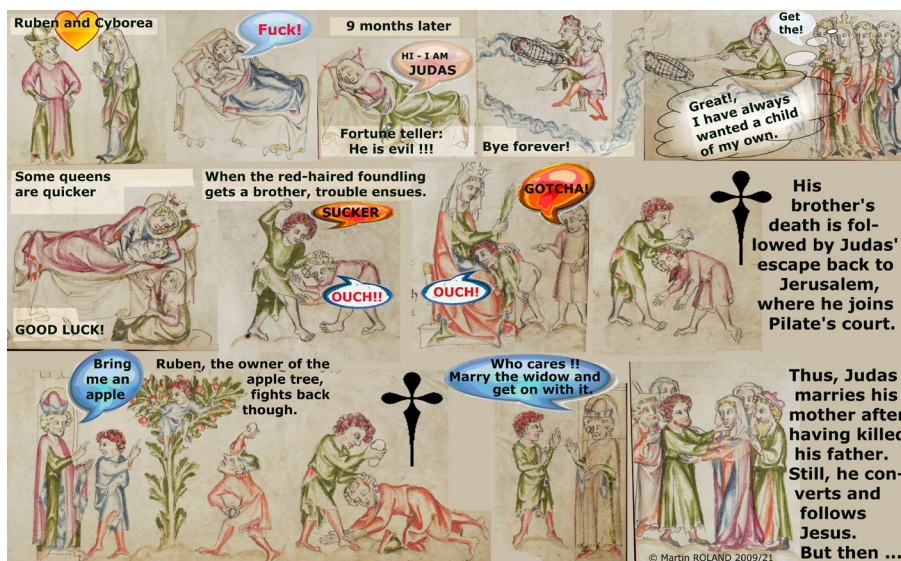


# PERFORMANCE AND IMAGE CYCLES

## How the Middle Ages use the ‘Popular Style’

Martin ROLAND



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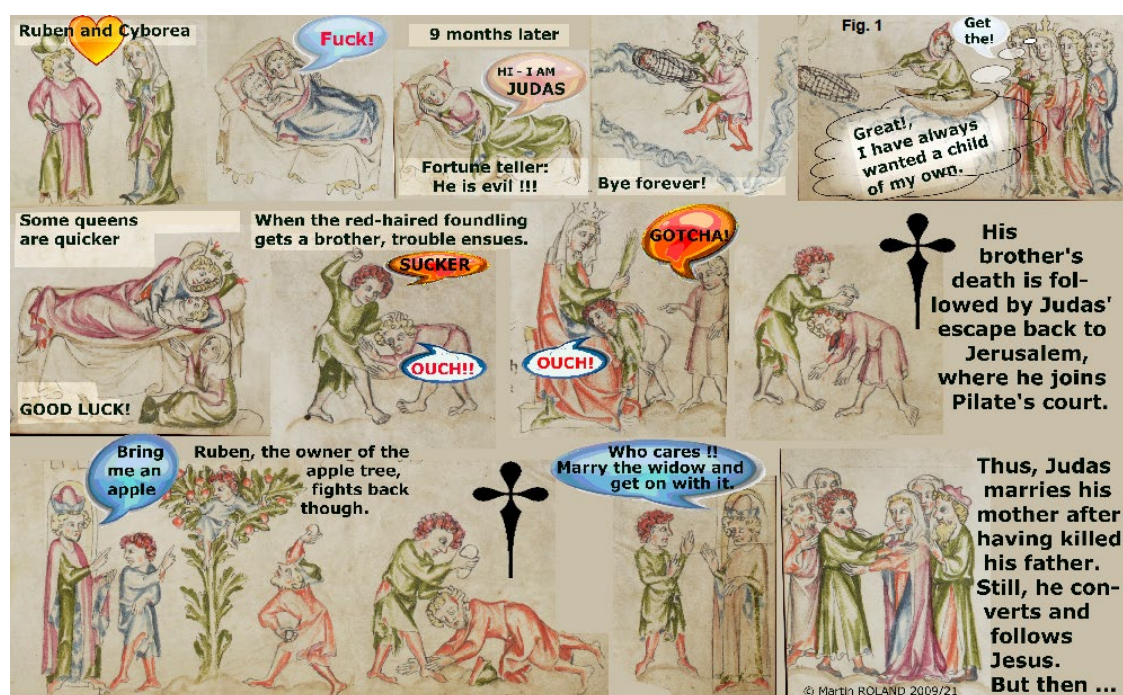
# PERFORMANCE AND IMAGE CYCLES

## How the Middle Ages use the 'Popular Style'\*

Martin ROLAND

Using a 'popular style' and swimming with the mainstream, is a necessity at universities and elsewhere today. Humanity, high culture and political correctness captivate fewer people, as Donald Trump and many others have demonstrated.

The combination of text and image – for example in comics<sup>1</sup> – is considered 'popular' today. That is the reason why I made a comic from illustrations I will study in the second part of this contribution (**fig. 1**).<sup>2</sup> In the Middle Ages, however, images were not as present in daily life as



*fig. 1*

\* The text follows my oral presentation during the conference *What does animation mean in the Middle Ages?* (Białystok, 17–19 September 2021), but is enriched by footnotes. – All links were checked 31 May 2022. This paper is – due to the open access required by the author – not be part of the proceedings: Kamil Kopania, Henning Laugerud, Zuzanna Sarnecka (eds.), *The Living Image in the Middle Ages and Beyond* (New York: 2025).

<sup>1</sup> For a general introduction to the subject of 'comics' and for suggestions for a definition see: <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comic>; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_comics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_comics); [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comic\\_strip](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comic_strip).

<sup>2</sup> I put the comic together in 2009 when I presented a paper on the Schaffhausen codex (see note 61 and <https://manuscripta.at/Ma-zu-Bu/dateien/schaffhausen-gen8.html>). Speech bubbles in English were added in 2021 for the conference in Białystok.

they are today. Few images were publicly visible, murals in churches, for example. Narrative picture cycles – such as those we will deal with – were extremely rare even in churches.

Insulting cartoons on a slip of paper were not possible: there was no paper, only parchment. And: printing technologies to reproduce images were not developed until around 1400. ‘Popular style’ had to use other media: performative action was necessary to reach the masses.

### *Flip Books and Interactive Single Sheet-Printing*

Flip books (in German ‘Daumenkino’: cinema with your thumb) create the impression of movement when you quickly flip the pages of the book.<sup>3</sup> Flip books are a development, parallel to comic strips, for animating stories.<sup>4</sup> Not by inserting text into the graphic by means of speech bubbles, but by performative means.

A cheap little book, available for almost all levels of society (not just the very rich). So I thought at first, but the medium was not widely used, while the sequential narrative of comic strips became extremely popular from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

The German Wikipedia article (‘Daumenkino’) mentions a medieval *Sigenot* manuscript in Heidelberg<sup>5</sup> as a precursor.<sup>6</sup> This may seem far-fetched, but it is a starting point to bridge the gap between manuscripts and animation.

Features to support the connection between flip books and medieval illustrations are as follows: the frame and horizon line are evenly repeated, and the figures are positioned in the centre. But: the authors admit that the impression of movement cannot be created – and: the illustrations seem more like an ancestral gallery than a living narrative.

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<sup>3</sup> A (random) example I showed in Białystok at the beginning of my presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYFuGK9IqEU>: Marina Hertling (Pforzheim) 19/11/2013.

<sup>4</sup> When the flip book appeared for the first time is uncertain. The evidence before 16 March 1868, when John Barnes Linnett patented it, is somewhat doubtful.

<sup>5</sup> Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek (University Library), Cod. Pal. germ. 67: *Sigenot* (digital representation: <https://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/cpg67>). The manuscript was produced ca. 1470 in the workshop of Ludwig Henfflin; for basic information cf.: [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Codex\\_Palatinus\\_germanicus\\_67](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Codex_Palatinus_germanicus_67) and <https://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/de/bpd/glanzlichter/ober-deutsche/henfflin/cpg67.html> (Ulrike Spyra, Maria Effinger [09/2008]); Dietrich Grünewald, “Sigenot – Daumenkino des Mittelalters?,” *Deutsche Comicforschung* 2 (2006) 7–16; Svenja Fahr, “Comics im Mittelalter – Mittelalter in Comics. Zur Verbildlichung des Sagenstoffs von Dietrich von Bern,” in *Graphisches Erzählen. Neue Perspektiven auf Literaturcomics*, ed. Florian Trabert, Mara Stuhlfauth-Trabert, Johannes Waßmer (Bielefeld: 2015), 263–282, <https://books.google.at/books?id=o4W3BwAAQBAJ> (2<sup>nd</sup> link).

<sup>6</sup> <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daumenkino>. This predecessor is mentioned in the English version as well: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flip\\_book](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flip_book).



A vernacular World Chronicle in rhyme, kept in Linz, is a much better example.<sup>7</sup> Not the whole manuscript is relevant here, but just a sequence of tinted drawings that tells an episode of Noah's Ark ([foll. 26r–32r](#) – **fig. 2**). This will be studied in the first chapter.

