

# Middle Ages

**Cathedral hill at the core**

**An age of kings?**

**How texts are produced**

**Manuscripts in Basel**

**Cover recycling**

**A great Basel poet**

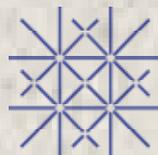
**Legal history**

**Golden altar frontal**

**New family law**

**How vision works**

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### Perspectives on an era

The Middle Ages – that long period in European history between 500 and 1500 AD – are generally seen as extending from the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West to the first discoveries of new continents and distant regions by European seafarers. A large part of the population, the vast majority of them peasants and, later, tradesmen, spent their lives under the rule of a small elite. Many people eked out a simple existence, at the mercy of nature's whims. Little is known about them. We know far more about members of the courts and the clergy, who left behind large amounts of evidence in the form of town planning, architecture, art and culture.

Medieval monks, scholars and researchers built on the intellectual legacy of antiquity. In the late Middle Ages, in particular, they began to observe natural phenomena with greater precision, to come up with discoveries and inventions, and to construct new systems of thought. Europe's first universities were established – including, in the 15th century, the University of Basel, Switzerland's oldest. Although ostensibly the period has been over for centuries, it continues to live on today – not just visibly, in our townscapes, transport routes and some buildings, but in people's heads, as the medieval revival in popular culture, for example, makes clear.

The main focus of this issue of UNI NOVA is this long, supposedly 'dark' period, about which we are constantly learning more and making many discoveries – not least through the application of new approaches and modern scholarly methods. The articles dealing with the subject here, which began life as an interdisciplinary lecture series at the University of Basel organized by the 'Basel medieval studies' workshop ([www.mediaevistik.unibas.ch](http://www.mediaevistik.unibas.ch)), look at the Middle Ages from a variety of perspectives, drawing on philosophy, theology, archaeology, history, languages and literature, cultural history, and the history of law. At the same time, there is an emphasis on topics of local relevance. I hope you enjoy the issue!

Christoph Dieffenbacher, Editor UNI NOVA

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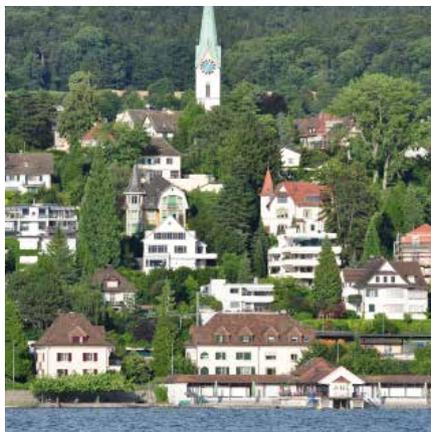
### Cover page and image sequence

The images on the cover and in the focus section of this issue are by the photographer Ursula Sprecher. They depict the public space around Basel cathedral ('Münster'); the previous building on this site – the Carolingian Haino cathedral – dated back to the beginning of the 9th century. The more recent early Romanesque construction was consecrated by Emperor Henry II in 1019. It becomes clear from the photos how the space surrounding the church set out back in the Middle Ages is used by today's population in quite a different manner.



### Wii Games for Parkinson's Sufferers

Parkinson's patients can benefit more from mobility games on a Nintendo Wii console than from a computerized training program specifically designed for their disease – and their cognitive abilities improve considerably. These findings are reported by Professor Peter Fuhr and his team at the University of Basel and University Hospital of Basel in a study of around 40 patients. About half of the test subjects participated in a specially developed computer program, while the other half played Wii mobility games such as table tennis and archery. Wii consoles have motion-sensitive remote controls and players move their entire body in front of a television screen, often competing against a virtual opponent. All test subjects were tested in five cognitive areas before and after the four-week training. When it came to concentration, the Wii sports games produced better results than the disease-specific computer training program. The research team concluded that games consoles could represent a cost-effective and entertaining medication-free addition to the conventional drug-based treatment offered for Parkinson's disease.



### Differing Tax Burdens

A study by Professor Kurt Schmidheiny and Marcus Roller from the Faculty of Business and Economics at the University of Basel has shown that due to Switzerland's federal tax system, the personal income tax burden is regressive for very high incomes. Taking the tax rates from all municipalities and cantons, they calculated the average tax burden in percentage for different income levels taking into account the uneven distribution of income groups across Swiss municipalities. In this calculation, the low rates of the municipalities with favorable taxes carried more weight for high income groups than for medium and low income groups because people on high salaries tend to live in areas with lower tax rates. This flattens out the effective tax progression of the combined cantonal and municipal tax burden. For single people and married people without children, the tax burden in percentage actually decreases once their income reaches around one million Swiss francs. This applies to the whole of Switzerland, but also to individual city regions such as the Greater Zurich Area. While tax progression also levels out for married people with children, it does not follow a regressive scale.



### Aberrant signaling pathways

The protein mTOR acts like a central controller, regulating growth and the metabolism. Deregulation of mTOR signaling promotes the development of metabolic diseases such as diabetes, obesity and cancer. Scientists led by Professor Michael Hall from the Biozentrum at the University of Basel report how aberrant mTOR signaling pathways in the liver impair not only hepatic metabolism, but also whole body physiology. They conducted research into the nutrient sensor mTORC1 in the liver and were able to show for the first time that activating this sensor in mice restricted not only the animals' hepatic metabolism, but also their body temperature and locomotor activity. On investigating the molecular mechanism, the research team established that hyperactivation of mTORC1 leads to a reduction in the amino acid glutamine, and therefore to increased levels of the stress hormone FGF21. The application of glutamine was used to reduce the level of FGF21 and thus to prevent physiological damage. Numerous tumors demonstrate a deregulated mTORC1 signal network and glutamine addiction.

# “The law should take reality as its starting point”



In recent months, ideas on ways to reform Swiss Family Law have provoked heated debates, and Basel-based law professor Ingeborg Schwenzer also has something to say on the topic. Our question to her: How should the state regulate partnership and family for the future? Interview by Christoph Dieffenbacher

**Changes to the Family Law are subject to intensive discussion in Switzerland at the moment – so why now?**

We have reached the point where we have to decide how to create a modern family law that takes into account the ways that society is changing. In this process, we need to consider how people live nowadays. I have compiled a report on the subject that has three main points: First, the state should not intervene in relationships between adults if they are capable of making their own decisions; second, the law must hold people responsible for the actual life they lived; third, it must secure the best interests of the child – in fact, this must take priority over everything.

**“From status to the real relationship” is the title of your post-doctoral ‘Habilitation’ that you completed in 1987 in the field of Family Law ...**

Due to historical developments and based on my own convictions, I came to the conclusion that marriage cannot be the single basis for Family Law. Non-marital cohabitation, which was still illegal in some cantons up until the 1990s, has increased significantly. The same is true for children born to non-married couples – this number is set to increase even further as a result of the new custody law.

**You claim that marriage should represent one of a number of possible partnership choices. Why?**

Marriage used to function as an insurance policy for the woman: If she was divorced against her will and due to no fault of her own, she could claim marital support for the rest of her life. Nowadays, most couples in Switzerland

are unmarried. A law that takes into account the diverse forms of cohabitation would also serve to protect children; statistics have shown that patchwork families are more likely to break up than traditional families. Another question is at which point a cohabiting partnership is subject to legal jurisdiction, and which support services come into play following a breakup. The danger currently is that if a non-married couple separates after twenty years, and one of them owns the house they’re living in, they can simply lock out their partner without legal consequences.

**Traditional marriage coming under scrutiny provokes an emotional response in many people, as does your call to address topics such as the ban on incest and polygamy in your report ...**

Marriage should be preserved: It is an important institution, and it allows couples to declare their partnership to society. Those who claim that the family will be destroyed under the new law have misunderstood it. The ban on incest should be more closely examined, for example in the case of adoptive siblings who are not related by blood. The ban on polygamy might also be negotiated in the long run.

**How do your suggestions compare with similar laws in other countries?**

A number of the individual points are already in practice abroad, for example the ruling of financial responsibility for non-married couples, or the awarding of parental rights to those who are not the legal parents. I have created a new concept that I believe is coherent.

Professor Ingeborg Schwenzer (\*1951) has been a tenured professor in Private Law at the University of Basel since 1989. After having graduated in Law from Freiburg im Breisgau, Geneva, and the University of California, Berkeley, she completed her doctorate in 1978 and went on to write her postdoctoral work in the field of family law. She finished the project in 1987, when she was offered a professorship in law at the University of Mainz. Her primary research interests are the Swiss Code of Obligations, trade law, and family law. She has also been active as an adjunct professor in Brisbane (Australia) and in Hong Kong (China).



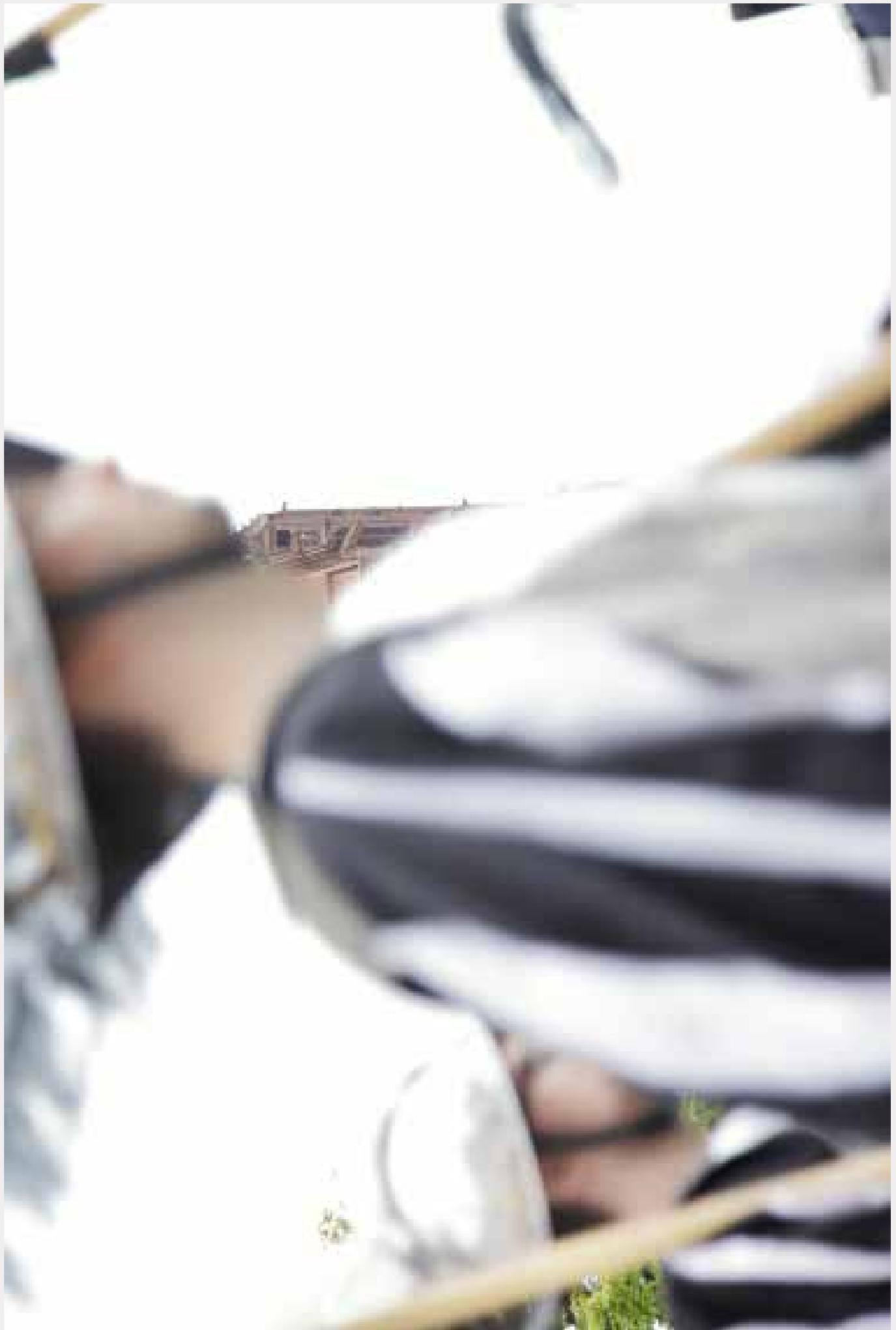














# Views of pre-medieval Basel

From the oppidum to the first cathedral: For anyone looking to reconstruct the Celtic, Roman and early medieval history of Basel, the starting point has to be archaeological discoveries such as walls and pits, along with finds like animal bones, coins and pottery vessels. Inscriptions and texts have an important – although still only complementary – role to play.

Peter-Andrew Schwarz

From written sources, we know that in the second century BC the bend in the Rhine and the southern part of the upper Rhine basin were inhabited by a Celtic population, termed Raurici by Caesar and other classical authors. Their older, unfortified settlement (known as ‘Basel gas factory’ after the former site of the gasworks) was located on what is now the Novartis campus and dates from the period 150 to 80 BC. The uniform alignment of the buildings and the presence of ditches, thought to mark plot boundaries, suggest that the settlement – which covers around 15 hectares – was laid out to a plan. One thing we can be sure of is that this large settlement, with its agricultural hinterland, anticipated a development that led to the modern city of Basel – in economic terms, too. Amphorae of wine from the Mediterranean, pottery from Bohemia and amber from the Baltic testify to the settlement’s role as a hub of long-distance Celtic trade.

