Passion and making it central for the viewer, who is supposed to arrange the story chronologically. Jerusalem, in this passion panorama, is at least as important as the Passion of Christ. Possible references to the medieval stage are vague.

Recently Jelle de Rock linked Memling's *The Passion of Christ* with theatrical activity of 15<sup>th</sup> century Bruges, and suggested that this passion panorama is directly influenced by stage settings presenting Jerusalem. In fact we deal here with a situation quite similar to the case of fol. 14 of Ms. Lat. 166 from Bibliothèque Nationale de France showing The Ascension. As Jelle de Rock writes: "The Bruges city accounts mention numerous (between 1399 and 1434 even annual) expenditures for a stage setting called the *Stede van Jerusalem* ('The City of Jerusalem'). This Bruges production must have gained a certain regional *renown*, as in 1432 the aldermen of the city of Aalst (Eastern Flanders) commissioned a replica. The 'City of Jerusalem' consisted of a float dressed with a huge scale model of the Holy City, made out of wood, iron and canvas. The structure rested on four iron-plated wheels and could be pulled through streets with the assistance of nine people. The Bruges accounts mention a total of 72 persons who were needed to operate the construction during the procession, suggesting a simultaneous performance of various scenes of the Passion cycle. On the occasion of the triumphal Entry of duke Philip the Good in Bruges on 22 February 1463, the municipal government hired the famous painter Petrus Christus to supervise the construction of two gigantic props installed in the streets, among which the city of Jerusalem. An early sixteenth-century illustration of a similar theatrical performance of the Holy City during the Entry of Charles V in Bruges in 1515, gives us a clue of what such a construction might have looked like. The scene was made by the Castilian nation and represented the city of Jerusalem as an ensemble of painted buildings and towers, very similar to Memling's *Turin Passion*."<sup>13</sup>

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At first glance, such a supposition seems to be legitimate. Memling, a potential participant in events such as those described above, was inspired by what he saw, that is a simultaneous performance of various scenes of Christ's Passion taking place in Jerusalem, using elaborately prepared stage machinery. The conventions

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<sup>13</sup> Rock de 2019, pp. 59–60.

of the performance became a kind of pattern directly transposed onto the painting. The main problem with such presumptions is that their authors fail to consider the possibility that it was not the painter who was inspired by theatrical solutions but those responsible for preparing the performance who tried to copy a reality known to them from various paintings.

Late medieval painters were much more independent in their work than has commonly been thought. Meg Twycross states this succinctly and clearly: “The relation between medieval art and medieval drama is a perennially fascinating and contentious one. We would no longer declare sanguinely with Émile Mâle that fifteenth-century artists were so affected by the mystery plays that when they came to represent the same scenes, *ils peignaient donc ce qu’ils avaient vu*. The relationship between the two are more subtle and complex than that, besides being based on the false and modern premise that good artists copy life: most artists, unromantically, tended to copy other artists. Just because an image is lively, it does not necessarily come from life – and liveliness is no proof that it comes from the theater.”<sup>14</sup> To sum up: the main principle is that medieval works of art are dependent on the mystery stage, because their iconography deviates substantially from well-established patterns. When we can spot deviations from common iconographical rules, we may think that the author of a specific work was influenced by theatre or simply wanted to include some components of theatrical performance, that is, the mystery play. The dozens of scenes of Christ’s Passion presented in late medieval passion panoramas are all typical for medieval art and fit perfectly well into the iconographic patterns of that time.

Many misinterpretations relating to alleged dependence of medieval art on theatre are the result of failure to consider the possibility that medieval art and theatre could use the same modes of representations to present the same things. Violent, emotional gestures and movements, as well as i.e. symbolic clothing, were typical for both late medieval art and theatre. The dynamics of the stage action went parallel to the dynamics of the composition and details of i.e. paintings. And in both cases such modes of representation fulfilled the same functions. The brutality, vigor and enthusiasm characterizing the tormentors of Christ contrasted with the stillness, submissiveness and humility of the Saviour, creating powerful images of the Passion.

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<sup>14</sup> Twycross 1991, p. 1. See also: Ferre 2010; Meyer 1886, pp. 409–439; Rohde 1926; Touber 1984, pp. 657–661.

In that way, the magnitude of evil deeds clashed with the magnitude of the love and mercy of Christ suffering for mankind.<sup>15</sup>

The symbolic clothing fulfilled the same function. It was used to mark the tormentors of Christ as bad people and Christ himself, along with other positive characters, as good people. The same methods were used in the medieval theatre. The raiment of the tormentors contrasted with the raiment of Christ, Mary and the saints. In medieval art and theatre Christ and His apostles, in contrast to the tormentors, are dressed in long, flowing robes, whose colors are soft and neutral, and whose cut is simple. Bad people's garments are strongly fanciful, sometimes even bizarre; their cut is unusual, and the colors are intense and patchy. Usually their costumes are tight-fitting, accentuating parts of the body, or torn, showing their calves, belly, or buttocks. Their headwear is strange, exotic or atypical (or both) in shape, their armor incomplete or very rich and full of ornaments.<sup>16</sup> In every late medieval passion panorama, we find this system of reinforcing the narrative, enriching the meaning of each scene and the whole story. As this system was typical both for medieval art and theatre, we may assume that potential viewers of panel paintings we are interested in could link them with the theatre on the basis of simple associations. Viewers of late medieval passion panoramas could be active in various fields of religious life, and manifestations of their faith and devotion could reflect numerous religious trends. Meditating on the Passion of Christ could take various forms. It could be associated with panel paintings, altarpieces, sculptures, illuminated books, prints etc. Potential viewers of late medieval passion panoramas could attend mystery plays as well as theatricalized liturgical ceremonies.<sup>17</sup> In fact, the sum of their private artistic and religious experiences created the background for viewing the paintings we are interested in. However, it should be emphasized once again that there are no direct indications in their composition or iconography that such paintings were influenced by the reality of the medieval stage. They might have drawn nothing directly from it.

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<sup>15</sup> See especially: Marrow 1979; Mellinkoff 1993.

<sup>16</sup> On the subject of the clothing of Christ's tormentors and various theological, ideological, juridical, and social contexts, see: Bayless 2007, pp. 280–306; Dittmeyer 2014; Groebner 2004; Jaritz 1993; Kocher 1990, pp. 131–191; Kopania 2012, pp. 61–72; Marrow 1979; Marrow 2008; Mellinkoff 1993; Mellinkoff 2004; Pochat 1997.

<sup>17</sup> On different types of such ceremonies see: Kopania 2017, pp. 6–17 (with extensive bibliographical references).