Before following up this path, we must mention a hint from Joanna Sikorska during the conference in Białystok. She pointed to an interactive woodcut from the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>8</sup> The single-sheet woodcut shows two apes performing on a horseback. By rotating an astonishingly small volvelle the apes change their position from horizontal to vertical. Performative movement intrudes into the world of paper and parchment. This is common knowledge for didactic purposes<sup>9</sup> but not for fun, as with the sheet with the apes. In contrast to the examples we will discuss, no proper story is narrated.<sup>10</sup>

### 1) Sex on the Ark

The aforementioned illustrations depicting the life on Noah's Ark (**fig. 2**) are part of the so-called 'Erweiterte Christherre-Chronik', a compilation of various sources.<sup>11</sup> The episode on

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<sup>7</sup> Linz, Österreichische Landesbibliothek, Hs. 472: *Erweiterte Christherre-Chronik* (digital representation: <https://digi.landesbibliothek.at/viewer/resolver?urn=urn:nbn:at:AT-OOeLB-1271672>). The manuscript was produced ca. 1350 in the so-called 'Enikel workshop': Martin Roland, "Illustrierte Weltchroniken bis in die zweite Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts" (doctoral thesis, University of Vienna, 1991), 49–73, <https://manuscripta.at/Ma-zu-Bu/DissertationRoland/dissertationroland.html>; Jörn-Uwe Günther, *Die illustrierten mittelhochdeutschen Weltchronikhandschriften in Versen. Katalog der Handschriften und Einordnung der Illustrationen in die Bildüberlieferung* (tuduv-Studien, Reihe Kunstgeschichte 48) (Munich: 1993), 183–193 (n° 22); <https://handschriftencensus.de/2688>.

<sup>8</sup> Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum (GNM), H 5690, Kapsel 8: Alfred Hagelstange, "Ein Verwandlungsbild des XV. Jahrhunderts," *Mitteilungen aus dem Germanischen Nationalmuseum* (1898): 125–131 (with illustration) (<https://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/mittgnm/article/download/27566/21250/79719>); Suzanne Karr Schmidt, *Interactive Sculptural Printmaking in the Renaissance* (Leiden, Boston: 2018), 6–7 and Catalogue A: European Single-Sheet Interactive Prints 1450–1700, 1–2; Suzanne Karr Schmidt, "Multiplicity and Absence. The Negative Evidence of Interactive Prints," in *The Reception of the Printed Image in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, ed. Grażyna Jurkowlanec, Magdalena Herman (New York, London: 2021), 27–47, esp. 35–36 and pl. 3–4 (and further examples) and Joanna Sikorska in the volume named in prefatory note "\*\*\*".

<sup>9</sup> In manuscript culture, primarily astronomical topics are concerned. The tradition continues unbroken when printing changed the book culture from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The same rotating technique with a volvelle was (for example) used for animating an angel pointing to the years in an Easter calendar for the years 1466–1494 (Karr Schmidt, *Interactive Sculptural Printmaking* [as note 8], 23–24, 82–88, catalogue A, 6–9; Washington, National Gallery of Art, [Rosenwald Collection, 1944.2.1](#)). Cf. also Joanna Sikorska as quoted in the previous note. – See also London, British Library, [Ms. Harley 941](#) or Oxford, Bodleian Library, [Ms. Digby 46](#). Joanna Sikorska mentions also another technique to add movement to books: "flap-prints", used for medical (anatomical or gynaecological) purposes. – For further information: <https://medievalbooks.nl/2015/01/16/medieval-apps/>

<sup>10</sup> Circus artists entertaining the people, like the monkeys mentioned above, have a clear connection with the performative, even if they do not act on a real stage.

<sup>11</sup> The 'Weltchronik' of Rudolf of Ems, the Christherre-Chronik and Jans of Vienna's 'Weltchronik'; for the manuscript tradition see <https://handschriftencensus.de/werke/801>.





Fig. 2: Linz

Noah's Ark is taken from the 'Weltchronik' authored by *Johans der Jansen enikel* (Jans of Vienna).<sup>12</sup> The repeated depiction of the Ark can be compared to a stage. The family locked in the boat for 40 days are the actors of a comedy.

The narrative framework is the Deluge according to the Book of Genesis (6,14–8,22). Comparable incidents, however, are part of the mythical heritage of many peoples, and not only the Bible but also the Koran (sura 11, 25–48) knows about it.

May I tell the story? Noah, the only righteous one, and his family are to be saved. "But all was not well in the Noah family. One of his sons thought it was all terribly funny. He laughed at his mother's instructions, and didn't take a word of them seriously. When his father heard that, he was furious: Get into the Ark, you little devil!"<sup>13</sup> The devil took this literally and boarded the Ark unnoticed. For the illustrations, which accompany the text in the quoted manuscript in Linz, see [fig. 2/1](#).<sup>14</sup>

Noah instructs his family ([fig. 2/2](#)): You must wrestle to win God's favour. And that means that we must not go to our wives' beds for anything saucy. It makes no difference whether we do it standing up or sitting down, it would offend against God's command and we would end up being drowned.<sup>15</sup> Noah wants to be on the safe side: That's why I'm going to check for any hanky-panky. On the floor between the beds I scattered ashes.

The devil coaxes a son, then his – bare-breasted – wife ([fig. 2/3 and 2/4](#)). The son is anxious but the devil appeases him and says: Don't talk nonsense. I will bring you safely into the luscious white arms of your wife, and no-one will see the footprints.<sup>16</sup>

The devil carries him to her ([fig. 2/5](#)) and wishes them a lot of fun.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Der dicz geticht gemacht hât, / der siczt ze Wienn in der stat / mit haus und ist Johans genant, / an der choroniken er ez vant / der Jansen enikel hiez er.* Quoted from Regensburg, Fürst Thurn und Taxis, Hofbibliothek, Ms. Perg. III (see note 22), fol. 1r; Philipp Strauch (ed.), *Jansen Enikels Werke* (MGH, Deutsche Chroniken 3) (Hannover, Leipzig: 1900), 2, vv 83–87, <https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00000774-9>. – These verses have survived only in one 14<sup>th</sup> century manuscript (Regensburg) and in two more recent manuscripts from central Germany, far away from Vienna.

<sup>13</sup> The script I quote is from Graeme Dunphy written for students preparing a public performance. Dunphy's adaptation refers to Jans of Vienna, vv 1801–05 (Strauch, *Jansen Enikels Werke* [as note 12], 36): *Der ein des erlachte, / der red er niht enahte. / dô daz der vater ersach, / ein wort er zornlich zuo im sprach: / ginc, tiufel, drât dar in!*

<sup>14</sup> For the illustrations in the Regensburg manuscript see below.

<sup>15</sup> Graeme Dunphy after Jans of Vienna, vv 1829–34 (Strauch, *Jansen Enikels Werke* [as note 12], 37): *Nâch gotes hulden sült ir ringen / und sült zuo süntlichen dingen / zuo iuwern hûsfroun niht gên, / weder sitzen noch enstên, / daz wir daz gebot iht krenken / und uns selb iht ertrenken.*

<sup>16</sup> Graeme Dunphy after Jans of Vienna, vv 2051–55 (Strauch, *Jansen Enikels Werke* [as note 12], 41): *Er sprach: lâ die red stân. / ich bring dich vrœlichen dan / an dînes wîbes arm blanc – / des solt dû mir sagen danc –, / und daz die trit nieman siht.*

<sup>17</sup> Jans of Vienna, v 2138 (Strauch, *Jansen Enikels Werke* [as note 12], 42): *Die zît dû dâ vertrîp.*



*Dâ lâgen si vil wunnliclich.  
si wârn beidiu freudenrîch.  
daz was ir beider gewin.  
diu naht gie mit freuden hin.*<sup>18</sup>

The fact that the young man touches with relish the bare breasts of his consort ([fig. 2/6](#)) makes it clear that the visual message is as explicit as the text written by Jans.

Like in any good film, before the happy ending, there needs to be a real crisis. The devil refuses to carry the son back, so he must leave footprints in the ashes ([fig. 2/7](#)). Following the direction of the tracks, Noah looks for the sinful woman in the son's room, but could not find her. He remains helpless. Noah's wife advises him to grant the couple immunity from the threatened punishment in order to learn the truth ([fig. 2/8](#)).

The devil has to flee, deliberately destroying the hull of the Ark. Water penetrates, the ship threatens to sink. A fat toad lies down in front of the hole and thus saves all creatures on the Ark ([fig. 2/9](#)).<sup>19</sup> This brings the story back to what we know from the Book of Genesis ([fig. 2/10](#), [11](#) and [12](#)).

"Sex and crime" is what makes this storyline popular, but not populist, because there is no-one (no minority) that has to suffer for the misbehaving of the majority. The guilty son is not named, Ham for example, the author even showed him some sympathy.<sup>20</sup> And: women are sexy AND wise.

### *1a) Variations in the Picture Cycle Between Munich, Cgm 11, Regensburg and Linz*

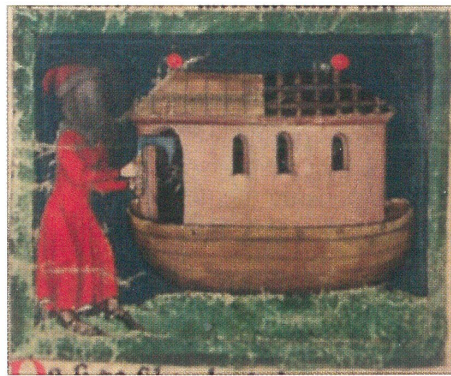
The literary quality of Jans' verses is modest. The miniatures of the Linz manuscript are not outstanding either. But they represent in the most complete form a cycle which was available in a workshop, the so called 'Enikel-Werkstatt',<sup>21</sup> which was active in the region where one speaks 'mittelbairisch', i. e. somewhere east of the river Lech and west of Preßburg/Bratislava.

