Contents

The Story of Illustration

Illustration sits at the intersection of two well-established, jealously independent cultural territories: literary studies and art history. Literary folk study texts. Art historians claim academic jurisdiction over objects and images. Neither field has prioritized a synthetic approach to common material. Compounding that problem are two others. First, not all illustration appears in literary contexts. Second, until recently art history has shown little interest in illustrations as artifacts or in illustration as a cultural practice. The legal concept of an orphan work is one without available claimants. In some respects, illustration can be seen as an orphan field.

As it happens, few subjects require more integrated treatment than illustration, by implication and in fact, a blend of word and image. Extravagantly mixed, illustration has suffered from plentiful biases that have affected its cultural standing around the world. For example, the autonomous or independent status of high modern artworks proved easier to assess than the contingent character of illustration, bound up in obligations to textual sources, and rightly suspected of shared authorship. Technological advancements posed ideological problems as well; connoisseurs since the nineteenth century have expressed disdain for the cookie-cutter of mass production. From the very beginning, collectors have preferred the authentic singularity of the original artwork, a view mirrored by Ming and Qing Dynasty literati, who found printed illustrated books vulgar. Lastly, distrust of commercial motives negatively influenced high cultural reception of illustrated print. Each of these objections —analytical messiness, multiplicity, money-grubbing—can be associated with Immanuel Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (1790), a foundational text that explored the cultivation of taste and defined terms for the modern art object.

Reputationally speaking, illustration fared poorly during the explosive growth of consumer culture, characterized as "commercial art" after 1910. Art critic Clement Greenberg denounced illustrated magazines and comic strips in newspapers as forms of kitsch in 1939. With serious acceptance increasingly foreclosed, the field suffered from insularity. Under such conditions, during the postwar period illustration proved resistant to critical writing, and even now lacks useful boundaries.

Even so, enthusiastic audiences have long welcomed compendiums of illustration. Over the last century and a bit more, professional chronicles have supplied colorful surveys of style and influence, stressing individual practitioners who adapted to changing technical and commercial contexts. Such books have tended to be organized as a march across essentialized decades: "The Roaring Twenties," and the like. Other more capacious projects have stretched to integrate more material, from Paleolithic cave painting to medieval tapestries and Renaissance frescoes. Most histories of illustration have tended to define the subject rather loosely, a shortcoming attributable to the field's fraught status as an aesthetic category.

A Different Focus

Having cultivated university collections with families of storied illustrators and hawkers of stray ephemera, and after writing on, teaching, and curating exhibitions with such materials for the last twenty-five years, I am untroubled by, and uninterested in, the status anxiety that has bedeviled thinking about the field of illustration. Instead, I have come to focus on reading as the central activity illustration enables, enlivens, and clarifies, and to which it adds delight. As the illustrator and art director Steven Guarnaccia recently remarked, simply, "We are people of the book."

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Lord Acton famously advised historians to study problems, not periods. Defining illustration has been a problem. For starters, "What is illustration?" may be answered: Illustrations are pictorial, symbolic, and decorative contributors to reading experiences. A good start, but this is a formal answer to the question, not a historical one, as it fails to account for change over time. In 1938, the British historian R. G. Collingwood observed, "The history of dining is not the history of eating." That is, famished early humans devoured foodstuffs eons before their descendants threw fancy dinner parties. Collingwood implicitly invites us to ask, when is illustration? Was there a moment before illustration existed? Looking ahead, is it possible to imagine conditions under which illustration will no longer exist? (Yes, and yes.)

In this book I will argue that illustrations—printed, by definition—are pictorial, symbolic, and decorative contributors to modern reading experiences published in vernacular languages. The earliest extant illustration may be found on the frontispiece of the first dated printed book: the *Diamond Sutra*, printed in Tang Dynasty China in 868 CE. The design of printed pictures for books emerged as a professional practice in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Europe, earlier, if spottily, in China, and later comprehensively in seventeenth-century Japan. Illustrators, so named for the first time during the middle of the nineteenth century, found their footing in transatlantic print culture between 1820 and 1850. A boom followed. The high season of illustrated mass publishing can be dated roughly from 1870 to 1970. "If there be nothing new under the sun," wrote Henry James in *Picture and Text* in 1893, "there are some things a good deal less old than others. The illustration of books, and even more of magazines, may be said to have been born in our time, so far as variety and abundance are signs of it." James was noting a new chapter in media history and praised the "comprehensive, ingenious, and sympathetic spirit" of the field.

Aims

Reading Pictures is my attempt to tell a story of how printed images and texts developed, engaged, and sometimes manipulated audiences in North America, Europe, and East Asia from the early modern period to the present day, with greatest emphasis on the era of mass culture during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I am concerned with the uses to which illustrated materials were put, and the particularities of precisely how words and pictures were combined: when, where, and why. These are historical questions, of course, but they are also critical ones with contemporary resonance. From the early nineteenth century, pictorial accompaniments made books and booklets more appealing; in the early twenty-first, hybridized literacy requires a blend of reading and looking. The cumbersome ancient scroll was replaced by folded codices that later blossomed a millionfold into modern books and magazines. Yet now the electronic scroll has pushed back, and what we call "reading" has changed. In certain respects, illustration can be seen as a chapter in media history, now largely past. But viewed differently, illustration has simply become a dimension of late modern reading through comics and manga, sundry interfaces, informational arrays, and more. *Reading Pictures* should be understood as a double entendre: when the stress is on the first word, it conveys pictures that go with reading; if the second is emphasized, the phrase suggests decoding images. Today, both frequently apply.

It follows from a belief that illustrations serve as contributors to reading experiences that attention be paid to the presentation of language. Wherever possible, this book seeks to foreground the interaction between text and image. Or alternately: what the words say, how the words look, and what the picture does. This triad may be seen as a modern

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cognate to the "three perfections" of Chinese painting, poetry, and calligraphy. The integration promised by the painter, poet, and politician Wang Wei during the Tang Dynasty, and realized by others in the Song, may readily be seen in illustrated printed matter. Admittedly, this is an interpretive jump from cultured literati to "vulgar illustration." But the Western duality of word and image—solidified by Europeans' embrace of Johannes Gutenberg's cast metal movable type, which segregated type and illustration—may usefully be expanded by the Eastern triad. After a four-decade experiment, Japanese book and print designers rejected cursive *hirakana* movable type. From 1640 they re-embraced xylography (woodcutting text and image on the same block) to integrate illustration and calligraphy. Later, *ukiyo-e* prints inspired Parisian lithographic poster designers to do the same. During the twentieth century, the mongrel character of modern print, especially advertising, traveled the globe. But modern audiences began to acclimate to integrated reading and looking experiences as early as the 1820s.

Reading Pictures is not an encyclopedic survey of the illustration industry, nor an attempt to establish a new canon of people and works. The book has been designed to provide a thematic encounter with the history of illustration, itself a dimension of the history of reading. Each chapter presents an aspect of modern experience—the rise of consumer culture, the systemization of wartime propaganda, the development of children's literature—exploring a relevant history of ideas, while highlighting how illustrators, authors, printers, and publishers played a role in those developments. The main chapter essays provide historical narrative, calling out particular people and projects for special notice. Discursive captions to copious images provide in-depth analysis of visual sources to support the chapter essays.

The project started as an effort to apprehend an unwieldy subject that had, through sheer ubiquity assisted by bias and avoidance, resisted definition. As work proceeded, my research came to highlight surprising fluidity between words and images during the early nineteenth century; explored text, type, and image as an ensemble toward the turn of the twentieth and after; and ultimately pointed to a synthetic vision of reading and looking that deserves further investigation. The book celebrates the field of illustration while acknowledging its plentiful historical misuses. If nothing else, during an epochal upheaval in media ecology, attended by rising fears of online surveillance, *Reading Pictures* holds up and defends the old intimacies, jointly textual and pictorial, of that stubbornly private redoubt, the codex.