At the same time, it is possible that their viewers, being familiar with mystery plays, compared them with the scenic action they had seen therein.<sup>18</sup> Yet we must remember that the experiences of viewers of late medieval passion panoramas could vary. In contrast to the widespread and rich tradition of organizing theatricalized liturgical ceremonies,<sup>19</sup> there are no indications or archival sources which enable us to theorize about staging mysteries in the Kingdom of Poland, especially in the region of Pomerania. In fact – apart from one short and enigmatic reference concerning 14<sup>th</sup> century Kraków<sup>20</sup> – there are no archival sources which prove that mystery plays were performed in the vast territory of the Kingdom of Poland.<sup>21</sup> *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń, even if we assume that its creator was to some degree inspired by the mystery stage,<sup>22</sup> probably did not evoke associations with the theatre. For viewers of the painting living in Pomerania, the mystery stage was not an important component of their religious life, if it featured at all. The same can be said about works of art similar in terms of composition and iconography, like the wall paintings from Gdańsk,

<sup>18</sup> Recently Paola Ventrone pointed out that there are no grounds for seeing direct influence of theatre on *The Passion of Christ* from the Sabauda Gallery. Ventrone sees *The Passion of Christ*, just like *The Seven Joys of Mary*, as panels useful in the context of *ars memorativa*: “[...] Sebbene la loro suggestiva impostazione spaziale e diegetica abbia spesso indotto gli storici a riconoscerci un’influenza dei misteri, a mio avviso queste opere non volevano comunicare un rapporto di rispecchiamento fra rappresentazione e pittura, ma, piuttosto, impiegavano mezzi espressivi in parte analoghi, e legati all’ *ars memorativa*, allo scopo di indurre la *pietas* per favorire la contrizione dei fedeli. Erano, in altri termini, ‘immagini di memoria’”; Ventrone 2016, p. 327.

<sup>19</sup> Kopania 2015, Kopania 2017, pp. 6–17; Lewański 1999.

<sup>20</sup> Kopania 2004, p. 15, note 31 (with further bibliographical references).

<sup>21</sup> In fact in the Kingdom of Poland, then Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the tradition of staging plays which can be compared to mysteries, according to knowable and reliable written sources, begins in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and lasts till the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Especially see: Lewański 1981, Lewański 1992.

<sup>22</sup> *The Passion of Christ* was made by a Westphalian artist, thus German in origin. As Mitzi Kirkland-Ives states, German theatrical practice in staging mysteries shows some similarities with the composition of Memling’s *The Passion of Christ*. It does not mean that he was inspired by such scenic practices, particularly since Burgundian staging practice was different: “In this simultaneous technique (termed *Simultanbühne*, *mise-en-scène simultanée*, or *simultantoneel*), a number of small stages or settings for a number of episodes were placed literally side by side (*Glachenbühne*) or around a plaza (*Raumbühne*), thus simultaneously present but experienced in sequence. These stages took the form of *sedes* (seats), *mansiones*, or *simpli loci*: in descriptions of these arrangements one finds separate locations representing Heaven and Hell, Nazareth, the mansions of Pilate and Caiphas, Gethsemane, the pillar of the Flagellation, etc. As the action moved from one scene to another, the actors would physically move from one setting to the next, the audience following along. Heinzel notes the performance of different scenes in German plays not only sequentially on separate, juxtaposed stages, but multiple scenes actually performed simultaneously on one or more stages – an action scene on one stage occurring during a dialogue on an adjacent stage, or even two action scenes. This technique, however, appeared relatively late in the Burgundian territories [...]”; Kirkland-Ives 2013, p. 104.



not to mention the one in Lažiště, in the Kingdom of Bohemia, whose theatrical tradition cannot be straightforwardly compared to that typical for Low Countries. The multi-scenic, simultaneous composition itself, not to mention the way each scene was devised, its details wrought and shaped, does not prove the influence of the theatre on late medieval passion panoramas. Only the associations of their viewers, in fact difficult to recapture hundreds years later, different in scale and intensity and based on diverse religious or artistic experiences, can eventually link such panel paintings with the mystery stage.

Even the view of the city, with buildings so eagerly compared by scholars to mansions, should be treated as a dubious argument in favor of the impact of the mystery stage on the painters responsible for late medieval passion panoramas. We have already noted that in fact in each panel of this type, the whole view of Jerusalem (if we deal with a convincing view of Jerusalem at all) and architectural structures shown are completely different. Given the wide range of ways of presenting Jerusalem and its buildings, it is doubtful that all of them provide useful information on the reality of medieval stagecraft. It is difficult to even indicate one late medieval passion panorama in which we can discern any reflection, even a modest one, of the staging of mystery plays, with mansions as the main stage module. Buildings shown in late medieval passion panoramas are either firm, solid architectural structures that render the reality of late medieval northern cities, or firm, solid architectural structures that render an idealistic or realistic view of the ancient Holy City so important for Christians. In other cases, buildings do not form a coherent urban structure but rather are just an architectural frame for episodes of Christ's Passion. That does not change the fact that they are painted in a way that enables the viewer to treat them, at least to some extent, as real buildings. Even if we deal with light, decorative, openwork architectural structures, as in the case of the passion panorama from Leuven, they do not resemble stage edifices made for the needs of the theatre.

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Both visual documentation and archival sources confirm that medieval stagecraft was not elaborate enough to be compared with any architectural structures present in late medieval passion panoramas.<sup>23</sup> The formal language of medieval stage and passion panoramas was completely different. In continental Europe, especially in Germany, but also in the Low Countries and France, mansions were usually simple,

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<sup>23</sup> Butterworth, Normington 2014, Konigson 1975, Meredith, Tailby 1983, Nagler 1976, Robinson 1991.

rudimentary structures, mobile platforms set up in the market squares where mystery plays were staged. First and foremost they were places prepared to act, to play, not to give a strongly illusionistic impression of real buildings. Buildings that were important to the main story were designated in a simple way, i.e. a dome was erected over the mansion representing the Temple of Solomon. On the other hand, of course, some mansions were built to impress the public. The Hellmouth was worth the greater effort required to produce it because of the special effects (sulfur smell, flames, smoke, loud sounds) and dynamic of the action associated with it. So the mansions representing the Hellmouth were quite elaborate and technically advanced.<sup>24</sup> It is difficult, however, to find any similarities between them and the passion panoramas in which the Harrowing of Hell is shown. In the panels from Leuven, Toruń and Turin, we do not see the Hellmouth. The entrance into Limbo is carved into the rock (Leuven, Turin) or is part of a destroyed castle (Toruń). Such a way of presenting it was not a popular solution on the mystery stage. Generally, in late medieval passion panoramas one cannot scenographic find any structures, of whatever degree of complication in form and construction, that resemble temporary and simple structures like mansions. And it is surely pointless to search for potential analogies between late medieval passion panoramas and moveable mansions, that is, pageants, performed mainly in England, but also in the Low Countries in the period when such panel paintings were being produced.<sup>25</sup> Simultaneous composition and dozens of scenes of Christ's Passion shown do not constitute a convincing argument for linking them with pageantry. Especially since, as we stressed earlier, linear narration, following the footsteps of Christ in order to render coherent a chaotic narrative, was not necessarily the most important aim of late medieval passion panoramas.

Furthermore, even if we point out that the actors in mystery plays used existing city spaces, performed in front of real buildings or otherwise used parts of them (like arcades or galleries),<sup>26</sup> we cannot claim that such artistic devices are comparable

<sup>24</sup> Davidson 1996, pp. 81–87; Davidson, Seiler 1996.

