After the Discovery of the New World - The Rediscovery of History: Hartmann Schedel's *Liber chronicarum*. A Masterpiece of the Incunabula Time

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Abstract: Although Hartmann Schedel's *Liber chronicarum*, or World Chronicle, from 1493 has been lauded as a masterpiece from the incunabula time, we are still missing a critical examination of its approach to history, its use of narrative strategies, and the highly sophisticated utilization of the print media (woodcuts). The present study introduces Schedel's chronicle once again, outlining the major approaches employed by older and recent scholarship, and it studies how the author perceived history, which he obviously saw through the traditional lens of the chronicler and also as an author, not to forget his strong awareness of the new importance of book illustrations by means of woodcuts.

Abstract: Obwohl Hartmann Schedels *Liber chronicarum* bzw. Weltchronik von 1493 bisher regelmäβig als Meisterwerk der Inkunabelzeit angesehen worden ist, fehlt es weiterhin an einer kritischen Untersuchung seiner Herangehensweise an Geschichte, seines Gebrauchs narrativer Strukturen und des erstaunlich geschickten Einsatzes der neuen Druckmöglichkeiten (Holzschnitt). In dem vorliegenden Aufsatz geht es darum, Schedels Chronik erneut ein- und vorzuführen, die wichtigsten Forschungsansätze

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älteren und jüngeren Datums zu diskutieren und zu analysieren, wie der Autor Geschichte wahrnahm. Diese nahm er offensichtlich wahr sowohl durch die Linse eines traditionellen Historikers als auch durch die eines Autors literarischer Provenienz. Zugleich wird der Einsatz von visuellen Medien genauer untersucht.
Keywords: Hartmann Schedel, Liber chronicarum, Chronik-Literatur, Inkunabeln, Druckmedien

Once Johannes Gutenberg had invented the moveable type,[1] this printing technology soon developed rapidly and opened many new avenues for the early-modern book market.[2] Not surprisingly, here we come across many different types of text genres, and some of those that continued to enjoy high popularity were chronicles.[3] In 1493 one of the most comprehensive and most illustrated world chronicles appeared in print in Nuremberg, created by the medical doctor Hartmann Schedel in close collaboration with a whole team of artists, scribes, scholars, and printers.[4] The purpose of this paper is to re-examine his work in terms of the media paradigm shift and to investigate closely the major aspects of this chronicle which allow us to identify the *Liber chronicarum* as a masterpiece of the incunabula time and yet as a harbinger of the early modern age. Why was this world chronicle such a major success

1. Stephan Füssel: Gutenberg und seine Wirkung. Frankfurt a. M. 1999, engl. Übersetzung von Douglas Martin: Gutenberg and the Impact of Printing. Aldershot, Hampshire, und Burlington, VT, 2005.
2. Uwe Neddermeyer: Von der Handschrift zum gedruckten Buch. Schriftlichkeit und Leseinteresse im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit. Quantitative und qualitative Aspekte. 2 Bde. (Buchwissenschaftliche Beiträge aus dem deutschen Bucharchiv München, 61). Wiesbaden 1998.
3. Albrecht Classen: Werner Rolevinck's Fasciculus Temporum. In: Gutenberg-Jahrbuch 81 (2006), pp. 225-30.
4. Stephan Füssel: Die Welt im Buch: buchkünstlerischer und humanistischer Kontext der Schedelschen Weltchronik von 1493 (Kleiner Druck der Gutenberg-Gesellschaft, 111). Mainz 1996.

on the book market, and how did the extraordinary combination of text and image contribute to Schedel's success?[5]

By way of introduction, however, I would first like to reflect upon the meaning of chronicles and comparable historical documents within the humanities. One of the most outstanding and most significant aspects of all human endeavors consists of the interest to talk with and about people, hence about their activities and work; in other words, to reflect about and interact with society. We always want, and especially need, to know what happened in the past, and why it happened, many times hoping that we can learn somehow from the past for the present and, especially, the future. We want to profit from previous experiences in order to handle ever-changing conditions in our society, however elusive this might be. As Judith M. Bennett recently formulated most poignantly, "History Matters."[6] Of course, the study of history has never been a panacea, as much as we might hope so, and people seem to repeat the same mistakes, as if they had never learned anything from past experiences. But this does not mean that we have less concern for history or would not actually continue to develop as a species. On the contrary, libraries are filled with chronicles and other primary materials giving account of every step in human history; those have become the sources for endless studies on history, and those, in turn, have become the basis for literary creations, art work, and even musical compositions.