I have sought to situate the printed image in the context of cultural production. It is important to consider how such images were conceived, planned, and executed, their intended effect, and how they were situated within, and altered by, textual contexts. The range of pictures and the motives driving them can be quite varied. The selection of illustrations reproduced in the book balances connoisseurship or "quality" with heterogeneity and thematic messaging. Easel paintings, photographs, murals, package labels, playing cards, and blotter calendars are presented as visual evidence. Offensive imagery and the question of why we look at examples of same receives attention. *Reading Pictures* also covers a range of early modern platemaking and printing processes: Woodcut, engraving, etching, and lithography are explained, and labor systems discussed. When relevant, photographic practices are covered as well. I hope that general readers, students, and scholars will gain knowledge and confidence to describe, analyze, and interpret illustrated printed matter, instead of relying on reductive approaches such as declaring what a picture allegedly "says."

▲ **Spot illustrations for *Stormy Monday*, episode 63 of *Sam the Dog* by D. B. Dowd, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 15, 1998.**

Of Persons Named and Not

Jaleen Grove has written on canon formation in the history of Anglo-American illustration: Once an artist was included in Book A or B, the likelier they were to be mentioned in C or D or X and Y, to cumulative effect. As Grove noted, histories of the field predictably mentioned and reproduced men over women by exponential margins. Persons of color appeared in vanishingly small numbers for related reasons.

Because this book seeks to tell a thematic story concerned with how pictures in league with words have shaped modern life, canonical questions are not particularly relevant. I have kept audiences and communities of production and reception very much in mind, resulting in a focus on linked groups of publishers, illustrators, and authors. Inevitably, celebrated figures do appear, some repeatedly. Obscure or overlooked figures come briefly into view. And work by other illustrators and designers whom I admire deeply is not to be found among these pages, simply because it did not contribute to the story I sought to shape.

Publishers do not like to waste words. Left to my own devices, I would have included the notation "illustrator uncredited" or "illustrator unknown" for every image in the book, where appropriate. There are many such entries. I invite the reader to note the absence of a credit and quietly acknowledge that a person made the image in question. The sentries at the Tomb of the Unknown Illustrator will appreciate the nod.

1

Setting the Stage: Early Modern Printing and Publishing

Illustrations are inextricably tied to text. They inflect reading experiences by contributing color and atmosphere, underscoring meaning, and adding pleasure. And although the experience of reading has evolved, the venerable form of the codex, or book format, retains its appeal today.

The first codices were folded scrolls, initially an efficiency for administrative Romans, later a strategy for early Christians allowing more easy concealment when carrying forbidden texts. The bound codex followed quickly, supplanting then replacing the comparatively awkward scroll by 400 CE. A piece of parchment folded once produced a folio, or two-page spread, which extended to four pages by including the verso, or back, a structural advantage over the scroll. Folding a sheet twice produced a quarto, and three times an octavo. Modern codices include magazines of many sizes, booklets, broadsheet newspapers, informal eight-pager supplements, paperbacks, and hardbound books, among many others. More recently, the discarded ancient scroll has returned electronically on smartphones and tablets.

On the History of Reading and Looking

As historian Alberto Manguel has observed, the act of reading has evolved consistently since writing was invented between five and six thousand years ago in ancient Sumeria. A pictographic system designed for record-keeping transitioned to characters and alphabets capable of capturing laws, instructions, poems, novels, and more. Because very few people could read, ancient scribes and medieval monks often transcribed to facilitate out-loud readings of sutras and epistles: Written texts focused on aural not visual perception. Conventions of punctuation, even intuitive line breaks (*per cola et commata*, or the practice of dividing lines by clause and phrase favored by Romans), evolved slowly for this reason, in both East and West. Other motivations for reading aloud emerged: St. Benedict's *Rules* directed monks to recite scripture aloud to keep sinful thoughts at bay.

The earliest extant dated printed book, formatted as a scroll, was produced in Tang Dynasty China. It was created using xylography (from the Greek *xylon* for wood or timber), a method in which a wood block is cut to show text and image. The *Diamond Sutra* presents a canonical Buddhist text, a Chinese translation of the Sanskrit original, published in 868 CE. The elegant frontispiece woodcut presents Buddha in glory; text spools out to his left. The ideographic character of written Chinese posed challenges for a comprehensive system of

◂◂ ***The Buddha in Glory*, frontispiece illustration for the *Diamond Sutra*, Tang Dynasty China, 868 CE.** The world's oldest printed book to bear the date of its production is this 17-foot-long (5 m) scroll that reads from right to left. The sophistication of the frontispiece includes subtle management of visual density and open space to frame the Buddha and his pupil, Subhati, at the lower left. The sutra itself is a six-thousand-word dialogue between teacher and student—one of the foundational texts of Mahayana Buddhism, which flourished in East Asia from the first century CE.

▸ ***Healing of the Leper*, initial capital miniature, antiphonary, Siena Cathedral, by Liberale da Verona, 1468–75.** This exquisite miniature painting, framed by a capital R, is a decorative flourish in a large choir book in the cathedral of Siena. The struggle for dominance between the symbolic letterform and the captivating painted scene (Matthew 8:1–14) is not really a contest. Looking is more important than reading.

movable type; many thousands of characters would have been needed, precluding all but Imperial use. Experiments in China and Korea preceded Gutenberg's invention, but the comparative ease of typesetting texts in the twenty-six-letter Roman alphabet proved decisive for acceptance of the technique.

Johann Gutenberg published his forty-two-line Bible, so named for the number of lines of type that appeared in each column, in the 1450s. Printed from movable type on his newly invented relief printing press, the edition heralded epochal change. Previously, during the Middle Ages, hand-copied books of received texts had been produced in monastic scriptoria, transcribed in Latin, and devoted to religious concerns. A revolution in production methods altered more than logistics. As printing spread, so too did new ideas. Humanist teaching began to replace the scholastic mindset, a medieval holdover, in education. The latter focused on the confirmation of textual authority; the former, on probing it. The relationship between illumination and illustration provides a visual parallel. Singular painted illuminations layered gilt and decorative flourishes to glorify a divine dispensation; plural printed illustrations addressed an increasingly secular readership. In modern letters, the redoubt of the writer gave way to the responsibility of the reader, and a new, intimate, individualized form of private reading resulted. The early modern novel had a comparable effect in China and Japan.

Over time, printed Bibles replaced the monumental gospel books and massive antiphonaries fixed in situ with pocket-sized, portable, and direct access to Holy Writ. Gutenberg's book used St. Jerome's fourth-century Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible. Roughly a decade later, in 1466, Johannes Mentelin published the first German edition. The textual shift was complemented by a visual one. Fully illustrated xylographic devotional pamphlets and loose sheets, especially *Apocalypses* (presentations of the Book of Revelation) reached many. The portability of the Holy Book and its translation into a vernacular language—one spoken by the people—implicitly challenged the power of the Roman Catholic Church. For some, the nature of religious experience shifted from priestly authority to the *logos*, or word itself. Private scriptural reading helped prepare the ground for the Protestant Reformation, launched in 1517 by Martin Luther, who collaborated with illustrators to devastating effect. In time, private readings of published texts on other subjects would succor science, threaten empires, and launch revolutions of many stripes, in every case aided by printed pictures in league with words.

The illustrated mass culture of the nineteenth century has roots in early modern publishing in both Europe and Asia from the beginning of the fifteenth century. Loose print production, from playing cards to talismanic devotional pictures, came first, and book publishing followed, necessitating typesetting and binding as well as papermaking and printing.

◂ ***St. Christopher Carrying Christ Across a Stream*, German woodcut with hand-coloring, 1423.** Among the earliest dated woodcuts in Europe is this depiction of the patron saint of travelers. The design is transitional; the cutting goes beyond simple contour lines. Sets of parallel lines create optical grays suggesting shadowed passages. According to legend, Christopher began life as a gigantic pagan named *Reprobus* ("the Reject"), before he was baptized by a hermit. The large Christopher is shown crossing the stream with the young Jesus Christ, bearing the weight of the world. Christ blessed him and his heavy wooden staff, predicting it would sprout leaves, fruits, and roots—all visible in the woodcut.