<sup>25</sup> On the subject of mansions and pageants, the way they were created and looked like: Barton 2016; Cohen 1955; Davidson 1991; Davidson 1996, pp. 17–32; Nagler 1976; Southern 1975; Twycross 1980, pp. 15–98; Tydeman 1978.

<sup>26</sup> According to Jelle De Rock “The affinity between the *Simultanbilder* and the performance of religious drama becomes even more obvious when looking at sixteenth century drawings and stage plans that were used for the planning of the yearly Passion Play on the town's central square. During these well-orchestrated spectacles the scenes were re-enacted in symbiosis with the monumental framework of the square. It is, for instance, no coincidence that the *Ecce Homo* scene (in which Christ led to Pilate) was often set before the city hall”; Rock De 2019, p. 61.

to the organization of scenes of Christ's Passion in late medieval passion panoramas. These last are typically composed of scenes of Christ's Passion, but arranged in one space simultaneously. Only the way of arranging them may be treated as somehow unusual, resembling theatre practice, but we have to stress once more that simultaneity was not a distinguishing feature of late medieval theatre, it had been present in art for ages. As we mentioned earlier, if medieval painters wanted to add a kind of theatrical spirit to their composition, they simply did so, although they did not do it frequently. There is no point in looking for theatricality where it simply does not exist.

We can link late medieval passion panoramas with the mystery stage on the premise that viewers of such panel paintings associated them with theatrical practice. Such associations are plausible in the case of the inhabitants of i.e. Bruges, with its rich tradition of organizing plays and theatrical events of various kinds. We may assume, following Mitzi Kirkland-Ives' suppositions, that theatrical practice, mystery stage, processions etc. permeated late medieval Bruges, so people were used to them. For late medieval citizens of Bruges the urban space could indeed have a distinct theatrical dimension, and thanks to this they could associate paintings like Memling's *The Passion of Christ* with theatrical activities. But theatricality was not and is not inherent in late medieval passion panoramas, it was (and is) rather in viewer's minds, which does not mean that viewers approached passion panoramas as paintings rather than as mystery plays. The way they imagined the whole story was not necessarily conditioned by the way they perceived action on stage. They did not mentally take part in a mystery play. Association with the theatre did not necessarily imply a theatrical understanding or interpretation of the paintings.

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It is also worth emphasizing that not all viewers of late medieval passion panoramas had an opportunity to attend mystery plays, or if they did, these plays simply were not as important an element in their everyday life as in the case of citizens of Bruges. This applies not only to *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń, but also to *The Passion of Christ* from Lisbon. Could the nuns of the Madre de Deus Convent of Poor Clares really have the same theatrical knowledge or experiences as citizens of Bruges?

The theatrical connotations of late medieval passion panoramas are not as strong as is usually emphasized by scholars, and certainly cannot be identified in all paintings of this kind. We do not know the history of most of them, but still works from Lisbon,

Toruń and Turin, whose history we know quite well, give us indications that the mystery stage, especially the mystery stage of the Low Countries, should not always be treated as the proper reference for late medieval passion panoramas. The same problem arises when we think of spiritual journeys to Jerusalem. The distant Holy Land, not accessible to most Christians for numerous reasons, but so important to Christian faith and thought,<sup>27</sup> focused the broad attention of the faithful. While it was a desired destination for pilgrimages, efforts were made to make it accessible, to bring it closer to all those who felt the need to experience Christ's Passion in the context of the Holy Land, in the context of the place where it happened. According to numerous scholars, late medieval passion panoramas were tools to enable mental pilgrimage; their aim was to awaken the viewer's mind and guide it through Jerusalem. Their composition and iconography were thought to engender mental images. Thanks to the fact that all scenes of Christ's Passion were shown in and outside the Holy City, the viewer has a unique opportunity to experience them in a way similar to the experience of real pilgrims.

As we already saw, some scholars emphasize the composition of late medieval passion panoramas, the fact that their users were able to follow in the footsteps of Christ. According to them, mere direct eye contact with a painting, followed by close analysis of its organization, were enough to awaken the imagination and start a spiritual pilgrimage. Others offer much broader reflection on the phenomenon of spiritual pilgrimage and place late medieval passion panoramas in the context of various activities whose aim was to explore Jerusalem mentally and meditate on Christ's Passion. Both views fit only partially with the reality of late medieval passion panoramas.

As we already tried to prove, late medieval passion panoramas do not form a coherent group of paintings. The number of differences between them are significant, and, crucially, relate to various aspects of the concept of spiritual pilgrimages. The main problem with late medieval passion panoramas is that their composition and iconography usually do not facilitate spiritual pilgrimage at all. In most cases, the Passion of Christ itself is the main, dominant motif on which the viewer should concentrate, while all other motifs are of minor importance. The presentation

<sup>27</sup> Alexander 1998; Berriot 1995; Bowman 1988; Budde, Nachama 1996; *Jerusalem, Heilige...* 1986; Konrad 1965; Kühnel 2012; Ousterhout 2012; Ramos-Lissón 2003; Renna 2002; Roberts 1990; Rosneau 1979; Rubenstein 2014; Smith 1986; Turner, Turner 1978.

of Jerusalem and its outskirts in a way that would make it easier to imagine the Holy Land itself, and meditate on Christ's Passion in that context, represents the exception to the rule. *The Passion of Christ* from Baltimore is the best and most meaningful proof that late medieval passion panoramas should not be unambiguously read as tools for spiritual pilgrimages to Jerusalem. In this case there is no doubt that the architecture shown organizes the New Testament narration first, and the whole landscape has nothing in common with the actual topography of Jerusalem. Kathryn Rudy treats the three buildings shown in the work as an idealized version of the city's architecture.<sup>28</sup> That claim seems dubious because the architecture depicted is conventional and primitive in form, not idealized at all. It is hard to find any argument for the supposition that the painter created a convincing vision of the Holy City or created proper conditions for imagining it. All of these simple structures stand next to each other, almost in a straight line, and do not form a consistent urban organism. What we see in this passion panorama is not Jerusalem, but three simple architectural structures intended as a background for four events from Christ's Passion. The artist did not paint any single element that could be associated with Jerusalem.

Furthermore, we take exception to Kathryn Rudy's claim that the architecture depicted "invites one to penetrate the city and its surroundings, to move in, out, through, and above it."<sup>29</sup> Since there are no streets, city walls, or buildings one can look inside (even the Flagellation takes place more in front of the building, not inside of it), the architectural structures do not enable the viewer to move in, out of, through, or above the city at all. Importantly, even the Crowning with Thorns, customarily shown inside, is shown outside the building, in front of the city gate.