Every person has history and exists because of his own history. Each community finds its basis in the past and draws its

5. For medieval perspectives, see: Visualisierungsstrategien in mittelalterlichen Bildern und Texten, ed. Horst Wenzel and C. Stephen Jaeger (Philologische Studien und Quellen, 195). Berlin 2006.
6. Judith M. Bennett: History Matters: Patriarchy and the Challenge of Feminism. Philadelphia 2006.

strength from this sense of history because the historical process reflects upon our development, the specific character, the cultural orientation, and the sense of identity. And not to forget, we all create history, every day, whether it has much or little impact on larger issues. Collectively we are historical beings, live through history, and constitute history in a myriad of different ways, and disregarding this would blind us to the very nature of human nature.

Although it might seem to be too elusive or academic, we still need to ask ourselves, however, what chronicle accounts, some of the most important sources for all writing on history, really are. Is a chronicle a factual report that I can take at face value and trust its basic information? Of course not, as we all know, insofar as every human statement, written or oral, reflects personal opinions, attitudes, ideas, and the historian's task consists of examining as critically as possible the true value of those statements. Chronicles reflect individual perspectives, like all other human expressions, though we may assume that the authors at least tried to achieve a certain level of objectivity. Any critical examination of the vast corpus of available sources immediately indicates how problematic the evaluation of all written documents from past and present proves to be. We might approximate truth, but ultimately we project our concept of history into the chronicles.

Hayden White's observations concerning this issue make the most sense here and deserve to be quoted at length:

> Narrative discourse, then, is as much "performative" as it is "constative," to use the terminology of early Austin, which Ricoeur favors at crucial junctures in his discussions of metaphoric language and symbolic discourse. And historical narrative, which takes the events created by human actions as its immediate subject, does much more

> than merely describe those events; it also imitates them, that is, performs the same kind of creative act as those performed by historical agents. . . . This experience of historicality, finally, can be represented symbolically in narrative discourse, because such discourse is a product of the same kind of hypotactical figuration of events (as beginnings, middles, and ends) as that met with in the actions of historical agents who hypotactically figurate their lives as meaningful stories.[7]

Aristotle had been the first to differentiate—and in this he was followed by countless others, most famously by the anonymous author of the *Rhetorica ad Herrenium* (1st c. B.C.E.)—between *fabula* (impossible events), *historia* (actual events), and *argumentum* (verisimilar events).[8] David Dumville alerts us to the difficulty even within various historical writings, or genres, to draw precise distinction between chronicles and annals, not to speak of chronological tables, though chronicles surface as considerably more comprehensive and also interpretive than annals.[9] And here begin the problems because chroniclers pursue their own agendas, writing history from their perspective. Moreover, many chroniclers, far into the sixteenth and even seventeenth centuries, did not limit themselves to a narrow definition of their task and incorporated many other textual genres, including literary, religious, economic,

7. Hayden White: The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation. Baltimore, 1987, pp. 178–79.
8. Robert L. Montgomery: History and Poetry. In: The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, ed. Alex Preminger and T. V. F. Brogan. Princeton 1993, pp. 533-36.
9. David Dumville: What is a Chronicle? In: The Medieval Chronicle II: Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on the Medieval Chronicle Driebergen/Utrecht 16-21 July 1999, ed. Erik Kooper. Amsterdam and New York 2002, pp. 1-27.

and political ones. In other words, many chronicles represent a form of *bricolage*, a definite blending of fact and fiction.[10]

Most medieval heroic epics, and so also Old Norse Eddic poetry and sagas, represent complex combinations of factual reports containing precise references to actual historical events, such as travels, warfare, power structures, and figures, with fictional, or mythical accounts, yet frame them within a fictional context. The same applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to urban chronicles, family, or dynastic, chronicles, and also world chronicles,[11] though the degree to which fact merged with fiction heavily depended on each individual author.[12]