## The cathedral hill as a nucleus

Around 80 BC, the focus of the settlement shifted – probably for military and political reasons (pressure from Germanic tribes) – to the cathedral hill, the *nucleus* of the later city of Basel. This spur, protected by the steep banks of the Rhine and the river Birsig, was fortified around the Rittergasse by a *muris gallicis*, a reinforced earth wall, and a ditch. We see evidence of this even today in the local topography (on the Bäumleingasse). The *oppidum* (fortified settlement) was accessed via a gateway on what is today the Rittergasse. However, hardly anything is known about the *oppidum*’s internal layout. It is also unclear whether this was one of the approximately 400 settlements burned down and abandoned by the Helvetii, Boii, Tulingi and Raurici when they left the area in 58 BC.

Following Caesar’s defeat of the Helvetii at Bibracte in 58 BC, Rome decided for strategic reasons to forge an alliance (*foedus*) with the Raurici living on the bend in the Rhine. As *foederati* of Rome, they were responsible for protecting the frontier of the *imperium Romanum*, which at that time still

ran along the Rhine. This was accompanied by the establishment of a second settlement in the region. In the summer of 44 AD, Lucius Munatius Plancus, one of Caesar’s generals, had founded the first *Colonia Raurica*; there is still some dispute about whether this was on the site of the later colony of Augusta Raurica (at Augst, in Baselland, and Kaiseraugst, in Aargau) or in the *oppidum* on the cathedral hill. One thing we can be sure of is that the cathedral hill continued to be occupied, whereas so far Augusta Raurica has yielded no finds from the time when the first colony was established. On the contrary, the current state of research even suggests that an existing Celtic settlement located within the perimeter of the later *caput coloniae* was abandoned during this period.

According to two bronze inscriptions discovered at Augusta Raurica, the second foundation of the *colonia P[aterna] M[unatia Felix] Apollinaris Augusta Emerita Raurica* – this time not just *de iure* but *de facto* – probably took place shortly after the occupation of what is now Switzerland during the so-called Alpine campaign (15 BC) by Lucius Octavius, a relative of Emperor Augustus. From this point onwards, it is likely that a Roman garrison was also stationed on the cathedral hill. It is still unclear whether this consisted of a larger unit or smaller detachments; where and how the soldiers were housed is another unresolved question.

## In the shadow of Augusta Raurica

Following the garrison’s withdrawal in the mid-first century AD, the *muris gallicis* was razed and the fortification ditch partly filled in. The Roman civilian settlement (*vicus*) moved to the area south-east of the cathedral hill. Although this *vicus sine nomine* (Ariabinnum?) had a certain economic importance, thanks to its position on an important trunk road and its quayside where the Birsig joins the Rhine, throughout the heyday of the *imperium Romanum* (from the first to the third century) it was overshadowed by the colony of Augusta Raurica 15 kilometers further



*Castrum* on the cathedral hill and *munimentum* in Kleinbasel (around 380 AD) [image: Archäologische Bodenforschung Basel-Stadt].

upstream. This enjoyed some key advantages as a location, such as its position at an important crossroads. After abandoning the upper German-Rhaetian *limes*, the Romans moved the frontier back to the rivers, which were easier to defend. From 260 onwards, the Rhine, the Danube and the Iller formed the ‘wet’ frontier between the *imperium Romanum* and the Germanic tribes (the Alemanni, the Juthungi and the Franks). The settlement on the approaches to the cathedral hill was abandoned and the strategically important cathedral hill was fortified once again (see image above).

Furthermore, in his *res gestae*, the Roman officer and historian Ammianus Marcellinus reports that in 374 AD Emperor Valentinian I (364–375) had a fortification (*munimentum*) constructed in *Basilia*. He indicates explicitly that the town acquired the name *Basilia* only after Valentinian I’s stay there, having previously been called *Robur* by the locals. According to the *Notitia Galliarum* (390–413), the *civitas Basiliensium* was significant primarily as a civilian center, by contrast to *Castrum Rauracense* (Kaiseraugst), whose importance was mainly military and ecclesiastical. Around 343/346 AD, *Iustinianus Rauricorum*, the first bishop for our area who is known by name, resided in *Castrum Rauracense*.

During the transition from late antiquity to the early Middle Ages, from the fifth century onwards, we have evidence of three peoples on the bend in the Rhine, who for the time being were still living as separate groups: Romance-

speakers (descendants of the Gallo-Roman provincial population); and Alemanni and Franks, two Germanic peoples. In the fifth and sixth centuries, the Rhine formed a linguistic and cultural boundary between the Romance-speakers living in the *castrum* on the cathedral hill and the Alemannic settlements in ‘Kleinbasel’. Later, this took on the role of a diocesan boundary, with Grossbasel forming part of the archdiocese of Besançon and Kleinbasel falling within the diocese of Constance.

#### Under Frankish rule

From the fifth to eighth century, new villages, hamlets and farmhouses were established around the *castrum* on the cathedral hill (place names ending in ‘-ingen’ such as Gundeldingen, Kleinhüningen, Binningen and Bottmingen). This ‘decentralization’ was the result of changes in political organization following the withdrawal of Roman frontier troops around 400 AD and the collapse of the provincial administration in the first half of the fifth century. Other important factors were the decline of trade and industry and the growing importance of agriculture. Construction techniques also testify to the ‘ruralization’ of society, with wood replacing stone as the preferred material for farm buildings and houses.

In 496 AD, the Frankish king and founder of the Merovingian monarchy, Clovis (466–511), subjugated the Alemanni. The area around Basel became part of the Frankish empire,



The cathedral hill around 820 AD. On the right is one of the two round towers of Haito's cathedral; on the left is a late antique stone building, probably restored (image: Archäologische Bodenforschung Basel-Stadt and Historisches Museum Basel).

which also included large parts of France and Belgium. We find archaeological evidence of the Franks' arrival in, for example, the cemetery of 'Basel-Bernerring'. The Frankish central government's restoration of the Roman trunk road to central Switzerland, through the Birs valley and across the *petra pertusa* (Pierre Pertuis pass), was a key factor in ensuring that Basel – not Augusta Raurica – became the main regional hub during the early Middle Ages. Basel's increasing economic and political importance in the first half of the seventh century is confirmed by Merovingian gold coins. These were struck by a Frankish *monetarius* (master of the mint) named *Gunso* and carry the circular inscription *Basilia fit* – made in Basel.

#### Construction of a round-tower cathedral

Between late antiquity and the reign of Charlemagne (771–814), the *lingua franca*, Latin, was gradually replaced by Alemannic dialects; the personal names that appear in documents from the Carolingian period onwards are almost exclusively 'German'. From the seventh century, Germanic immigrants founded more villages and hamlets in the surrounding area – place names ending in '-wil' such as Oberwil, Therwil and Reigoldswil. However, the names of settlements that had been founded by the Romans and continued to be inhabited by Romance-speakers, such as Muznach, Dornach and Solothurn (place names ending in '-acum'- und '-du-

*rum*') – have survived down to the present day. In the early seventh century, there is also evidence of the presence once again of high-ranking church dignitaries. Around 615 AD, a *Ragnacharius* is mentioned in a document as the *praesul* (overseer) of the churches of Augst and Basel. It is unclear whether an independent bishopric was (again) in existence at this time, as we have a reliable list of bishops only for the period from the late eighth century onwards.

Eventually, Basel's political importance (for the church) was boosted by the appointment of Haito (762–836), abbot of the monastery of Reichenau, as its bishop. Haito (also called Heito or Hetto) was a member of the Frankish Carolingian elite and a close friend and confidant of Charlemagne; he also witnessed Charlemagne's will. After taking office, Bishop Haito had a new church erected to replace the one that had existed previously, which had clearly fallen into disrepair. This is probably identical with the round-tower cathedral for which archaeological evidence survives – the predecessor of the predecessor of today's cathedral (see image above). Graves dating from between the 8th and the 12th centuries show that the cathedral hill was (also) used as a cemetery. Whether we are dealing with a number of smaller cemeteries from different periods or burial places for particular (privileged?) groups of people is still an unresolved question.

Professor Peter-Andrew Schwarz holds the Vindonissa Chair in the Department of Classics at the University of Basel.

# Medieval studies on the holodeck

The kings of the Middle Ages can be found around and about – even today. Recently, another monarch celebrated his enthronement – almost entirely behind closed doors. This has more to do with medieval history than you might initially think. It also shows why medieval history cannot put complete faith in its own cast of characters. Lucas Burkart, Jan Rüdiger

Kings clearly fall within the remit of historians of the Middle Ages. Surely there can be no dispute about that. Henry, Charles, Rudolph, Arthur and the rest of the curly-headed horsemen in their red cloaks who gallop through our children's books and feature films are medieval, after all. Of course, kings are still around – and were around before then – in Europe and other parts of the world. However, the fact is that the 'real' kings belong in the Middle Ages and that they are somehow 'more real' there than anywhere else.

## An age of kings

This explains why kings have for so long been central to medieval studies, as well as why we like to assume that the European monarchies as they have developed down to the present day represent the 'natural' continuation of medieval Christian kingship. Crowned heads such as those of England and Denmark, with a line of succession going back 1,000 years or more, fit that image wonderfully – they are medieval, right up to today.

Of course, we know full well that that isn't true. The seven European kingdoms in existence today have been shaped by the same profound changes – revolutions, coups and civil wars – as the rest of the continent, making it easy to dismantle the claims to continuity that the Danes and English (and others) love to make. Even while they take in the splendor of golden coaches and long, ermine-lined robes at the opening of Parliament, weddings or coronations, onlookers are constantly being reminded that this or that ceremony has been around for 150 years at most. Rarely have a historian and his work become part of common knowledge so quickly as Eric Hobsbawm and his *Invention of Tradition*.

Moreover, the form of government bears little relationship to the title held by the person in a state who signs the laws. As early as 1867, Walter Bagehot distinguished between the *dignified parts* of the British constitution, above all the queen, and its *efficient parts*. And taken as a whole, today's mo-

narchies seem to be more 'democratic', if anything, than the European average, although that can have little to do with the kings themselves. Monarchies are therefore no less modern than they are medieval.

## History as a place of longing

Yet there is something more to the idea of a 'king' – something immune to the arguments of political scientists and transcending the national distinctions that operate so powerfully in other spheres. Felipe and Letizia or Kate and William have the ability to touch even people with no interest in politics. There is something pre-modern about them. However, it can hardly be Weber's 'charisma', which tends rather to be the preserve of politicians from states that did not exist even 30 years ago. Perhaps it is just the word 'king', and the short cut to the Middle Ages that it promises. That is as far back as the time machine (still) goes – with medieval, you can't go wrong.

So, the medieval kings are everywhere. It would seem that the historical material for the period between 500 and 1500 is best organized around this group of a few hundred people. But they are not just people, of course!

In his study *The King's Two Bodies*, Ernst Kantorowicz described not just the wealth of symbolism generated by kingship as a legal fiction in medieval Christendom but how this served to legitimate monarchical rule by emphasizing its continuity. Not only does the king possess a mortal body, he symbolizes a 'body politic' that can never die: "Le roi est mort, vive le roi!" Sovereignty was always linked somehow to God and his apologists in this world, the theologians and clever legal scholars, who drew on the remnants of Roman law to achieve their ends.

Basing himself on a concept developed by a jurist from the Tudor period, Kantorowicz interpreted medieval kingship as political theology. In so doing, he rejected the negative view associated with the 'classical' history of political

thought, which held that really there was no political theory between Cicero and William of Ockham. Rightly, Kantorowicz argued that theology is also political theory and that the tradition of explicit discussion of the polis and the state that begins with Aristotle is just *one* way (our own) of thinking about the whole issue. This was an important contribution to the understanding of the question of ‘the West vs. the rest’, with which political anthropology had been grappling since the 1960s.

Implicitly, therefore, the medieval ages were assigned to the ‘rest’. The era has become a foreign country, alternatively dark or dreamlike, within our own culture – with the added attraction that all of it is set ‘here’, producing a thrilling interplay that sustains today’s thriving tourist industries. As such, it is again what it has mostly been since its invention as a period in the 14th century: deficient, beautiful in the neo-romantic sense, and, unlike a lot of things to do with history, reassuringly over.

#### It’s just words

Since the Middle Ages became popular once again in these terms, academics have been clustering together more and more across disciplinary boundaries in ‘Mittelalterzentren’ grouped as ‘Medieval Studies’. As a result, the intellectual approach and methodology associated with a particular discipline has been replaced by the object of study – those 1,000 years – as the main organizing principle in the field. This helps boost the kings’ status still further, as we see them everywhere, as in a hologram. Historians find that their chronicles and annals are divided up by reign and their documents are dated by regnal years, while art historians hunch over illuminated liturgical manuscripts full of political iconography; scholars with an interest in media and ritual study coronation orders, specialists in German and Romance literature read courtly novels about King Arthur, while their counterparts in Scandinavian studies read the kings’ sagas. In short, kings are so clearly everywhere that it would seem absurd to call into question their overwhelming importance for ‘the Middle Ages’.