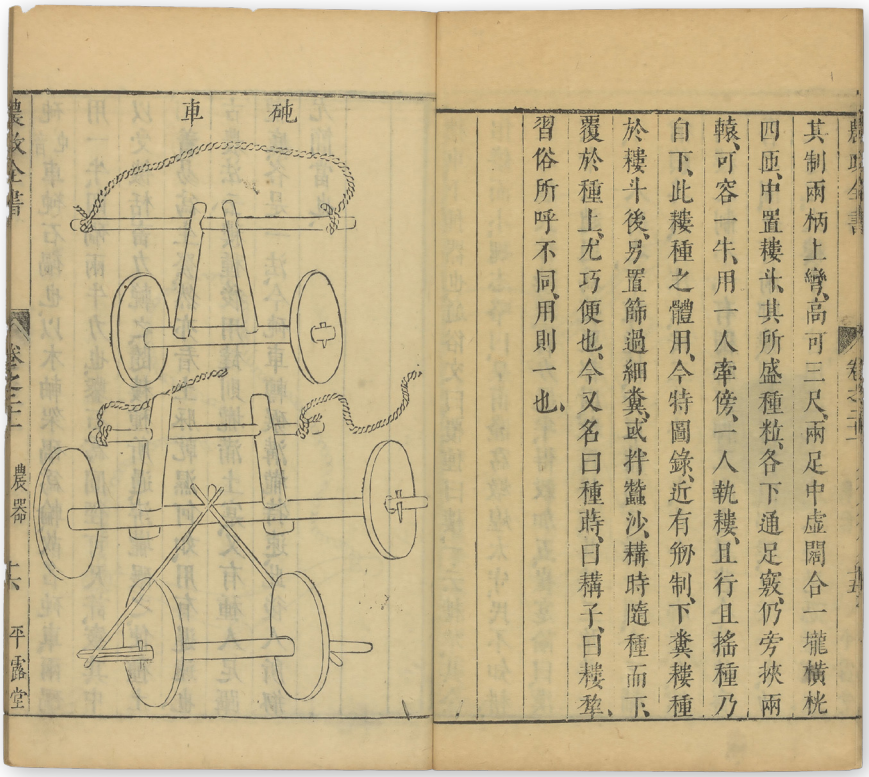
▸▸ ***Pictoris Operis: Heinrich Füllmaurer, Albrecht Meyer | Sculptor: Viet Rudolphe Speckle*, by Albrecht Meyer for *De historia stirpium commentarii insignes* [Notable commentaries on the life of plants], by Leonhart Fuchs, 1542.** Found at the end of a nearly nine hundred-page book, these portraits show a rare visual documentation of individual workers and the creative process in the woodcut production system.

A Labor System for Woodcut Illustration

In 1542, Leonhart Fuchs published *De historia stirpium commentarii insignes* [Notable commentaries on the life of plants], a landmark illustrated plant book. Produced in the Swiss city of Basel (a printing center in the fifteenth century, and later known for the "Swiss style" of modernist typography in the 1950s), the work offers a glimpse into the lived experience of image production workers from four hundred years ago. A standing portrait of the learned Fuchs appears in the front of the book. But in the back, on page 897, three additional characters appear, the men who produced the volume's 511 woodcuts: Albrecht Meyer, Heinrich Füllmaurer, and Viet Rudolph Speckle. A generous innovation on the part of the publisher Fuchs, this pictorial credit page captures the early modern labor system for large-scale woodcut production from the late fifteenth century. Three roles are represented: illustrator, transcriber/translator, and block cutter (or *Formschneider*, a subspecialist within the carpenter's guild). Not shown are *Printschneiders*, the woodcut printers. These credits are reserved for those who prepared the image to print—generically termed platemaking.

Meyer appears in a brimmed hat bent over a drawing, lips lightly pursed. A flowering plant sits before him in a small two-handled vase, the apparent model for his work. He holds a brush in his right hand, his gaze fixed on the fluid contour line unfurling toward the bottom of his page. A pair of tiny ramekins sit nearby, one for ink, the other water. Meyer's task is to convert a three-dimensional object into a two-dimensional line drawing. Across from him, Füllmaurer props up a woodblock tipped at 30 degrees with his left hand, holding a weathered piece of paper (presumably Meyer's last drawing) between his thumb and the block. He, too, is drawing, on wood, with a brush in hand, the same miniature ink and water pots beside him. A second smaller brush awaits employment, likely for detail work. The plant sits off-center, partially obscuring Füllmaurer's block, yet enabling us to watch Meyer's drawing develop. Speckle appears in a second, lower register, fingering his cloak, waiting. He will use knives and gouges to scoop out unneeded areas from the surface of that woodblock.

Consider the transparency of Meyer's work, and the opacity of Füllmaurer's: We see the plant being drawn, but its translation on to the wood is concealed. Print historians, especially the venerable William Ivins Jr., have noted the imposition of such visual translations on artists' work, and the distorting effects that often resulted. Here, two steps are involved: transcribing the image and cutting it. Did the interventions of Füllmaurer result in distortion of the original work, or clarification and refinement? The cuts in *Stirpium* are unusually lucid, so it might well have been the latter. As the field of illustration developed, the interplay of roles in the production of a printed image collided with the myth of the isolated creative genius to raise needless questions of authenticity in a quintessentially team sport.



◂ ***Illustration of a dunce (or dunzi), a stone roller for packing soil around seeds after planting*, in *Nongzheng quanshu* [Comprehensive Treatise on Agricultural Administration], Volume 8, No. 592, by Xu Guangqi, 1639.** This book is a descendant of *Nong Shu* [Book of Agriculture] by Wang Zhen, printed using movable type in 1303 and now lost. Xu's later compendium was printed xylographically.

▸▸ ***On the Plain of Kasuga*, woodcut for *Coming of Age*, the first episode in the tenth-century classic *Tales of Ise*, published by Suminokura Soan, 1608–10.** In this Japanese secular book, episodes (known as poem-tales) combine illustrated prose sections and poetry. Here, two deer signal proximity to the former capital of Nara. "Two beautiful sisters were living there, and the young man…glimpse[d] them through a crack in the fence." He writes and sends them a poem that mentions "riotous patterns," which are visible on the textiles, garments, and even on the deer. Hon'ami Koetsu's calligraphy was used as a source for the movable kana type.

Relief Printing: East and West

The term printing can be applied to many different processes. After all, three-dimensional printing has pushed the idea well past the transfer of ink from block or plate to paper. For many centuries, printing involved two complementary activities: platemaking, as noted above, involving the preparation of a matrix—the thing to be printed from—and inking, followed by a transfer under pressure onto a surface.

In contemporary digital printing the matrix isn't physical, but rather a set of electronic instructions. You select "print" on your laptop to generate a document, but such immateriality is quite recent. Things remained extremely concrete between 1400 and 1800 CE, a period during which little changed for platemaking. Then, prepping a surface to print meant assaulting its topography: knifing it, gouging it, scoring it, biting it with acid. Relief—or block—printing is a physiographic process, the simplest and oldest among them, involving rolling ink across a raised surface, from which nonprinting areas have been cut away.

China

Woodcut block printing (xylography) was invented in Tang Dynasty China in the seventh century CE. But book printing in China did not advance quickly. There were considerable challenges in developing, using, and storing movable type to print written Chinese—typesetting the four classic Confucian texts, including the *Analects*, would have required multiple copies of approximately eight thousand characters. In addition, the cultural prestige of calligraphy and painting slowed the acceptance of printed texts among the elite. Manuscript books prevailed but xylographic book production achieved significant progress during the Song Dynasty (960–1279).

Wang Zhen's *Nong Shu* [Book of Agriculture] stands out as a useful illustrated book believed to have been produced with movable type. Designed to reach a wide audience, and published in 1303, the original edition is no longer extant. A xylographic edition of *Nong Shu* printed in 1530 survives today. The book is divided into three sections; the third, *NongQi tu Pu* [Illustrated Register of Agricultural Implements], features extensive illustrations of tools and processes. Composed during the

Yuan Dynasty, when the Mongol Empire ruled China, Wang's book advocates for the use of tools to ease the farmer's life, and underscores the civilized nature of agriculture, perhaps as a contrast to the lifestyle of the nomadic overlords.