Virtually every medieval monastery, for instance, contained a scriptorium, and much of the scribes' work consisted of copying religious and chronicle texts. Without the written record, any institution is in danger of losing its identity, and hence its social significance. This does not necessarily mean that the chronicles or compilations of historical documents consist only of verifiable accounts. Medieval historiography is often characterized by a strong tendency to falsify for very pragmatic and basically even honest reasons in order to preserve one's property that had been inherited from generation to generation, without any charters ever having been created. Often fires destroyed archives, and then it

10. Albrecht Classen: Literarische Diskurs-Bricolage als literarische Strategie (Textallianz) in spätmittelalterlicher Chronistik: der Fall von Jans Enikels Weltchronik. In: Strukturen und Funktionen in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Festschrift Franz Simmler zum 65. Geburtstag, ed. Claudia Wich-Reif. Berlin 2007, pp. 425-44.

11. A good example for this literary bricolage would be the sixteenth-century *Zimmern Chronicle* which contains many intriguing, actually fascinating literary texts, many of which have not yet been adequately examined, if at all. See, for instance, Judith J. Hurwich: Noble Strategies: Marriage and Sexuality in the Zimern Chronicle (Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies Series, 75). Kirksville, MO, 2006.

12. Joachim Schneider: Heinrich Deichsler und die Nürnberger Chronistik des 15. Jahrhunderts. Wissensliteratur im Mittelalter (Schriften des Sonderforschungsbereichs 226 Würzburg/Eichstätt, 5).Wiesbaden 1991, pp. 279-320.

was necessary to recreate history by the best possible memory. Or the chronicler pursued self-serving interests and established an account that was most favorable to him or his institution. It would not come as a surprise at all also to realize how much monastic and scholastic authors reflected upon their personal viewpoints, hence it would be absurd to expect chronicles to serve as objective and truth-based documents. Finally, chronicles were more often the result of a falsification process than not, both in the Middle Ages and today, especially because the patrons intended to leave a positive image behind and made sure that their authors did not denigrate them or their activities during their life-time.[13]

History is constantly in the making and changes entirely depending on the spectator's or reader's perspectives, significantly reflecting power structures and ideologies, social structures, religious orientations, moral and ethical value systems, military and technological developments, and economic conditions.[14] Historiography, in other words, provides most important insight into a society's mentality and illustrates its stand toward the rest of the world. Chronicles inform us about many details and facts, but they are just as important in serving as reflections on cultural conditions, concepts of identity, perceptions of others (minorities, foreigners, heretics, members of other religions, etc.), and the sense of the self. Joachim Knape, for instance, characterizes chronicles as "purposeful, strategical communicative acts. The

13. Fälschungen im Mittelalter: Internationaler Kongress der Monumenta Germaniae Historica, München, 16.-19. September 1986. 6 vols. (MGH Schriften, 33).Hanover 1988-1990.

14. Robert F. Berkhofer III: Day of Reckoning: Power and Accountability in Medieval France (The Middle Ages Series). Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

rhetorical perspective of analysis is thus the perspective of the text in function."[15]

As we have learned to understand, a chronicle first and foremost consists of texts, and texts are subject to interpretation and change, hence the claim that chronicles provide us with the factual history would be highly questionable and finds hardly any support today anymore. Following Knape, "It is modern methodical criticism of sources which assigns the respective status. What is valid here is the principle of mutual criticism of sources: all data have to be capable of being integrated without contradiction into a systematic network of authentic traces (archeological, diplomatic sources) or memorialized traces (historiographical sources). The aim is usually an historical first-degree observation, an observation of facts we may also call a reconstruction of facts."[16]

We divide chronicles into the following categories: 1. world chronicles; 2. national chronicles; 3. chronicles of a monastic order; 4. monastic chronicles; 5. crusade chronicles and other war chronicles; 6. city chronicles; and 7. family chronicles. We have medieval chronicles from virtually every country in Europe and from all periods, and many of them still remain forgotten in the archives. But the way how history is being written and what materials are included also illustrates the process of history itself. For instance, whereas world histories continued to hold their own position within that genre far into the late Middle Ages, remarkable changes can be observed as well. Increasingly local and regional chronicles emerged that were written in the various vernaculars, and soon enough verse chronicles gave way to prose chronicles. This global paradigm shift found its perhaps best expression in Germany where increasingly the imperial power

15. Joachim Knape: Historiography as Rhetoric. In: The Medieval Chronicle II, pp. 117-29, here p. 117.
16. Knape: Historiography as Rhetoric, p. 119.

