

## A brief exploration of the history of book illustration in Europe

BIANCA IONELA TULEA\*

“George Enescu” National University of the Arts, Iași  
ROMANIA

**Abstract:** This article traces the historical development of book illustration, from prehistoric narrative cave art to contemporary digital practices. By defining illustration through its communicative function rather than material or technique, the study highlights key moments in which visual storytelling evolved alongside writing, printing technologies, and cultural change.

**Keywords:** book illustration; visual narration; prehistoric art; illuminated manuscripts; printmaking; digital illustration.

### Introduction

In order to truly reach the origins of book illustration, we must first understand how illustration itself emerged and which defining moments shaped its evolution. However, identifying the exact period in which illustration arose as an artistic form is a difficult task, for unlike painting, which can be associated with the material used in its creation (paint), or engraving, which is characterized by its technical process (engraving and printing), illustration is not tied to a specific material or technique. Illustration is defined primarily by its purpose, and thus it is far more difficult to associate it with a particular time period.<sup>1</sup> We may say that painting was born with the use of the first pigments, photography arose with the invention of the camera, engraving appeared with the first printed wooden plates, yet there is no tangible object through which illustration can be dated. Nevertheless, if we were to assume that illustration is defined by its purpose, then that purpose could be summarized as the intention to communicate concrete or abstract ideas and information through a visual channel.

Continuing this line of reasoning, we looked for the earliest signs of humankind’s desire to leave behind tangible proof of its own existence and beliefs, whether individual or communal, and thus arrived at the hypothesis that the history of illustration begins with the first complex messages: stories. This leads us over 40,000 years into the past, to the moment when narrative cave art first emerged.<sup>2</sup>

---

\* PhD Student, email: [biancatulea@uahoo.com](mailto:biancatulea@uahoo.com); PhD Supervisor: Prof. Atena-Elena Simionescu.

<sup>1</sup> Susan Doyle, Jaleen Grove, Whitney Sherman (2019). *History of Illustration*, Bloomsbury Publishing Inc, New York, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 2.

The oldest examples of prehistoric art originate in the Upper Paleolithic, a period in human history situated between 50,000 and 10,000 years ago.<sup>3</sup> The first artists decorated cave walls with a wide range of signs and images, using natural pigments, most often of mineral origin. The paint, made from soil rich in elements that gave it specific coloration (e.g., iron oxide for reddish tones, charcoal for black, etc.), and often mixed with animal fat or blood, was applied directly by hand or with the aid of sticks.<sup>4</sup> There is ongoing debate regarding the role these paintings served. It is possible that the illustrations had a purely decorative purpose, yet many theories point instead toward a ritualistic function. In most cases, the paintings are found in hard-to-reach areas deep within caves, far from any natural light. In some instances, typical signs of inhabited spaces are entirely absent in areas where paintings appear, indicating that the sites were reserved as sacred zones. The most widely accepted theory is that animals illustrated with extraordinary detail served to offer hunters some kind of magical advantage. The sharp contrast between the effort invested in depicting the animals, as opposed to the abstract, stylized form of human figures, suggests that the animals represented the central point of interest; thus, the more realistically an animal was portrayed, the more powerful its invocation likely was and the higher the chance of success in hunting.<sup>5</sup>

The recently discovered cave paintings in Indonesia are considered to be among the earliest human attempts to convey a story by means other than spoken language. Researchers involved in the discovery of these relics from the past estimate their age at approximately 44,000 years, several thousand years earlier than the first European cave paintings with comparable narrative qualities.<sup>6</sup>

The Indonesian paintings discovered in a cave in the southern area of the island of Sulawesi are currently considered the oldest form of narrative illustration found to date. Eight anthropomorphic creatures equipped with ropes and spears are depicted in a hunting scene, pursuing and capturing wild animals, including wild boars and buffaloes, species characteristic of the local fauna. These paintings also appear to possess a possible religious character. The eight figures are illustrated with several seemingly animalistic features, such as tails, beaks, or animal heads.<sup>7</sup>