Forms of popular literature began to emerge in China during the fourteenth century. *Pinghua,* or "illustrated plainly told tales," appeared in the 1320s, followed by the *cihua*, or "ballad tales" of the 1470s. These were butterfly-bound codices that, like all Chinese books, read right to left. In pinghua, illustrations ran across the top third of every page; by contrast, cihua used images to launch each text, sometimes every chapter. Text and images were divided between pages. The first extant printed novel in China dates to 1522. Prefaces from the mature novels published from the early seventeenth century onward often concede that the stories "aren't serious," and are intended for (wealthy) women and young boys, likely a fraction of their true audience. Although historical sagas dominated popular literature—nearly all with copious illustrations—some narratives suggest twentieth-century pulp fiction adventures. For example, Judge Bao stars as the "justice hero" in his own cihua, reliably cracking cases and dispatching wrongdoers (see page 30).

Japan

Woodblock printing traveled from China to Japan in the eighth century and served primarily as a method for propagating Buddhist texts through xylography. In 764 CE, Empress Shōtoku commissioned one million printed *dharanis*, prayers to be read aloud. Each dharani was inserted into a miniature wooden pagoda and placed in a temple as an offering.

In the late 1500s, Jesuit missionaries brought printing equipment and movable Roman type to Japan, which briefly made an impact. Between 1600 and 1640, Kyoto calligraphers created wooden movable type in cursive *hiragana* phonetic script combined with *kanji* characters adapted from Chinese. An early celebrated example of the *Saga-bon* (books printed in Saga, west of Kyoto) is the first printed edition of *Tales of Ise*, a tenth-century text attributed to Ariwara no Narihira, an amorous grandee. The book is a collection of poems and prose narratives that explore court life, longing, and love. Published by Suminokura Soan, *Tales of Ise* is among the first illustrated secular books in Japan. A delightful effect is created by the elegant typeface, workmanlike woodcuts, and subtle colored papers.

As the Edo period (1603–1867) advanced, Japan developed a dazzling print culture (see Chapter 2). Movable type would lose favor, in part because Japanese print designers preferred to integrate type and image, rather than isolate them.

◂ ***The Plague of Locusts* (Exodus 10:12–15), illustration for the Cologne Bible, published by Henry Quentell, 1478.** Moses stretches his staff to launch the plague, assisted by the Lord. Locusts descend and the locals recoil. This example shows how colors were applied to printed books. In a holdover from medieval practice, workers called *rubricators* (from the Latin *ruber*, for "red") penned initial capitals in color. Here, the red for the capital is a ruddy orange, a color that has also been used to hand-color the illustrated figures, joined by green, ocher, and faint purple. The opaque green and orange pigments mute the printed black beneath.

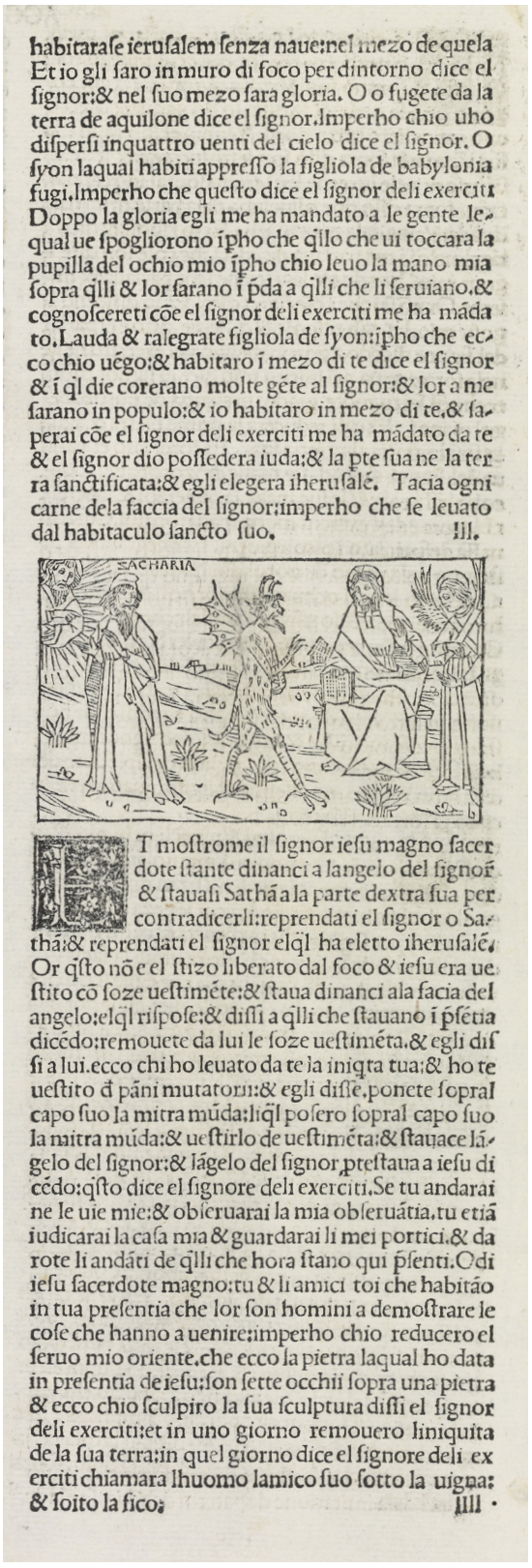
Europe

A goldsmith versed in mechanics named Johannes Gutenberg altered the trajectory of reading. He engineered a system of book manufacturing through two major innovations: a variation on the screw press to enable mechanical relief printing, and a mold system to cast and set movable type, the latter developed without apparent knowledge of stalled Chinese and Korean efforts. Around 1450, Gutenberg set up shop in Mainz, the German city where he published the celebrated Gutenberg Bible, and later a two-color Psalter.

The Gutenberg Bible was not illustrated. Others would build on his system to integrate typesetting with woodcut illustrations, the earliest in 1461, when Albrecht Pfister published *Der Edelstein* [The Gemstone], a book of fables based on classical sources by Ulrich Boner (or Bonerius), a Dominican monk (see page 29). Of one hundred copies, exactly one survives. The author appears in each of the book's many illustrations, plainly as a labor-saving device: Bonerius lingers on the left edge of the picture, contained by a rule, gesturing toward a horizontal rectangle that contains the illustration of a given fable. For every print, two woodblocks were placed on the press bed. As a practical matter, the monk stayed put, while variable scenes were swapped in and out. Notably, Bonerius wrote *Der Edelstein* in Middle High German: Vernacular texts—as distinguished from Latin—would become a critical development in the formation of European literature and especially the spread of literacy (see Chapter 2). *Edelstein* also provides an example of hand-coloring in watercolor, a strategy for dressing up black-and-white printed matter, if also sometimes an excrescence.

Book printing on the Continent spread at a spectacular rate. In half a century, Gutenberg's methods had reached most of Western Europe. Two hundred and five cities boasted printing houses in 1500, from Stockholm to Lisbon, Danzig to York. North of the Alps, printers were concentrated in German and Swiss towns up to the Low Countries, and several centers in France. England was a laggard. To the south, Italy bristled with printers, especially in Rome, Tuscany, and Venice. Books and printed ephemera from those five decades, 1450–1500, are known as *incunabula*.

Albrecht Pfister's efforts were followed by other illustrated book projects, notably the Cologne Bible, published in that city by Heinrich Quentell in 1478. At 15.5 x 10.5 inches (39 x 27 cm), Quentell's influential book is the scale of a modern, oversize magazine, if a great deal heavier. It included a suite of 123 well-fashioned, uncredited woodcuts, designed as horizontal rectangles extending across a two-column typesetting—a conceit descended from fourteenth-century illuminated manuscripts. In 1490, the Venetian publisher Lucantonio Giunta issued a Malermi Bible, an Italianate take on the Cologne program, integrating 386 refined cuts in a more reader-friendly page design, at three-quarter the scale of the Cologne Bible. The two-column typographic system was supported by illustrations stacked within it, rather than broken by them. As publisher and book historian David Bland observed, Italian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carne dela faccia del signor:imperho che se leuato
dal habitaculo sancto suo. III.