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faded in its influence, giving way to growing territorial princes and also mighty and independent cities for which chronicles gained a new significance as a medium to reflect the individual concerns, disadvantaging universal history.[17]

Nevertheless, one of those major world histories, which continued to exert considerable influence for a long time after its first publication, drawing from past experiences and signaling the changes of time, if not of an imminent paradigm shift, was composed by the Nuremberg author and medical doctor Hartmann Schedel and published in 1493. This chronicle represents one of the masterpieces from the incunabula time, as scholarship has repeatedly confirmed (Stephan Füssel; Elisabeth Rücker et al.). We have an exceptionally large amount of information available regarding its inception process, the sources, the contributors, the financing, and the artists who contributed to this chronicle, making this to a most fascinating study object both in historiographical terms and as a reflection of the extent to which the pending paradigm shift resulting from the invention of the moveable type in ca. 1450 by Johannes Gutenberg extensively and deeply made its impact felt.[18]

But let us first turn to Schedel's biography. He was born in the imperial and wealthy city of Nuremberg that excelled through its outstanding craftsmanship, trade relations, art works,

17. Leopold Hellmuth: Geschichtsepik und Reimchronistik. In: Von der Handschrift zum Buchdruck: Spätmittelalter, Reformation, Humanismus: 1320-1572, ed. Ingrid Bennewitz and Ulrich Müller (Deutsche Literatur: Eine Sozialgeschichte, 2). Reinbek bei Hamburg 1991, pp. 140-48; here pp. 146-47.

18. For a completely digitized version of the chronicle, see: http://www.obrasraras.usp.br/; and http://mdz1.bib-bvb.de/~mdz/kurzauswahl.html?url=http://mdz1.bib-bvb.de/cocoon/bsbink/Exemplar_S-199,1.html (both last accessed on Jan. 15, 2008)

architecture, and hence also great political significance.[19] Not surprisingly, many of its citizens had turned to writing, whether of chronicles (Ulman Stromer, 1329-1407), various family chronicles by members of the Tucher family, then by Konrad Paumgartner Senior, and Lazarus Holzschuher Senior, then war reports concerning the struggle between Nuremberg and the Margrave Albrecht Achilles of Brandenburg by Erhard Schürrstab, local chronicles, such as the one by Heinrich Deichsler, and world chronicles such as the one by Johannes Plattenberger Junior and Theodorich Truchsess, which can be regarded as influential inspiration for Schedel's own chronicle.[20] Concomitantly, vernacular literature also bloomed in Nuremberg, perhaps best represented by the composers of Shrovetide plays and poems Hans Rosenplüt and Hans Folz.[21] In other words, in late-medieval Germany Nuremberg emerged as a true intellectual and artistic center, so it was the ideal location for a humanist like Schedel to turn to the task of creating a monumental world chronicle.[22]

Hartmann Schedel was born in 1440 into a well-to-do merchant family. His father had made huge profits from selling products to the Hussite Bohemians despite a papal ban imposing a trading embargo on them during the Hussite wars (1419-1436),

19. Nürnberg—Geschichte einer europäischen Stadt, ed. Gerhard Pfeiffer. Munich 1971.

20. Hans Rupprich: Die deutsche Literatur vom späten Mittelalter bis zum Barock. Part One: Das ausgehende Mittelalter, Humanismus und Renaissance, 1370-1520 (Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart, 4/1). Munich 1970, pp. 147-48.

21. Aaron E. Wright: "Die gotlich sterk gab daz der teutschen zungen": Folz, Schedel, and the Printing Press in Fifteenth-Century Nuremberg. In: Fifteenth-Century Studies 19 (1992), pp. 319-49; here pp. 321-23.

