

Maria Theisen presented her current FWF funded project, which investigates illuminated manuscripts held by the Austrian National Library. The project focuses on manuscripts of Eastern European provenance dating from about 1400 to 1500 in order to subject them (in most cases for the first time) to art historical analysis. Information concerning book illumination given by the up to now published catalogues of the National Library generally remained only very general (like e.g. "coloured initials") and does not provide any information about style, artist or iconography [slide 2]. It should also be borne in mind that the medium "book" was a very mobile one and consequently was not necessarily illuminated in the same place where it was written. The investigation of book illumination can thus provide us with further knowledge about the fate of a book and, herewith, of its owners. This becomes especially clear in the Eastern Central European region with regard to the Hussite Revolution (1419–c 1436), in the course of which fleeing Catholics have brought numerous books from the Bohemian and Moravian lands into Austrian monasteries. (After the abolition of the monasteries by Emperor Joseph II in the eighties of the eighteenth century, their manuscripts finally were incorporated into the Viennese Court Library, the later Austrian National Library.) The manuscripts brought from Bohemia and Moravia either already contained book decoration or were decorated in Austria later on – either by Bohemian and Moravian “refugees” or by, resp. together with Austrian illuminators.

The lecture also gave insight into the daily work on such a project – beginning with the search in the depots of the National Library, the digitization of the manuscripts and their description according to the form which was especially developed for this catalogue series by the Viennese art historian Otto Pächt [slides 3–6]. Including codicology and information on provenance, the catalogue entries contain extensive art historical analysis. Since most of the illuminators of this period did not sign their works, i.e. remained anonymous, the art historians have to work by means of comparison of style, in the course of which scholars also study manuscripts held by other libraries.

Additionally, a short introduction on technique and workshop practice of medieval book-painters was given: talking about the preparation of parchment and paper, layout of text and image, the preliminary drawings (using hand-drawn sample books and copper engravings) [slide 7], the transfer of patterns and figures by means of stencil technique, the preparation of the painting ground with chalk base, the gilding, the making of egg-tempera colours with mineral and organic pigments, and the application of colours in several layers [slide 8]. The topic was presented by referring to a few examples from the material chosen for the catalogue. In the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the illuminations reflected a confessionally split society: old iconographies were reinterpreted, new iconographic themes were introduced. The large chorus books of the Catholic and Utraquist communities were particularly rich in this period, when the book printing was already invented, therefore the copies in Vienna, though preserved in the collection of music and not in the manuscripts collection of the National Library, were also included in the catalogue of illuminated manuscripts [slides 9, 10]. The lecture last not least finished with examples from the library of the Hungarian king Matthias Corvinus, who is known for his rich humanist book collection and faibles for Italian Renaissance artists [slide 11].



ÖSTERREICHISCHE  
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# Central European Schools IX (c 1450–1500)

Bohemia – Moravia – Silesia – Hungary

Descriptive directory of illuminated manuscripts and incunabla held by the Austrian National Library in Vienna

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## Descriptive directory of illuminated manuscripts and incunabla held by the Austrian National Library

Franz Unterkircher, Inventar der illuminierten Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. Wien 1957. /  
**Inventary of illuminated manuscripts at the Austrian National Library**

Franz Unterkircher, Datierte Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. Wien 1971. /  
**Dated manuscripts at the Austrian National Library**

Karl Schwarzenberg, Katalog der kroatischen, polnischen und tschechischen Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. Wien 1972. / **Catalog of Croatian, Polish and Czech manuscripts at the Austrian National Library**

3453

Pap. I + 146 ff. (s. U.) 215 × 160. 15. Jh. Böhmen.  
 Gotische Buchminuskel, 24 Z. Rote Kapitelüberschriften und Initialen, diese teils gelb verziert; gelbe Zierstriche, rote Beistriche. Fol. 28 v, 29 v, 33 r, 40 r, 52 r, 63 v, 75 r, 79 v, 105 v, 113 r, 128 v farbige Initialen. Beschnitten — Reste der urspr. Sexternionen-numerierung und -Reklamanten. Fol. I und 144–146 im 19. Jh. ergänzt — Nachahmung der urspr. Ausstattung.  
 Ledereinband über Holz, 15. Jh. Schließen mit gepunzten Initialen; Beschläge entfernt. Blindstempel: in Rahmen, darin Ornamentstempel, ornamentale Schräggitterung, darin

Bohemia, 15th cent.

coloured initials

3304

Pap. 318 ff. 317 × 210. 15. Jh. Böhmen.  
 Gotische Buchminuskel, 2 Sp. zu 38 Z. Titel der Bücher, Kapitelüberschriften und Kolummentitel rot. Absatzinitialen rot, blau und rotblau; Satzinitialen, rote und gelbe Zierstriche. Fol. 1 r Rankeninitialen mit Rankenzierleiste.  
 Ledereinband über Holz, 15. Jh., Beschläge und Schließen entfernt.  
 Innenseiten, Hände des 16. Jh.: vorn:

Bohemia, 15th cent.

initial with tendrils

NOTIZEN (tschech.).