Or would it? Let’s give it a try by asking, “Were kings relevant to people’s lives in the Middle Ages?” When, where and for whom?

The very first step brings us up short, as it forces us to ask what kings actually are. The word itself is early medieval – *cyng*, *kuning*, *künec* – for the Latin *rex*. Thus far, everything seems clear. The only thing is, haven’t we been taken in here by an effective linguistic trick? We do not know who in the post-Roman West hit on the idea of using a Germanic word that may mean ‘someone with many relatives’ or ‘someone with knowledge of (future) things’ to translate *rex* – how, that is to say, a clan chief and/or a kind of seer from the misty forests of Central Europe became linguistically identical to Romulus and all the Etruscan, Persian and other kings with

whom Rome had had dealings. But the trick was successful and is still working today, as through Latin historiography Europe became accustomed to seeing ‘kings’ everywhere (apart from in the Roman Empire itself). We call the Babylonian Hammurabi from the 18th century BC a ‘king’, just as we do Romulus, Clovis, Juan Carlos and Bhumibol of Thailand, who has been on the throne since 1946.

There was a second aspect with, perhaps, even more profound implications. The glossing of ‘king’ as *rex* turned the forest gang leader into not just a Romulus or a Pyrrhus, but a David or a Solomon – someone to whom God had entrusted the leadership of his people on earth, in anticipation of that future *regnum* whose coming is invoked ‘on earth as it is in heaven’ in the Lord’s Prayer.

#### Gang leaders and that little bit extra

This role places quite a burden on all the Aethelwolds, Pepins, Harolds, Charleses and Henrys. On the one hand, a king must perform the everyday tasks of accumulating resources – internally, by raising taxes, and externally, by waging wars of pillage – and reinvesting – by bestowing gifts, entertaining and traveling around in a tactically shrewd manner. On the other, he must embody the divine *ordo* on earth. At the point where the two intersect, he must be a *rex iustus* and strike the right balance between severity and leniency – for ‘justice’ was both the key term in medieval governance theory and, at the same time, a practical necessity if he wanted to live to see another day as king. The job description of a medieval king went something like ‘between a gang leader and the Lord’s anointed’.

The next question is, for what parts of the job was a king absolutely necessary? It can hardly have been to accumulate resources – anyone who turned up at a monastery or in a peasant village with the necessary force could manage that. More regularized forms of government like the Roman or modern state taxation systems were out of the question. Even Charlemagne – who, as a gang leader on a grand scale, certainly knew how to rake in money – had to rely on political symbolism here. For that was what was needed to be a ‘David’ – to have that little bit extra. The vast majority of people had no concrete dealings with the monarchy, for either good or ill, until at least the 13th century, not even through general taxation or the law. And it is by no means certain that they always knew who their respective kings were at any given time.

Yet for the articulate part of the medieval population – the only people whose attitudes and opinions we know about – it was imperative that there should be a ‘king’, almost regardless of who it was. Without one, the divine order of the universe set forth in human history could not be described. ‘King’ was primarily a concept; only rarely and for a few people was it part of daily life. In that respect, the kings of the early and even the high Middle Ages are not dissimilar to their dead counterparts, the saints.



Growing up with kings:  
Playmobil's 'Magdeburg Rider'  
(Picture supplied by JR).



Head in heaven, body on earth:  
Picture of Emperor Otto III enthroned, from the Liuthar Gospels (fol. 16r)  
around the year 1000 (image: Aachen cathedral treasury).

### The medieval present

When, from the 13th century onwards, external sources of revenue became insignificant in comparison with internal ones, this concept was taken over by the emerging tax regimes of England, Aragon and France. Monarchies gradually became a palpable reality, although to nowhere near the same extent as the omnipresent modern state. It is for precisely this reason that medievalists need to look beyond their own period. If we adopt a period-based approach and restrict our view of kingship to the time frame '500–1500', all we will see is the hologram: kings everywhere. In this period, which produced relatively little written or pictorial material overall and in which production of that material was limited to a narrow social and intellectual elite, the sources are so unanimous that we cannot help but appropriate their logic. To escape this vicious circle, we need to make comparisons or connections with the ancient and modern periods.

This raises the question of whether the European monarchs of today are really any different from medieval kings in terms of their function as *dignified parts*. Historians are trained to be suspicious of the vocal claims made on behalf of political systems like ethnic nationalism, socialism, democracy and the separation of powers; so why shouldn't the same apply to the Middle Ages? However, we cannot arrive at

this critical view through historical parthenogenesis; rather, it requires a comparative approach across different periods. Unless we sometimes step behind or to the side of the hologram, we will believe that what we see in history is really there.

Thus, even the protocol followed for the investiture of the Spanish king in June 2014 throws up a fundamental question for any monarchy that history needs to address – its relationship with the 'ruled', its subjects, the people. By persuading the royal family to forgo a huge ceremony with guests from the upper echelons of the European nobility, the social crisis in Spain seems to have deprived it of its last remaining function: to provide symbolic legitimacy for the handing over of power. This prompts the historian to wonder whether, even before the establishment of parliaments and democracy, the *populus* was not more influential and kings were less powerful than the sources would have us believe. Perhaps a medieval king, caught between the need to raise revenue and to embody the universal order, was not all that different from his titular successors in the third millennium.

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A full version of this article can be found at <http://dg.philhist.unibas.ch/burkart> and <http://dg.philhist.unibas.ch/ruediger>.



# From notes to text

All that now survives of most medieval academic debates is their end product, either as a book or in the stylized form of a so-called disputation. However, thanks to a case recorded at Basel University Library, we can now track in detail what happened at one such disputation and how the participants prepared for it. From this, it is clear that medieval text production was not all that different from what it is today. Florian Wöller, Ueli Zahnd

When we study the history of late medieval thought at a 21st-century university, in a way we are studying ourselves. In the period from the 13th to the 16th century, the main activities at educational institutions were thinking, teaching, and writing, as is the case today, so some medieval inventions and practices live on in our own institutions and ways of working. One very obvious survival of this kind is the university itself, of course. It is a medieval invention – in Basel’s case, the university was actually founded during the Middle Ages. Then as now, universities were centers of teaching and discussion, and then as now this teaching activity led to the writing of books.

## Unknown production processes

In contemporary academia, we see on a daily basis how essays and books come to be written. We discuss initial ideas, watch projects grow and eventually note that they have resulted in a book. Often we just check the preface quickly to see whether our colleagues have included us in the acknowledgements. We know what the book is about; we were there to witness its genesis, after all. In the case of texts written during the late Middle Ages, the situation is reversed. We read the finished product with care and attention, but we are cut off from the process that led to it. Initially, we can get a handle only on the work itself, not on the process that gave rise to it.

This is also true of a particular medieval form of debate – the disputation. Disputations were held on a regular basis – on major church feast days, for example – and formed part of the assessment process. The candidate proposed a set of propositions for debate, while a colleague of around the same age formulated opposing propositions. Both then argued against each other and tried to prove the respective opponent wrong. In the late Middle Ages, candidates often adopted the stance of an earlier great thinker, whom they sought to defend against their colleague’s objections. At the end, the outcome of the disputation was determined by a “magister”, who also judged whether the candidate had acquitted himself well

enough to pass the exam. These disputations were often the result of long periods of preparation. In many cases it would be helpful to know what those involved, as it would improve our understanding of university life and the genesis of academic works. Fortunately, there is one peculiar case whose records have survived at Basel University Library (UB). From this, we can reconstruct precisely not just what happened at a disputation but how the candidate prepared for it. The documents thus give us a vivid sense of how universities operated at the time, allowing us to peer over the shoulder of a late medieval academic.

## A disciple of Thomas Aquinas

The documents in question are part of the estate of Johannes Heynlin, who was born around 1430 in Stein, near Pforzheim, and died in 1496 in Basel. Heynlin led a fascinatingly varied life. Although firmly rooted in the practices of medieval scholasticism – he was particularly devoted to the thought of Thomas Aquinas – from 1470 he ran France’s first humanist printing house, based in Paris. He held senior administrative positions at several universities but was also a monk, withdrawing to the seclusion of Kleinbasel’s Carthusian monastery towards the end of his life.

Heynlin owes his place in the history of Basel to the leading role he played during the early years of the university (1464–1466), when he insisted on the introduction of a curriculum indebted to his great role model Thomas Aquinas. He also left his mark on the city through his position as preacher at the cathedral. Above all, however, he was a collector and lover of books; not only did he build up a personal library comprising numerous manuscripts and printed books (the contents of which would eventually pass to the university library, via Basel’s Carthusian monastery), but he was a meticulous collector of his own works and notes.

Heynlin assembled most of the records from the time of his academic activity in two volumes held at the university

library: a small-format volume (A VII 13), which includes a wide range of different documents, and a volume in somewhat larger format (A VI 12) containing mainly disputations. Since pages are arranged by format rather than chronologically or by content, pages dealing with the same event appear in both volumes.

#### On the confession of sin

Both volumes, therefore, contain texts dealing with the question of whether the confession of sin is necessary for salvation, if a sin has already been wiped away by previous repentance. Although today we may find this question disconcerting, dealing as it does with things necessary and, indeed, the obligation to take part in a religious ritual, it was one that went to the heart of late medieval piety. For believers at the time, the issue of precisely how individuals could achieve salvation was an urgent concern – just a few decades later, Martin Luther would trigger the Reformation by asking how we can conceive of a merciful God. The stance taken on the importance of confession also had very concrete implications for everyday religious practice: If repentance was enough, was there any need to go to confession at all? However, scholars were in disagreement on the issue. Unlike Thomas Aquinas, who readily conceded that repentance could take away the burden of sin, there were those such as Duns Scotus, another great scholastic theologian, who denied this was possible through repentance alone.

Heynlin's scattered notes on the question appear in two different places in the small-format volume and on 13 pages, bound together, in the large-format one. Still, reading these notes today, we are confronted with a confused picture. The handwriting of at least two theologians, besides Heynlin, appears on the pages in the large-format volume. Eight subsections can be identified in total, but not all of them revolve around the need for confession; some deal with the opposite question, the need for repentance. In the small-format volume, both the two scattered collections of notes on the confession issue and the intervening material are in Heynlin's hand, but the material is highly diverse in terms of form. Alongside pages full of disorganized notes, we find there two bigger units, divided up into subchapters, on the topic of penance.

Academics today will be familiar with this sort of jumble. Anyone who gathers up the material that went into producing an essay they have just finished will also find themselves with a disparate collection of notes, drafts and copies. One suspects that in Heynlin's case we are dealing with a similar collection, a suspicion reinforced by three prominent references that appear in the material. One of the sections in the larger volume bears the heading *magna ordinaria*. Another section in the same volume – one of the sections that are not written by Heynlin – is headed *Petrus de Bellopont*, while the words *ex Thomae* are noted down twice in one of the two clearly subdivided units in the small-format volume.

#### Paris, fall semester of 1469/1470

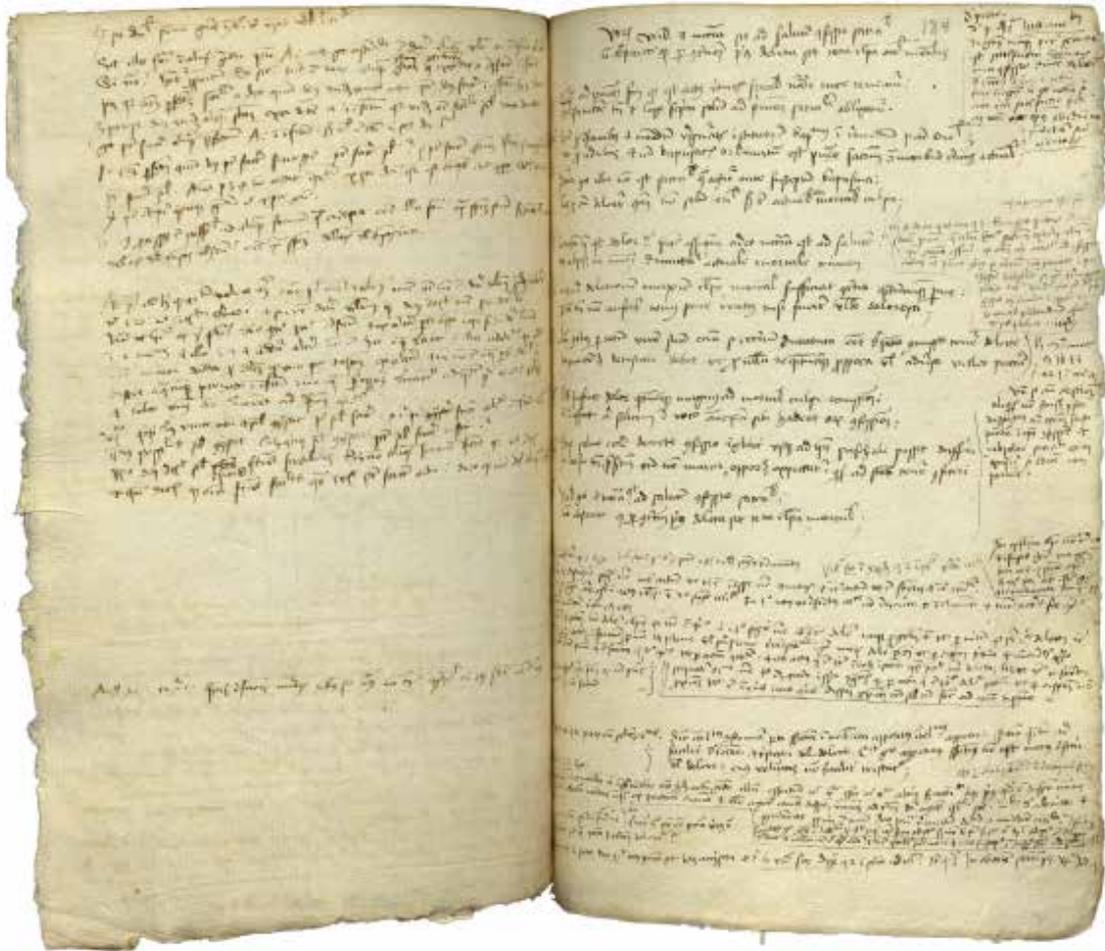
The first reference, to the *magna ordinaria*, takes us to the fall semester of 1469/1470 at the Paris faculty of theology. Heynlin was then an advanced doctoral student, a *baccalarius formatus*, having already completed a synopsis of theology in the usual form of a “commentary on the Sentences”. During Heynlin's lifetime, commentaries of this sort by all the great scholastic theologians were available, so it comes as no surprise that in his own synopsis he followed the commentary of his great role model, Thomas Aquinas, almost word for word. However, to complete his doctorate Heynlin still had to prove himself in a few disputations. One of these mandatory disputations was called the *magna ordinaria*, because it took place in regular term time, during the longer semester in the fall.