22. Ludwig Veit: Handel und Wandel mit aller Welt: aus Nürnbergs großer Zeit (Bibliothek des Germanischen Nationalmuseums Nürnberg zur deutschen Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte, 14). Munich 1960; Dieter Wuttke: Nuremberg: Focal Point of German Culture and History (Gratia, 16). Bamberg 1985.

then to Venice, and part of Northern Italy. He had also been particularly successful in selling sweet Italian wines to the Council of Constance (1414-1418). Hartmann's mother Anna, née Grabner, died already in 1445, and his father married a second time in 1451. Hartmann began his university studies in Leipzig in 1456, earned his *baccalaureate* in 1457, and then his *magister artium* in 1460. He seemed to have leaned subsequently toward a career in the Church, but then, following the model set up by his younger cousin Hermann, he opted for the study of medicine in Padua in 1462, though he did not leave until December 1463. Influenced by scholars such as Peter Luder, who had been teaching at the University of Leipzig in 1462, Schedel was strongly drawn to Humanistic Studies, and he followed his teacher to Padua where Luder had received an appointment. In Padua Schedel met a number of students from Nuremberg, such as Johannes Pirckheimer, Georg Pfinzing, and Georg Tetzel. He also studied Greek, apart from his focus on medicine. Schedel received his doctorate on April 17, 1466 and returned home to Nuremberg.[23] He traveled several times before he began working as a medical doctor in Nördlingen since 1470 and transferred to Amberg in 1477. Next he served as counselor and medical expert for Count Palatinate Philipp in 1479, and finally he returned home and began with his own medical practice in Nuremberg in 1484.

Schedel married Anna Heugel in 1475, and their first daughter was born in 1477, though she died already the next February. His wife died in 1485, and Schedel remarried in 1487, Magdalena Haller. Once he had settled in Nuremberg, Schedel established close contacts with the entire intellectual urban elite,

23. Martin Kirnbauer: Hartmann Schedel und sein "'Liederbuch": Studien zu einer spätmittelalterlichen Musikhandschrift (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Cgm 810) und ihrem Kontext (Publikationen der Schweizerischen Musikforschenden Gesellschaft. Serie II, 42). Bern, Berlin, et al. 2001, pp. 72-93.

both medical doctors and scholars, artists and scientists, which was particularly facilitated because this city had emerged as one of the crucial centers of cultural exchange and transfer of information, connecting the world south and north of the Alps in a myriad of ways. Schedel was most anxious to collect books, either by copying them himself, which he had started in 1456, or by buying and trading them. When he created a catalogue of his library in 1507, he owned 667 volumes, a most impressive number for any late-medieval collector and bibliophile.[24] In his will he requested that his library should be preserved for posterity in its completeness, so in 1552 his last descendant, Melchior Schedel, sold the library *in toto* to Johann Jakob Fugger in Augsburg. When Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria purchased the entire Fugger library in 1571 for the court library in Munich, Schedel's books ended up there as a complete collection, and they continue to be housed in the Bavarian State Library until today.

Schedel was a true bibliophile and took excellent care of every one of his books, making sure that they were newly bound and received additional illustrations and ex libris, or bookplates. He himself added drawings, miniature illustrations, lithographs, wood-prints, etchings, and other art work. Based on his long educational training and continued learning as a medical doctor and a humanist, he was ideally prepared to produce the work for which he is best remembered until today, his Latin world chronicle, the *Liber chronicarum*, published in 1493, which was translated still the same year into German. Schedel died, after he had outlived two of his daughters, his brother Georg, and his

24. Renate Jürgensen: Bibliotheca Norica: Patrizier und Gelehrtenbibliotheken in Nürnberg zwischen Mittelalter und Aufklärung. Vol. I. (Beiträge zum Buch- und Bibliothekswesen, 43). Wiesbaden 2002, pp. 33-34, esp. note 48 with the relevant research literature.

mother-in-law Anna Oelhafin, on November 28, 1514.[25] Before turning to this world chronicle, however, we also need to consider that Schedel produced a remarkable song book, probably during his years at the university around 1460, his *Liber musicalis*, which contains more than 120 polyphonic compositions. As was rather typical for a Renaissance representative, this was obviously a man of many different talents and skills, both in the area of medical sciences and history, music, and languages.