It is not clear whether these animalistic traits were meant to describe chimeras imagined by the creator or by the communal culture, or whether they represent an attempt to depict camouflage techniques used by prehistoric hunters

---

<sup>3</sup> Susan Doyle, Jaleen Grove, Whitney Sherman, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Andrew G. Dixon (2013). *Art: The Definitive Visual Guide*, new edition, Dorling Kindersley (2018), London, p. 38, Marilyn Stokstad, Michael Cothren (2013). *Art History*, fifth edition, Pearson Education, Boston, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Marilyn Stokstad, Michael Cothren, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>6</sup> Maxime Aubert, Rustan Lebe, Agug A. Oktaviana *et al.* (2019). *Earliest hunting scene in prehistoric art*, in "Nature", No. 576, DOI:10.1038/s41586-019-1806-y, p. 445.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 443, 445.

in their search for food. General opinion seems to lean toward the first hypothesis, especially given that the hunted animals are strongly oversized in relation to the humanoid figures<sup>8</sup>; however, this hypothesis is not supported by sufficient data to be universally accepted. Whatever the case, it appears evident that this scene, in its complexity of characters interacting with one another, is rich in narrative content. Thus, at least until new archaeological discoveries emerge, we may consider that narrative illustration first appeared, in its most rudimentary form, with these cave paintings, at least 44,000 years ago.

When humankind's primary occupation began to focus less on hunting and more on agriculture and animal husbandry, its way of life also underwent major changes. The cultivation and harvesting of grains and the domestication of animals made it possible to obtain a surplus of food that could be stored for long periods, making it no longer necessary to move from place to place in pursuit of animals and their migration patterns. Humans thus shifted from a nomadic existence to a sedentary, stable one, a shift that led to population growth and to the need to coordinate that population. Gradually, tribal settlements transformed into villages, villages became towns, and some towns became true metropolises of the ancient world<sup>9</sup>.

The first such metropolises emerged in Mesopotamia, a historical region located within the boundaries of present-day Iraq, bordered to the northeast by the Zagros Mountains and to the southeast by the Syrian Desert. Bearing its name since antiquity, the land "between two rivers"<sup>10</sup>, also known as the "Horn of Plenty," the "Fertile Crescent," and the "Cradle of Civilization," was the witness to the birth of human civilization and of civilized art.

The most renowned inhabitants of this region were likely the Sumerians. Among many other accomplishments, the Sumerians are recognized as the inventors of the plow, the wheel, cities, and not least, cuneiform writing.<sup>11</sup> If a tradition of painting on wood or canvas existed, it has long since disintegrated; thus, the only forms of illustration from this period must be observed through a more flexible interpretation of its definition. Although we traditionally consider illustration to be a two-dimensional artistic form, we will push the boundaries of this concept so as to include relief sculpture as well.

Possessing a distinct elegance and unique archaeological significance, the Warka Vase (ca. 3200 BCE) is one of the oldest legacies of illustration and civilized narrative art. "Carved from a single block of alabaster, this massive

---

<sup>8</sup> Maxime Aubert, Rustan Lebe, Agug A. Oktaviana *et al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 443.

<sup>9</sup> Andrew G. Dixon (2018). *Art: The Definitive Visual Guide*, new edition, Dorling Kindersley, London, p. 42.

<sup>10</sup> Marilyn Stokstad, Michael Cothren, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>11</sup> Andrew G. Dixon, *op. cit.*, pp. 42-43.

vase is decorated with three relief-sculpted registers”<sup>12</sup> that encircle the object’s entire circumference.