„Letha etc. MDXXXV w pondiely przed swatym Wondrżegem umrzel slowautny muž, pan Wacław Wokrżin miesstienyn stareho miasta pražského a pochowan gest u swateho Hawla w starem miestie pražskem.“ — „Letha etc. LIIIo w patek po swatym Marku Ewangelistu umrżela Kateřina manželka Jana Halacžka miesstienyna stareho miasta pražskeho etc. a pochowana gest u swateho Hawla.“  
 „W patek po swatym Janu (verschmiert) umrżela Yulyana Yana Halacžka a



Digitizing manuscripts with special equipment („Bücherwippe“)  
 © Austrian Academy of Sciences, Maria Theisen

## Descriptive directory of illuminated manuscripts and incunabla held by the Austrian National Library



### Aim:

Creating an inventory focused on  
the art of book illumination

### This means:

- 1) professional description of book decoration  
(penwork, drawings, ornamental and historiated initials,  
miniatures, whole page illuminations etc.)
- 2) Identification of workshop / master,  
time and place of production  
= research on style and iconography

Helpful literature concerning terminology of ornaments:

Christine Jacobi Mirwald,

Buchmalerei. Ihre Terminologie in der Kunstgeschichte

Other sources:

Special literature, Catalogues of illuminated  
manuscripts in Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary,  
exhibition catalogues

## Descriptive directory of illuminated manuscripts and incunabla held by the Austrian National Library

### BUCHSCHMUCK

Rubriziert, Zählung der Kapitel durch römische Ziffern im Schriftblock. Anfangsbuchstaben gelb ausgezeichnet. Fortlaufende Kopfzeilen in roter Farbe, ebenfalls mit gelber Auszeichnung der Anfangsbuchstaben (auf ff. 24v–25r fälschlicherweise „Liber Genesis“). Auf f. 278r eine fünfzeilige gelbe Lombarde. Zu Beginn der Textabschnitte **Zahlreiche Fleuronné-Lombarden** (meist vierzeilig, in Einzelfällen ein- bis dreizeilig), alternierend in Rot und Blau mit Fleuronné in der Gegenfarbe oder mit goldenem Buchstabenkörper und blauem Fleuronné (drei- bis fünfzeilig). **Sechs** vierzeilige, **goldene Lombarden** auf blauem, mit weißem Fadenornament verziertem Grund (ff. 293r, 296v, 299r, 303r, 307v, 308v). Der Beginn der Bibelbücher und Kapitel wurde jeweils durch ornamentale oder historisierte Initialen und Miniaturen hervorgehoben: Die Handschrift enthält **67 ornamentale Deckfarbeninitialen** (sieben- bis zehnzeilig), **41 historisierte Deckfarbeninitialen** (zehn- bis 18-zeilig) sowie **vier Miniaturen** (zehnzeilig, jeweils zu Beginn eines Evangeliums). Sämtliche historisierte und ein großer Teil der ornamentalen Deckfarbeninitialen werden von **Akanthusranken** begleitet, die häufig durch große **Menschen- und Tierfiguren** sowie **Mischwesen** belebt sind.

### BOOK DECORATION

Rubrics ... **numerous lombards** in red and blue (mostly four lines high, in some cases also one to three lines high) **with penwork in red or blue ink, golden lombards with blue penwork** (three to five lines high). **Six golden lombards** on blue ground with white filigree decoration (ff. 293r, 296v, 299r, 303r, 307v, 308v). The beginning of each book and chapter of the bible is marked with an ornamental or historiated initial or a miniature: The manuscript contains **67 ornamental initials** (seven to ten lines high), **41 historiated initials** (ten to eighteen lines high) and **four miniatures** (seven to ten lines high, each one at the beginning of a gospel). ...etc.