<sup>18</sup> Jans of Vienna, vv 2141–44 (Strauch, *Jansen Enikels Werke* [as note 12], [42](#)).

<sup>19</sup> The story ends with Jans' verse 2582 (Strauch, *Jansen Enikels Werke* [as note 12], [50](#)).

<sup>20</sup> This fact is stressed by Francis Lee Utey, "Noah's Ham and Jansen Enikel," *The Germanic Review* 16 (1941): 241–49, esp. 246–47, 249, and Raymond Graeme Dunphy, *Daz was ein michel wunder. The presentation of Old Testament material in Jans Enikel's Weltchronik* (Göppingen: 1998), 99, 102–03, <https://www.academia.edu/36245134>.

<sup>21</sup> Martin Roland, "Erzählstrategien der Bildprogramme zur 'Weltchronik'," in *Rudolf von Ems. Beiträge zu Autor, Werk und Überlieferung*, ed. Elke Krotz, Norbert Kössinger, Henrike Manuwald and Stephan Müller (Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur, Beiheft 29) (Stuttgart: 2020), [301–24](#), [357–74](#) (ill. 1–20), esp. [307–10](#).



*fig. 3: Regensburg*



A comparable cycle illustrates the pure text of Jans in the manuscript of Jans' in Regensburg (**fig. 3**)<sup>22</sup>, which is a bit younger than the compilation in Linz. The oldest version of this cycle is preserved in an unfinished manuscript in Munich.<sup>23</sup> The images are much less impressive and less narrative than the vividly reporting cycle in Linz.

The cycles were in the focus of Gesine Mierke (2014)<sup>24</sup>, Nina Rowe (2020)<sup>25</sup> and Rebecca Tschümperlin (2021)<sup>26</sup>, but the authors did not fully match my expectations.

The miniature showing the commission to Noah (Cgm 11, [fol. 4v](#) – Regensburg, fol. 11v [**fig. 3/1**] – Linz, [fol. 25v](#)) follows the narrative of Jans of Vienna in Cgm 11 and in Regensburg, for here, as Jans reports against the Bible, an angel speaks to the patriarch, whereas in Linz God himself addresses Noah).

The miniature showing Noah building the Ark (Cgm 11, [fol. 5r](#) – Regensburg, fol. 11v [**fig. 3/2**] – Linz, [fol. 25v](#)) is by no means a copy-like repetition, but there are no differences in content. In Regensburg and Linz these two depictions are placed on one page.

The entry of the devil onto the Ark, i. e. the beginning of “our” narrative, shows significant deviations (Cgm 11, [fol. 5r](#) – Regensburg, fol. 12r [**fig. 3/3**] – Linz, [fol. 26r](#) [**fig. 2/1**]). In Cgm 11, an unspecified (incorrect?) scene is presented in a (poorly preserved) miniature: a (probably young) man and, behind him, the devil enter the Ark. Noah is missing. In Regensburg, as

<sup>22</sup> Regensburg, Fürst Thurn und Taxis, Hofbibliothek, Ms. Perg. III: Enikel workshop, ca. 1360/70: Roland, “Illustrierte Weltchroniken” (as note 7), [168–181](#); Günther, *Weltchronikhandschriften* (as note 7), 315–23 (n° 40); <https://handschriftencensus.de/14914>.

<sup>23</sup> Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (BSB), Cgm 11 (digital representation: [urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00093674-2](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00093674-2)), [foll. 5r–9v](#): Enikel workshop, ca. 1340/50: Roland, “Illustrierte Weltchroniken” (as note 7), [99–109](#); Günther, *Weltchronikhandschriften* (as note 7), 219–223 (N° 26); Béatrice Hernad, *Die gotischen Handschriften deutscher Herkunft in der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek*, part 1: Vom späten 13. bis zur Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts (Katalog der illuminierten Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek in München 5,1) (Wiesbaden: 2000), <http://bilder.manuscripta-mediaevalia.de/hs/kataloge/HSK0535.htm>, text vol. [141–43](#) (N° 203), plates vol. [207–13](#) (ill. 441–49); <http://www.handschriftencensus.de/7522>.

<sup>24</sup> Gesine Mierke, *Riskante Ordnungen. Von der Kaiserchronik zu Jans von Wien* (Deutsche Literatur, Studien und Quellen 18) (Berlin: 2014), 99–101.

<sup>25</sup> Nina Rowe, *The Illuminated Word Chronicle. Tales from the Late Medieval City* (New Haven, London: 2020), 30–51. Rowe focuses on later manuscripts and does not attempt to search for the sources of the narrative. In my opinion, she mixes the plot, which can be localised in Vienna, and the illustrations, which were created much later and cannot be localised, although there is no evidence that Jans planned an illustrated chronicle. Moreover, two manuscripts that Rowe presents have a mixed text rather than Jans' pure version.

<sup>26</sup> Rebecca Tschümperlin, *Weltenentwürfe in Text und Bild. Erzählungen vom Anfang der Geschichte in illustrierten Handschriften der Weltchroniken Rudolfs von Ems, Jans' von Wien und des sächsischen Anonymus* (Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur, Beiheft 35) (Stuttgart: 2021), 115–54.

Tschümperlin very rightly points out,<sup>27</sup> a summary of the stay on the Ark is shown to the recipients. Through the depiction of raven and dove the boarding is combined with the end of the journey, in which these two birds play a role. This seems like a secondary intervention in the narrative flow. In addition, contrary to the text, an (unspecified) woman is depicted, while Jans of Vienna says that, as very clearly depicted in Linz, the devil, taking Noah's scolding literally, enters the saving ship unrecognised behind Noah's delayed son. Here, too, an – unspecified – bird flies into the boat through a skylight.

The Ark with three “inhabitants”, Noah at the top proclaiming his commandment of chastity, a young man, and a woman with a headscarf at the bottom, is only depicted in Linz ([fol. 27r](#) [[fig. 2/2](#)]).

The conversation of the devil with an (unnamed) son (Cgm 11, [fol. 6r](#) – Regensburg, fol. 13r [[fig. 3/4](#)] – Linz, [fol. 27v](#) [[fig. 2/3](#)]) is shown – though in Linz in reverse – without any differences in content in the three manuscripts.

The same applies to the conversation with his young wife (obviously very erotic, i. e. depicted with bare breasts) (Cgm 11, [fol. 6v](#) – Regensburg, fol. 13r [[fig. 3/5](#)] – Linz, [fol. 27v](#) [[fig. 2/4](#)]) and to the transport of the man to the wife (Cgm 11, [fol. 7r](#) – Regensburg, fol. 14r [[fig. 3/6](#)] – Linz, [fol. 28r](#) [[fig. 2/5](#)]). If one wants to pay attention to details, one could give preference to the Linz miniature, because the two arches make it visually clearer that the devil is going from one chamber to another. Again, the woman is bare-breasted.

The night of love, which certainly belonged to the pictorial programme of this episode – the lovers are depicted embracing, the son and the devil are just saying goodbye – was only included in the pictorial programme in Linz ([fol. 28v](#) [[fig. 2/6](#)]).

There are also significant differences in Noah's conversation with his son after his footprints were discovered (Cgm 11, [fol. 8v](#) – Regensburg, fol. 15r [[fig. 3/7](#)] – Linz, [fol. 29v](#) [[fig. 2/7](#)]). In Cgm 11 and in Regensburg, a heated conversation is depicted, which admittedly offers no clues as to its content. In Linz, a very specific miniature is offered: it formally follows the full-figure type as in Cgm 11 and is also in portrait format. This allows the illustrator to depict the footprints. Again, the pictorial programme in Linz surpasses the cycles of the two ‘pure’ Jans of Vienna manuscripts.

This excellence continues in the next miniature. In the solution of the case (Cgm 11, [fol. 9r](#) – Regensburg, fol. 15v [[fig. 3/8](#)] – Linz, [fol. 30v](#) [[fig. 2/8](#)]), the mediating wife of Noah is shown

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<sup>27</sup> Tschümperlin, *Weltenentwürfe* (as note 26), 148–49.



in Linz – quite rightly – while in Cgm 11 and Regensburg the scene is limited to the patriarch, his son and daughter-in-law.

There are clear deviations in the rescue of the Ark (Regensburg, fol. 16v [fig. 3/9] – Linz, fol. 31r [fig. 2/9]): Cgm 11 lacks a corresponding scene, and the next miniatures depict the raven finding carrion (Cgm 11, fol. 10r) and the dove bringing back a green branch (Cgm 11, fol. 10v). In Regensburg, a panoramic scene is offered again which, although depicting the fleeing devil and the toad (unlike in the older Cgm 11), combines these motifs with the sending of the raven and includes the raven finding carrion – and thus again expands the narrative with biblical motifs. In Linz, the scene focuses on the escape of the devil and the rescue by the toad. A pictorial programme focused on the specific Ark narrative is realised, which – as in the text – re-enacts the biblical narratives with raven and carrion (Linz, fol. 31v).