The first register, beginning at the base, illustrates a sequence of plants and animals in an alternating rhythm, while the second register depicts a series of men bearing offerings. The third and most intriguing register depicts what appears to be one of the oldest visual records of an ancient ritual.<sup>13</sup> “This scene is believed to be a reinterpretation of the ritual marriage between Inanna and Dumuzi, her consort – an office taken on by the priest-king – which took place during the New Year’s festivities to ensure the fertility of crops, animals, and people, and therefore the continuity of Uruk.”<sup>14</sup>

The idea of immortalizing aspects of a kingdom’s history through art is not limited to the region of Mesopotamia. While the city-states were emerging between the Tigris and the Euphrates, another civilization was taking root, this time on the banks of the Nile River. Egyptian civilization developed in the fertile Nile Valley, whose annual floods created rich soils favorable for agriculture, in contrast to the arid desert surrounding them. The art of ancient Egypt changed very little over the centuries. The Predynastic Period (ca. 5000-3000 BCE) left behind a variety of ceramic vessels and occasional small-scale sculptures and murals, but a true treasure of illustration materialized with the rise of the first dynastic pharaohs.<sup>15</sup>

In comparison with Mesopotamian leaders, the rulers of the Egyptian people appear to have taken a much greater interest in recording historical events in artistic form. The Narmer Palette (ca. 3000 BCE) is an object of art and history that represents one of the earliest examples in this sense, namely the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt. The pharaoh, shown at one point wearing the white crown of Upper Egypt and later the red crown of Lower Egypt, symbolizes his victory over Lower Egypt and the unification of the two realms under his rule.<sup>16</sup>

The Mesopotamians have the distinction of being considered the inventors of writing, but the Egyptians were the first to popularize the combination of words and illustrations within the same compositional space. Beginning with tomb walls and later adapting mural art to portable surfaces such as coffins and papyrus, the Egyptians were those who invented book illustration before actual

---

<sup>12</sup> Larry Ball, Marshall Becker, Andrew Fitzpatrick (2009). *10,000 Years of Art*, Phaidon Press Limited, London, p. 6

<sup>13</sup> Senta German (2022). *Warka Vase*, Smarthistory accessed on 25 August 2022, <https://smarthistory.org/warka-vase/>

<sup>14</sup> Marilyn Stokstad, Michael Cothren, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>15</sup> The First Egyptian Dynasty originated around 3000 BCE, beginning with Pharaoh Menes (Narmer). The final dynasty, the Ptolemaic Dynasty, ended in 30 BCE with Queen Cleopatra VII. Source: Marilyn Stokstad; Michael Cothren, *Art History*, fifth edition, Pearson Education, Boston, 2013, pp. 50, 79; \*\*\* *ART*, Parragon, Bath, 2011, p. 55; Andrew G. Dixon, *Art: The Definitive Visual Guide*, new edition, Dorling Kindersley, London, 2018, pp. 46-47.

<sup>16</sup> Marilyn Stokstad, Michael Cothren, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-53.

books existed. Their ritual texts written on sheets of papyrus were almost always accompanied by vibrant illustrations. We observe this most often in the “Book of the Dead.” Although the Book of the Dead is not a book in the true sense of the word, but rather a collection of individual texts transcribed onto papyrus, it fulfilled the role of an illustrated guide, and setting aside its unconventional physical format, we may consider Egyptian papyri to be the precursors of illustrated books.

The first illustrated books, bound in the form of a codex as we know it today, appeared in Western Europe beginning around 400 CE, most often addressing subjects from scripture and Christian teachings. These were called “illuminated manuscripts” and represented, for a thousand years, Europe’s most valuable artistic achievement in book form. Illuminated manuscripts bore this name due to the gold and silver leaf or ink with which the text and illustrations were decorated. When rays of light passed over the enriched pages, the text and images reflected the light, shining with a truly divine appearance.<sup>17</sup>