## Descriptive directory of illuminated manuscripts and incunabla held by the Austrian National Library



Original leather cover with blind stamps: Bohemia, Workshop Doubleheaded eagle & lily (double II)

(see: EBDB w002814)

New Testament – Cod. 3304 (Czech)  
translator: Martin Lupáč  
Prague, c 1450/60

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Maria Theisen

## Descriptive directory of illuminated manuscripts and incunabla held by the Austrian National Library



Designing ornaments and figures with the help of model books and prints (Schongauer a.o.)  
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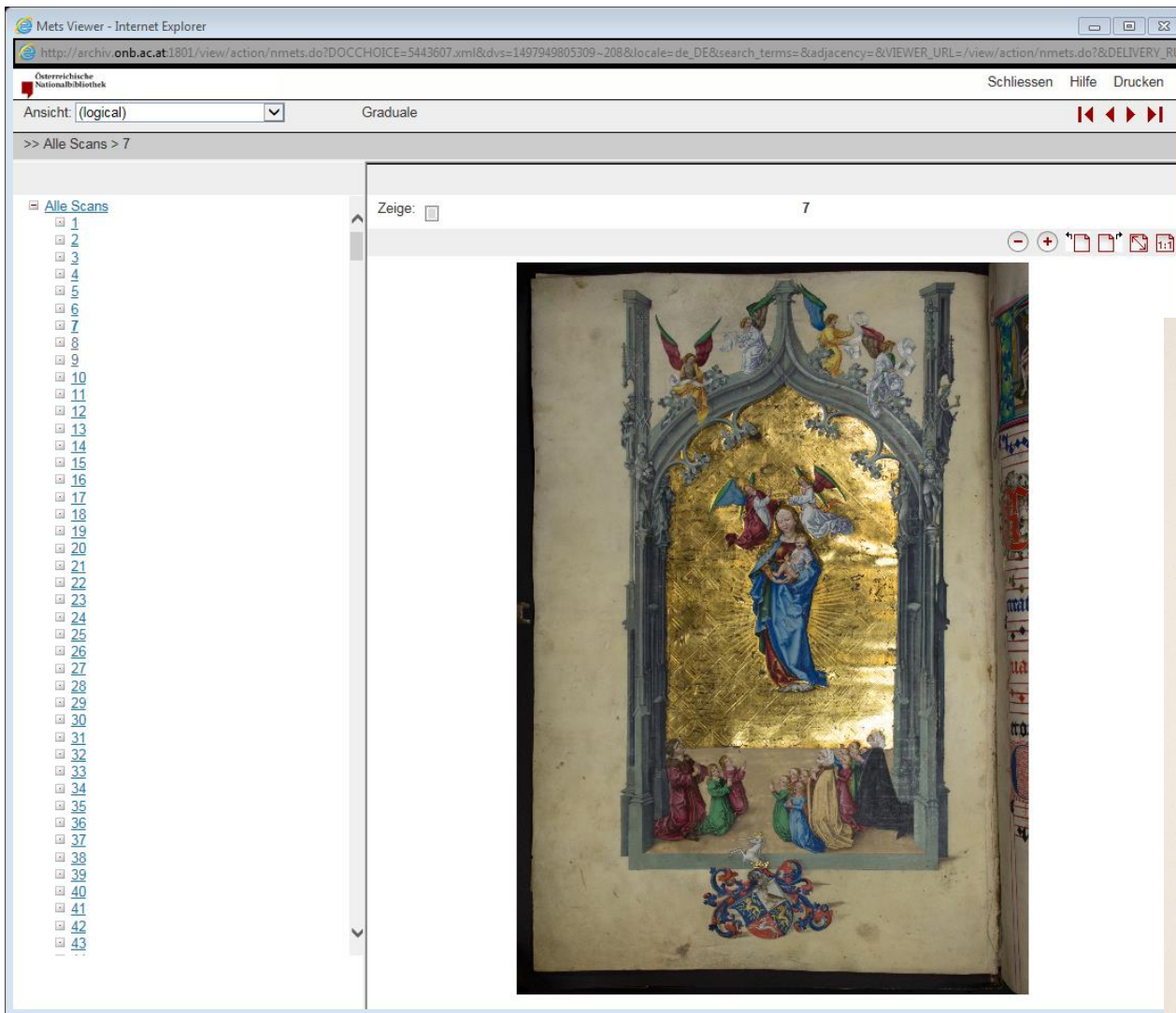


„Wiener Musterbuch“, KHM  
© Facsimile Müller & Schindler



See: Jonathan J. G. Alexander, Medieval Illuminators and Their Methods of Work. Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1992.