Again, it becomes clear that in Regensburg the narrative apparently deliberately does not remain restricted to core narration, but refers to a “general” view, like the miniature on fol. 12r (fig. 3/3) and fol. 16v (fig. 3/9).

To summarise: Although the picture programme in Regensburg and in Cgm 11 illustrates the pure text of Jans dem Enikel, the individual scenes do not seem to refer more precisely to the text than in Linz, where the manuscript offers a mixed text (in the section relevant here, admittedly [almost] exclusively based on Jans).<sup>28</sup>

The explanation for this is the so-called ‘Enikel workshop’ active from ca. 1310 onwards.<sup>29</sup> There were not only various illustrations for Jans’ text at hand, but also for other available texts (e.g. for Christherre). For each ordered manuscript, the workshop could configure a text version from this pool and a (more or less suitable) image programme. The purchaser of the Linz manuscript simply ordered the most complete cycle.

### *1b) Source of the Plot*

The storyline of sex on the Ark and the devil’s involvement is not known to everyone with an average knowledge of the Bible and related narratives, but is not unique either. Oskar Dänhardt compiled – albeit with a strong Biblical focus – the ethnographic material concerning the Deluge.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> The fact that in Linz, on fol. 25v, God and not an angel speaks to Noah is due to the different text here.

<sup>29</sup> Roland, “Erzählstrategien” (as 21), 307–10.

<sup>30</sup> Oskar Dänhardt, *Natursagen. Eine Sammlung naturdeutender Sagen, Märchen, Fabeln und Legenden*, 4 vol. (Leipzig: 1907–1912), vol. 1, 257–67 (chapter 13: Sündflutsagen), <http://www.zeno.org/M%C3%A4rchen/M/Allgemein/Oskar+D%C3%A4nhardt%3A+Natursagen>.

**Jewish sources** date back to the 5<sup>th</sup> century. In connection with Jans' narrative, Utley,<sup>31</sup> Tschümperlin<sup>32</sup> and Gerhard Langer<sup>33</sup> consider Jewish material and name as the oldest source the first Midrash referring to the Book of Genesis, the so-called Genesis Rabbah.<sup>34</sup> Basis of the edition from 1912/21<sup>35</sup> is a manuscript in London, British Library, Ms. Add. 27.169, which dates from between the late 11<sup>th</sup> and the mid-12<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>36</sup>

The argument, not a proper narrative, is as follows: As soon as Noah entered the Ark, cohabitation was interdicted to him. Hence it is written: And thou shalt come into the Ark, thou, and thy sons – apart; And thy wife, and thy sons' wives – apart. When Noah went out, God permitted cohabitation again, as they are mentioned together: *Go forth from the Ark, thou and thy wife*, etc. (Gen. 8, 16).<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, Rabbi Abin is quoted: *They are lonely in want and famine* (Job 30, 3): when want and famine visit the world, regard your wife as though she were lonely [i.e. menstruous]. The Genesis Rabbah in this passage also argues with Rabbi Muna: It is written, *And unto Joseph were born two sons* (Gen. 41, 50): when? Before *the year of famine came*. The very source refers also directly to the sexual intercourse on the Ark:<sup>38</sup> Rabbi Hiyya said: *Ham and the dog copulated in the Ark, therefore Ham came forth black-skinned while the dog*

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Dänhardt cites two narratives describing how the devil enters the Ark (with the patriarch's wife – 257 [Russian] and 259 [Mansi language: "wogulisch"]) and the passage from Jans (Enikel [Jans of Vienna] – 257–59).

<sup>31</sup> Utley, "Noah's Ham" (as 20), 242–43.

<sup>32</sup> Tschümperlin, *Weltenentwürfe* (as 26), 120.

<sup>33</sup> Gerhard Langer, mail to the author, 13 October 2021.

<sup>34</sup> For basic information about this source, cf. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genesis\\_Rabbah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genesis_Rabbah). Sarit Kattan Griebetz, David M. Grossberg, Martha Himmelfarb, Peter Schäfer (eds.), *Genesis Rabbah in Text and Content* (Tübingen: 2016).

<sup>35</sup> J(ulius) Theodor (finished by Chanoch Albeck), *Midrash Bereshit rabba* (Berlin: 1912–21), <https://archive.org/details/bereschitrabba00albeuoft>.

<sup>36</sup> London, British Library, Ms. Add. 27.169 (digital representation: [http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add\\_MS\\_27169](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_27169)). Michael Sokoloff, "The Major Manuscripts of Genesis Rabbah," in *Genesis Rabbah* (as note 34), 23–32. – Rome, City of Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. ebr. 30 (late 11<sup>th</sup> c. – digital representation: <https://digi.vatlib.it/mss/detail/Vat.ebr.30>) and Vat. ebr. 60 (11<sup>th</sup> c. – digital representation: <https://digi.vatlib.it/mss/detail/Vat.ebr.60>) are considered even more important than the London manuscript today.

<sup>37</sup> H. Freeman, Maurice Simon (eds.), *Midrash Rabbah, translated into English* (Hertford: 1939 – 3<sup>rd</sup> ed: 1961), 246 (GenR31.12), <https://archive.org/details/RabbaGenesis/page/n293> (referring to Rabbi Judah ben Rabbi Simon and Rabbi Hanan in the name of Rabbi Samuel ben Rabbi Isaac). For a German translation: *Midrasch Bereschit Rabba*, trans. August Wünsche (Leipzig: 1881), 136, <https://books.google.at/books?id=5lpBAAAAYAAJ>.

<sup>38</sup> Freeman, Simon, *Midrash Rabbah* (as note 37), 293 (GenR 36,7), <https://archive.org/details/RabbaGenesis/page/n340>; [https://www.sefaria.org/Bereishit\\_Rabbah.36.7](https://www.sefaria.org/Bereishit_Rabbah.36.7); Wünsche, *Midrasch* (as note 37), 163. Compare also David A. Wacks, *The Curse of Ham in Medieval Iberia and the Enslavement of Black Africans* (web publication 2021), <https://davidwacks.uoregon.edu/2020/12/30/ham/>; Samuel A. Berman, *Midrash Tanhuma-Yelammedenu*. An English Translation of Genesis and Exodus from the Printed Tanhuma-Yelammedenu with an Introduction, Notes and Indexes (Hoboken:



*publicly exposes its copulation. Rabbi Levi said: This may be compared to one who minted his own coinage in the very palace of the king, whereupon the king ordered: I decree that his effigy be defaced and his coinage cancelled. Similarly, Ham and the dog copulated in the Ark and were punished.*

To sum up: Jewish sources refer to the sex on the Ark but omit the devil.<sup>39</sup> There are no narrative details but a scholarly approach.

**Christian sources** about sex on the Ark start with the 12<sup>th</sup>-century author Petrus Comestor. He refers in his *Historia scholastica* to the above-mentioned Jewish tradition.<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, Fritz Peter Knapp considers the prohibition of marital intercourse on the Ark by referring to a rabbinical commandment and not to Christian sources alone.<sup>41</sup> However, all cited Hebrew-written sources lack the narrative richness of Jans' verses, especially in that the devil does not occur at all. Although Islamic sources from the 10<sup>th</sup> century onwards mention the devil, the plot differs considerably, as he enters the Ark with the donkey.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, Islamic material is more likely to be regarded as a parallel development and not as the very source of Jans.

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1995), <https://books.google.at/books?id=WLOi9vWEzTEC>, 65 (oldest manuscripts from ca. 800: Ham, the dog and the raven are mentioned as sexual offenders on the Ark).

<sup>39</sup> Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: 1912), 166 (and the respective note 54 = vol. 5, 188–89) reports that on the Ark men and women – of men and animals – lived separately. This separation is removed at the blessing after landing by the words “be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth” (Gen. 6, 1). Only Ham, the dog and the raven disobeyed – Utley, “Noah’s Ham” (as 20), 243 refers to Ginzberg’s opinion that Hebrew sources in the East influenced Christian authors there.

<sup>40</sup> Cap. 33: De ingressu in arcam (PL 198 [<https://www.mlat.uzh.ch/browser?path=11575&text=11575>], col. 1083D [2<sup>nd</sup> link]): Perfecta igitur arca, dixit Dominus ad Noe: Ingredieris arcam tu, et filii tui, uxor tua, et uxores filiorum tuorum (Gen. 6). In his octo reservatum est seminarium generis humani. Et seorsum viros, seorsum mulieres nominavit Dominus cum de ingressu loqueretur. Ac si diceret. Tempore afflictionis vacandum est ab amplexibus mulierum.

<sup>41</sup> Fritz Peter Knapp, *Die Literatur in der Zeit der frühen Habsburger bis zum Tod Albrechts II. 1358* (Die Literatur des Spätmittelalter in den Ländern Österreich, Steiermark, Kärnten, Salzburg und Tirol von 1273 bis 1439 = Geschichte der Literatur in Österreich von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart 2/1 (Graz: 1999), 243–45. – Martin Przybiski, “di juden jehend. Die Aufnahme jüdischer Erzählstoffe in die ‘Weltchronik’ des Jans von Wien,” *Aschkenas* 14 (2004): 83–99, mentions on p. 87 the story on the Ark only in passing and refers to Utley, “Noah’s Ham” (as 20).