The illustrations of illuminated manuscripts can be divided into three main groups: decorated initials, borders, and miniatures.<sup>18</sup> The richly decorated initial letters represent perhaps the most characteristic element of these manuscripts and were used to mark the beginning of a paragraph. Their stylistic range varied from an oversized capital letter highlighted with one or two colors to complex artistic works richly colored and adorned with gold or silver. Sometimes the decoration of these initials was taken to the extreme, becoming almost a miniature in its own right.<sup>19</sup> Beautifully decorated borders were also a typical element of illuminated volumes. The motifs most often found in their ornamentation were spirals, lace-like forms, geometric patterns, Celtic knots, as well as floral and animal representations. The miniatures, however, were the most interesting ornaments of the pages. Sometimes framed, other times free, miniatures often depicted religious scenes related to the text or important figures such as the Evangelists or the Virgin Mary.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Susan Doyle; Jaleen Grove; Whitney Sherman (2019). *History of Illustration*, Bloomsbury Publishing Inc, New York, pp. 9-10; Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, *illuminated manuscript*, Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed on 2 August 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/art/illuminated-manuscript>

<sup>18</sup> \*\*\*, ART, Parragon, Bath, 2011, p. 171.

<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth MacDonald, *Lighting the way - How illuminated initials guided medieval readers through books*, Europeana, accessed on 3 August 2022, <https://www.europeana.eu/en/stories/lighting-the-way-how-illuminated-initials-guided-medieval-readers-through-books>; Philip B. Meggs, Alston W. Purvis (2012), *Meggs' History of Graphic Design*, fifth edition, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, pp. 48-49.

<sup>20</sup> *ILLUMINATED Manuscripts in the making*, The Fitzwilliam Museum, accessed on 2 August 2022, <https://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/illuminated/manuscript/discover>; *Illuminated borders*, The Morgan Library & Museum, accessed on 2 August 2022, <https://www.themorgan.org/genres/illuminated-borders>

In the beginning, illuminated manuscripts were made entirely by monks in abbey workshops, but as these books became more popular, the centers of production began to move to large cities, where artisans executed and sold them. Although illuminated manuscripts indeed became commercial, few could afford them. The time and materials required to produce a single copy determined a cost beyond the reach of an ordinary person, so only the upper class of society enjoyed these luxury items.<sup>21</sup>

Until the eleventh century, paper was not used in Europe because it was considered un-Christian by the medieval Church – an invention of pagans from the East – so manuscripts were made using parchment. Vellum, the parchment obtained from calfskin, was preferred by European monks and thus became the standard support for a long period.<sup>22</sup> The inks used were likewise the result of a complex process of grinding, mixing, and boiling organic and mineral materials, either local or imported. Often, the monks themselves were responsible for processing and preparing all necessary materials. They also handled every artistic aspect of the books. The creation process of a book began with cutting the vellum to the desired size. After preparing the support, lines were drawn for the text, and empty spaces were left where the illustration was to be created. Joshua J. Mark explains the continuation of this process:<sup>23</sup>

“The text was written first in black ink (or gold or another appropriate color for the subject) between the ruled lines on the page and then would be given to another monk to proofread for errors; this second monk – or perhaps a third – would then add titles in blue or red ink and then pass the page on to the illuminator who would add images, color, and the requisite gold illumination.”<sup>24</sup>

The most beautiful works were created between the seventh and sixteenth centuries CE, when the essential elements of illustration were mastered and perfected. Among these works, the best known is the Book of Kells, created around 800 CE and currently preserved at Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland.<sup>25</sup> The book, written in Latin, contains the four Gospels of the New Testament along

---

<sup>21</sup> Susan Doyle, Jaleen Grove, Whitney Sherman, *op. cit.*

<sup>22</sup> Regarded as un-Christian by the medieval Church, paper and papyrus were avoided, their use discouraged due to associations with pagan writers of the past and with “infidels” from the East. Paper was not widely accepted in Europe until the 11th century. Source: Joshua J. Mark, *Illuminated Manuscripts*, *World History Encyclopedia*, accessed on 2 August 2022, [https://www.worldhistory.org/Illuminated\\_Manuscripts/](https://www.worldhistory.org/Illuminated_Manuscripts/)