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*The Passion of Christ* from the Walter Museum of Art is a good work to consider in order to stress that in case of the late medieval passion panoramas, the architecture depicted does not need to evoke Jerusalem at all or, better to say, not all late medieval passion panoramas were intended to evoke Jerusalem. The main aim of the *The Passion of Christ* from Baltimore is to bring the Passion of Christ out, to focus the viewer's attention on specific events, not the city itself. In this case it is even hard to talk about a view of the city at all, let alone a convincing view of the Holy Land. Jerusalem is not even the background for the events depicted. It is at best only distantly evoked.

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<sup>28</sup> See first chapter.

<sup>29</sup> Rudy 2014, p. 385.

There are no grounds to claim, however, that it is a particularly important element of the painting, important enough to be the starting point for spiritual pilgrimage. Here, specific actions, violent, emotional or pious gestures, movements and symbolic clothing, rather than the Holy City, set the scope of interest of the painter.<sup>30</sup> A similar problem arises when we consider the passion panoramas from Pont-Saint-Esprit and Leuven. Though presenting complicated city landscapes, they do not give the viewer a convincing view of the Holy Land. The one from Musée d'Art sacré du Gard can be treated as simply a more elaborate version of the panel from Baltimore. Even the painting from Leuven does not present Jerusalem in a way which would be useful for a viewer eager to follow in the footsteps of Christ and go through the streets of the Holy City. In fact no one has taken into consideration that people who looked at this passion panorama could be educated enough or acquainted enough with art of the region to see that the majority of the architecture shown is imaginary, not realistic at all, and based on common artistic patterns of the region, particularly those used in the art of illuminated manuscripts. If someone really would like to use this passion panorama for a spiritual pilgrimage, he or she would have difficulty simulating a mental journey to Jerusalem on the basis of what is shown in the painting. There are no details which enable specific buildings or places to be identified. Of course the viewer could associate certain scenes with the Holy Land but only through his/her knowledge of the Bible or Passion tracts, not thanks to any landscape details of the painting itself. We may even assume that he or she could make that association based on knowledge of pilgrimage literature. Still, it is difficult to assert that the Holy Land depicted in the passion panorama from Leuven, not to mention those from Baltimore or Pont-Saint-Esprit, was painted accurately enough to awaken mental images of the real, historic Jerusalem and its surroundings. One should also have in mind that, as Antoni Ziemba points out, painters did not pay much attention to accurate, realistic imaging of the Holy Land. In terms of topography, Memling's *The Passion of Christ*

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<sup>30</sup> The idea of spiritual pilgrimage seems to dominate the reception of passion panorama so much that it has been almost mechanically aligned with them and with other works of art that are similar in terms of composition and iconography. As we have already mentioned in the previous chapter, Kathryn Rudy, analyzing the miniature from Hours of Saluzzo, presenting nineteen scenes of Christ's Passion (fol. 210r), wrote that "the miniaturist portrays several modern pilgrims who walk along the city roads. While the figures from sacred history wear floor-length robes, the modern figures are easily distinguishable in their half-length tunics. Two women and two men, dressed in fifteenth-century garb and wearing wide hats and carrying staffs, are pilgrims who follow a path down the left side of the image to begin a journey within the city walls." (Rudy 2014, p. 387). The problem in this specific case is that all garments identified by Rudy as pilgrim's garments are the same in shape and color as those worn by the tormentors of Christ. It is rather unjustified to think that Christ's tormentors were pilgrims, or vice versa.

and *The Seven Joys of Mary* are in no way related to the geographical reality of Jerusalem and the surrounding area.<sup>31</sup>

Late medieval passion panoramas are commonly analyzed in the context of spiritual pilgrimages. The problem is that no one has raised the question of whether late medieval passion panoramas fit among other works of art or literature whose aim was to enable a mental journey to the Holy Land or to present its realities. There are dozens of studies written about pilgrimage literature of all kinds. Diaries of and guides to physical and mental pilgrimages are incomparably more detailed than the vast majority of paintings we have been examining.<sup>32</sup> In them, Jerusalem and its streets, buildings, and various nooks are described quite meticulously. The same applies to the other pilgrimage sites of the Holy Land. Notably, many texts that aimed to provide information about the Holy City or the whole of Palestine, and an opportunity to meditate on the Passion of Christ, were enriched with illustrations presenting realistic historical views of certain buildings. One should keep in mind, too, that such literature served a variety of purposes besides helping readers concentrate on Christ and His Passion. The authors of such texts give detailed information about places related to His mother and other New Testament and Old Testament figures, not to mention saints.

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Even in what we broadly term late medieval art, Jerusalem and pilgrimages to the Holy Land were often explicitly present; dozens of paintings demonstrate this. First of all, even general views of Jerusalem and the Holy Land are usually more elaborate and detailed than those in late medieval passion panoramas. The main buildings, such as the Holy Temple, are clearly accentuated, while other buildings are explicitly Orientalized, city walls are complete, etc.<sup>33</sup> In many cases we deal not with imaginary structures, but efforts to present the Holy City and its surroundings in a convincing way, such as, for example, Bernhard von Breydenbach's *Peregrinatio*

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<sup>31</sup> Ziemba 2015, pp. 751–752.

<sup>32</sup> Literature on diaries about and guides to Jerusalem is vast and varied. See, amongst numerous positions: Arnulf 1998; Bebee 2006; Bebee 2014a; Bebee 2014b; Cahn 1992; Dorninger 2014; Ertzdorff von, Neukirch 1992; Feilke 1976; Ganz-Blättler 1991; Freedberg 1995; Grandewitz 1984; Howard 1980; Huschenbett 1985; Kaliszuk 2006; Kemper 2006; Leermack 2008, pp. 97–111; Manikowska 2008; Manikowska, Zaremska 1995; Nolte 1997; Noonan 2007; Ousterhout 2009; Paravicini 1994; Peters 1985; Prescott 1954; Ran 1989; Renna 1996; Richard 2003; Röper 2009; Ross 2014; Rudy 2000a; Rudy 2000b; Rudy 2000c; Rudy 2001; Schur 1980; Timm 2006; Wolf-Crone 1977; Yoshikawa 2005.

<sup>33</sup> Horký 2012; Krinsky 1970; Kühnel 1987; Maginnis 1994; Reiner von 1987/1988; Robin 1986; Rock de 2019; Rubenstein 2014; Worm 2011; Zink 1941.

in *Terram Sanctam* decorated with woodcuts of Erhard Reuwich, some of which depict the Holy Land and Jerusalem.<sup>34</sup> In the context of such views, one should have in mind the well-established, long-lasting tradition of making cartographical views of the Holy Land. Sometimes very detailed, they were thought to be a vehicle suitable for mental journeys to Jerusalem and other parts of Palestine.<sup>35</sup> More importantly, there are a lot of late medieval illuminated manuscripts in which miniatures and marginal decoration clearly and undoubtedly refer to the idea of mental or real pilgrimages.<sup>36</sup>

Comparative analysis of the views of Jerusalem produced in the last decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century allows us to draw the following conclusion – if the artists wanted to depict Jerusalem and its surroundings convincingly so that the urban landscape resembled the historical or contemporary Holy City, they simply did so. Moreover, many of them rendered the architecture and landscape of Jerusalem in a far more elaborate and convincing manner than most of the painters who authored the passion panoramas. This remark might be also applied to discussions of the relationships between the passion panoramas and the practice of pilgrimages to the Holy Land. A thorough analysis of the works of art combining simultaneous manner and Passion iconography, discussed in the previous chapter, leads us to observe that some of these pieces feature direct references to the practice and reality of travels to the Holy Land undertaken by people at the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> and into 16<sup>th</sup> century. The artists – when they really intended to do it – depicted travelers wearing clothes that can undoubtedly be perceived as pilgrims' garments. The ships on which the pilgrims arrived at the shores of the Holy Land were also represented, as well as the genre scenes and the everyday life of the people living in and around Jerusalem. The same might also be said about many works of art whose composition diverges from the typical pattern of passion panoramas. The period when the latter were made produced

<sup>34</sup> Ross 2014; Timm 2006.