<sup>42</sup> Husam Aly, “Die Noahgeschichte in rabbinischer Literatur und bei Koraninterpreten” (doctoral thesis, Duisburg-Essen: 2007), 280, <https://d-nb.info/984793135/34>, refers to Al-Tabari (839–923). Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (12<sup>th</sup> c.) criticises this passage (281–82), which proves that the story was known. This narrative is connected to the Newcastle Mystery Play *Noah’s Ark* (see below) and to Jans of Vienna by Anne Jean Mill, “Noah’s Wife Again,” *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 56 (1941): 613–26, esp. 615–16 (Newcastle), 617 (note 22), and 619 (Jans of Vienna) (not open access). – Husam, “Noahgeschichte”, 318, mentions that Al-Tabari reports also that the devil was on the roof of the Ark.

Utley and Dunphy<sup>43</sup> focus on the narrative tradition combining the devil and sexuality. This narration culminates in Jans' story but has an older line of transmission, namely a Latin marginal gloss in a manuscript of Petrus de Riga's *Aurora*.<sup>44</sup> The note on [fol. 19v](#) is attached to Ham's mockery of the drunken Noah.<sup>45</sup> Utley and Dunphy considered the manuscript to be French. From my point of view the most plausible region from which the McClean manuscript's style of script and decoration derives is Upper Italy.<sup>46</sup> The codex is said to have been written in the second quarter (or the middle) of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, with some glosses (as the one fol. 19v) added later.<sup>47</sup> I am convinced that the production of the codex was started by a team from Upper Italy around 1250.<sup>48</sup> Such teams were, quite often, active in Austria as well.<sup>49</sup> If that is true, Jans' chronicle and the McClean codex with its gloss might be from the same region or even town (Vienna?).

Even though the marginal note mentions the son's name (Ham) and the moral verdict is different, Utley and Dunphy proved convincingly that the same narrative source(s) was/were used.

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<sup>43</sup> Utley, "Noah's Ham" (as [20](#)), 245; Dunphy, *Daz was ein michel wunder* (as [20](#)), 14, 24, 43, 50, 97–107.

<sup>44</sup> Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, Ms. McClean 31: <https://collection.beta.fitz.ms/id/object/118798>: Description by Bob Proctor (1990). M(ontague) R(hodes) James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the McClean Collection of Manuscripts in the Fitzwilliam Museum* (Cambridge: 1912), 55–65; *A Catalogue of Western Book Illumination in the Fitzwilliam Museum and the Cambridge Colleges*, Part Three: France, vol. 1: Deirdre Jackson, Nigel Morgan, Stella Panayotova, c. 1000–c. 1250 (London, Turnhout: 2015), 193–99 (Cat. 69).

<sup>45</sup> Cham minor filiorum Noe transgressor continentie quam Noe indixerat in archa, mulieribus seorsum et viris similiter seorsum manentibus. Cham vero per magicam artem vocato demone transivit ad uxorem suam dormiens cum ea. Ideo autem vehiculo demonis usus est quia Noe cinerem sparserat in medio in quo notaret vestigia transeuntium ad uxores. Ceteris vero cum patre continentibus solus Cham demonis ministerio simul et adiutorio mulieris amplexibus operam dedit. Noe vero precibus insistente demon Cham reducere non valuit nocturnis orationibus Noe impeditus et effugatus. Unde Cham ante lucem ad ceteros fratres redire compulsus est (et) per cinerem dispersum admissum facinus celare non potuit. Quo circa Noe vestigia sua deprendens Cham propter inobedientiam habere cepit exosum. Unde Cham derisit eum post inebriationem. (Utley, "Noah's Ham" [as note [20](#)], 241 – revised by the author).

<sup>46</sup> There can hardly be room for doubt, not least because the historiated initial on [fol. 103r](#) is stylistically completely clear.

<sup>47</sup> *Cat. Cambridge 3/1* (as note 44), 196. Whether the few glosses named in the catalogue were added later or only by another scribe is, in my opinion, open for discussion.

<sup>48</sup> Patricia Stirnemann, who laid the path for the stylistic attribution, dated the manuscript ca. 1225/35, which is in my opinion a bit too early.

<sup>49</sup> Patricia Stirnemann's expertise quoted in *Cat. Cambridge 3/1* (as note 44), 201–02. Tschümperlin, "Weltenentwürfe" (as note [26](#)), 118 obviously refers to that.



From the 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards, there is a vivid tradition of “mystery plays” in England<sup>50</sup> staging biblical narratives. The Deluge is part of this tradition, but the plot is quite different. Noah’s wife is the ‘bad cop’ and the action concentrates on the time before boarding the Ark.<sup>51</sup> The connections to Jans are only loose and are mentioned merely because England played an important role for the sources of the illustrations.

### *1c) Source of the Illustrations*

No older image cycle is known, yet some illustrations in very prominent English manuscripts – Ramsey Psalter and Queen Mary’s Psalter – show the entering of the devil with Noah’s wife and his leaving of the Ark.<sup>52</sup> This may reflect an indirect influence of the aforementioned mystery plays.

In Sweden, there are such scenes as well. Especially the cycle in Edshult from the early 14<sup>th</sup> century is important,<sup>53</sup> which however focuses on Noah’s wife, as in England.

The Queen Mary’s Psalter adds an illustration of the devil fleeing from the Ark and thus destroying the ship’s hull.<sup>54</sup> The depiction is unique in the English realm. The only (partial)

<sup>50</sup> Hans-Jürgen Diller, *The Middle English Mystery Play. A Study in Dramatic Speech and Form* (Cambridge: 1992); Hetta Elizabeth Howes, *Medieval drama and the mystery plays* (online publication: 2018), <https://www.bl.uk/medieval-literature/articles/medieval-drama-and-the-mystery-plays>.

<sup>51</sup> To cite but one conclusive example of the rich reference literature: Edward George Cole, “Obedience, disorder, and grace in the Noah mystery plays” (Master thesis, McMaster University: 1982), <https://macsphere.mcmaster.ca/bitstream/11375/9231/1/fulltext.pdf>. For a recent performance (2013) of the Chester Noah Play by the Liverpool University Players see: <https://sarahpeverley.com/2013/05/26/the-chester-noah-play-directing-silence-and-rain/>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cn0pcYONuxc>.

<sup>52</sup> Ramsey Psalter (Winchester, ca. 1300): St. Paul im Lavanthal, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. XXV/2, 19, and New York, The Morgan, M 302: [fol. 1v](#) in the New York part (as part of a picture cycle without any recognisable narrative connection); Adelaide Bennett, “Noah’s Recalcitrant Wife in the Ramsey Abbey Psalter,” *Source. Notes in the History of Art* 2 (1982): 2–5, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23202244> (not open access) – Queen Mary’s Psalter (see note 54) features, on [fol. 6r](#), a conversation between the devil and Noah’s wife.

<sup>53</sup> Mill, “Noah’s Wife” (as [42](#)), 622–23; Boudewijn Servaes Jan Visschers, *Non-scriptural Elements in the Towneley Cycle* (Durham: 1983), [49](#) and [plate 11](#), <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/7192/>. Mill and Visschers mention 15<sup>th</sup>-century depictions as well, but these will be left apart here.

<sup>54</sup> London, British Library, [Ms. Royal 2 B VII](#), Queen Mary’s Psalter (London ca. 1310/20): [fol. 7r](#). The accompanying Old French text describes the sending forth of the raven who finds carrion, the dove who returns with a branch, and the devil who bores through the floor of the Ark to escape. George Warner, *Queen Mary’s Psalter. Miniatures and drawings by an English artist of the 14<sup>th</sup> century reproduced from Royal Ms. 2 B. VII in the British Museum* (London: 1912), [13–15 \(10–12\)](#): <https://bestiary.ca/etexts/warner-queen-mary-psalter-introduction.pdf>; Mill, “Noah’s Wife” (as [42](#)), 620–22; Anne Rudloff Stanton, *The Queen Mary Psalter. A Study of Affect and Audience* (Philadelphia: 2001), [88–90](#), <https://books.google.at/books?id=fB4LAAAAIAAJ>; V. A. Kolve, *Chaucer and the Imagery of Narrative: The First Five Canterbury Tales* (London: 1984), [203–10](#), <https://books.google.at/books?id=USW1GqN-28oC> (each without a satisfactory answer).

parallel is the Egerton Bible picture book<sup>55</sup> showing a conventional depiction of all saved beings leaving the Ark ([fol. 4r](#)). One of them is – obviously – the devil.

To sum up:

Manuscripts like the presented world chronicles with hundreds of illustrations are anything but ‘popular’. They are part of a bourgeois-aristocratic high culture. By no means do they correspond to the understanding of image-based popular culture of today’s time. Nevertheless, for our considerations **the image cycle** and the single illustrations mentioned are important because they represent the first generation of illustrations of this topic.