The chronicle, with its full title *Liber chronicarum cum figuris et ymaginibus ab inicio mundi*, was printed on July 12, 1493, by the highly respected and extraordinarily successful Anton Koberger in Nuremberg, probably the most productive and esteemed book printer and seller in all of Germany, and hence in late-medieval Europe.[26] A German translation followed on December 23, 1493. The chronicle contains altogether 1,809 woodcuts from 645 woodblocks and thus was, at its time, the one printed book in the entire world with the most illustrations. The drawings were created by Michael Wolgemut, Albrecht Dürer's teacher, and his son-in-law, Wilhelm Pleydenwurff. The Nuremberg bankers and merchants Sebald Schreyer and his brother-in-law Sebastian Kammermeister bankrolled the entire project, which had actually originated as early as 1471, so it took more than two decades to reach its final stage of completion.

Schedel was in close contact with many Nuremberg humanists to assist him in special details, such as the famous

25. Kirnbauer: Hartmann Schedel, pp. 357-60.

26.Here I am relying on the facsimile edition: The Nuremberg Chronicle: A Facsimile of Hartmann Schedel's Buch der Chroniken: Printed by Anton Koberger in 1493. New York 1979; see also Elisabeth Rücker: Hartmann Schedels Weltchronik: Das größte Buchunternehmen der Dürer-Zeit. Mit einem Katalog der Städteansichten. Munich 1988. Now see also Hartmann Schedel: Weltchronik:Nachdruck [der] kolorierten Gesamtausgabe von 1493. Einleitung und Kommentar von Stephan Füssel. Augsburg 2004.

medical doctor Hieronymus Münzer who helped him, based on his own travel experiences, to create a two-page map of Germany and to cover the most recent events on the Iberian Peninsula, where Münzer had traveled between 1494 and 1495.[27] Most unusually and truly exciting for the history of the early-modern book, the complete set of the layouts for Schedel's chronicle has been preserved, and so the drawings that served as the basis for the woodcuts, discovered only in 1973.[28] We can even tell where the paper came from—though none from Nuremberg itself—and what companies delivered the material.[29] For the Latin version obviously better paper was used, whereas the German version had to rely on cheaper paper, as the many yellowed pages today indicate.

The *Liber chronicarum* immediately enjoyed considerable success, with a print-run of ca. 1400 copies of the Latin version, and a print-run of ca. 700 copies of the German translation. Competitors in the book market realized quickly that this world chronicle with its enormous pictorial program represented a major innovation and soon endeavored to copy this major enterprise. The Latin text appeared in shortened and simplified versions, but those also contained considerably more woodcuts (an increase of 350 images), and so did the German translation that was reprinted in Augsburg in 1496, 1497, and 1500. These were

27. Europäische Reiseberichte des späten Mittelalters: Eine analytische Bibliographie, ed. Werner Paravicini. Part 1: Deutsche Reiseberichte, ed. Christian Halm. 2nd, revised and expanded ed. with an appendix (Kieler Werkstücke. Reihe D: Beiträge zur europäischen Geschichte des späten Mittelalters, 5). Frankfurt a. M., Berlin, et al. 2001, orig. 1993; Albrecht Classen: Die Iberische Halbinsel aus der Sicht eines humanistischen Nürnberger Gelehrten Hieronymus Münzer: *Itinerarium Hispanicum* (1494-1495). In: Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung 111, 3-4 (2003), pp. 317-40.
28. Rücker: Hartmann Schedels Weltchronik, pp. 7-8.
29. Adrian Wilson: The Making of the Nuremberg Chronicle. Amsterdam 1980, p. 188.

produced by Johann Schönsperger without any license (hence as pirated editions), which considerably diminished the market success of the Nuremberg print, as the original patrons had to conclude in 1509 when they drew up a balance sheet.[30]

Although the *Liber* was certainly the result of humanistic thinking, the chronicle itself still represents the tradition of the medieval world chronicles, lacking any critical approaches to the many different sources, and it also includes fantastic reports about monsters in the exotic Orient in the tradition of Pliny (fol. 12r). Schedel structured his chronicle, that extends in terms of time from biblical Genesis to the year 1493, into six world ages, followed by an eschatological one, the end of time. The sixth age, or chronological period, begins with the time after Christ's birth and is basically determined by the history of the popes and emperors. The massive tome concludes with an appendix which contains a description of the European countries, including Portugal, which Schedel had borrowed from the geographical account *Europa* by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, the later Pope Pius II.