Smíšek-Gradual – Mus. Hs. 15492,  
 c 1495  
 © ÖNB Digital Images online



Martin Schongauer,  
 Madonna on the crescent,  
 c 1480  
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15492\_2v



15492\_3r



15492\_3v



15492\_4



15492\_5



15492\_6



15492\_7



15492\_8



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10



15492\_12



15492\_15



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15492\_82



15492\_83



15492\_84



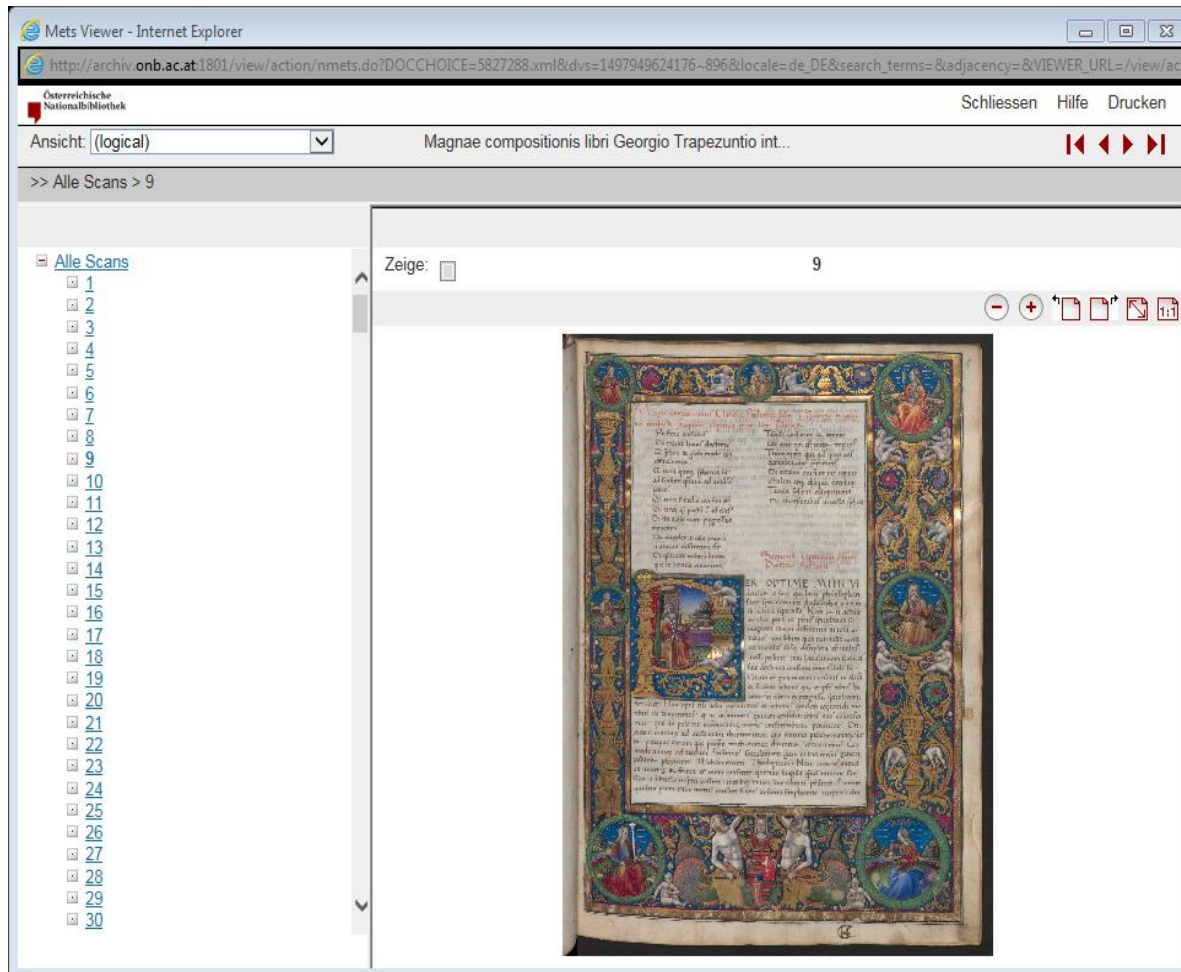
15492\_85



15492\_86



# Descriptive directory of illuminated manuscripts and incunabla held by the Austrian National Library



Claudius Ptolemäus – Cod. 24

Ofen, 1467

Johannes Antonius Cattaneo de Mediolano (illuminator)

owners: Johannes Vitéz de Zredna, Matthias Corvinus

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