In addition, the stage-like illustrations could very well reflect the knowledge of a real play.<sup>56</sup> English sources prove that Noah’s Ark was present on medieval stages. Their plot deviates significantly, which gives the proposed Viennese tradition a higher and independent status. **The storyline** is of high interest and represents an independent viewpoint with astonishingly ‘humanist’ and ‘human’ tendencies, which remain valid in current gender discussions as well.

Whether or not plot and illustrations have one or more common sources remains still unanswered.

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<sup>55</sup> London, British Library, *Ms Egerton 1894*: [http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Egerton\\_MS\\_1894](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Egerton_MS_1894) (with a link to a digital representation); <https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=8780&CollID=28&NStart=1894> (with scholarly description of the decoration from the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the 14<sup>th</sup> century).

<sup>56</sup> How stage action is reflected in illustrated manuscripts cannot be discussed here. Very prominent is, for example, the Terence de ducs (Paris, Bibliothèque d’Arsenal, Ms. 664), Paris, ca. 1410: <https://utpictura18.univ-amu.fr/serie/publius-terencius-afer-comoediae-dit-terence-ducs-15e-s-arsenal-ms-664>. The illustrations are of the highest quality but do not really reflect actors playing on a ‘real’ stage because the stage setting is always changing. – Two Carolingian manuscripts refer directly to late antique models: Unframed miniatures of Rome, City of Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, *Vat. lat. 3868* (ca. 825): <https://utpictura18.univ-amu.fr/serie/comedies-terence-ms-9e-s-dapres-antique-vat-lat-3868>, and unframed drawings of Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), Ms. lat. 7899 (from the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the 9<sup>th</sup> c.): <https://utpictura18.univ-amu.fr/serie/comedies-terence-ms-remois-9e-s-dapres-antique-bnf-latin-7899>. The printed illustrations of an incunabula of the *Comoediae* of Terence, Lyon 1493 (*GW, M 45.397*), stand at the end of the medieval development: <https://utpictura18.univ-amu.fr/serie/p-terentii-comoediae-sex-ed-josse-bade-lyon-trechsel-1493> and <https://books.google.fr/books?id=NU5yfsji4FAC>. The woodcuts clearly show the stage and the actors. – For the tradition of illuminated Terence manuscripts see F(rencesca) Cecchini, “Terenzio Afro, Publio,” in *Enciclopedia dell’Arte Medievale* 11 (2000), 131–33, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/publio-terenzio-afro\\_%28Enciclopedia-dell%27-Arte-Medievale%29/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/publio-terenzio-afro_%28Enciclopedia-dell%27-Arte-Medievale%29/).



## 2) Judas' Fate

Populist politicians always try to direct the hatred of the people towards defenceless minorities. Refugees are abused to win elections: in the US, in Poland, in Hungary and unfortunately also in Austria with our gently smiling young chancellor.<sup>57</sup> This was no different in the Middle Ages. The author of our second example – however wonderful his language – is an example of that disgusting mind-set.

The “Österreichischer Bibelübersetzer” lived somewhere between Passau and Bratislava in the second quarter of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, most probably in Austria.<sup>58</sup> Gisela Kornrumpf recently suggested his name was Wolfhart.<sup>59</sup> Like Jans of Vienna, he had time to write and must therefore have had sufficient financial means to afford to do so.

His *Evangelienwerk* is a Middle High German gospel harmony, basically a linguistically very competent and fluent translation of biblical texts, supplemented by glosses and some apocryphal additions.<sup>60</sup> If I am correct, a beautifully illustrated copy of Wolfhart’s *Evangelienwerk*, today in Schaffhausen,<sup>61</sup> was produced in 1330 for the author’s own pleasure.

Some episodes are heavily illustrated (‘comic-like’): the apocryphal youth of Jesus, the legend of Judas<sup>62</sup> and the Passion. The storyline of the Judas episode is based on the *Legenda aurea*

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<sup>57</sup> The paper was presented in Białystok in September 2021. Shortly afterwards Sebastian Kurz, to whom I refer in this passage, had to resign due to severe allegations.

<sup>58</sup> There is extensive literature on his oeuvre, which cannot be referred to in our context. For an introduction: [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%96sterreichischer\\_Bibel%C3%BCbersetzer](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%96sterreichischer_Bibel%C3%BCbersetzer) and Kurt Gärtner, “Klosterneuburger Evangelienwerk,” in *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters. Verfasserlexikon*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (VL<sup>2</sup>), vol. 4 (1983), cols. 1248–58. For the illustrations cf. Martin Roland, “Stoffgruppe 35: Evangelienwerk,” in *Katalog der deutschsprachigen illustrierten Handschriften des Mittelalters* (KdiH), vol. 4/1 (2012), 121–55, plate VIIIb–XI and fig. 61–71, <https://kdiH.badw.de/datenbank/stoffgruppe/35>.

<sup>59</sup> Gisela Kornrumpf, “Wolfhart,” in VL<sup>2</sup> (as note 58), vol. 10 (1999), cols. 1361–63.

<sup>60</sup> German sources are known for all apocryphal texts, only the Judas episode appears to be directly translated from Latin (see note 63).

<sup>61</sup> Schaffhausen, Stadtbibliothek, Gen. 8 (<http://e-codices.ch/de/list/one/sbs/0008> with a digital representation and the description by Rudolf Gamper, Susan Marti, *Katalog der mittelalterlichen Handschriften der Stadtbibliothek Schaffhausen* (Dietikon-Zürich: 1998), 80–95 [with additions from Rudolf Gamper, 2008]).

<sup>62</sup> On the Judas legend, known in the Latin West from the 12<sup>th</sup> century onwards, cf. Paul Franklin Baum, “The mediaeval legend of Judas Iscariot,” *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 31 (1916), 481–585, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/457014.pdf> (not freely accessible); Friedrich Ohly, *Der Verfluchte und der Erwählte. Vom Leben mit der Schuld* (Opladen: 1976), 140–43, plates 1–4 (appendix with an edition of the Judas legend according to the Schaffhausen manuscript); Walter Puchner, “Zur Herkunft der mittelalterlichen Judaslegende,” *Fabula* 35 (1994): 305–09 (with alleged Greek material); for an overview with a focus on the German tradition see Franz Josef Worstbrock, “Judaslegende,” in VL<sup>2</sup> (as 58), vol. 4 (1983), cols. 882–87; Bernhard Dieckmann, “Judas als Oedipus’: Inbegriff des Sünders und Sündenbock,” *zur Debatte* 2 (2010), 9–

by Jacobus de Voragine.<sup>63</sup> A cursory survey by me has not unearthed any manuscripts of the *Legenda aurea* with illustrations of the Judas episode.<sup>64</sup>

In the lower margins of [fol. 223r](#) of the Schaffhausen manuscript, immediately after the beginning of the Judas story with a golden initial, you see Simon (or Reuben) and Cyborea, Judas' parents. After turning the page, the open book looks like this ([foll. 223v–224r](#) – [fig. 4](#)) and we see Simon and Cyborea closely embraced in bed, then Cyborea dreaming that the son she has conceived



[fig. 4](#): Schaffhausen

[11](#), [https://www.kath-akademie-bayern.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/debatte\\_2010-2.pdf](https://www.kath-akademie-bayern.de/fileadmin/user_upload/debatte_2010-2.pdf); Brandon W. Hawk, *Translating the Traitor: A Medieval Life of Judas* (online publication 2021), <https://www.ancientjewreview.com/read/2021/3/20/translating-the-traitor-a-medieval-life-of-judas>.

<sup>63</sup> Theodor Graesse (ed.), *Jacobus a Voragine, Legenda aurea, vulgo Historia Lombardica dicta* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Breslau: 1890), <https://archive.org/details/jacobiavoragine00jacogoog>. Compare the corresponding passages in the edition (183–86 as part of the legend of Matthew, who – after the death and resurrection of Christ – took the place of Judas in the circle of the apostles) and in the Schaffhausen manuscript ([foll. 223r–224v](#)). The version of the narrative in the *Legenda aurea* is the special focus of Leopold Kretzenbacher, “Verkauft um dreissig Silberlinge,” *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde* 57 (1961): 1–17, <http://doi.org/10.5169/seals-115534>, esp. 2–5.

<sup>64</sup> Alison L. Beringer, “Before the Betrayal. The Life of Judas in a Vernacular Fourteenth-Century Austrian Manuscript,” in *Between the Picture and the Word. Manuscript Studies from the Index of Christian Art Essays in Honor of John Plummer*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Index of Christian Art Occasional Papers 8) (Princeton: 2006), 151–60; figs. 213–31, does not consider the possibility of illustrated manuscripts from the *Legenda aurea* as a possible inspiration for the artist of the Schaffhausen marginal illustrations.

will cause terrible suffering. The new-born child is abandoned; already here, Judas is given his red hair as a trademark. A childless queen fishes the abandoned child out of the water – reminiscent of the Moses iconography. She simulates a birth and lovingly accepts Judas in place of her own child. A biological son follows the foundling – how, in a tragedy, could it be otherwise. The two boys immediately start quarrelling. The insult to the younger brother is followed by the punishment and mockery of the younger one. This mockery provokes the next spurt of violence; Judas becomes his brother’s murderer and has to flee. He reaches Jerusalem and Pilate’s court. Pilate orders him to pick an apple from a tree in a neighbouring garden, and Judas obeys. The owner, none other than Judas’ father, is – quite understandably – upset about the theft. Judas has no other choice but to kill the rebellious man, whom he, of course, does not know. This does not particularly upset the boss.