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Or q̃sto nõ e el stizo liberato dal foco & iesu era ue
stito cõ soze uestimẽte:& staua dinanci ala facia del
angelo:elq̃l rispose:& dissi a q̃lli che stauano i ꝑsẽtia
dicẽdo:remouete da lui le soze uestimẽta.& egli dis
si a lui.ecco chi ho leuato da te la iniqta tua:& ho te
uestito d̃ pãni mutatorii:& egli disse.ponete sopral
capo suo la mitra mũda:liq̃l posero sopral capo suo
la mitra mũda:& uestirlo de uestimẽta:& stauace lã-
gelo del signor:& lãgelo del signor ꝓtestaua a iesu di
cẽdo:q̃sto dice el signore deli exerciti.Se tu andarai
ne le uie mie:& obseruarai la mia obseruãtia,tu etiã
iudicarai la casa mia & guardarai li mei portici.& da
rote li andãti de q̃lli che hora stano qui ꝑsenti.Odi
iesu sacerdote magno:tu & li amici toi che habitão
in tua presentia che lor son homini a demostrare le
cose che hanno a uenire:imperho chio reducero el
seruo mio oriente,che ecco la pietra laqual ho data
in presentia de iesu:son sette occhii sopra una pietra
& ecco chio sculpiro la sua sculptura dissi el signor
deli exercitu:et in uno giorno remouero liniquita
de la sua terra:in quel giorno dice el signore deli ex
erciti chiamara lhuomo lamico suo sotto la uigna:
& soito la fico: IIII.

▸ ***Zechariah, Satan, and the High Priest* (Zechariah 3:1–2), woodcut illustration with typesetting, the Malermi Bible, published in Venice by Lucantonio Giunta, 1490.** Just like the designer of the book you are reading, Giunta used a two-column grid to which the woodcuts were subject along with Nicolas Jenson's elegant typography. Here, the strutting Satan —bearded, horned, bat-winged, and chicken-footed—plays an obnoxious prosecutor, badgering the witness and provoking an angry rebuke from the Lord.

(overleaf) **Interior spread from the Book of Psalms in the Cologne Bible, published by Henry Quentell, 1478.** On the left-hand page, the Lord speaks to three men in a camp below a fortified city. On the right-hand page, an aged King David—considered the author of certain Psalms, at least by conventional attribution—plays his harp. Despite their appeal, the pictures interrupt the reading experience by breaking two columns of text.

printers brought particular sensitivity to typography and page design, integrating illustration in support of the whole. Certainly, the Roman typeface designed by Nicolas Jenson in Venice compares favorably with Gutenberg's blackletter adopted by Swiss and German printers. Even when hand-colored, the Malermi Bible embraces the properties of printed books, rather than extending the manuscript tradition via reproduction. Named for its translator Nicolò Malermi, the project presented the first printed rendering of the Gospel in Italian.

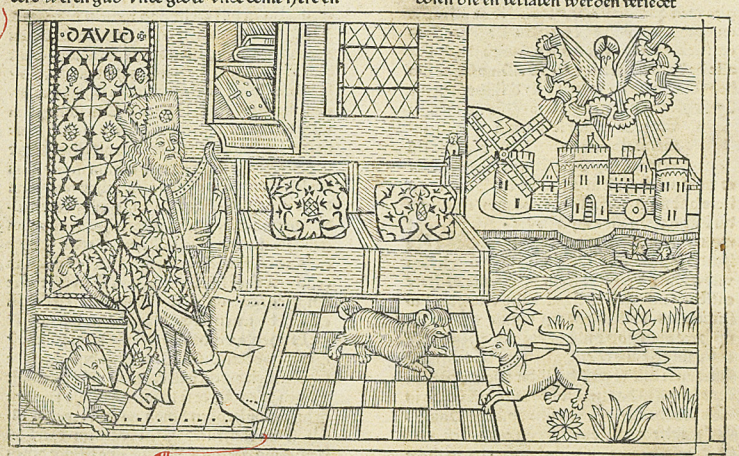
In 1492, just as Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Bahamas expanded the European universe, German publisher Anton Koberger and colleagues labored over a massive opus, *The Nuremberg Chronicle*—an intermingled sacred history, world geography, and humanist encyclopedia. Nuremberg was a city-state in the Holy Roman Empire, then an agglomeration of German palatinates, central European duchies, and northern Italy. Commissioned by city fathers to burnish Nuremberg's reputation, the book was written by Hartmann Schedel, a local physician with an enviable library. Michael Wolgemut and stepson Wilhelm Pleydenwurff designed, illustrated, and oversaw production. The book is crammed with woodcuts: 1,809 in all, printed from a total of 645 blocks with generous repeats, to no ill effect on the reading experience.

Simultaneously published in German and Latin in 1493, the *Nuremberg Chronicle* is justly regarded as a monument of book design and production. Wolgemut's page designs realize surprisingly fluid text and image relationships.

verborghen en sint · we is dusse de sinen rait he
let sunder kunste? Hir vmme hebbe ik dozly
ken ghespraken · vnde dat auermathe genck
bauen myne kunste · Hore vnde yck scal spre
ken · yck schal dy vragen vnde antworde du
my · Met den horen mynre oren hebbe yck dy
ghehort · men nu seet myn oghe dy · hyr vm
me berispe yck my suluers · vnde yck doen pe
nitencie in vunken vnde in aschen · Als ghod
dusse wort ghespraken hadde tho Job · do se
de he tho elyphas van theman · myn torn ys
wergrampt en veghen dy · vnde en veghen dyn
twe vrunde · wente ghy en hebbet al so gerecht
lyken voz my mecht ghespraken als Job myn
knecht · dar vmme nemet mit iuw seuen steir
vnde seuen wedder · vnde gait tho Job mynē
knecht vnde offert bernenden offer voz iuw ·
wente Job myn knecht schall voz iuw bydde
vnde yck schal sin angheschyt vntfanghen so
dat iuw dusse sothcyt nicht gerekent en wer
de · wente ghy en hebbet tho mywart nycht
recht gespraken als Job myn knecht · Aldus
ghenghen ewech elyphas van theman · vnde
baldad vā suith · vñ sophar van naamath · vn
de se deden alse en de here ghesecht hadde · vn
de de here vntfenck Jobs angheschyt · vñ de he
re kerde sick tho Jobs penitencie · do hee vor
sine vrunde bat · vnde de here gaff Job wedder
dobbel alle dat he ghehat hadde · vnde tho
eme quamen alle sine brodere · vnde alle syne
sustern · vnde alle de en tho voren kanten · vn
de se athen myt eme broyth in sineme huse ·
vnde se wegheden dat houet ouer en · vnde se
troesteden en van allen quaden dat de here vā
en ghebracht hadde · vnde een iuwelick gaff
em een schape vnde enen gulden oerūg · vn
de de here ghebenedyde Jobs laetsten mer dā
syn beghin · vnde eme worden wttyē dusent
schape · vnde sesdusent camele · vnde sesdusent
iock ossen · vnde dusent eeselynnen · vñ he had
de seuen sone · vnde dry dochter · vnde he here
der eenre name Dyna · vnde der ander name
casia · vnde der drudder name cornustibÿ · In
alle den landen en vant men so schone wyuer
mecht · als Jobs dochtere weren · vnde er vader
gaff en erfghetale vnder eren broderen · vnde
na dussen ✳ gheyselen ⊥ leuede Job hundert
vnde vertich iaer · vnde he sach syn kindere ·
vnde synder kinder kindere beth tho deme wir
den gheslechte · vnde he starff olt vnde vol vā
daghen · Hyr gheet vth Jobs boke vnde
hyr nauolghet de psalter ·

Hier begint die vorrede des propheten dauits auer den pſalter.