<sup>23</sup> Joshua J. Mark (2022). *Illuminated Manuscripts*, *World History Encyclopedia*, accessed on 2 August, [https://www.worldhistory.org/Illuminated\\_Manuscripts/](https://www.worldhistory.org/Illuminated_Manuscripts/); Andrew G. Dixon (2018). *Art: The Definitive Visual Guide*, new edition, Dorling Kindersley, London, p. 71.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem.*

with several other texts laid out across 680 vellum pages.<sup>26</sup> The illustrations display a wide range of colors. To obtain the pigments, various materials were used, both organic and inorganic. Among the organic sources were extracts from plants such as *Chrozophora tinctoria*, indigofera (the indigo plant), and dyer's woad, along with insects such as *Kermococcus vermilio*. The inorganic pigments included orpiment (arsenic sulfide), copper oxide, and even precious lapis lazuli.<sup>27</sup> The book's popularity is due in large part to the extravagance with which it was decorated, making it possibly the most admired Gospel of insular creation. Never completed and with an origin still unconfirmed, the book is nonetheless believed to have been begun on the island of Iona in Scotland and later moved to Kells, Ireland, by monks fleeing Viking raids.<sup>28</sup>

By the beginning of the 1200s CE, most of the production of illuminated manuscripts had moved to developing urban centers, where universities exerted influence and the commercial market was centralized. The relocation of production did not greatly alter the process by which manuscripts were created, but it had a significant influence on the subjects addressed. No longer under the exclusive control of monasteries, manuscripts began to be used for secular topics as well. Religious literature was thus no longer the sole subject explored. Books continued to be produced manually until the invention of the printing press around 1440.<sup>29</sup> After the advent of printing, the effort invested in producing a manually illuminated manuscript gradually became unjustifiable, and this art form came to be executed less frequently, more often commissioned by wealthy clients than out of necessity. For a short period, a hybrid form of books continued to exist: the text was printed using the printing press, while the illustration and illumination were executed by hand, resulting in a product that combined the clarity and symmetry of printed text with the opulence of hand-made illustrations.<sup>30</sup>

The first printed books, from the invention of the printing press until 1501, are known as *incunabula*.<sup>31</sup> These books were of two types: printed books, produced using the printing press with movable type, and books made using the woodcut technique, which involved printing from a wooden block in which both the text and illustration were carved. Books printed using woodcut enjoyed a

---

<sup>26</sup> Martha Kearney (2022). *The Book of Kells: Medieval Europe's greatest treasure?*, BBC, accessed on 25 August, <https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20160425-the-book-of-kells-medieval-europes-greatest-treasure>

<sup>27</sup> Bernard Meehan (1994). *The Book of Kells*, Thames and Hudson, London, p. 88.

<sup>28</sup> Andrew G. Dixon (2018). *Art: The Definitive Visual Guide*, new edition, Dorling Kindersley, London, p. 71.

<sup>29</sup> Susan Doyle, Jaleen Grove, Whitney Sherman, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 19.

<sup>31</sup> Incunabulum, from the Latin incunabulum ("cradle," "origin," "source"), refers to the meaning of "a book at its inception". Source: Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, *Incunabula*, Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed on 28 August 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/incunabula>

brief period of popularity in the second half of the fifteenth century, during the transition from manuscript to printed codex, and were contemporary with the latter. The woodcut process involved carving the text and image in reverse on a wooden plate, which was then inked. The image was transferred onto a sheet of paper placed over the wooden block. Subsequently, the illustration could be hand-colored to enhance its aesthetic value. The disadvantage of this technique was that only one side of a sheet could be printed, as the pressure of the transfer process created a relief on the back, preventing a second impression.<sup>32</sup>

The woodcut process was quickly surpassed in efficiency by Gutenberg's movable-type printing press – a revolutionary invention that brought extraordinary advances in the field of printing. Woodcut artists began to lose dominance over the craft of printing, seeing typography as a serious threat to their livelihood, which led to tension between the two occupational branches. The solution to this conflict came from Albrecht Pfister, a printer from Bamberg, who had the inspired idea of combining the expertise of both trades in a single object.<sup>33</sup>