Against this backdrop, it is easy to identify the first four sections in the large-format volume as individual parts of this *magna ordinaria* – in other words, as the end product of what Heynlin was clearly preparing himself for. The first part introduces the subject of the disputation; in the second, Heynlin presents his own theses; in the third, he reproduces his opponent's arguments; and in the fourth, he refutes these counter-arguments. Thus, we have here the typical elements of a classic disputation in finished form.

But what is contained in the other four sections in the large-format volume that are bound together with this disputation? Here, the second reference provides a further clue, as Petrus de Bellopont was one of Heynlin's fellow students and a prominent defender of Duns Scotus, Thomas Aquinas's adversary. The Scotist Bellopont had already taken part in his own *magna ordinaria*, making him a suitable opponent in Heynlin's disputation. Sections 6 to 8 in the large-format volume are, in fact, nothing other than Bellopont's *magna ordinaria* – they appear under his name and are structured in the same way as Heynlin's disputation. The counter-arguments in section 7 come from a further person – namely, the opponent in Petrus's earlier disputation – accounting for why this section is written in a third hand. Conversely, it now becomes clear what section 5 is: the misplaced original of Bellopont's counter-arguments at Heynlin's disputation, reproduced by Heynlin as part 3 of his fair copy of the disputation.

#### Papers from the opposition

Clearly, then, as preparation for his disputation, Heynlin had obtained the papers from his opponent's “*magna ordinaria*”, to give him a sense of the arguments Petrus would use. We can now also categorize the texts inserted between the two sections of notes on the question of confession in the small-format volume as preparatory material of this sort. The note *ex Thomae* suggests that they include excerpts from texts by Thomas Aquinas, and one section is indeed made up of extracts from Aquinas's most important theological work,



Drafts and notes on the thesis of Heynlin's *magna ordinaria* (image: UB Basel, Sign. A VII 13, fol. 183v-184r).

the *Summa theologiae*, supplemented by passages from other works. However, the second well-structured section in the small-format volume, which also presents relevant passages from a source text, is more interesting, as these are not taken from Thomas Aquinas. Rather, they are quotes excerpted by Heynlin, the great Thomist, from texts by Thomas's adversary Duns Scotus; that is to say, texts whose contents he had to take on board if he wanted to be able to match his opponent Petrus de Bellopontre.

From this scattered material, we can reconstruct how Heynlin prepared for his great disputation and what it resulted in. Knowing who his opponent would be, Heynlin not only got hold of Petrus's *magna ordinaria* but also took on the thinker who served as his main inspiration. Heynlin was so pleased by the results that he even went to the trouble of making a fair copy of the whole disputation. There is much in his approach that the modern reader will find familiar, from his strategic preparation to his delight at the finished work and disorganized filing of his research material. It would seem that the way in which academics go about producing texts has not changed fundamentally.

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# Medieval manuscripts in the University Library

The vast majority of medieval manuscripts in Basel University Library were written later than the earthquake of 1356 – that is to say, in the late 14th and, especially, the 15th century. Unsurprisingly, the collection is dominated by theological works, which comprise two thirds of the total. A quarter can be assigned to the liberal arts, while law and medicine account for the rest. There are around 350 volumes containing works in German and 90 containing works in Greek, but the majority – almost exactly three quarters of the total – are written in Latin. Ueli Dill

On February 22, 1536, Bonifacius Amerbach, the rector of the University of Basel, and Theodor Brand, the senior guild master, discussed a plan to erect a dedicated building for the university's library. Like most library construction or renovation schemes, the project was subject to delays, reaching completion only in 1559. The result was the construction of a two-storey building below the old university on the Rheinsprung, with workspaces on the first floor and a storage area in the basement. This housed not just the book collection built up during the century since the university's establishment but also the much more extensive libraries, relatively speaking, of monasteries dissolved in the course of the Reformation.

## A safe haven

For 30 years, this material had been left in its original locations, unused, neglected, and poorly protected; much of it had also been lost. With the opening of the university library in 1559, the surviving volumes (with certain exceptions) were moved to this relatively safe haven; a second wave of transfers followed in 1590. The largest collections preserved in this way, consisting of manuscripts and what we would today class as early printed books, came from the Carthusian monastery (2,100 volumes, including around 450 manuscripts), the Dominican monastery (600 volumes, including around 500 manuscripts), the cathedral chapter (100 manuscripts), and the collegiate chapter of St Leonhard (300 volumes, including around 40 manuscripts). Together, they contain about 1,200 manuscripts – a good two thirds of the current total.

Later, more medieval manuscripts were added as part of two large collections from the Amerbach cabinet (1661) and the Faesch museum. The fate of a set of manuscripts from the monastery at Fulda serves as a special case. These manuscripts, dating from the 8th to 10th centuries, were acquired by the Petri printing house in order to produce an edition (which was never published) of the complete works of Isidore of Seville. Following the firm's bankruptcy, they became part of

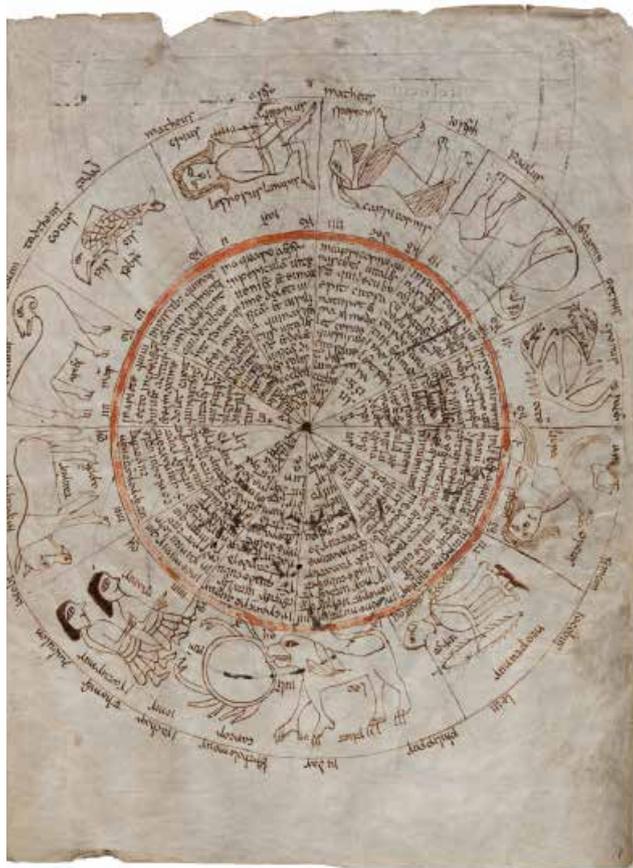
the Faesch family library, which passed to the university library in 1823. In this way, the university library accumulated a total of around 1,750 medieval manuscripts – the largest such collection in Switzerland today by some measure.

Following the turmoil of the partition of the old canton of Basel in 1833, the University Library became an even safer haven. The university's assets were awarded to the new canton of Basel City and declared an inalienable possession by the University Act of 1836. For centuries, therefore, Basel has made an important contribution to preserving humanity's written cultural heritage. It has also saved a whole series of so-called *codices unici* from destruction, meaning that today Basel possesses the only surviving manuscripts of these works. They include the Roman historian Velleius Paterculus's universal history, as well as works by Hincmar of Reims and the Greek scholar Eustathios of Thessalonica.

## An impressive Greek collection

Basel was unusual in possessing a very large collection of Greek manuscripts, which is always mentioned in descriptions of the library. In his *Epitome historiae Basiliensis* of 1577, for example, Christian Wurstisen notes, "The university library is well stocked with new and old books, as well as manuscripts and books in Greek". Around 60 of the Greek manuscripts come from the Dominican monastery, to which they were left by the Croat Ivan Stojković, himself a Dominican. Stojković had bought them up on the instructions of the Council of Basel while serving as the council's legate in Constantinople from 1435 to 1437.

For several decades they lay in Basel unused, but later they played a key role in the spread of knowledge of Greek north of the Alps and the development of printing in Basel during its golden age. In 1516, Erasmus of Rotterdam used them for his first edition of the Greek text of the New Testament; many other Greek and Latin manuscripts later served as the basis for works published by Basel's printers. We can assume



Composite manuscript from the monastery of Fulda (8th–9th century) containing works by Isidore of Seville, Fulda's oldest library catalog, the so-called Basel Prescriptions, in Old High German, and an astronomical-computistical picture cycle (image: F III 15a, fol. 23r).

that seeing them held in such high esteem by printers and scholars motivated the authorities of the University Library to include them in its collections.

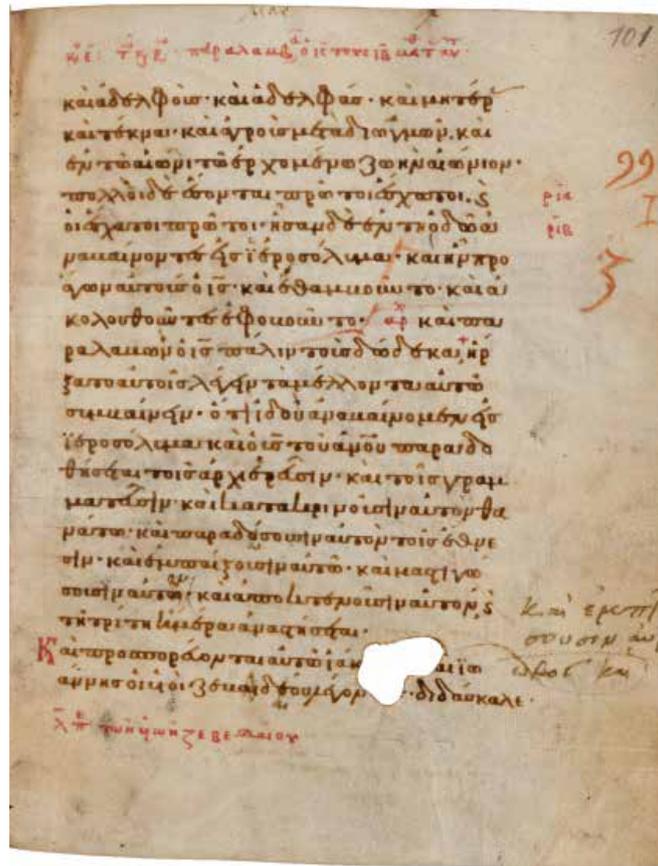
This is clear from the example of Stojković: The Council of Basel (1431–1449), which also acted as huge European book market, played an important role in building up the stock of the city's monastic libraries. The monasteries not only produced books themselves, but also purchased them or received them as gifts. Often delegates to the council made such donations in an effort to stimulate intellectual life in Basel, which was considered rather backward. The work of the council itself is well documented in the current manuscript collection: through transcripts of its proceedings, manuscripts of delegates' speeches and, above all, the conciliar history of Juan de Segovia, which was presented to the city by the author as a gift along with four other manuscripts.

#### From monasteries and monks

Other manuscripts came from monasteries with links to those in the city. Thus, the Carthusian monastery obtained an illustrated edition in several volumes of Nicholas of Lyra's commentary on the Bible from its sister house in Freiburg.

However, the most important source was the monks' private libraries. In two cases, these provide a detailed picture of their owners' lives and scholarship. Albert Löffler from Rheinfelden (1416/17–1462) left 33 volumes in his own hand to his Dominican monastery. And when Jacob Louber, the penultimate prior of the Carthusian house, entered the monastery in 1477, he brought with him 42 volumes, half of them wholly or partly handwritten. Today, they are an important source for academic teaching at Basel University, then in the early phase of its development.