<sup>35</sup> Arad 2012a; Arad 2012b; Arad 2014; Baumgärtner 2001; Baumgärtner 2012; Bekemeier 1993; Brincken 2005; Connolly 1999; Connolly 2009; *Early Images...* 1987; Goren 2014; Harvey 2006; Iwańczak 1996; Klein 1986; Koldewej 2006, pp. 211–225; Kupfer 2014; *Kurs Jerusalem...* 1990; Levy-Rubin 1999; Levy-Rubin, Rubin 1996; Meyer 1978; Nebenzahl 1986; Ran 1989; Rodney 1993; Terkla 2008; Vorholt 2009; Whatley 2014; Zalewska-Lorkiewicz 1997.

<sup>36</sup> Amongst them there are illuminated manuscripts with numerous motifs such as pilgrim badges whose aim was to create a kind of a mental image of selected pilgrimage sites. See: Bredow-Klaus 2009; Defoer 2006; Foster-Campbell 2011; Gefoer 2006; Goehring 2011; Goehring 2013; Koldewej 2006, pp. 227–245; Lermack 2008; Siew 2014, pp. 83–93. See also: Newhauser, Russel 2013, pp. 83–111; Nichols 2013, pp. 113–141. The same pattern can be observed in prints, some of which can be treated as *Interactive Indulgence Prints*, see: Gibson 2011. See also: Montgomery 2005.



numerous paintings, tapestries, drawings and prints representing pilgrims arriving at pilgrimage sites.<sup>37</sup>

Assuming that late medieval passion panoramas were to be used as tools for spiritual pilgrimages and to transfer the viewer, in his/her imagination, to the historical and contemporary realities of the Holy Land, we should accept that almost every late medieval image of the Passion could be used as such a vehicle as well. Late medieval passion panoramas render Jerusalem and the realities of pilgrimages cursorily or, like most of images of this kind preserved up to this day, do not render them at all. Moreover, they narrate the Passion in the most typical manner in terms of iconography; they do not diverge from the most commonly used schemas of particular scenes. Therefore, if such representations were to be used as vehicles for mental pilgrimages, why were any other, especially multi-scenic renderings of Christ's Passion, not meant to be used in a similar way?

Scholars researching late medieval passion panoramas assume that:

a) these images were used by viewers sensitive to and aware of the benefits of both real<sup>38</sup> and mental pilgrimage to the Holy Land, curious about Jerusalem and thirsty for knowledge of the places where the Passion of Christ took place. Such consumers met their needs by reading guides to the Holy Land, scrutinizing maps of Jerusalem and its surroundings, and examining paintings or prints representing subsequent buildings connected with Christ's Passion. Moreover, potential recipients of late medieval passion panoramas lived in a world where the idea of Jerusalem, as well as images of it, were constantly present as references to a place of particular importance to Salvation. Buildings, chapels or particular architectural elements (such as cupolas suggesting by their form particular buildings in Jerusalem) were to remind viewers of the Holy

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<sup>37</sup> Apart from a panel painting from the collection of Foundation Schloss Friedenstein Gotha and the tapestry *The Holy Places of Jerusalem* (*Die heiligen Stätten Jerusalems*, in the collection of the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich (discussed in the previous chapter), one can list i.e. a group of paintings from Staatsgalerie Augsburg, dated to the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> c., presenting pilgrimage sites of Rome (Gärtner 2002; Kwapis 2014, pp. 250–271; Schawe 1999; Schawe 2001, *passim*). On other works of art presenting pilgrimage sites in a detailed way, see: Kwapis 2014.

<sup>38</sup> On medieval pilgrimages, see, i.e.: Craig 2003; Craig 2009; Dansette 1979; Davidson, M. Dunn-Wood 1993; Gosse 2005; Graboš 2008; Herwaarden 1998; Herwaarden 2003; Manikowska 2008; Manikowska, Zaremska 1995; Mruk 2001; Rottloff 2007; Sumption 1975; Sumption 2003; Theilmann 1986, pp. 100–107; Webb 1999; Witkowska 1979, pp. 5–14.

Land.<sup>39</sup> A similar role was played by extensive arrangements of buildings in the open air, such as Passion Parks, where one could move among structures modelled on the buildings of the Holy Land and connected with the Passion of Christ.<sup>40</sup> The interiors of such buildings often imitated the interiors of particular structures in Jerusalem. Furthermore, some scholars argue that late medieval towns were perceived by their inhabitants as spaces ideationally close to both historical and celestial Jerusalem. For the religious faithful, everyday life in late medieval town was full of reflections on Salvation and eschatological themes.

b) Late medieval passion panoramas, in their composition and iconography, were designed as vehicles for spiritual pilgrimages. Following subsequent stages of Christ's Passion, depicted on the streets and in the squares of Jerusalem, as well as in its surroundings, enabled viewers to visualize the real, historical space of the Holy Town and events known from Bible;

c) Works of art featuring analogous or similar composition and iconography, produced earlier or when passion panoramas were created, contribute very little to our understanding of the latter. They are mentioned mainly in the context of research on formal issues related to late medieval passion panoramas; they also serve as an additional argument in favor of late medieval peoples' fascination with Jerusalem and real or mental pilgrimages to the Holy City.

A close reading of the academic debate on late medieval passion panoramas leads us to conclude that scholars generally a priori assume that works of art of this kind were designed as tools to enable viewers to travel, in their minds, to Jerusalem (see: point b). This understanding of passion panoramas' function was drawn from their iconography – the depiction of the Passion of Christ in the landscape of Jerusalem – and the fascination with the Holy Land typical of the Late Middle Ages (see: point a). At the same time, works of art featuring analogous or similar composition are not used as a starting point for an in-depth analysis that would answer the question of whether such works of art indeed significantly aid our understanding of passion panoramas.

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<sup>39</sup> Beaver 2013; Gelfand 2008; Gelfand 2016; Griffith-Jones, Fernie 2018; Mai 2016, pp. 163–194; Mecham 2005, pp. 139–160; Pierotti, Tosco, Zannella 2005; Schock-Werner 1986, pp. 264–265; Walczak 2007.