Ick byn geweſt die alder iũgeſte vnder mynen broderen vnde byn geweſt der koenynghe iũgelick in deme huyſe mynes vaders Ick hebbe geweidet de ſchape mȳs vaders: myn hẽde hebben gemaket enẽ orgel vnde myne vynger hebben beredet enen pſalter. Vnde we is de de myme herẽ hefft werkũdiget vñ geſacht van my. die here aller herẽ ſuluẽ hefft my gehoert: he hefft geſant enen engel vnd hefft my geuoert vnde ghenomen vandẽ ſchapen myns vaders vnde he hefft my geſaluet myt ō ſaluen ſiner barmherticheit Myne brodere weren gud vnde gewet. vnde deme herẽ en was nicht enwolbeuallen in en. Ick byn vthgheganghen vnde byn enthegen komen dem heyden philiſteo vnde hebbe vth getaghẽ d at ſwert van ſiner ſcheden vnde hebbe em affgeſlaghen ſijn houet vnde alſo heb ick gheno-men dat laſter vnd de ſchande vanden kynderen van iſrahel Een ende hebbent de vorrede vnd beghĩt an de konȳclike ꝓphete dauid De erſte titel des erſten pſalmes Do Saul gades gebot brack do ſande he ſamuel dat he wigede dauid eme to eme konynghe: do dat geſchach do woch die hillige gheſt vã Saul Vñ do mẽ dauid ſette vp des rikes ſtoel tho bethlehem do makede he deſſen erſten pſalmẽ wo god de rechtuerdighẽ vnde gudẽ ledet de ſine weghe vnde ſijn ghebot holden. vnd wo de boſen die en werlaten werden verledet



Beatus vir.

Alich is de man denicht en ghinck in den raed ō boſen: vnd in den weghe der ſundere mcht en ſtōt vnde in deme ſtole ō pſtelencien edder der beſpotter nicht en ſat. Sũder in deme geſette des heren is ſijn wille: vnde in ſijn geſette denckt he dach vnde nacht. Vnde he ſchal ſijn alſo dat holt dat geplantet is by dem henlope der watere dat ſijne frucht ghifft in ſijnre tijt Vnde ſijn blat en ſchal nicht afuleten: vnde alle de dynghe de he deyt de werden gelucklich. Nicht alſo gȳ boſen nicht alſo: ſũder alſo dat geſtubbe dat der wȳnt werpet van deme angeſichte der erdẽ Daer vmme en ſtaent nicht vp de boſen in deme oordele: noch de ſundigen in deme rade der rechtuerdighen. Wente de here hefft bekant dẽ wech der rechtuerdighẽ vnde de wech der boſen ſchal vorderuen.

Deſſen ſalmen makede dauid do he ſtriden ſcholde wedder amalech vnde wedder de philiſteen de heyden De ander. pſ

Quare fremuerunt gentes.

Dar vmme grimmeden de lude: vnde dat volck gedachte ydelheit. De konynghe der erden ſtonden by en and: vnde de worſten quemen te hope teghen dẽ heren vnd thegen eren geſalueden. Tijo breken

Consider pages XX and XXI, the concluding episode of the Second Age of the World. An adeptly composed verso (left-hand page) shows geneaological information in Genesis 11: the line from Shem to his father, Abraham, starting with Serug as an array of characters in waist-up portraits, tethered by woody umbilical vines that flower into offspring. A contemporary viewer would have known the backstory: Abraham is uncle to Lot. According to Genesis 13, the two of them shared grazing land near Bethel but began to jostle over resources. They agreed to depart from one another, and Lot and kin settled near the towns of Sodom and Gomorrah. Much later, following a disagreeable incident at his home, Lot fled with his two daughters and wife (all unnamed). Furious, the Lord destroyed both towns in a fiery storm; famously, Lot's wife ignored a divine injunction (*"Don't look back!"*), and was immediately turned into a pillar of salt. Afterward, Lot and his daughters hid in a cave, where suitors were in short supply. Desperate, the daughters served Lot excessive amounts of wine two nights running, resulting in two sons born to two daughters, Moab and Ammon. All of this is captured by word or image on page XXI, joined to the opposite page by a vine. The illustrative woodcut at the bottom conveys the destruction, with steeples toppling. Poor Lot's wife has indeed been transformed into a smooth, fixed column as the others escape to the right, escorted by an angel. On the following page begins a new episode, the Third Age of the World, starring Abraham and Sarah, at one hundred, the world's oldest parents.

In addition to his work on the *Chronicle*, Michael Wolgemut is remembered as Albrecht Dürer's teacher. After apprenticing in Wolgemut's woodcut and engraving shop from 1486–1490, Dürer traveled to Basel in the early 1490s as a journeyman. There he is believed to have worked on the first illustrated book of amusements, Sebastian Brandt's *Das Narrenschiff* [The Ship of Fools], published in 1494. Each brief chapter of Brandt's book explored an aspect or dimension of foolishness, pairing

◂◂ **Genealogical display from Genesis 11 with *The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah* (Genesis 19:24–25), illustrated by Michael Wolgemut and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff, on pages XX and XXI of the *Nuremberg Chronicle* by Hartmann Schedel, 1493**. Schedel's personal copy of the creatively designed *Nuremberg Chronicle*, now in the Bavarian State Museum, is elaborately hand-colored. Modern sensibilities have tended to prefer the austerity of black ink on white paper, as shown on this copy.

▸ ***The Predestination of God*, woodcut illustration by Albrecht Dürer, from *Das Narrenschiff* [The Ship of Fools] by Sebastian Brandt, Chapter 57, 1494.** Dürer's treatment of the scene does more than it needs to: Beyond the fool and his lobster we see a grove of trees upper left, a particularized outcropping on the far side of a valley, the town and its steeple. These are all superfluous but lend authority to the image. In poorly realized knockoffs (such as John Cawood's English edition of *The Ship of Fooles*, 1570), lazy copyists omit Dürer's landscape, generalize plants, and abbreviate the characters, compensating weakly with decorative borders.

moralistic but humorous verse with a woodcut illustration. Scholars have disagreed on how many of the book's 114 woodcuts were designed by Dürer, but as many as two-thirds of them are now believed to be his, including Chapter 57, which shows a fool riding a lobster. Brandt's verse caption (translated by Edwin H. Zeydel) reads:

> "Who, lacking merit, seeks a prize
> And on a fragile reed relies,
> His plans go backward lobster-wise."

Das Narrenschiff was the first international bestseller, inspiring multiple European language translations in pirated editions. The legal concept of intellectual property did not exist at the end of the fifteenth century, so no recourse was possible.

Dürer, a central figure of the Northern Renaissance, was known for the precision and refinement of his line, which set a new bar for printed image-making in Europe. His work spanned woodcut, engraving, painting, and writing. His woodcut work remains unsurpassed; a plate from his 1498 *Apocalypse with Pictures* appears in this chapter's image gallery (see page 35). Other noted Northern Renaissance woodcut designers included Lucas Cranach, whose dramatic compositions and political portraits would become closely associated with the Lutheran Reform (see Chapter 6) and Hans Holbein, best known for witty if grim illustrations for his version of *The Dance Macabre* (1523–25).

Connoisseurs of print have noted a decline in the quality of woodcuts after newer print media gained prominence. Assessments based on aesthetic value are one way of engaging cultural material. But woodcut remained an effective medium for several centuries, even when, as often, it was crudely employed. Because illustration is enmeshed in culture in many aspects, "the finest" isn't necessarily a criterion for inclusion or emphasis within these pages.

◄◄ ***Six of Birds*, illustration by Master E. S. for *The Large Playing Cards*, 1463.** Fifteenth-century intaglio printmakers in German-speaking Europe not only produced plentiful devotional images but also sets of playing cards. The first refined copper engravings have been attributed to a nameless artist referred to as the "Master of the Playing Cards," between 1430 and 1450. His followers included Master E. S., known by his monogrammed plates. This card has been attributed to the latter artist, from a deck of four suits: Men, Hounds, Birds, and Shields. The irregularly arranged birds are inventively presented, charmingly drawn, and skillfully engraved.

Etching and Engraving in Europe

A second physiographic printing process was known by printmakers as intaglio (silent "g," from the Italian verb *intagliere*, to engrave). In contrast to relief printing, in which ink is rolled onto the raised portions of the block and paper pressed against it, intaglio printing involves pushing paper into the recessed passages. The roots of intaglio lie in a metalsmithing practice called niello. Medieval jewelers and armorers engraved fine lines into silver and steel objects, rubbed a dense black pitch into the depressions, and buffed off the excess, leaving dark decorative lines to contrast with the polished metal. It wasn't a big leap to use the technique to engrave plates for the purpose of transferring the lines onto paper. Metal engraving appeared in Europe during the 1430s, but did not travel to Asia.