The most famous private library is that of the theologian and humanist Johannes Heynlin. After a successful career in Paris and Basel, Heynlin retired to the Basel Carthusian monastery in 1487, together with nearly 300 volumes – around 50 of them manuscripts – designed as collector's editions (see page 21 ff.). Although almost no trace remains of actual scriptoriums in Basel, the monasteries were clearly centers of writing. One impressive example is the Bible in four volumes produced by the Carthusian Heinrich Vullenhoe, a keen scribe. The completion dates for the three surviving volumes – 1435, 1443 and 1445 – show that Vullenhoe spent more than ten years on this work.



A 12th-century manuscript of the four Gospels in Greek, with corrections by Erasmus of Rotterdam and printer's notes (image: AN IV 1, fol. 101r).

The most extensive, best-attested and best-preserved library is that of the Carthusians. Not only do nine-tenths of the original holdings survive, we also have two catalogs, a loans register, and a librarian's guide. In fact, there were four libraries: the *bibliotheca antiqua*, which housed the manuscripts and older printed books; the *bibliotheca nova*, containing more recent printed material; the choir library, made up of liturgical texts; and the lay library. This housed books in German for use by the community's lay brethren, including the many translations by one of its own members, Ludwig Moser. The loans register records around 500 loans between 1482 and 1528 – to professors and students, clerics, printers, schoolteachers, and friends of community members. The librarian's manual provides a detailed description of how books are to be acquired, bound, catalogued, supplied with an ownership mark and table of contents, shelved, and lent out. It also sets out in full the tasks to be performed to ensure that stock is checked and kept clean.

#### Preserving and opening up the collection

Today, the Department of Manuscripts and Early Printed Books continues to work hard to preserve and open up its

manuscript collection. In recent years, all documents have been cleaned and packed into specially made cardboard covers. The descriptions and catalogs produced over the course of the last century, only parts of which were available in published form, are being updated and made accessible through the *HAN online catalog* for manuscripts, archival records and estate papers. More and more manuscripts can be consulted in digital form on the online platforms *e-codices.ch* (for the Middle Ages) and *e-manuscripta.ch* (for the modern period). The aim is not just to safeguard the rich manuscript heritage of medieval Basel for as long as possible, but also to facilitate and encourage its use by scholars.

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# From Troy to Scandinavia – Old Norse topographies

In recent years, popular culture has been rediscovering Norse mythology. This colorful world has been passed down to us mainly via written sources such as the *Poetic Edda* and the *Prose Edda*, preserved in medieval manuscripts. With their help, we can work out what the topographies described in the Scandinavian myths looked like. Lukas Rösl

Blockbuster movies such as “Marvel’s *The Avengers*” and Hollywood’s two “Thor” movies, based on the Marvel comics of the same name, portray not just the mythological characters themselves but their surroundings. But how do we know about the world of the Norse gods that is portrayed in such detail in these comics and films? Apart from a few schematic illustrations of mythological scenes on Scandinavian picture stones, the Old Norse myths have come down to us mainly in literary form. The two most important works, written in Old Icelandic in the second half of the 13th century and preserved in several medieval manuscripts, are known today as the *Poetic Edda* and the *Prose Edda*.

The *Poetic Edda* is an anonymous collection of songs made up of both Scandinavian myths about the gods and Common Germanic heroic songs that form part of the same corpus of material as the Middle High German *Song of the Nibelungs*. The *Prose Edda*, on the other hand, is a mythographic and poetological text. It was probably designed to teach prospective skalds – the court poets of medieval Scandinavia – the stories about the world of the Norse gods that were essential to mastering their complex art, so that they could use them in their poems. The *Prose Edda* also quotes stanzas from the *Poetic Edda* at various points and fashions a unified mythology from its verses, which are often very obscure. A substantial part of the *Prose Edda* describes not only the creation and lives of the gods and a few humans, but numerous topographical structures that appear, change, expand or vanish, only to collapse again in the end.

## Gods on the move

Following Genesis, the prologue to the *Prose Edda* tells of the creation of the world by an all-powerful God. It describes how, after the world has been purified by the Flood and human beings have once again forgotten God’s name, Odin and his companions leave Troy for northern Europe, in response to a prophecy that they will be venerated there as gods. By

tracing the Norse pantheon back to people from the city of Troy, the text – which was written down more than 200 years after the Christianization of Iceland – was able to evade the charge of glorifying the pagan gods.

At the end of their journey, the migrants from Troy settle in Scandinavia and are venerated there as supernatural, divine beings, known collectively as the Aesir. The wise Swedish King Gylfi wants to discover the source of the divine power attributed to the Aesir, so he travels to their castle disguised as an old man. There he is tricked by three Aesir kings into imagining that he is standing in a great hall while he asks them about the creation and history of the world, and the lives and deeds of the Aesir.

## Creation from the primordial giant

First, Gylfi wants to know whom the Aesir kings consider to be the greatest of all the gods. They respond with a description of the All-father, who made heaven and earth and everything in them. Following the same narrative that appears at the beginning of the prologue to the *Prose Edda* – which recalls the creation story in Genesis – they also tell Gylfi about the immortality of the soul and the division of the next world into heaven and hell. This cosmogony, which bears a clear Christian stamp, is implicitly rejected by Gylfi when he asks where the All-father resided before creating this dualistic world. In response, the three kings tell him that the All-father lived with the frost giants.

Having referred to a time and a world from before the creation they have just described, the Aesir kings are forced to outline a new cosmogony. Gylfi learns that in the beginning there were only two regions, a hot one in the south and an icy one in the north, divided by the *Ginnungagap*, a yawning abyss. The interaction between ice and heat in this empty space produced dew drops; these formed the primordial giant Ymir, who gave rise to further giants. According to the genealogy related here, a giantess and another unspecified

being had three sons, one of whom was named Odin. Odin and his two brothers killed Ymir and used his body to create the world. Ymir's blood produced the sea, his skin became the earth, his bones became mountains and the top of his skull formed the dome of the sky.

The land, which was bounded on all sides by sea, was protected from the hostile giants, who lived along the shoreline, by a rampart called Midgard, consisting of Ymir's eyebrows. In the center of this new world, Odin – who in the three kings' story is retrospectively equated with the All-father – and the Aesir erected a castle, which they called Asgard. According to the kings, this Asgard was modeled on the old Asgard, which they identify with Troy.

#### Mirrored spaces

Even in this short account by the three Aesir kings, we can identify some of the narratological techniques used to create topographies for the Eddic myths in the *Prose Edda*. Two principles – the mirroring of known topographies and their dynamic transformation through adaptation to new narratives – are deployed to particularly good effect. Mirroring involves picking up a topographical structure introduced previously in the *Prose Edda* and adapting it to a new spatial narrative. We see this technique at work in the creation story from the prologue, which is itself based on the start of Genesis and is subsequently taken up by the Aesir when presenting Gylfi with their first cosmogony.

The all-powerful God who is introduced as the creator of the world in the prologue is replaced in the Aesir kings' tale by the figure of the All-father, whereas the process of creation itself mirrors that described in the prologue. However, this mirrored cosmogony fails to stand up to Gylfi's critical questions and has to be replaced by a new narrative. Only with the story of Ymir and of how Odin and his brothers formed the world from the primordial giant do we arrive at an independent Eddic cosmogony. It takes Gylfi's question to prompt the Aesir to relate this new creation story, in which Ymir becomes the primordial matter and the medium from which the world is created.

#### Narrative worlds as fictions

The dialogical narrative mode in the *Prose Edda* produces a dynamic that allows the Aesir continually to reshape the topographies they describe in the Eddic myths and to adapt them to Gylfi's critical questions. Thus, the prologue describes a world created by God, which in the three Aesir kings' version becomes one fashioned by the All-father, which in turn has to give way to a world formed from the body of Ymir. In their account of the Eddic world, ancient Troy – the original home city of the Aesir according to the prologue – becomes the model for Asgard and therefore part of the topography of Norse mythology. As mentioned above, the cosmographies set out in the *Prose Edda* and the topogra-

phies they produce within this mythical world are presented to Gylfi – and, at the same time, to the text's audience – within the framework of a hallucination. The illusory character of this narrative space, in which the three Aesir kings are forced to come up with answers to Gylfi's questions, serves to qualify their narrative. Every statement about the lives of the Norse gods and the world they inhabit that is made in this bogus hall is therefore part of a stage-managed deception by the three kings. At the same time, however, it is Gylfi's questions that steer the narrative on to the topographies of the Eddic myths. The formation of an independent Eddic world comes about only because he challenges the story he is initially told about creation by the All-father.

This dynamic, triggered by Gylfi's rejection of the cosmogony with which he is first presented, is carried forward by his subsequent questions and forces the three Aesir kings to continue coming up with new stories, until the questioner is satisfied with what he has heard. It is thus only in the course of the narrative that the worlds described by the Aesir kings and the topographies portrayed in them are created.

Even these two narratological principles of mirroring and dynamic transformation that we see exemplified in the *Prose Edda* show just how difficult it is to derive a unified or static topography from the Eddic myths. Tracing these mythological stories, recast as literature, back to the world view of people in pre-Christian Scandinavia is an even harder task. However, the dynamic quality of the Eddic world and the ease with which its topographies can be adapted to new narratives – which in the *Prose Edda* is demanded by the narrative itself – leaves ample scope for new forms of representation, such as the films and comics mentioned above.

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# Recycling: Music manuscripts as book covers

The Basel-Stadt State Archive houses hundreds of account ledgers bound in medieval music manuscripts. These parchment covers with musical notation come from liturgical songbooks that were used as scrap paper following the Reformation to protect the books against wear and tear. Matteo Nanni

Quite simply, these archive materials demonstrate the reuse of found materials – or recycling, a principle with which we are all familiar. Documents whose contents were no longer required were reused for their tangible value in a manner far removed from their original purpose. What is their relationship with history, these books covered in musical parchment? What is preserved, what is destroyed, what is ignored, and what is prized? What do these objects teach us about the musical and cultural history of Basel in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period? Their materials alone invite us to reconsider the rich network of relationships between the history of music, religion, and culture.

## Tax registers from former monasteries

The volumes bound with choral fragments are ledgers from the 16th and 17th century that contain the accounts of manorial systems and descriptions of economic conditions. These are known as “rent-rolls”, the name given to tax registers that were kept by state inspectors (asset administrators) who monitored the former monastery estates. Rent-rolls are pragmatic registers that document the economic and administrative status of the former monasteries in chronological order.

These are objects made from a variety of natural, processed substances: parchment and leather on the outside; cardboard, paper and fibers on the inside. Parchment is a particularly resistant and elastic material that offers long-lasting protection and prevents damage to the spine and edges of the book. It is made from processed animal skin and – particularly on the porous grain side – has a soft, tactile quality considered advantageous for rent-rolls, which were subject to intensive use. Some of the Basel rent-rolls were produced based on the rules of the highly professional art of bookbinding, while in other cases the tax registers were simply stitched and given a parchment cover.

The objects have a highly charged history all of their own as handwritten liturgical pages from the Middle Ages that

were first bound into songbooks, then cut out, and transformed into covers for tax books. Later, these were stored in archives and are now presented to us as *historical testimonies* as they emerge from the archive.

## Changing and reassessing value

From a musicology perspective, these archives provide a broad area for philological investigation and systematic study. In the last few decades – mainly due to the contribution of musicologist Martin Staehelin, who came from Basel – research has focused on the fragmentary and scattered tradition of medieval music manuscripts. Based on the pioneering work conducted by Albert Bruckner, former head of the State Archive, in Basel on the manuscript tradition, in 1995 musicologist Frank Labhardt completed a groundbreaking (and sadly as yet unpublished) work on the choral fragments in the State Archive. In addition to the philological identification and cataloguing of all fragments with musical notation – a total of 813 dating from the 11th to 15th centuries – Labhardt provides a very important initial reconstruction of connected songbooks.

These objects also invite us to think about the value given to things and how this changes throughout the course of history. These medieval manuscripts, once the bearers of sacrosanct verses, were reused to protect books due to their robust materials and thus present us with a history of reassessments and shifts in value. The liturgical value, an intangible quality expressed in songs of prayer, was replaced during the Reformation by the tangible value of the parchment as a natural substance. This enriched tangible value can be seen in the parchment’s role as protector of other economic values recorded in rent-rolls.

In a subsequent step, the economic value was then superseded by the historic value of these objects as archival documents. And, finally, they are now valued as exhibition pieces, transforming them into expressive *historical testimonies* – a



Account ledgers with parchment covers displaying different notations.  
 Basel State Archive, Domstift OO 2, 1629/30; Maria Magdalena LL 1,  
 1634; Klosterarchiv Klingental GG 1, Stadtcorpora, 1633/34;  
 Klosterarchiv Klingental GG 2, Landcorpora, 1660/61; Spital-Archiv F 4,  
 1692; Almosen D 6, 1592/93 (image: Daniel Spehr).

history comprising an unresolvable dialectic between saving and destroying, between tangible and intangible values. In the midst of this dialectic, these archive materials paint a unique picture of the cultural history of Basel and Europe between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

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# A great Basel poet: Konrad von Würzburg

The tales of Perceval's quest for the Grail and the love of Tristan and Isolde are firmly embedded in cultural memory. These stories acquired their definitive literary form in the high Middle Ages, in the work of poets such as Wolfram von Eschenbach and Gottfried von Strassburg. Equally famous at the time was a Basler, Konrad von Würzburg. Over the past few decades, the complex body of work that he left behind has become a focus of research; recently it has been attracting increasing interest from medievalists in Basel itself. Gert Hübner, Seraina Plotke, Stefan Rosmer

Basel's most important writer is unknown in the city. There is no writers' museum, memorial plaque or street name to remind us of him; even people with an interest in literature have not heard of him or his works. We are talking about Konrad von Würzburg who lived in Basel in the second half of the 13th century and wrote many of his works here. As with most medieval writers, the 'von Würzburg' affixed to his name was not a mark of noble status but a reference to his place of origin. His name was *Cuonrât* and he came from Würzburg – and that is how he referred to himself.