<sup>40</sup> Arad 2015; Bacci 2014; Beaver 2013; Kneller 1908; Kopeć 1975; Pacciani 2014, pp. 76–81; Rudy 2006; Siew 2015, pp. 113–132; Thurston 1906. In this context see also: Connolly 2005.

It has been mentioned many times throughout this text that late medieval passion panoramas do not form a homogenous group of works of art and that they generally do not depict the Passion of Christ in the landscape of Jerusalem, but rather stages of the Passion in an assortment of urban architectural frames which lack unity. One more issue should also be brought to the fore. Namely, we must consider whether passion panoramas with their cursorily but not convincingly realistic rendering of Jerusalem indeed served as a useful vehicles for spiritual pilgrimages. If we assume that the viewers of passion panoramas were well-educated, familiar with pilgrimage literature and literate in the geographical and historical reality of the Holy Land, we must ask whether their knowledge did not clash with what they could see depicted in these paintings. Most likely the passion panoramas, not meticulous in rendering Jerusalem and barely depicting the realities of the Holy Land, did not constitute a useful and attractive tool for educated people willing to complete their spiritual journey to Jerusalem. Similarly, they could hardly be useful to those whose knowledge of the places of Christ's Passion was scarce. What kind of knowledge could the passion panoramas provide them with? Indeed, it is only *The Passion of Christ* from Lisbon that could be perceived as a useful visual aid for a spiritual pilgrimage. Drawing on the view of Jerusalem depicted in this painting, one could gain some knowledge of Jerusalem itself and place the Passion of Christ in a specific historical reality. Viewers more acquainted with the Holy Land and pilgrimages could compare the way architecture was depicted in the painting with the descriptions and/or depictions of the architecture of the Holy Land they knew from literature or visual sources. Other passion panoramas preserved to this day were of less, or of no use here. Most passion panoramas were designed as depictions of the Passion and served to attract to and focus viewers' attention on the torments of Christ and His tremendous suffering. This suffering was often accentuated by means of emphasis put on Christ's Body in the scene of Flagellation depicted in the very center of the whole composition. In most late medieval passion panoramas, Jerusalem serves as a barely suggested background to the meticulously depicted scenes of Passion; sometimes it is not depicted at all.

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While considering the role that passion panoramas fulfilled, the relationships between these paintings and the theatre are peripheral considerations. These relationships are indirect and seem more dependent on loose associations made by contemporary scholars. The latter, while assuming that the citizens of late medieval towns recognized in the passion panoramas scenes from mystery plays, seem to forget

that not all paintings of this kind or works of art similar to them but executed in different media, fulfilled their function in the context of plays typical of the theatrical culture of Netherlandish towns. Neither is it taken into consideration that there exist several works of art featuring analogous composition but divergent iconography. Scenes depicted in these works of art, such as episodes from saints' lives, were not necessarily related to the plot of any plays acted in the streets of late medieval towns, in the Netherlands or elsewhere.

Contrary to the most widespread opinions, spiritual pilgrimages do not constitute a primary point of reference for passion panoramas, either. Only one painting, out of the seven that constitute this group, represents Jerusalem meticulously enough to be of use to both a viewer knowledgeable of the reality of the Holy Land and one thirsty for knowledge and willing to meditate on the Passion of Christ in the context of place where it was accomplished. In most cases we deal with images of Jerusalem that present more or less developed architectural background to the scenes of Christ's Passion, not really effective as an instrument for imagining the reality of the Holy Land. In the case of most passion panoramas, the Passion of Christ is, in fact, the main motif. Singular autonomous architectural structures, simplified in terms of form, serve only as frames separating one scene of the Passion from its neighboring representation.

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Moreover, numerous works of art discussed in chapter II show that passion panoramas are not extraordinary in terms of composition, narration or their way of rendering reality. Taking into consideration the fact that some of the passion panoramas do not represent the Passion of Christ at all but depict episodes from the lives of saints instead, including even scenes related neither to Jerusalem nor to late medieval piety and spiritual pilgrimages, it seems plausible to assume that works of art featuring composition typical of passion panoramas could fulfill other functions and serve other purposes. Following the suggestions of Monika Jakubek-Raczkowska and Juliusz Raczkowski, we may assume that both passion panoramas and works of art similar to them could serve as visual equivalents of Passion tracts<sup>41</sup> and narratives telling the lives of saints.<sup>42</sup> As such, they could meet a need for active and thorough

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<sup>41</sup> Jakubek-Raczkowska, Raczkowski 2013, pp. 107–112. It must be stressed here that letters visible on the surface of *The Passion of Christ* housed in M-Museum in Leuven might refer less to the text on pilgrimages to the Holy Land than to Passion tracts. On Passion tracts see i.e.: Bartal 2014, pp. 369–379; Bestul 1996; Kemper 2006.

<sup>42</sup> In works of art of huge dimensions, one should consider their pedagogic function, related to preaching practices.

consideration of episodes from lives of saints or Christ, and not of the locations where these events took place.

While reflecting upon late medieval passion panoramas we should emphasize the act of meditating on the Passion of Christ. Late medieval passion panoramas meet the criteria for interactive works of art designed to activate viewers' emotions. Numerous detailed scenes dispersed in the space of the painting required the attention of the viewer, his/her involvement and a gift for observation.<sup>43</sup> Events, rather than the locations where they took place, constituted the focal points of passion panoramas. The figure of Christ and narrative of His salvific mission were the stimuli acting on the emotions of the viewer. This can be observed in two of passion panoramas preserved to this day. The figures of the tormentors of Christ, destroyed by the viewers of *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń and Pont-Saint-Esprit, memorably prove how the Passion of Christ visualized in painting could engage viewers' emotions.

Reflection on late medieval passion panoramas should be focused on other questions than those asked so far. It seems legitimate to pay more attention to relations between passion panoramas and works of art whose composition, iconography and construction stimulated viewers' feelings in an extraordinary way. Late medieval passion panoramas' relationships to mystery plays and spiritual pilgrimages seem unimportant in this context. This varied group of works of art includes small panel paintings which could be held in the hands and manipulated or scrutinized in multiple ways. In such cases, the viewer enjoyed a direct, intimate relationship with the figures depicted. In this group of works of art there is also space for small objects of various kinds such as devotional beads, series of woodcuts, portable animated sculptures and, first and foremost, sculptures of huge dimensions whose construction enabled animation.<sup>44</sup> There are two factors connecting these representations. Firstly, the requirements that viewers must meet: the need to focus on details and inscriptions as well as the need to discover relations between the scenes and the figures depicted. Secondly, the strong influence of these paintings on the emotions of the faithful, who saw images suggestive in both narration and realistic rendering. Though late medieval

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<sup>43</sup> Recently: Sadler 2018.

<sup>44</sup> All such works of art are Antoni's Ziemia's subject of interest. He also gives an extensive bibliographical references concerning their history and function: Ziemia 2015. In context of late medieval books and way they were used: Rudy 2015.

passion panoramas were not designed as objects to be manipulated or animated, they feature composition and iconography that require particular involvement from the viewer, who, in turn, receives an unusual opportunity to experience the Passion of Christ.