Schedel drew most of his information from Italian Humanist writers, such as Jacobus Philippus Foresta of Bergamo, Flavio Biondo, Platina, Petrarca, Boccaccio, Poggio Bracciolini, Palmieri, Leonardo Bruno, and especially Piccolomini.The latter's *Historia Bohemica*, *Historia Austrialis*, and *Europe* were the key texts for Schedel's own composition, particularly for the section dealing with the history from the time of Emperor Charles IV to Frederick III (so fourteenth through fifteenth centuries). Although the entire

30. Peter Zahn: Die Endabrechnung über den Druck der Schedelschen Weltchronik (1493) vom 22. Juni 1509: Text und Analyse. In: Gutenberg-Jahrbuch 66 (1991), pp. 177-213.

design of the *Liber* certainly reflects medieval thinking, only few medieval chronicles were of direct influence on Schedel's work.

Most interestingly, Schedel paid great interest to cities and offered detailed descriptions. Thirty-two of the urban vedutas are apparently done based on personal observations. Most important, on leave 100 the author included the cityscape of Nuremberg, a triumphant visual encomium on this imperial city, the center of German economic power, craftsmanship, and the arts.[31] Some of the churches are identified by name, and we can more or less trust the artist for having portrayed the city in a rather realistic manner, showing us the double wall, the city gates, bridges, and, most outstanding, the castle towering above the city. But the humanist perspective finds its reflection here as well since the eye is invited to wander into the far distance, to linger on hills with some buildings, then to move back to the river surrounding the city, and some constructions outside, such as the paper mill, the gallows, and fences as part of the forward defense system. In this regard Schedel was not at all the only one to perceive his world in different terms compared to the Middle Ages, as contemporary vernacular and Latin literature indicates that focused heavily on city encomia.[32]

On fol. 12v-13r we find a world map, but it is still missing America, not to speak of Australia, and it does not reflect any knowledge of the southern half of Africa, directly drawing from the *Cosmographia* of Pomponius Mela from 1482.[33] By contrast, the

31. Klaus Arnold: Bilder und Texte: Stadtbeschreibung und Städtelob bei Hartmann Schedel. In: Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Hafniensis, ed. Rhoda Schnur et al. Binghampton, NY, 1994, pp. 121-32.
32. Hartmut Kugler: Die Vorstellung der Stadt in der Literatur des deutschen Mittelalters (Münchener Texte und Untersuchungen zur deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters, 88). Munich 1986, pp. 103, 105, 164, 179-80.
33. Elisabeth Rücker: Nürnberger Frühhumanisten und ihre Beschäftigung mit Geographie: Zur Frage einer Mitarbeit von Hieronymus Münzer und Conrad Celtis

map of Germany on fol. 286v-287r proves to be astoundingly detailed and reflects a high level of geographic knowledge, a clear indication of the coming of a new time in intellectual terms, although the proportions are not accurate, and the information about the neighboring countries is considerably shrunk in favor of that relevant for Germany. Nevertheless, the chronicle contains a long series of texts that specifically focus on the whole range of countries in Europe, providing historical details and then also images.

But the chronicler often focuses more on historical events pertaining to the ruling houses than to geographic aspects. France, Spain, and Hungary receive great attention, whereas England or Lithuania are only mentioned, as if in passing. Germany, on the other hand, is divided into the various smaller territories that are all treated separately and often quite extensively.

The chronicle cannot be discussed at length here because it is just too comprehensive and detailed, covering, well, the entire history of the world.[34] But let us examine, at least briefly, some outstanding features and characteristic concepts of the basic design and structure that shed significant light on the innovative approach taken by Schedel and his team of collaborators. At the beginning, the *Liber* contains several fascinating graphic illustrations of the creation of the world, with empty circles and God's hand serving as the basis for creation, which soon enough is filled with stars, then living creatures, then Adam being lifted by

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am Text der Schedelschen Weltchronik. In: Humanismus und Naturwissenschaften, ed. Rudolf Schmitz and Fritz Krafft (Beiträge zur Humanismusforschung, VI). Boppard 1980, pp. 161-92, here p. 184.