## Aristocratic patrons in Basel

Although Konrad was born in Würzburg between 1220 and 1230, from the 1260s he must have been based in the Upper Rhine region, as in his works he names patrons living in Basel. The verse romance *Partonopier und Meliur* was written for Peter Schaler, a mayor of Basel, while another verse romance, the *Trojanerkrieg*, was financed by Dietrich an dem Orte, who as cathedral cantor held one of the highest offices in the diocese. In his legends of the saints, too, Konrad refers to aristocratic patrons: the cathedral canon Liutold von Röteln, the city councilor Johannes von Arguel, Heinrich Iselin and Johannes von Bermeswil.

Konrad is also mentioned in three non-literary sources. First, in the *Annals of Colmar*, compiled by an unknown Dominican friar between 1266 and 1306, the entry for the period 8 to 22 October 1287 reads: "Obiit Cuonradus de Wirciburch, in Theutonico multorum bonorum dictaminum compilator" (Konrad von Würzburg died; he was the compiler of many good poems in the German language). This is a remarkable piece of information, as no other surviving Latin chronicle from the 13th century or earlier mentions the death of a poet writing in German. The second reference is in a Basel document from 1295, on the settlement of a legal dispute over a house in the Spiegelgasse (now the Augustinergasse); this is said to have been situated next door to the house formerly

belonging to Konrad von Würzburg ("magistri Cuonradi de Wirzeburg"). Third, the cathedral's obituary books record that Konrad provided for a mass to be celebrated on 31st August each year for the repose of the soul of himself, his wife and their two daughters. According to this entry, the family was buried in the chapel of St. Mary Magdalene in the cathedral cloisters.

In German Studies circles, Konrad is often described as a professional poet. This is true in the sense that he was paid for writing, which probably took up a significant amount of his time. However, it is unlikely that writing alone would have secured him a house on the cathedral hill and a grave in a cathedral chapel. He must, therefore, have had another profession; his place of residence suggests a link to the prince-bishopric. Given the location of his house and grave, together with his ability to attract clients from the city's social and political elite, the immigrant Konrad von Würzburg could be described as a prime example of successful integration.

## Praise from his fellow writers

To categorize Konrad as a successful immigrant is to apply modern standards, which can be misleading. Seen in this light, the claim that he is Basel's most important poet is a double-edged sword, as such accolades are always linked to value judgments on the part of those bestowing them. There was, however, no doubt about Konrad's status during his lifetime. That is clear not just from the striking reference to Konrad in the *Annals of Colmar* but from the testimony of his fellow poets. Hermann Damen and Rumelant von Sachsen in central and northern Germany, far away from his sphere of activity in Basel, class him as one of the best living lyric poets. The lyric poet Frauenlob – the most celebrated literary figure around 1300 – dedicated a eulogy to him in which it is said that art itself died with Konrad.

What sets Konrad apart from his contemporaries is the sheer range of his output, a great deal of which has survived.

He wrote verse romances, legends of the saints, shorter verse novellas, a long poem in praise of the Virgin Mary, a description of a tournament, *Minnelieder* (courtly love songs) and *Sangsprüche* (short didactic poems). This places him firmly in the tradition of courtly poetry that became established in the Provençal-, French- and German-speaking lands during the 12th century. For a long time medieval scholars regarded him as an epigone, but more recent work in the field has recognized just how exceptional he was, endorsing the view of contemporaries and subsequent tradition. Among medievalists in Basel, too, there is now an increasing focus on Konrad's works, as the following examples show.

#### The Trojanerkrieg – a courtly romance with Greco-Roman roots

The *Trojanerkrieg* is Konrad's most ambitious work. The story of the war waged by the Greeks against Troy was well known in Western Europe during the Middle Ages, largely thanks to two late-antique Latin prose narratives. Homer's *Iliad*, by contrast, was known mainly from a short Latin summary dating from the 1st century AD. The French poet Benoît de Sainte-Maure used these sources as the models for his courtly romance *Roman de Troie*, written around 1165. At around 30,000 lines, the *Roman* is considerably longer than the works on which it was based, largely because the author invented many new details.

In the 1280s, Konrad made use of Benoît's work, integrating into his own text references to the Troy story from Virgil and Ovid. With the help of these additional sources, he was able, in particular, to reconstruct precisely the chain of events leading to the war. Like Benoît, he also embellished his text with much material of his own invention – concerning the love affair between Paris and Helen that triggered off the war, for example. A primary focus of research in Basel has thus been the relationship between poetic invention and the truth claim that is central to literary narrative during the 12th and 13th centuries. To gain a proper understanding of the characteristics of medieval narrative, we need to link this practice – which is not unique to Konrad – to rhetoric and to historical conceptions of truth and reality.

#### Partonopier und Meliur – a romance of love and adventure

Medievalists in Basel are preparing a new edition of *Partonopier und Meliur*, which will include the first translation of the work into modern German. As well as providing fertile ground for research, this tale of love and adventure, running to around 22,000 lines, is well worth reading for its own sake. The poem describes how Partonopier, the son of a count, gets lost while hunting and finds himself in a splendid but seemingly deserted city. There he embarks on an affair with an invisible woman, Meliur, the fairy-like daughter of the Emperor of Constantinople, who possesses magical powers. She reveals to him that he may marry her in two years' time but

is not allowed to see her before then. At first Partonopier devotes himself to the war against the pagans, but then, urged on by the archbishop, he breaks the taboo on seeing Meliur. Having lost her, he has to undergo a series of trials to win back his beloved. In his work, Konrad deals with a wide range of contemporary cultural issues, two of which are briefly considered here:

- The action of the piece is set within the cultural triangle of Christian West, Orthodox Christian Byzantium, and the Muslim East, which played the defining role in a Europe shaped by the crusades. Here literature enters into a dialogue with real historical events. As Stephen Greenblatt would put it, the text "negotiates" cultural relations between Europe and the East by using particular configurations and patterns of behavior to play out different modes of relationship and to redefine lifeworld situations in relation to one another. The fantastic trials the hero undergoes in foreign lands are thus reflections on present events, reflecting the writer's perception not just of foreign cultures but of his own.
- Konrad's work experiments with the reordering of gender relations by picking up the narrative pattern of the fairy story and the so-called "Mahrteenehe" (generally a tabooed sexual union between a human being and a magical creature), which was very popular in the high and late Middle Ages and has been adapted by modern writers (Goethe, Tieck, Fontane, Ingeborg Bachmann) right up to the present day. This narrative model is characterized by the way in which it uses the fairy motif and the taboo confronting the human partner to explore modified forms of gender relations and to challenge socially accepted gender stereotypes. The power structures governing relations between the sexes are reconfigured, along with their scope for freedom of action, while the motif of the taboo and its breaking opens the text up to ethnological, psychoanalytical and socio-political readings that link in with questions of gender history.

#### A distinguished lyric poet

Besides the narrative texts, a corpus of Konrad's song lyrics has survived; although few in number, these are of high quality. He composed works in the two great genres of medieval German song-writing, the *Minnelied* and the *Sangspruch*. Generally, a *Sangspruch* consists of a single stanza performed as a song; it usually takes the form of pithy aphorism on a particular subject, delivered as a universal truth. The genre deals with a range of subjects covering all aspects of courtly life. These include advice for princes, praise and censure of rulers, politics of the day, general advice on how to behave at court, writers' requests for payment, complaints about avarice, religious instruction, prayer-like verses, natural history, and the conduct of men and women.

Konrad's love poetry is noteworthy for its generalized portrayal of love. Typically, the *Minnesang* is written from the perspective of a person in love, but here that is abandoned:



One of the most distinguished poets of his time:  
Konrad von Würzburg (left) with a scribe  
(image: Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg, Grosse Heidelberger  
Liederhandschrift, Cod. Pal. germ. 848, page 383r).

The focus is on love itself rather than the love pangs of a particular individual. In terms of their formal artistry – verse form, use of rhyme and poetic diction – Konrad’s love songs are quite remarkable. His *Sangsprüche* are equally well-crafted as regards their use of rhetoric, rhyme and meter, giving his lyric works a pivotal place in the history of poetic style. Of particular importance in this context is the tension between rhetoric as a historical text production theory and the practice of poetry writing.

Konrad’s *Sangsprüche* are important for the subsequent history of sung lyric poetry. Whereas the other genres of courtly poetry saw a break with tradition in the first quarter of the 14th century, the *Sangspruch* continued to be handed down and produced. In the process, the genre underwent fundamental change, eventually resulting in the urban *Meistergesang* (mastersong). The use of elaborate verse forms in combination with melody must have played a crucial role in this process. The mastersingers of the 15th and 16th centuries regarded Konrad as one of their forerunners and as a poetic authority – one of the ‘twelve old masters’.

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# Insights into the history of law

The Middle Ages played an important role in the development of European law. Central to this was the fact that two different legal systems – the ecclesiastical system of Canon law, on the one hand, and the secular system dominated by Roman law, on the other hand – operated alongside each other at the time. Felix Hafner, Patricia Kaiser

These two legal systems – the Canon law and the Roman law – are represented symbolically on the seal of the Faculty of Law at Basel University (founded in 1460), which depicts the Pope and the Emperor. After studying both systems of law, graduates received the title *licentiatius utriusque iuris* and on completing their dissertation are awarded the title of doctor *utriusque iuris*. We still find traces of this dualist approach. Even today it is said that someone studying law is reading “Jura” – in German “Rechte” or “Rechtswissenschaften” – all plural.

Of course, these two legal systems had their roots not in the Middle Ages but in the ancient world. As the name suggests, Roman law was an achievement of the Romans, while Canon law originated in the structures of the early Christian church. However, both systems reached their peak during the Middle Ages.

## The evolution of Roman law

The year 529 was a decisive turning-point in the development of Roman law. It was then that the Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian issued four books of laws and statutes – dubbed the *Corpus iuris civilis* only in the 16th century – that primarily codified Roman private law. The most important of these books, the so-called Digest (from the Latin “Digesta”, meaning “ordered excerpts”) or *Pandects* (from ancient Greek “Pandektai”, meaning “all-inclusive”) – was a systematic compilation of a vast number of legal cases, with accompanying commentaries by Roman jurists.

In the Germanic territories, Roman law mutated into what is known as vulgar law after the collapse of the Western Roman Empire. This was no longer based on the sophisticated jurisprudence of the Roman lawyers (for example, regarding the distinction between possession and ownership); in codes such as the Frankish *Lex Ribuaria*, from the 7th century, it was heavily infiltrated by elements of Germanic law. Roman law managed to survive only within the church. This turned

out to be particularly important for the later development of Canon law – the *Lex Ribuaria* itself states that the church is governed by Roman law (*ecclesia vivit lege Romana*). Otherwise, Roman law was consigned to oblivion for a long time. The dominant influence was instead German tribal law influenced by customary law.

In the 11th century, medieval law began to move in a different direction, following the rediscovery of the *Digest* by Italian jurists. This was the start of a longer process, known as the reception of Roman law, which was of huge significance for legal history. In the northern Italian cities, law schools were established at which Roman law was taught. In this respect, Bologna was of fundamental importance, as their jurists – known as glossators – produced annotations on the Roman legal texts. These law schools formed the core of one of the world’s oldest universities – the University of Bologna, founded in the 12th century. From the start, therefore, the appearance of universities was closely linked to the establishment of schools and faculties of law. Through their subsequent work as practitioners, the lawyers trained at these universities contributed to the development in continental Europe of a “*ius commune*”, influenced by Roman law, alongside traditional local customary law.

## The beginnings of a modern legal system

The 12th century saw parallel developments in ecclesiastical law, again centered on Bologna. Here, the dominant contribution came from the monk Gratian, who taught Canon law at Bologna’s School of Law. He was the author of the so-called *Decretum Gratiani*, a collection of papal decrees and acts of church councils and synods. Gratian managed to resolve the contradictions between some of these texts; for this reason, he gave his work the title *Concordia discordantium canonum* (Harmony of discordant rules). In the 16th century, it was combined with other texts in a work comprising six books and published as the *Corpus iuris canonici*.

Canon law was not confined to questions of church governance. Much of it also dealt with legal matters that are now subject to secular law, such as matrimonial and contract law. In addition, it was not restricted to private law, also covering norms of administrative law, in its organizational provisions, and criminal law, in its procedural law. Famously, in a development whose impact continues to be felt today, the 11th and 12th centuries saw the formalization of the inquisitorial process. Instead of relying on private actions and trials by ordeal, like the traditional accusatorial procedure under customary law, it required the authorities to initiate proceedings and gather evidence. In this way, the church created an autonomous legal order during the high Middle Ages; in it we can even glimpse the first signs of a modern Western legal system.