Like the beginning of the story, the ending is on another page and one has to turn the pages once more to see [fol. 224v](#), where Pilate commands his faithful servant to marry the widow.

All the elements of a proper tragedy are present, murder of the father and incest, yet Judas converts and follows Jesus, but the merciless fate does not let go of him.<sup>65</sup> A tragic and beautiful plot comes to an end, certainly not a message of salvation but a potential basis for populist abuse.

## 2a) The Image-Cycle

Alison Beringer could not find any older evidence of the pictorial programme.<sup>66</sup> Younger cycles are known from Bohemia as part of a ‘picture book’ dated shortly before 1350,<sup>67</sup> from Bavaria,

<sup>65</sup> Judas is depicted during the Last Supper ([fol. 226v](#)), kissing Jesus in Gethsemane ([fol. 235r](#)), trying to bring back the money he had received ([fol. 237v](#)), throwing the coins into the temple, and his suicide (both on [fol. 238r](#)).

<sup>66</sup> Beringer, “Before the Betrayal” (as note 64). Cf. also Ingrid Westerhoff, “Der moralisierte Judas. Mittelalterliche Legende, Typologie, Allegorie im Bild” (doctoral thesis, Zürich: 1996); published also in the *Aachener Kunstblätter* 61 (1995–97), 85–156; Kim Paffenroth, *Judas. Images of the Lost Disciple* (Louisville 2001), 71–73: <https://books.google.at/books?id=3kb08nyeKGMC>. – Although the title is very promising, Anastasia G. Tourta, “The Judas Cycle? Byzantine Examples and Post Byzantine Survivals,” in *Byzantinische Malerei. Bildprogramme – Ikonographie – Stil*, ed. Guntram Koch (Wiesbaden: 2000), 321–35, has no mention of the traitor’s youth.

<sup>67</sup> Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 370, foll. 102v–104v: Ulrike Jenni, Maria Theisen unter Mitarbeit von Karel Stejskal, *Mitteuropäische Schulen III (ca. 1350–1400) Böhmen – Mähren – Schlesien – Ungarn (mit Ausnahme der Hofwerkstätten Wenzels IV. und deren Umkreis)* (Die illuminierten Handschriften und Inkunabeln der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek 12) (Vienna: 2004), 3–53 (Ulrike Jenni); Westerhoff, “Judas” (as note 66), 89, 91 (with ill.).



as the chapter of a prose New Testament called *Neue Ee*<sup>68</sup> dated 1440,<sup>69</sup> and as part of a French translation of Ludolf's *Vita Christi* produced in the North of France or Flanders in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>70</sup>

In contrast to the narrative dealt with in the first section of this study, there is no early evidence of performative dissemination. Only very late, between 1486–90, did the story become part of Jehan Michel's *Mystère de la Passion Jesu Christ*.<sup>71</sup> One copy of the printed edition (ca. 1493/94) has decoration and even illustrations of Judas' suicide ([fol. 339rv](#)),<sup>72</sup> but no depiction of his youth as in the above-mentioned contemporaneous French manuscripts of Ludolf's *Vita Christi*. The 'Freiburger Fronleichnamsspiele' date from as late as 1599, but we know of a

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<sup>68</sup> For the 'Die Neue Ee' see: Kurt Gärtner, in VL<sup>2</sup> (as note 58), vol. 6 (1987), cols. 907–09; <https://handschriftencensus.de/werke/2022>. For the illustrations in the manuscripts of the Neue Ee see: Ulrike Bodemann, "59.13. Die Neue Ee," in KdiH (as note 58), vol. 7 (2017), 59: <https://kdi.h.badw.de/datenbank/untergruppe/59/13> (and the list of pictorial themes: not online). Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Mqg 1861, foll. 38r–41r (written in 1447, illustrated in 1452) has coloured pen drawings; Munich, BSB, Cgm 522 (1470) has only one illustration (fol. 90v: abandonment); the manuscript in New York in focus here (see the following note). Munich, BSB, Cgm 246, [foll. 45r–47r](#) (1449/1455) and Znaim/Znojmo, city archive/Archív mesta, 302, foll. 66v–69v, only have sections left blank.

<sup>69</sup> New York, Public Library, Spencer Collection, Ms. 102: Die Neue Ee, foll. 68r–72v: *The Splendor of the Word. Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts at the New York Public Library* (New York: 2005), 116–24 (Jeffrey Hamburger); Jeffrey Hamburger, "Rewriting History. The visual and the vernacular in late medieval history bibles," in *Retextualisierung in der mittelalterlichen Literatur*, eds. Joachim Bumke, Ursula Peters (Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie 2005, Sonderheft 124), 260–308, esp. 278–289, 297–308 (the text closely connected with Munich, Cgm 370 [without illustrations]; Hamburger rightly emphasises the underlying anti-Semitism of the text and images). – <https://handschriftencensus.de/8446>; <https://kdi.h.badw.de/datenbank/handschrift/59/13/4> (Ulrike Bodemann).

<sup>70</sup> Paris, BnF, [Ms. fr. 181](#), Ludolf von Sachsen, *Vita Christi en français* (Inc.: La vie et conversation de Nostre Seigneur Jhesu Crist, filz de Dieu), [fol. 176r](#). For a bibliography cf. <https://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cc47519r>; Baum, "Legend" (as note 62), 535–41 (with the text); Westenhoff, *Judas* (as 66), 89–90 (with ill.). – Cf. also London, British Library, Ms. Royal 16 G III, [fol. 193r](#) (Gent 1479: <https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=7980&CollID=16&NStart=160703>), and Cracow, Biblioteka Czartoryskich, [sygn. 2919 V Rkps](#), [fol. 401r](#) (made in 1478 for Guillaume de Ternay).

<sup>71</sup> Baum, "Legend" (as note 62), 542–43 and 564; Kurt Kruse (Ed.), *Jehan Michel: Das Mystère de la Passion Jesu Crist jouee a Paris et Angiers und sein Verhältnis zu der Passion von Arnould Greban und zu den beiden Valenciennner Passionen* (Greifswald: 1907), <https://archive.org/details/JehanMichelMystereKruse/>, esp. 12, 14–15, 74–75, 79–87 (on the early life of Judas). Paffenroth, *Judas* (as note 66), 72, quotes a French passion play in which Judas recollects his awful crimes and fate.

<sup>72</sup> There are several printed editions, one example from ca. 1493/94 (Paris, Antoine Vérard: [GW, M 23.359](#)) featuring painted book decorations: Paris, BnF, département Réserve des livres rares, [VE-LINS-600](#).

performative tradition from 1515 onwards.<sup>73</sup> Hansjürgen Linke describes the fact that Judas' youth is part of the performance as exceptional.<sup>74</sup>

## 2b) Popular Impact of Images and Performances

Fortunately, the 'Österreichische Bibelübersetzer' only had his wonderfully clear language to narrate his novella and the marginal illustrations of his privately owned manuscript at hand.<sup>75</sup> Wolfhart's filth of anti-Semitism could therefore only flourish hidden behind the covers of a beautiful book.

What widespread damage could have been done if Wolfhart had written a successful play<sup>76</sup> to popularise his mind-set or if he had been able to have flyleaves printed with an anti-Semitic comic strip! (**fig. 1**)<sup>77</sup> – This disgusting and scaring vision leads us to the conclusions.

## 3) Conclusion

### 3a) Chronology

Let's start with a chronological approach: the first – prehistoric – dot on the timeline is the Deluge, then Judas. The flood myths and the New Testament are well-known "events", but the two storylines in focus here, though embedded in these settings, are something entirely different

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<sup>73</sup> Hansjürgen Linke, "Freiburger Fronleichnamsspiele," in VL<sup>2</sup> (as note 58), vol. 2 (1978), cols. 893–96. For the text see: Ernst Martin, "Freiburger Passionsspiele des XVI. Jahrhunderts," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Beförderung der Geschichts-, Alterthums- und Volkskunde von Freiburg, dem Breisgau und den angrenzenden Landschaften* 3 (1873/74): 1–206, <http://dl.ub.uni-freiburg.de/diglit/zgb1873-74/0013>. Judas' youth is on p. 69 (vv 1704–11), as Judas reports to Nicodemus before committing suicide. See also: Klaus Vogelsang, "Von Höllenfahrtsmaschinen, Münzprüfungen und fehlgeleiteter Rolle: Das populäre Judasbild des Mittelalters im Spiegel des Passionsspiels," *zur Debatte. Themen der Katholischen Akademie in Bayern 2010*, booklet 2: 6–8, [https://www.kath-akademie-bayern.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/debatte\\_2010-2.pdf](https://www.kath-akademie-bayern.de/fileadmin/user_upload/debatte_2010-2.pdf).

<sup>74</sup> Linke, "Freiburger Fronleichnamsspiele" (as note 73), col. 896.

<sup>75</sup> A copy of the codex dated 1482 apparently survived until World War II: former Neißer, Gymnasium Carolinum, Ms. A VIII.9: Roland, "Evangelienwerk," in KdiH (see 58), 133–35. Today, only old photos and fragments are known, none of which concerning the cycle discussed here.