34. For further discussions, see: 500 Jahre Schedelsche Weltchronik, ed. Stephan Füssel. Nürnberg 1994; Peter Zahn: Hartmann Schedels Weltchronik: Bilanz der jüngeren Forschung. In: Bibliotheksforum Bayern 24 (1996), pp. 230-48; Christoph Reske: Die Produktion der Schedelschen Weltchronik in Nürnberg. Wiesbaden 2000.

God out of a pile of soil, and then a cosmic view of heaven and earth, and all the stars and planets. We can follow the entire history from the beginning to the present time, that is, 1493, by studying the woodcuts that are richly scattered all over the pages, some large, others small, and often with the text winding around the images. Schedel also reflects a strong genealogical interest, both pertaining to biblical figures and to representatives of various dynasties in Roman times and in the Middle Ages. Intriguingly, the genealogical trees are presented as real branches of a rich vegetation, and at times even extend over the page folds, an extraordinary feature of early-modern book-printing which quickly disappeared in the pirated editions because of the cost factor.

Schedel also made sure to integrate as much information about the leading scholars, philosophers, and theologians from the past, with their half-size portraits decorating the margins of some pages, such as Hermes, Apuleius, Plotinus, Diogenes, and King Philippe of Macedonia (fol. LXXIIIv). The same applies to the popes, emperors, queens, and saints. The chronicler also includes references to important events, such as the fall of Constantinople into the hands of the Turks in 1453, though the illustration does not show any people, ships, arms, or animals. Then we see small images of comets and other astronomical phenomena, and also woodcuts depicting ritual murder allegedly committed by Jews (fol. CCLIVv). Most dramatically we are, of course, also confronted with the Apocalypse and the coming of the Antichrist (fol. CCLIXv), and there is also a beautiful woodcut with the motif of dance of death (fol. CCLXIr), not to forget the ultimate, triumphant Day of Judgment on fol. CCLXII.

Schedel did not yet reflect upon the discovery of America and had no images of any of the native people included in his chronicle, though this was to change soon elsewhere, for instance with the drawings by the German artist Christoph Weiditz who

witnessed some of them on his travel through Spain in the company of Emperor Charles V in 1529.[35] Schedel's world map, on the other hand, is still limited to the confines of Europe, including part of Asia and Africa, whereas America is missing. Nevertheless, as all city vedutas indicate, the perspectives always include the wider environs of the cities and show them in their broader context as part of the large landscape. We can clearly recognize the architectural designs, the natural surroundings, trees and forests, hills and mountains, rivers and lakes, and even sights of the distant ocean when the discussion turns to Italy (fol. CCLXXXVv).

Ultimately, Schedel and his team of artists and craftsmen created the perhaps most definitive chronicle and also art work of the late Middle Ages, hovering at the very last threshold to the modern age. His *Liber chronicarum* can, indeed, be identified as the triumph of the medieval world, but it was also its last call, and it did not undergo any of the planned revisions that the humanist Conrad Celtis had been supposed to carry out and which might have transported this bibliophile masterpiece into a Renaissance creation.[36] Nevertheless, from a bibliophile perspective, this world chronicle can safely claim world reputation as the best and most comprehensively illustrated representative of its kind. The art work included almost overshadows the highly elaborate historical narrative, especially because the aesthetic quality of the woodcuts certainly confirms a forward looking and innovative perspective, whether the chronicle account lags behind intellectually or not.

35. Albrecht Classen: Christoph Weiditz Paints Spain (1529): A German Artists Discovers the Spanish Peninsula. In: Neuphilologische Mitteilungen CV, 4 (2004), pp. 395-406.
36. Rücker: Hartmann Schedels Weltchronik, pp. 87-88, pp. 126-30.

In this sense this *Liber chronicarum* serves exceedingly well as a representative of the imminent paradigm shift from the Middle Ages to the early new age. Whereas that shift had occurred south of the Alps already many decades before, with Schedel's monumental work we have available one of the key printed books and also a huge collection of art works that indicate the very moment of transition. Hartmann Schedel must be credited for having accomplished this historically significant task, a most noteworthy accomplishment of a chronicler, bibliophile, editor, art collector, humanist, medical doctor, and lover of songs.