## 4.

# Conclusions

To summarize our considerations, we conclude the following:

1. There are seven late medieval passion panoramas preserved to our days. All panels belonging to this group implement the same compositional idea, that is simultaneity, and the same iconography, that is the Passion of Christ. Contrary to the most widespread opinions we observe that the view of Jerusalem does not have to be a crucial and the most meaningful element of passion panorama composition. In case of Hans Memling's *The Passion of Christ* and especially of *The Passion of Christ* displayed in Museu Nacional do Azulejo, the view of Jerusalem is indeed intended to evoke the Holy Land directly (but not always accurately); however, the views of Jerusalem depicted in *The Passion of Christ* paintings respectively from Baltimore or Pont-Saint-Esprit, do not have anything in common with convincing depiction of not only this particular city, but any city at all.
2. The Passion of Christ itself, as a subject, should be emphasized while discussing late medieval passion panoramas. It means that not only multiple selected Passion scenes based on the New Testament narration are important, but also the main protagonist, whose earthly, bodily sacrifice leads man to Salvation. On three panels, from Leuven, Pont-Saint-Esprit and Turin the body of flagellated Christ is obviously emphasized, placed exactly in the center of the composition. This fact allows us to say that it is not the Holy City, but the tormented Holy Body of Christ that should be venerated first. The buildings of Jerusalem in some cases should be treated no more than just as an architectural frames accentuating actions taking place inside them, and not as visual motives leading the viewer to the streets of real, historical Jerusalem. On some late medieval passion panoramas there are

significant evidences confirming how important the Passion of Christ was for the faithful present in front of such paintings. Both *The Passion of Christ* from Toruń and *The Passion of Christ* from Pont-Saint-Espirit bear traces of emotional reception of them. The viewers enlivened the action in their minds and react in a simple way by “attacking” the tormentors of Christ, scratching their figures with the use of sharp tools.

3. Late medieval passion panoramas are not exceptional works of art produced in the late Middle Ages. We may indicate many works of art from that period which, in compositional and iconographical terms, are closely related to them. Simultaneity, broad landscape and view of the city was a schema widely known for medieval artists, working in various medias, it was indeed a well-established artistic tendency. What is worth emphasizing – many pieces related to late medieval passion panoramas have nothing in common with presenting the Passion of Christ and Jerusalem. Instead, their aim was to present lives and deeds of other biblical figures or saints, who could have even had no direct relations with the Holy Land. As such, for example, these works of art have nothing in common with spiritual pilgrimages which constitute a popular reference for late medieval passion panoramas. In such case, they are a starting point for reflection whether late medieval passion panoramas were indeed commonly used as a tool enabling mental journey to Jerusalem.
4. Regarding the conception of influence of medieval stage on late medieval passion panoramas we claim that this concept should be treated as disputable. It is not justified to see direct relations between paintings under discussion and mystery plays. In terms of iconography, scenes of the Passion of Christ depicted on all panoramas correspond perfectly well with analogous scenes present in innumerable works of art produced in the Middle Ages. The same applies to the landscape, view of Jerusalem and architectural structures in which some events take place. All these elements simply derive from well-established artistic traditions of presenting biblical stories. Painters who were responsible for producing late medieval passion panoramas were much more dependent on artistic tradition of presenting particular scenes than influenced by stagecraft and reality of medieval stage.
5. The fact that painters who authored late medieval passion panoramas were not influenced directly by medieval stage do not mean that such works of art did not

arouse associations with theatrical activities. More elaborate late medieval passion panoramas could evoke in viewers' minds their experiences with various theatrical processions or mystery plays. But still, one should remember that such paintings functioned in various places all around Europe, and were used by members of various social and religious milieus, often expressing their faith in different ways.

6. The idea of spiritual pilgrimage seems to be overestimated in context of the function of late medieval passion panoramas. Apart from the panel in possession of Museu Nacional do Azulejo none of the panoramas reflect historical, geographical and topographical reality of the Holy Land, and the authors of some of them simply ignore it. For people deeply involved in the practice of spiritual pilgrimage, who read itineraries, pilgrimage guides and other texts devoted to the Holy Land they could not be a useful, convenient tool enabling mental journey. What is worth stressing is that if any medieval artist working in times when passion panoramas were at their height wanted to present, at least partially, realistic views of the Holy Land, or wanted to include scenes from Christ's Passion into its landscape and indicate that pilgrims were operating there, he simply did it. In case of late medieval passion panoramas preserved until this day, their artists did it sporadically.
7. Much more attention should be devoted to an interactive potential of late medieval passion panoramas and the way the viewers perceived them. Such works of art were designed to be used in an active way. Viewers were expected to be deeply involved in the process of analyzing subsequent scenes, to react to them emotionally, build in their minds powerful images of Passion, the effect of which practices was Salvation, so important for every true believer. As such, late medieval passion panoramas should be placed among other works of art from that time, like various sculptures designed to be manipulated or used in various theatrical activities, small panel paintings, buildings and architectural structures like passion parks etc. The aim of all of them was to induce to act, to come into close relations with depicted persons, arouse specific feelings towards them.

Late medieval passion panoramas undoubtedly constitute one of the most intriguing phenomena of art and religious culture of the second part of the 15<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Although it is not a large group of works of art, it is an exceptional testimony of how complex religious culture of that time was and – looking from today's perspective – how huge potential of interactivity resided in them.



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II. 3. *The Passion of Christ*, 1470-1480  
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Il. 4. *The Passion of Christ*, c. 1500  
Musée d'Art Sacré du Gard in Pont-Saint-Esprit





Il. 5. *The Passion of Christ*, before 1517  
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Il. 6. *The Passion of Christ*, 1480-1490  
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II. 7. *The Passion of Christ*, 1530-1560  
Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp







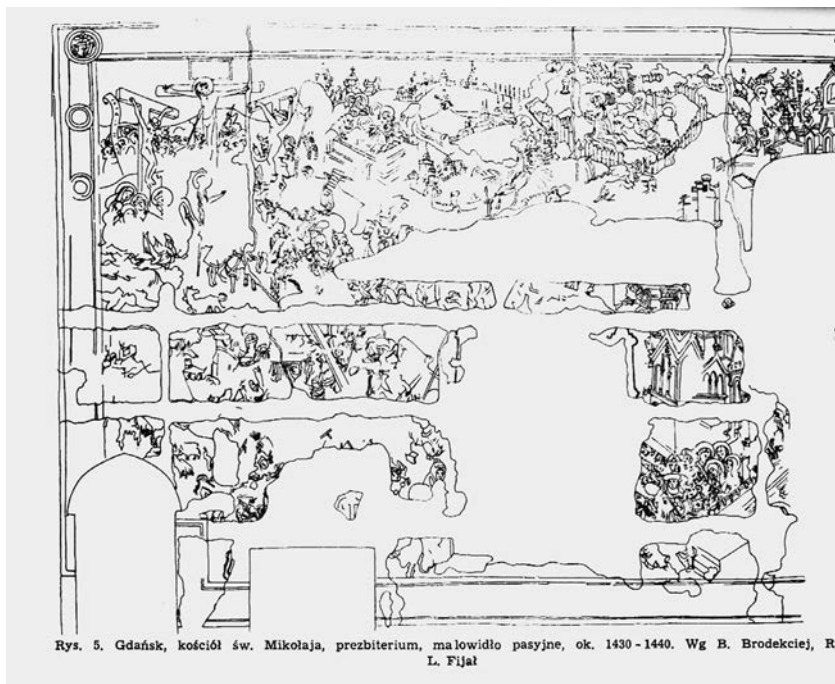












Il. 15. *The Passion of Christ*, wall painting in St. Nicholas church in Gdańsk, 1430-1440 (outline).