Woodcut artists therefore specialized in the art of illustration, providing printers with the images necessary for the production of illustrated volumes, which complemented the printed text. This marked the beginning of a flourishing period for both typography and woodcut, and as a result, Augsburg and Ulm, two important German centers specializing in woodcut prints for playing cards and religious publications, became hubs for the production of book illustrations.<sup>34</sup>

With the Typographic Revolution, it became possible to print thousands of pages in a single day. This caused the price of books to drop sufficiently to become accessible to an increasing number of people. Literacy was also on the rise, and the demand for books continued to grow.<sup>35</sup> The introduction of movable-type printing was, however, a difficult process that had to be carried out cautiously in a market previously dominated by scribes. Like the printing process itself, the book industry did not advance uniformly, being influenced by local practices and aesthetic trends.<sup>36</sup>

Printed books did not immediately replace manuscripts and woodblock-printed books. It is self-evident that, once removed from the ecclesiastical context, books were no longer produced by a single, isolated group of workers. Whereas initially monks oversaw the entire process of creating a book, from preparing parchment to binding, later these tasks were divided among specialized guilds. Wood blocks remained, for a considerable period, the only

---

<sup>32</sup> Susan Doyle, Jaleen Grove, Whitney Sherman, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>33</sup> Philip B. Meggs; Alston W. Purvis (2012). *Meggs' History of Graphic Design*, fifth edition, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, p. 81.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>35</sup> Marilyn Stokstad, Michael Cothren, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

<sup>36</sup> Susan Doyle, Jaleen Grove, Whitney Sherman, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

method for printing multiple copies of an illustration. Even after the development of other printmaking techniques, woodcut continued to be widely used for book illustration. By the end of the eighteenth century, wood engraving emerged – a technique that reproduced illustrations more easily and precisely than woodcut and was more enduring to repeated printings.<sup>37</sup>

By the mid-sixteenth century, another technique for printing illustrations gained prominence in Europe – intaglio printing.<sup>38</sup> Engraving, whether chemical (using acids) or mechanical (using chisels), enabled the creation of clearer and more detailed works, and the need to transfer images using a different press led to the normalization of using an entire page specifically for illustration.<sup>39</sup>

The progress of book illustration and typography in general continued relatively steadily. Presses were improved, fonts were added, printing firms employed a greater number of presses, and illustrations increased in quantity, quality, and diversity. Specific genres of books, such as scientific works, children's books, and atlases, began to be richly illustrated, while novels were occasionally enhanced with illustrations. Luxury copies of geography and natural history books, as well as some children's books, were printed and later hand-colored. Intaglio printing can thus be considered the last major typographic optimization before the Industrial Revolution.

Later, the lithographic process, discovered by Alois Senefelder in 1796, made a remarkable contribution both in terms of the greater flexibility of the technique itself, which allowed illustrations to be created directly on stone, and from the perspective of an expanding industrial economy. Lithography provided a simpler, faster, and more efficient way to produce a large number of prints. Subsequent developments of this technique allowed the incorporation of a wide range of colors.<sup>40</sup> Chromolithography brought a significant boost to the color printing industry. German printers were pioneers in the development of color lithography, and in 1837, the Frenchman Godefroy Engelmann patented chromolithography, a process involving the sequential printing of separate colors from different plates. The image was usually completed with a black plate that outlined the details. Printing illustrations using wood, metal, or stone continued to evolve, and these methods remained the primary means of visual expression within book covers until the digital revolution of the mid-twentieth century.<sup>41</sup>

With the development of electronic technology, typography has changed drastically. Today, the visual organization of a commercially intended book is carried out almost exclusively digitally. Thanks to new printing technologies,

---

<sup>37</sup> Martin Sailsbury (2004). *Illustrating Children's Books*, Barron's Educational Series Inc., New York, p. 9.