Copper engravers used tools called burins to score the plate with grooves. Using cross-hatched lines, it was possible to create rich tonal passages, as well as contours and edges. Depending upon the pressure applied to the burin, a groove might be deeper or shallower, reading as black or gray when printed. Very fine modulations were possible, as a card from a playing deck engraved by "Master E. S." shows. After the sixteenth century, copper (and later, steel) engravings were most often used to create reproductions of paintings and sculptures.

Etching emerged as a faster, more fluid method for producing an intaglio plate through chemical action. A waxy ground was applied to the plate and scratched through with a needle to create a drawn image. The copper plate was submerged in Dutch mordant, a hydrochloric acid solution, to be "bitten," or consumed. Longer and shorter bite times controlled the depth of the resulting groove, and the value (relative lightness and darkness) of the printed mark. Ambitious narrative scenes in multiple states designed by Rembrandt van Rijn like *The Entombment* (c.1654; see page 39) capture the speed and flexibility of the medium. Impressively complex images and modulations of value appear in *The Views of Rome* (c.1756; see page 40) by Giambattista Piranesi. Etching was adapted for caricature (see Chapter 5) and experienced a resurgence in the modern period. The Welsh illustrator and muralist Frank Brangwyn became especially accomplished in the medium, using visceral approaches to platemaking including drypoint, deep line-etch, and scraping, in *The Tow-Rope* (1906).

Intaglio ink is dense and tacky. The printer smeared it into the scored and pitted recesses of the plate, then buffed the surface clean with effort. Soft wet paper was placed on the plate, covered with felt blankets, and pushed beneath a cylinder under pressure. After printing, the finished impression was set aside to dry. All told, intaglio printing was slower and more laborious than relief printing; worse, it wasn't compatible with printing metal type simultaneously. As a result, intaglio prints had to be separately tipped in (lightly glued) or bound into letterpress books, causing greater expense for the publisher or author.

Undeterred, eighteenth-century European publishers issued luxurious illustrated editions of the works of dramatists and poets—what David Bland called "learned productions"—replete with engravings: in France, Molière, Racine, and La Fontaine; in England, Shakespeare and the venerable Romans Virgil and Ovid.

As the eighteenth century came to a close, the way forward to industrially scaled printing and publishing was unclear. Book publishing with relief-printed woodcuts and movable metal type had sufficed since 1461, but woodcut had fallen out of fashion. Publishing was limited to print runs of just hundreds of illustrated books, or in certain cases a few thousand. The system was capped at artisanal levels by the longevity of materials: Blocks and plates simply wore out.

The short-term fix was to improve the matrix. Traditional woodcuts used soft plank woods, typically pear, cut along the grain and scooped out with u- and v-gouges. During the 1790s,

▸▸ **Three illustrations by Thomas Bewick (clockwise from top): *Walter Brown's Fables*, published 1884, using salvaged wood engraved blocks by Bewick for his own *Fables of Aesop and Others* (1818), issued ten years before his death; *The Elephant*, from *A General History of Quadrapeds*, 1790; *The Night-Jar*, from *The History of British Birds*, 1797.** Bewick has been remembered primarily as a printer and naturalist on the strength of the *Quadrapeds* and especially his ornithological works. Art historians Charles Rosen and Henri Zerner have argued against this view, drawing on the vignettes as evidence of his significance as a Romantic artist. "His great evocative power...depended...on the expressive[ness] of the ornamental tailpieces, turning them into finely observed scenes... without relating them directly to the text." Charlotte Brontë offered a similar meditation on the opening of *British Birds* in the early pages of *Jane Eyre* in 1847.

Thomas Bewick, a British engraver, picked up on experiments by others in the trade. They cut wood across the grain, effectively rotating the block by 90 degrees to access the end grain face. In close-grained tree species such as Turkish boxwood, end grain faces are exceedingly hard and cannot be cut with gouges. Bewick used metal engraving tools to score boxwood as finely as in copper engraving for intaglio, but for a block print in relief. The result was referred to as "white line" engraving, to capture the difference; the engraved marks didn't print. Bewick's achievement was to bring refinement and consistency to the new approach, which in others' hands had produced crude results. In a stroke, several problems were solved. Boxwood was durable, and many more impressions could be pulled from a block. Engravers using burins could create highly refined images for relief printing, a cheaper process. Finally, end grain blocks could be cut to standard depth, permitting simultaneous printing of word and image. Quality, volume, and speed improved, and costs came down.

Several additional innovations in the early nineteenth century fed capacity. Stereotyping used plaster to create a mold from a press lockup (elements to be printed held in place inside a metal frame called a chase) of metal type and wood engraving. Molten metal was poured into the plaster mold called a flong to create the new printing plate. Stereotypes were also known as *clichés*, terms that survived original usage to later convey thoughtless overuse. Invented by Charles Stanhope in England in 1802 and in use in the United States by 1820, the technique extended the life of wood-engraved images. Electrotyping achieved the same end more durably by midcentury, using copper with steel facing to cast plates. New pulp paper from wood (an improvement over cotton rag paper in both speed and cost) and the invention of the steam-powered cylinder press portended a dramatic increase in publishing to feed an ever-growing reading public.

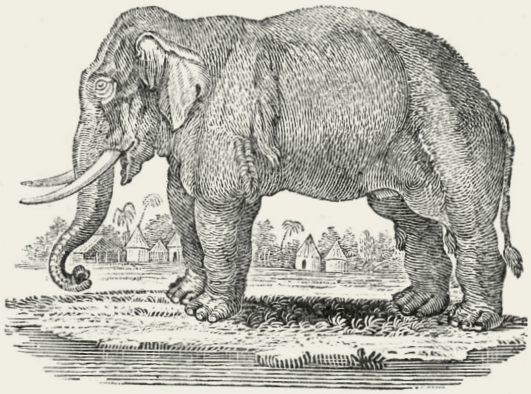
Even so, none of these developments led directly to the emergence of illustration as a profession. The widespread adoption of wood engraving would take decades. Metal engraving and copper etching became fashionable for genteel gift books and remained so through the 1840s. Many such pictures were straightforward art reproductions, paintings after which engravings had been commissioned. Only gradually would images specifically designed for publication become common.

Ultimately, the emergence of the illustrator as a contributor to modern readership was not a mechanical or technical process, but a cultural one.

THE NIGHT-JAR.

GOAT-SUCKER, DOR-HAWK, OR FERN OWL.

(*Caprimulgus Europeus*, Lin.—*L'Engoulivent*, Buff.)



THE ELEPHANT.

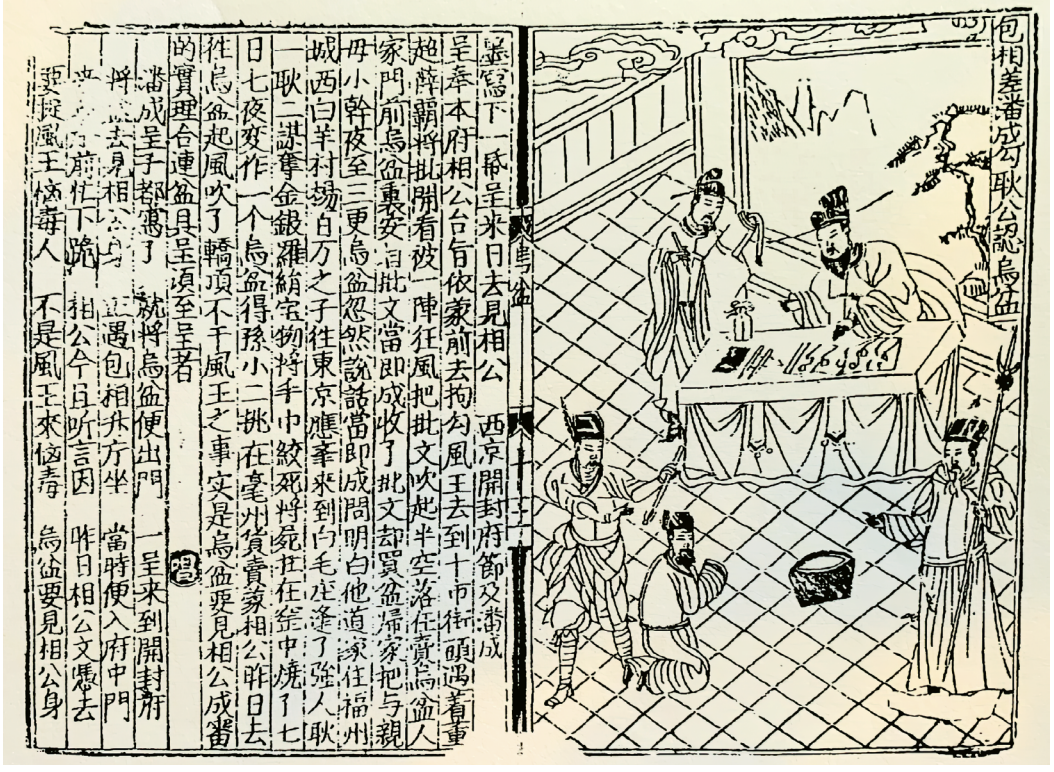
(*Elephas Maximus*, Lin.—*L'Elephant*, Buff.)