The church hierarchy and administration may have been steeped in the law, but it would be a mistake to equate this with the establishment of a modern constitutional state governed by the rule of law and guaranteeing the freedoms of individuals. Medieval Canon law was a long way from achieving this. Nevertheless, the idea to which it gave rise – that political power should be bound by the law – had profound consequences for the state, too. Here, the example of England's *Magna Carta* (1215) comes to mind. This required the English king to seek the agreement of a committee of his barons before raising taxes and prohibited him from imprisoning free men and members of the nobility without judicial or legal sanction.

Although the rights guaranteed by *Magna Carta* were limited to feudal lords, today it is regarded as an important milestone in the history of fundamental and human rights. In this connection, it is worth noting that England did not adopt Roman law; instead, its legal system was heavily influenced by Canon law.

### Securing the "Landfrieden"

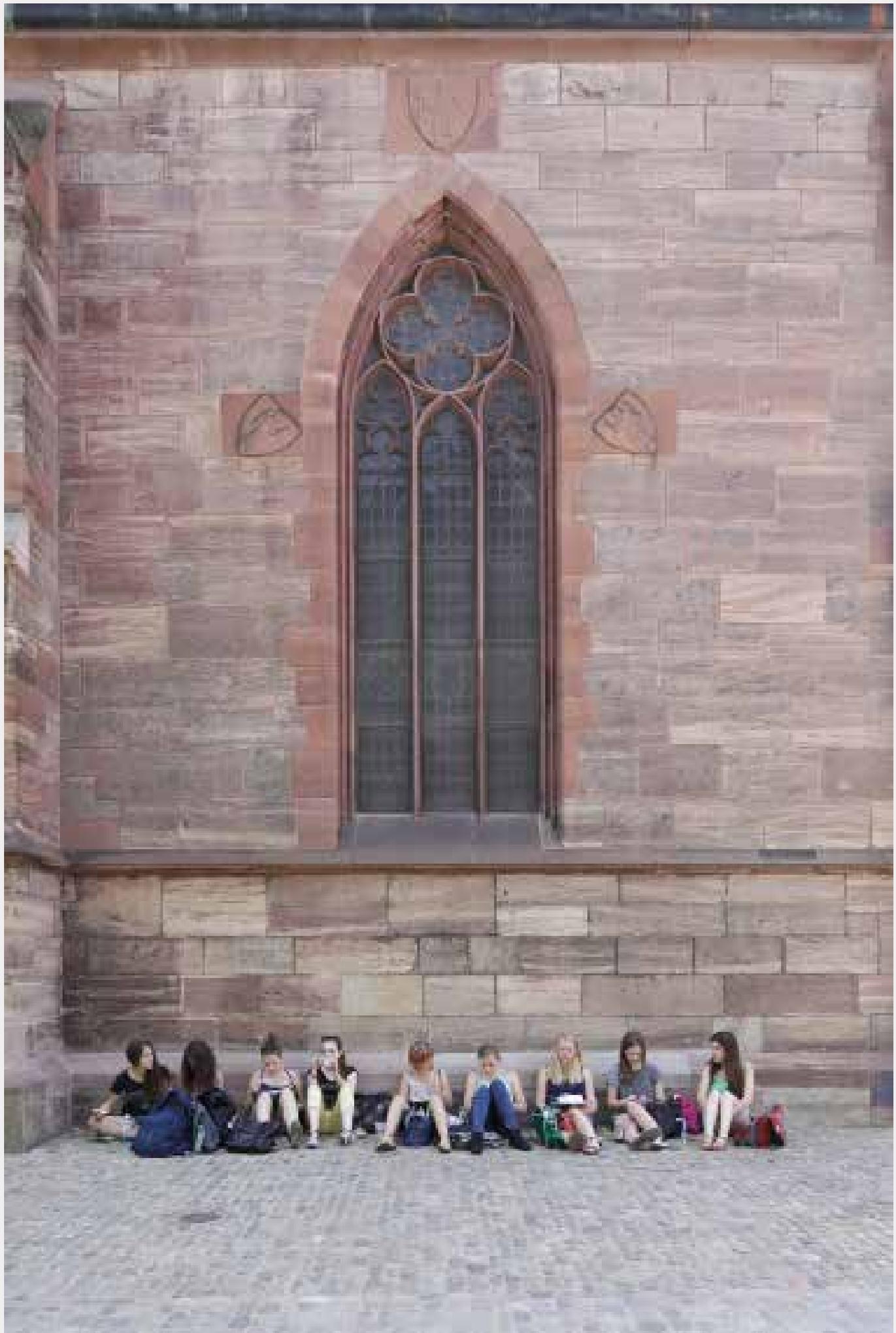
Turning to the area that makes up modern Switzerland, we find that the Confederation had its genesis in the late Middle Ages. The various confederacies established at that time, not only in today's central Switzerland but also in other parts of Europe, were based on treaties or charters resembling treaties. Those affecting the areas that make up modern Switzerland were later termed "Bundesbriefe" (federal charters). The network of alliances established during these dangerous times, when the feudal system prevalent within the Holy Roman Empire was showing signs of falling apart, was aimed primarily at securing the "Landfrieden", neither placing legal constraints on the exercise of political power, nor guaranteeing the freedoms of individuals.

Although initially during the Middle Ages, the Confederation were open to influences from Roman law, later they adopted a skeptical stance, as the following anecdote illustrates: In the 16th or 17th century, a doctor of law from Constance argued a case before the high court in Frauenfeld on the ba-

sis of Roman law. However, this was not appreciated by the court: "Wir Eidgenossen fragen nicht nach dem Bartele oder Baldele und anderen Doctoren; wir haben sonderbare [eigständige] Landgebräuche und Rechte. N[R]aus mit Euch Doctor!" ("We Confederates don't care about Bartele ('Barty') or Baldele ('Baldy') and other authorities; we have our own customs and laws. Away with you, doctor!") By Bartele and Baldele, the court meant Bartolus de Saxoferrato and Baldus de Ubaldis, who served as professors of law at Italian universities during the 13th century. They were not only known as "post-glossators" but also as "commentators" – they not only glossed the Roman legal texts but also wrote commentaries on them.

At the University of Basel, Bartolus in particular was ever-present, as it was said that no one could be a lawyer without being a "Bartolist" (*nemo iurista nisi Bartolista*). The accession of the university city of Basel to the Confederation in 1501, therefore, also served to strengthen the position of Roman law, as rediscovered and revised by scholars during the Middle Ages, in the areas that make up modern Switzerland.

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# The cathedral treasury's golden altar frontal

The emergence of medieval art history in Basel is closely associated with Wilhelm Wackernagel (1806–1869), Professor of German at the university from 1835. In some of his works, he explored medieval topics such as the cathedral treasury's golden altar frontal, only copies of which remain in Basel. Barbara Schellewald

If we explore the origins of medieval art history in Basel, we find that one of the leading figures was a Germanist, Wilhelm Wackernagel. Born in Berlin in 1806, Wackernagel studied in Berlin and Breslau. In 1833, he accepted a position at the Pädagogium (now a school, the Gymnasium am Münsterplatz) in Basel, shortly after securing a doctorate in Göttingen with the help of some influential friends. In Basel, the newcomer quickly proved to be a success; in 1835, he was offered a full professorship in 'German language and literature' at the university. Although Wackernagel's career path may seem unusual to us, this was not so at the time, prior to the introduction of the postdoctoral 'Habilitation' and senior academic assistantships. His ascent up the social scale was further assisted by his two marriages, to Karoline Louise Bluntschi and later to Maria Salome Sarasin. In 1837, he was made an honorary citizen of Basel. In 1841, 1855 and 1866, he held the office of rector of the university; he also served as a member of the Great Council.

## Involvement with collections

Wackernagel enjoyed an excellent reputation as a Germanist. We see this from his network of intellectual contacts; he was in regular correspondence with the brothers Grimm, Karl Simrock and others. Writing in the *Deutsche Biographie* in 1896, Edward Schröder lamented the fact that an academic of his stature had stayed confined to such a narrow sphere of influence. In fact, the universities of Munich, Vienna and Berlin had tried to lure Wackernagel away, but he had resisted these enticements and remained loyal to Basel. Although he was a philologist, Wackernagel engaged in a range of activities that attest to his keen interest in art and its history.

Besides Wackernagel's publications, his involvement with collections of 'antiquities' deserves mention in this context. There is no doubt that he was the prime mover in creating the predecessor to what is now the Historical Museum. Like that of the later Museum of Art, the collection exhibited in the

cathedral's St Nicholas chapel from 1856 (and in the council chamber from 1880) was under the institutional control of the university. At that time, art history had no university presence either in Basel or elsewhere; not until 1860 was Anton Springer appointed to the first professorship of art history, at the University of Bonn. It should therefore come as no surprise that for a substantial period (1853–1866) Wackernagel was responsible for the collection later subsumed into the Museum of Art. In any case, it is clear that over the years he built up some expertise in the field, which was also reflected in publications.

In 1855, Wackernagel published *Die Deutsche Glasmalerei* (on "German Stained Glass"), based on two major lectures. He had first become acquainted with the subject back in the 1820s. Although his work can hardly be described as a pioneering – a comprehensive *Geschichte der Glasmalerei* ("History of Stained Glass"), by the jurist M. A. Gessert had appeared as early as 1839 – as a Germanist he was obliged to give particular attention to literary sources containing references to stained glass. Wackernagel discusses chronology and developments within the genre, as well as its producers and their status. However – and this was by no means untypical – the work was produced entirely without illustrations.

What attracted Wackernagel to the subject is also clear from his short study on Basel's medieval collection (1857), which includes an appendix featuring a series of documents of interest to him as a Germanist. In the text, he sets out the purpose of such a collection – to reflect medieval life back to us through original works or reproductions. The fact that he accords equal status to originals and copies is significant, as it provides an insight into approaches to museum design during this period, which involved setting aside a lot of space for reproductions. They filled in the gaps, as it were, in order that the full sweep of artistic development might be depicted.

Wackernagel demonstrates a sound understanding of periodization, in that he wants to see the early history of the

Middle Ages represented on an equal footing with the later phase, on the threshold of the early modern period and the Renaissance. For him, doing justice to the period's 'cultural historical significance' means ensuring that all of its phases are represented, even those for which hardly any artifacts survive in Basel. This brings him to describe an artifact that was originally a centerpiece of the cathedral treasury but was represented here only by a copy, produced at the behest of Colonel Victor Theubet: the golden altar frontal. Wackernagel devoted an entire monograph to this work.

#### A turbulent history

First, some words on the altar frontal's previous history. Measuring 1.20 m by 1.77 m, its original function was to adorn the front of the high altar in Basel cathedral on major feast days. In the center it shows Christ, flanked by three archangels and St Benedict. Portraits of the donors in miniature can be made out kneeling at Christ's feet. The Latin inscription reads in translation: "Who can compare to God as a powerful physician and blessed savior? Gentle mediator, take care of human beings." The arabesques are inset with four medallions depicting the four cardinal virtues. Following the iconoclastic riots in Basel, the panel, as with all other artifacts, was hidden away, an arrangement formalized in 1559. In 1827, the treasury was moved to the city hall. In 1833, when the city canton of Basel-Stadt was forced to cede 64 percent of its assets to the countryside canton of Basel-Landschaft, the latter took possession of the altar frontal.

What followed was determined mainly by economic interests. The historical significance of the artifact, as a separate endowment donated by Emperor Henry II and his wife Cunigunde, was completely overshadowed by its material value. When the cathedral treasury was exhibited to the public in 1834, one city councilor, Jakob Christoph Pack, noted disparagingly that all he could see was "a goldsmith's shop" and that he had no idea what it was supposed to portray. On the other hand, it made quite an impression on the grammar school pupil Jacob Burckhardt, who included a sketch of it in his booklet "Some items from the Basel cathedral treasury, drawn from memory immediately after seeing them". His interest in the subject was probably kindled by his father, *Antistes* (church president) J. Burckhardt, who is credited with a short work entitled *The golden altar frontal of Emperor Henry II, 1019*. The anonymous author of this text praises the artifact as "a landmark in the history of art" and suspects that its creator may have been a Byzantine artist from Constantinople.

The altar frontal was then put up for auction at the Schlüssel inn in Liestal. Those present included some Berlin antiquarians working on behalf of a leading art historian: Franz Theodor Kugler, professor at the Berlin Academy of Arts from 1835, one of Jacob Burckhardt's university teachers and the advisor to the King of Prussia's collection. However, Berlin decided against purchasing the panel, which was acquired by

Johann Jakob III Handmann for 9,050 francs. Some Baslers had also come up with a rescue plan. A member of the *Freiwillige Akademische Gesellschaft* (Voluntary Academic Society), Peter Vischer-Passavant, wanted to bid for the panel at the Liestal auction, but his representative, Heinrich Schreiber, chose not to compete against Handmann as he thought the latter was also seeking to acquire it for Basel.

Eventually, in 1852, the altar frontal ended up in the *Musée national du Moyen Age* (*Musée Cluny*) in Paris, where it is still held today. Prior to that it was taken on 'tour' all over Europe; its image also featured in publicity brochures in English, French and Italian produced by Colonel Victor Theubet. In 1843, for instance, the panel was exhibited in London, for Theubet had acquired the original from Handmann in 1838 and was looking for a prominent buyer.