<sup>38</sup> Susan Doyle, Jaleen Grove, Whitney Sherman, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 186.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 179.

<sup>41</sup> Peter Hunt (ed.) (2004). *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*, Vol. I, second edition, Routledge, London, p. 329.

the creation of a book illustration is no longer limited by mass reproduction capacity; the illustrator is constrained only by their imagination. Techniques that seemed impossible to transpose to pages fifty years ago have now become routine practices, as long as the artistic object can be scanned, photographed, or digitally created.

To briefly conclude this article, we can observe that book illustration has undergone a considerable series of changes and improvements to reach the form we know today. Countless artists, most of them unknown, laid the foundations of this genre, which is highly relevant to contemporary society, and even now, new techniques and expressive possibilities continue to emerge, revolutionizing illustration and art year after year.

## Conclusion

Book illustration emerged as a fundamental form of visual narration long before the appearance of the book itself. Its evolution reflects both technological innovation and enduring human needs for storytelling and visual communication, which continue to shape illustration in the digital age.

## Bibliography

\*\*\* (2011). *ART*, Parragon, Bath.

Aubert, Maxime, Lebe, Rustan, Oktaviana, A. Agug *et al.* (2019). *Earliest hunting scene in prehistoric art*, in “Nature”, No. 576, pp. 442-445, DOI:10.1038/s41586-019-1806-y

Ball, Larry, Becker, Marshall, Fitzpatrick Andrew (2009). *10,000 Years of Art*, Phaidon Press Limited, London.

Dixon, Andrew G. (2018). *Art: The Definitive Visual Guide*, new edition, Dorling Kindersley, London.

Doyle, Susan; Grove, Jaleen; Sherman, Whitney (2019). *History of Illustration*, Bloomsbury Publishing Inc, New York.

Hunt, Peter (2004). *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children’s Literature*, Vol. I, second edition, Routledge, New York, 2004.

Meehan, Bernard (1994). *The Book of Kells*, Thames and Hudson, London.

Meggs, B. Philip, Purvis B., Alston (2006). *Meggs’ History of Graphic Design*, fifth edition, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken.

Melot, Michel (1984). *The art of Illustration*, Rizzoli International Publications Inc., New York.

Sailsbury, Martin (2004). *Illustrating Children’s Books*, Barron's Educational Series Inc., New York.

Stokstad, Marilyn, Cothren, Michael (2013). *Art History*, V<sup>th</sup> edition, Pearson Education, Boston.

### Webography

Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, “illuminated manuscript”, Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed on 2 August 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/art/illuminated-manuscript>

Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, "Incunabula", Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed on 28 August 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/incunabula>

German, Senta (2022). “Warka Vase”, Smarthistory, accessed on 25 August, <https://smarthistory.org/warka-vase/>

“Illuminated borders”, The Morgan Library & Museum, accessed on 2 August 2022, <https://www.themorgan.org/genres/illuminated-borders>

“Illuminated Manuscripts in the making”, The Fitzwilliam Museum, accessed on 2 August 2022, <https://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/illuminated/manuscript/discover>

Kearney, Martha (2022). “The Book of Kells: Medieval Europe’s greatest treasure?”, BBC, accessed on 25 August, <https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20160425-the-book-of-kells-medieval-europes-greatest-treasure>

MacDonald, Elizabeth (2022). *Lighting the way - How illuminated initials guided medieval readers through books*, “Europeana”, accessed on 3 August, <https://www.europeana.eu/en/stories/lighting-the-way-how-illuminated-initials-guided-medieval-readers-through-books>

Mark, J. Joshua (2022). *Illuminated Manuscripts*, “World History Encyclopedia”, accessed on 2 August, [https://www.worldhistory.org/Illuminated\\_Manuscripts/](https://www.worldhistory.org/Illuminated_Manuscripts/)