<sup>76</sup> A quick survey makes it likely that the youth of Judas does not appear in the "Passionsspiele" (Passion plays) in the German-speaking realm, (most plausibly) lacking in other regions as well. The "Freiburger Passionsspiele" (see note 73–74) and Jehan Michel (see note 71–72) are the only known exceptions. Cf. also <https://de.wikisource.org/wiki/Passionsspiele>.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Johannes Valentin Schwarz, "Antisemitische Karikaturen und Cartoons," in: Jüdisches Museum Hohenems, Didaktikmappe zur Ausstellung *Antijüdischer Nippes, populäre Judenbilder und aktuelle Verschwörungstheorien* (2005), [https://www.politik-lernen.at/dl/msLpJKJKoLnNoJqx4KJK/504\\_karikaturen.pdf](https://www.politik-lernen.at/dl/msLpJKJKoLnNoJqx4KJK/504_karikaturen.pdf). Whereas anti-Semitic cartoons are legion, I have so far not come across any anti-Semitic comic strips (with sequential narrative). An exception is Art Spiegelman, *Maus* (New York: Raw 1980–91), which was created by a Jewish American and was regarded (in Europe) as disrespectful and trivialising, nevertheless winning the Pulitzer Prize in 1992.

and emerge as narratives only in the **12<sup>th</sup> century**. The vernacular versions have not survived as independent texts, but as elements of a world chronicle written in the **late 13<sup>th</sup> century** by Jans of Vienna, and in a Gospel harmony authored by the ‘Österreichische Bibelübersetzer’ **before 1330**.

The Schaffhausen manuscript of the ‘Evangelienwerk’ with its wonderful marginal illustrations was probably commissioned directly by the author in **1330**.

Only a few years later (**around 1350**) the Linz manuscript with its stage-like illustrations was produced by the so-called ‘Enikel workshop’.<sup>78</sup>

### *3b) Media Transfer – Private and Public*

Wolffhart may have shown the marvellous marginal illustrations of his deluxe manuscript of his ‘Evangelienwerk’ to guests in private, but a public impact can be ruled out. Although a dozen of illuminated world chronicles were produced by the ‘Enikel workshop’ from the early 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards, public reception will not have been much broader than that of the Schaffhausen codex.

Jans’ text of the Ark episode has however dominant parts in direct speech, verses that sound like stage directions, AND stage-like illustrations.

Most probably two steps were necessary to get from the performance to the text and then to the medium of the image. Jans der Enikel (Jans of Vienna) integrated the Ark episode he had seen on stage into his – very likely unillustrated – chronicle. In a second step, the ‘Enikel workshop’ developed a series of illustrations that were inspired by the same (?) play.

We can assume that a Noah play was popular at least between 1275 and 1350.<sup>79</sup> The most likely place of performance and perception is Vienna, where Jans was a wealthy citizen.

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<sup>78</sup> The first fragment which documents closely related illustrations of Jans of Vienna’s world chronicle dates from before 1320 (Munich, BSB, [Cgm 199](#)). See Roland, “Erzählstrategien” (as note [21](#)), [307](#). Whether or not the story on the Ark was illustrated at this early stage of development cannot be proven, but seems quite likely.

<sup>79</sup> Bernd Neumann, *Geistliches Schauspiel im Zeugnis der Zeit. Zur Aufführung mittelalterlicher religiöser Dramen im deutschen Sprachgebiet*, 2 vols. (Munich: 1987), has no reference or other sources that point to such a (supposed) play.



### 3c) Popular Style and the Intersection Between Visual and Performing Arts

The two storylines presented are about ‘Sex and Crime’, topics equally popular in the ‘dark’ (and image-less) Middle Ages and in the present era. The narratives were passed on orally (via gossip) or through performance.<sup>80</sup>

I have positioned the Ark cycle at the intersection between visual and performing arts. At this very point, also the sculptures of Christ with movable arms are located. The wooden artefact animates Christ, makes him present again for a more or less devout audience.<sup>81</sup> Undoubtedly very popular.

In one case, there are the wooden remains of an action in which the role of Christ is ‘played’ by such a sculpture;<sup>82</sup> in another case there are painted stills (Standbilder) of the performative action.

These still frames are part of a very durable and elitist medium – a parchment codex. According to my theory, the illustrations mirror an elusive performative artefact. The luxurious picture cycle re-animates a play that was popular on the streets. We can thus bridge the gap between performing and visual arts, between deluxe and popular spheres.

A third (and much later) intersection between animation and visual arts is the ‘Daumenkino’ (flip books).<sup>83</sup> The thumb turning the pages animates stories, an invention (patented in 1868)

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<sup>80</sup> This included ‘stage play’ but also ‘political’ or religious action in public space.

<sup>81</sup> Gesine and Johannes Taubert, “Mittelalterliche Kruzifixe mit schwenkbaren Armen. Ein Beitrag zur Verwendung von Bildwerken in der Liturgie,” *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 23 (1969): 79–121; Johannes Tripps, *Das Handelnde Bildwerk in der Gotik. Forschungen zu den Bedeutungsgeschichten und der Funktion des Kirchengebäudes und seiner Ausstattung in der Hoch- und Spätgotik* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Berlin: 2000); Tanya A. Jung, “The Phenomenal Lives of Movable Christ Sculptures” (doctoral thesis, Univ. of Maryland, 2006), <https://drum.lib.umd.edu/bitstream/handle/1903/3893/umi-umd-3576.pdf>, esp. 75–78; Chapter 3, part: Movement and Narrativity; Kamil Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of the Crucified Christ in the Religious Culture of the Latin Middle Ages* (Warszawa: 2010), [http://otworzksiazke.pl/images/ksiazki/animated\\_sculptures\\_of\\_the\\_crucified\\_christ/animated\\_sculptures\\_of\\_the\\_crucified\\_christ.pdf](http://otworzksiazke.pl/images/ksiazki/animated_sculptures_of_the_crucified_christ/animated_sculptures_of_the_crucified_christ.pdf), esp. 44–47: a play from Assisi featuring the “animated Christ” (the other characters are real actors); Johannes Taubert, “Medieval Crucifixes with Movable Arms: A Contribution to the Question of the Liturgical Use of Sculpture,” in *Polychrome Sculpture. Meaning, Form, Conservation*, ed. Johannes Taubert (Los Angeles: 2015), <https://books.google.at/books?id=-GZdCwAAQBAJ>, 38–53, esp. 47–50 (examples of sculptures with movable arms in the Easter liturgy from 1339 onwards); Daniele Di Lodovico, “Revising Devotion: the role of wooden sculptures in affecting painting and devotion in the Late Medieval periods in Italy (XII–XV century)” (doctoral thesis, University of Washington, 2016), [https://digital.lib.washington.edu/researchworks/bitstream/handle/1773/37126/DiLodovico\\_washington\\_0250E\\_15827.pdf?sequence=1](https://digital.lib.washington.edu/researchworks/bitstream/handle/1773/37126/DiLodovico_washington_0250E_15827.pdf?sequence=1).

<sup>82</sup> Kopania, *Animated Sculptures* (as note 81), 44–49 (Assisi and Perugia, 14<sup>th</sup> c.), 60–67 (Wels, a play focusing on the deposition from the cross [Kreuzabnahmespiel], 1500 –Vienna, St Stephan’s, passion play [Passionsspiel], copy from 1687 – Debs-Codex [1515] in Sterzing), 70–83 (England, mystery plays from 1175), 135–36 (Wels and Vienna), 147–58 (Spain and Italy), 158–62 (England).

<sup>83</sup> Cf. note 3.

which, as a book, is near to our medieval examples. But the development in the field of animation went in a different direction, toward the projection of the sequences, i. e. cartoons animating the sequential narrative of comics (1888/92 by Charles-Émile Reynaud),<sup>84</sup> and the film in general (1895 by the Lumière brothers).<sup>85</sup> None of these techniques was developed to transport ideas, but they subsequently became means to influence the masses – like printing centuries ago.

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With the return to flip books, my presentation has come full circle. The animated message can be full of humanity (the German word ‘Menschlichkeit’ is more emphatic and precise), as Jans of Vienna proved with his love story full of affection and common sense. Yet people in the Middle Ages – like us today – were confronted not only with the shining sides of life but also with populist temptations. When the tempters are charismatic and a compliant legal system and powerful media are in place, the case becomes dangerous.

Our medieval counterparts had much more limited access to the media and had no opportunity to decide at the ballot box. Let’s not miss our chance to drive the devil out of the ark of democracy.

### *Image credits*

Figs.1–3: Created by the author using the online resources cited in notes 61 and 7, respectively, or using “Wissenschaftliches Bildzitat” after the publications cited in notes 25 and 26. – Fig. 4: <http://e-codices.ch/de/doubleview/sbs/0008/223v/>.

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<sup>84</sup> <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zeichentrickfilm>; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_animation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_animation). The oldest preserved example seems to be ‘Pauvre Pierrot’ (1891: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4FrX3-XUbY>; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pauvre\\_Pierrot](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pauvre_Pierrot)). From the first example ‘Un bon Bock’ (1888/92) only small fragments survive: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Un\\_bon\\_bock](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Un_bon_bock)).  
<sup>85</sup> <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filmgeschichte>; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_film](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_film).