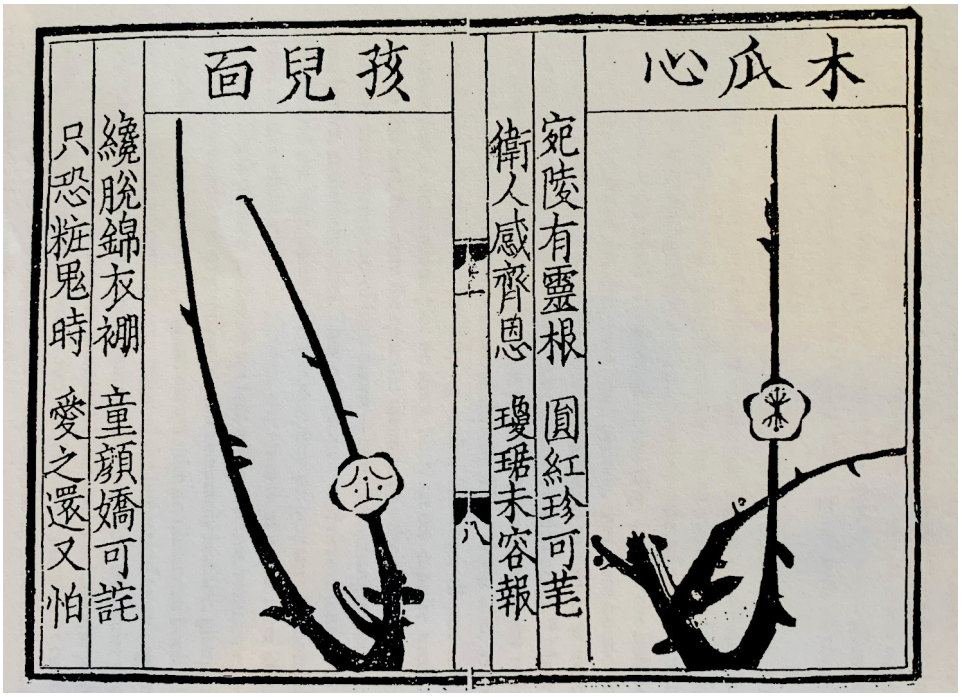
◄◄ ***Madonna of the Fire*, large-format (roughly 16 x 20 inches [40.5 x 51 cm]), hand-colored woodcut, 1428.** A tenderly realized Madonna and child are framed in an archway beneath a diminutive diorama of a crucifixion, bracketed by an annunciation and stacked pairs of saints. Printed in brown ink, the image was hand-colored in ocher, brick red, and a third hue that has now blackened with time. In February 1428 this particular impression—the only one extant—survived a terrible schoolhouse fire in Forlì, Italy, near Bologna. The endurance of the print was deemed miraculous. It came to be venerated as a holy object, and in 1636 was housed in a specially constructed chapel in the cathedral of Forlì. Over the centuries, imitations and tributes proliferated in many forms.

► ***Of Two Pots: On Useless Company*, hand-colored woodcut illustration for Fable No. 77 in *Der Edelstein* [The Gemstone], by Ulrich Boner, c.1350, published by Albrecht Pfister, 1461.** This edition of a vernacular text is an early example of combined illustration and typography, helping the spread of literacy to all classes. Albert Classen's translation reads: "Once a great river swelled up and overflowed, forging a huge new channel…the river took two pots with it…one being made of ceramic, the other out of cast iron." As they travel downriver, the ceramic vessel bobs on the surface, but the iron pot is swamped by water. The latter calls out, "Wait for me, I want to travel with you." But the ceramic pot knows better. It replies, "I cannot help it. If you were to get ahead of me, [and we were to collide] I would be dead… I can cope well without your company. Whoever bumps into the other, the harm will always be mine." The poor are advised to steer clear of the rich, and the lesser-ranked to avoid the higher. Inevitably, "the big one causes harm to the small one."

◀ ***Han general Zhang Fei fights his way out of Xiaopei and seeks aid from Cao Cao in the Countryside*, woodcut for *Sanguo zhi pinghua* [Plain Tales on the Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms], c.1330.** This pinghua can be seen as a colloquial proto-novel, stitched together from a third-century CE historical account amply flavored by folkloric and legendary sources. Pinghua were designed in a scheme of thirds with text filling the bottom two-thirds of the spread, and an illustration running the full width across the top.

▼ ***Judge Bao Solves the Case of the Uncanny Chamberpot*, a chapter-opening illustration for a collection of cihua, c.1480.** The incorruptible Judge Bao lived a long life across Chinese media, and this colorful storyline, where wicked potters encounter a rich traveler and murder him for cash, is a recurring theme. To conceal the crime, they pulverized his body and mixed it into a batch of clay, from which many pots were made. Despite the dispersal of his remains, the dead man's spirit lived on in various vessels. Before long the disconcerted owner of an anguished talking pot had contacted Judge Bao (seated), who launched an investigation leading to the conviction and beheading of the killers.





▲ **Two pages from *Portrait of a Plum*, a meditation on plum blossoms, written and illustrated by Song Boren, 1240.** Song was an official and painter–poet during the Southern Song period, and contributed to a vogue of plum-painting among the literati. The verses capture a poet's reverie while gazing at blossoms, much as people ponder the forms of passing clouds. On the right-hand page, Song is reminded of a flowering quince, suggesting the advance of spring and fluttering of young love; on the left, he sees a child's face in the blossom. Despite the painted source material, the book is notably graphic in spirit, characterized by strong black shapes.

▶ **"The Crab and the Prawn," an illustrated poem from *Shishō no Uta-Awase* [The Poetry Contests of the Four Living Things], Volume 2, an undated Kanei Era (1624–44) movable wooden type *tanrokubon* edition.** *Tan* (orange-red) and *roku* (mineral green) gave "red and green books" their names. Hand-colored passages in tanrokubon illustrations were unconstrained by woodcut contour lines. This delightful compendium was "conceived" by the crawling creatures who organized a fourteen-round poetry tournament among themselves. In response the birds did the same, and the two groups collaborated to publish Volume 1. Contests among the water creatures and the beasts comprise Volume 2.

◂ ***Quo vides in libro scribe* [What you see, write in a book], illustration showing John on the island of Patmos for folio 3R of *The Cloisters Apocalypse*, an early fourteenth-century French illuminated manuscript.** The spectacular imagery and poetic vision of sacred history in the Book of Revelation—the prophetic last book of the Bible—ensured periodic surges of interest during the Middle Ages. Here, the page comprises a horizontal illustration of the recumbent John placed above a two-column text. This formal conceit from the manuscript tradition recurred in early printed illustrated books, notably the Cologne Bible (1478).

▸ ***Opening of the third seal: The rider on a black horse* (Revelation 6:5) and *Opening of the fourth seal: the rider on a pale horse* (Revelation 6:7), folio 7R of *Life and Acts of St. John the Evangelist*, a xylographic book produced in Germany, c.1465–70.** A focus to the point of fixation on Gutenberg's invention of movable type tends to obscure the use of xylography in European book production during the incunabula period. The production of block books, as they are called in the West, enabled integration of lettering within the image area. The episodes from the Book of Revelation shown here present two of the famous "four horsemen" of the Apocalypse.

(continued...)

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