Il. 17. *Passion of Christ*: tapestry from Museo de Tapices de La Seo de Zaragoza, 1410-1430.





Il. 18. Nicolaus Alexander Mair, *Steinplatte mit Passionsszenen*, 1475-1500, formerly from Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne.



Il. 19. So called Meister der Apokalypsenrose, *The Passion of Christ*, c. 1490, colored woodcut from the collection of Biblothèque nationale de France.





II. 20, 21. *Passion of Jesus in Jerusalem*, 1460-1470, two fragments of woodcut prints from the Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College.







Il. 22. Gaspare Sacchi, *Scenes from the Life of Christ*, 1517-1536,  
Museo di Palazzo Vecchio, Florence.



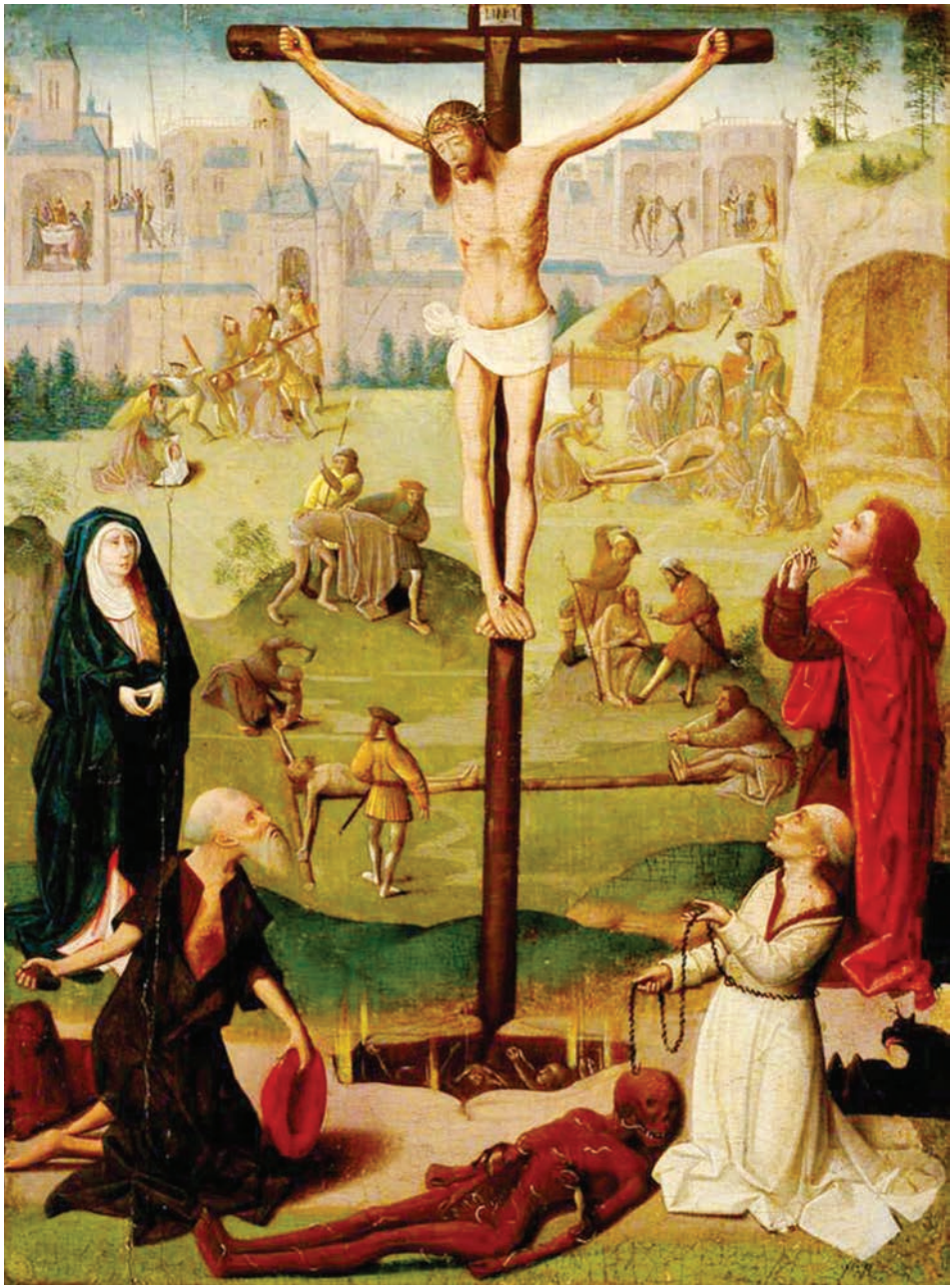


Il. 23. *Retablo de la Pasión de Cristo*, c. 1415,  
Museo de Bellas Arte in Seville, Spain.





Il. 24. Louis Alincbrot, *Triptych with Scenes from the Life of Christ*, c. 1440, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, Spain.



Il. 25. *Crucifixion with Saint Jerome and Saint Dominic, and Scenes from the Passion*, c. 1500, follower of Geertgen tot Sint Jans, The Scottish National Gallery in Edinburgh.







Il. 27. Hans Memling, *Seven Joys of the Virgin*, 1479, Alte Pinakothek in Munich.



Il. 28, 29. Hours of Saluzzo, London, British Library, MS Add. 27697, fol. 210<sup>r</sup>, Savoy, c. 1462-1472.









Il. 30. *Jerusalem and other cities of the Holy Land*, c. 1500,  
Schloss Friedenstein Gotha, Germany.



Il. 31. *The Holy Places of Jerusalem*, 1541, arras tapestry, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich, Germany.





Il. 32. Aert van den Bossche, *The Martyrdom of Saints Crispin and Crispinian*, 1490-1494,  
The National Museum in Warsaw, Poland.



Il. 33. *Triptych with scenes from the life of Job*, 1466-1500,  
Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Cologne, Germany.



Il. 34. Master of Saint Godelieve Legend, *The Life and Miracles of St. Godelieve*, 1475-1500, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA.





Il. 35 . Meister der Hl Sippe, *Legend of the Holy Ermit Anthony*, 1500-1510,  
Alte Pinakothek Munich, Germany.





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Background, Function, Reception

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