Wackernagel was due to present his findings on the panel at the *Pädagogium's* graduation ceremony in 1857. A cast of the work was needed to make up for the loss of the original. On Theubet's instructions, a mold was taken from the original to allow casts to be made; this resulted in the production of two casts. The gilded version (see image on the right), which is now in the Historical Museum, was initially retained by Theubet and later acquired by the museum (the arrangement became permanent in 1881). The second cast, coated only in a clear glaze, was soon put on public display as part of Wackernagel's collection; currently it is housed in the *Kleines Klingental Museum*. Other partial casts ended up in various European museums.

#### Original and cast

For his study of the panel, Wackernagel went back to the second, unglazed cast. He emphasized the advantages of this approach, arguing that the cast was in fact better suited to detailed examination and analysis than the original work as there were no metal reflections to deceive the eye. The study goes well beyond a simple description of the object. In painstaking detail, Wackernagel describes the origins of the antependium as an artistic form and its material qualities; he also makes a careful attempt to define its iconographic characteristics and to identify those depicted in the donor portraits. At the auction in 1836, one image was still described as depicting a female 'Benedicta' – despite the presence of a bishop's crook and beard and the accompanying inscription – but Wackernagel rightly notes that the imperial couple had strong ties to Bamberg, where devotion to St Benedict was particularly intense. (Current research suggests that the panel was originally intended for Bamberg.)

Wackernagel also has a particular interest in possible written sources. Like the author of the earlier anonymous study, he emphasizes the importance of the small sheet of parchment attached to the panel, which gives a clear description of the panel's function and the fitting out of the high altar on particular feast days. As a philologist, he was familiar with



One of two copies in Basel:  
 The golden altar frontal from the cathedral treasury  
 (image: Basel Historical Museum, P. Portner).

the small number of sources that provide information on, for example, production processes and pictorial techniques, such as the *Schedula diversarum artium* discovered by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. He also gives due attention to the inscription. In seeking to reconstruct exactly how the cathedral's high altar may have looked, Wackernagel mulls over the possibility that it was fitted out at the sides with sandstone panels depicting the apostles or the life of St Vincent. His dating of the panel relies not just on the identification of the two donor figures as Henry II and Cunigunde but also on paleographical evidence, which he enlists in support of his arguments.

Wackernagel concludes by rejecting Kugler's report on the work, in which he had repeatedly proposed a date of around 1200, based purely on stylistic criteria. In light of arguments arising from the context of the work's donation, which made

a plausible case for dating it to the time of Henry II (around 1019), Kugler was later forced to fall back on the position that the panel was a stylistically modified copy of the original work. At first glance, Wackernagel's objection that Kugler – as opposed to the art dealers he had sent to Liestal – had never seen the original is surprising, given his own praise for the merits of the copy. However, whereas he regarded the copy as being on a par with the original, the same did not apply to the lithograph print, which he did not consider a suitable basis for an academic study. Until today, the gilded copy of the altar frontal in the Historical Museum continues to fill the significant gap left in Basel by the loss of the original.

Professor Barbara Schellewald holds the Chair in Early Art History at the University of Basel.

## Academia and family life



“It has to be your burning passion’ ...?” (“Man muss dafür glühen’ ...?” is the title of a study by Jutta Dalhoff, Head of the German Center of Excellence Women and Science. It describes how the “generally postulated need for academics to be available 100 percent of the time” can affect careers, particularly those of women. In addition to unlimited availability, boundless inner devotion to academic life is also expected – and it is assumed that the related work be given absolute priority in your life. Dalhoff also takes aim at the “general conditions of academic work from a gender equality perspective”: Namely, that fulfilling the normative ideal of the scholar presupposes a conventional ‘male’ lifestyle, which is associated with full-time employment, and with childlessness or a traditional family model. Therefore, the prevailing scientific system is – following Bourdieu’s – always gendered and gendering. It is based on a traditional division of labor within the family and thus on a specific interweaving of the professional and private that still remains largely ignored, not least by the myth of the (gender-)neutral sciences. Furthermore, fulfilling this norm requires *female* academics to adopt a lifestyle previously associated with the construct of masculinity and forces those who cannot or do not wish to live in this way to either withdraw from the university system or pursue a less successful career.

Julia Reuter’s study “Professor with Child” shows just how closely the prevailing image of the excellent, autonomous academic ascetically fixated on academic tasks is connected with a traditionally ‘male’ lifestyle. However, she also shows

how the requirements of availability, flexibility and mobility, and complete inner devotion increase as academic standards of excellence intensify. For men, limited commitment or even time away from their research is scarcely conceivable. At the same time, there is usually a stressful tension between their roles as academics and fathers. The demands of science are seen to escalate. Initially accepted as part of career progression, the blurring of the boundaries between work and life does not dissipate upon attaining a professorship. On the contrary: Now, a growing number of other tasks must be completed with increasing speed and time pressure that have little – if anything – to do with academic work. Meanwhile, research is increasingly relegated to ‘out-of-hours’ periods, late evenings and weekends, eating into family time even more.

At the same time, many people are realizing – and current studies confirm this – that the equality gap is now also starting to widen between fathers who want to spend time with their children every day and work together with their partners to manage their families and men with no children or who live in a traditional family set-up. The increasing tension between academia and family life due to the neoliberal reorganization of universities now affects not just women, but men too. It remains to be seen whether this will prove a countertrend in the long term or whether this tension will intensify in its new form. It is to be hoped that science will turn its back on the current political and economic imperatives and focus more on its genuine mission and therefore also on (self-)criticism.

Professor Andrea Maihofer (born 1953) has been Professor of Gender Studies and Director of the Center for Gender Studies at the University of Basel since 2001. She studied philosophy, German and education at Mainz, Tübingen and Frankfurt, where she completed her postdoctoral ‘Habilitation’ in sociology in 1996.

### More degree places in the Faculty of Medicine

The cantonal governments of Basel-Stadt and Basel-Landschaft have approved the intake capacities determined by the University Council for Human Medicine, Dental Medicine, Nursing Science and Sports Sciences for the 2015/2016 academic year. These capacities have been defined in consultation with other universities in Switzerland. Due to the shortage of doctors identified at a national level, student capacities in Basel have already been increased by 30% for the 2014 fall semester, which equates to 40 student places in the first academic year. This expansion will gradually continue, so that, in six years' time, a total of 240 new student places will be available. Nevertheless, numerus clausus must be maintained to safeguard the quality of the education provided and to ensure sufficient practical placements. The cantonal governments have called upon the federal government to bear some of the additional costs of education, research and innovation over the 2017–2020 funding period. Expanding the Faculty of Medicine will also strengthen medical services in the area and life sciences in the Basel region.

### Werner Siemens Foundation supports laser project

In the Department of Biomedical Engineering (Faculty of Medicine) at the University of Basel, a project is underway to develop a technology for minimally invasive bone treatment using laser beams. This collaborative effort between the Faculties of Science and Medicine aims to develop a laser

### Rosental campus for Dental Medicine and Environmental Sciences

A Zurich architectural firm has been chosen to construct a new building for the planned University Center for Dental Medicine Basel and for the Department of Environmental Sciences at the University of Basel. The project will involve designing state-of-the-art infrastructure for dental patient care, teaching and research in Basel that will form the core of the new Rosental campus. The company has developed an architectural solution that brings together the public and university dental clinics, which are currently spread across three sites in the city. The aim is to harness clinical, administrative and technical synergies. At the same time, integrating these services will promote the transfer of knowledge from research to practice and the further training and continuing education of dental practitioners.

In addition to dental medicine, over the coming years the University of Basel wishes to consolidate the Department of Environmental Sciences (which currently has several sites) at the Rosental campus, primarily by converting existing buildings. The new construction project will act as a starting point for this, encompassing seminar rooms, a lecture theater, an on-site library and a cafeteria that can be shared by the Departments of Environmental Sciences and Dental Medicine.



osteotome that will expand the range of surgery and treatment options available, including those for patients in generally poor health. This should reduce the time they spend in hospital and rehabilitation. The plan is to base the project at the innovation park in Allschwil, north-west Switzerland. The Werner Siemens Foundation, based in Zug, is donating CHF 15.2 mil-

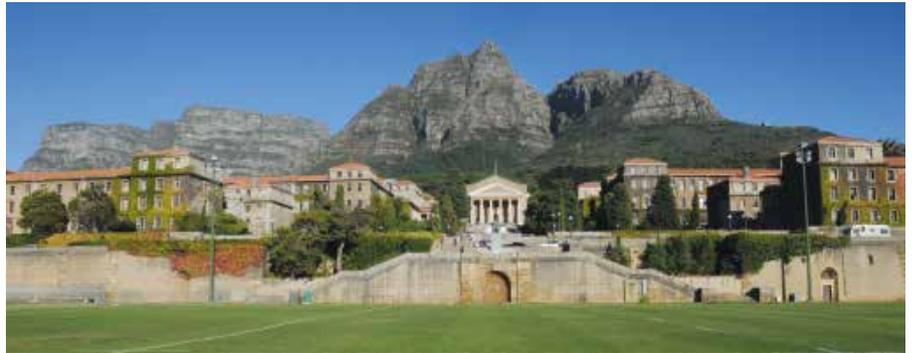
lion to this scheme over a period of five years. The project is led by Professor Hans-Florian Zeilhofer and Professor Philippe Cattin from the Department of Biomedical Engineering in the Faculty of Medicine. To implement the project, two additional professorships have been created, one for medical robotics and mechatronics and one for medical laser physics and optics.

# Urban Studies: Cooperation with Cape Town

The University of Basel is building partnerships in southern Africa with a new cooperation with the African Centre for Cities at the University of Cape Town. An interdisciplinary master's degree program in Urban and Landscape Studies is planned for which three professorships have been established.

The Urban and Landscape Studies degree program will be taught in English and will be launched at the start of the fall semester 2016. It will deal on a global level with current issues relating to urban planning, social, and territorial developments. The focus will be on Africa, applying perspectives from aesthetics, social sciences, and environmental sciences. This will strengthen competence predominantly in the Humanities at the University of Basel. "Partnerships with universities outside Europe are becoming increasingly important," explains Rector Antonio Loprieno. The new degree program is being developed in cooperation with the University of Cape Town in South Africa, which is ideally placed to deal with this subject, and is intended to have international outreach.

Founded in 1829, the University of Cape Town (UCT, image) is the oldest university in South Africa and officially ranks among the best universities on the continent. With 25,000 students, of which approximately one fifth come from abroad, the university is located under one of Table Mountain's massive peaks – Devil's Peak. As an academic unit of the UCT, the African Centre for Cities provides inter-



disciplinary research and teaching programs that focus on processes of urbanization. It promotes urban research and policy discussions in favor of a lively, democratic and sustainable urban development in the global south from an African perspective.

### New institute, three professorships

Future students of Urban and Landscape Studies will learn to conduct academic research and undertake practical tasks in a variety of areas related to urban and territorial development, such as urban planning, traffic or mobility. The degree program will draw on the high innovation potential of these areas of expertise for existing teaching and research at the University of Basel: As a result, the focal areas Visual Studies, European and Global

Studies as well as Energy and Sustainability at the university will be expanded and combined in an interdisciplinary network.

An interdisciplinary institute is planned that will report directly to the rectorate. As part of the concept, the University Council has agreed to the establishment and approval of three professorships. A professorship will be advertised for each of the following subject areas: Urban Anthropology (with a thematic focus on Africa), Urban-Rural Transformations and History and Theory of Architecture and Urbanism. The University of Basel's Strategy 2014 sets out the clear intention to develop expertise in aesthetics and environmental sciences focusing on the interface of mankind and the spatial environment.

# How the brain learns to see

Sonja Hofer's research focuses on how the brain processes visual information and how the underlying networks of neurons are altered by new experiences and learning – in short, how vision works. She communicates willingly about her work, and not just in student seminars: She publishes articles in specialist journals and has even appeared on local television talking about everyday life in the lab. Christoph Dieffenbacher

Sixth floor of the Biozentrum; the view to the south extends as far as the Jura mountains. The small office may seem somewhat makeshift to the visitor's eye: a desk with two large screens, above it a two-shelf bookcase with just a few books, a conference table and chairs, some boxes stacked in the corner. "That's all the space I need," laughs Sonja Hofer, neurobiologist and for the past one and a half years Assistant Professor at the Biozentrum. She deems it much more important that her doctoral researchers have enough space to work. And different instruments and microscopes take up quite a bit of space, too.

## 100 billion nerve cells

A white board hangs on the office wall with pen sketches of various brain regions to serve as memory aids. When discussing her research, Sonja Hofer comes across as dedicated and down-to-earth. Just occasionally she hesitates when the English term comes to mind faster than the German. When talking about her private life, the 37-year-old is a bit more reserved. She is a distinguished scientist with some prestigious scientific awards under her belt and papers in internationally renowned publications such as *Nature*, *Nature Neuroscience* and *Neuron*. And this is not the only arena in which she passes on her knowledge. She also knows how to present her work in a relaxed and understandable style, for example in interviews for the local TV station "Telebasel".

Professor Sonja Hofer has been Assistant Professor for neuronal networks at the Biozentrum, University of Basel, since 2013. Born in Munich in 1977, she studied biology at the city's technical university and received her doctorate from the Max Planck Institute of Neurobiology in Martinsried in 2006 with the highest possible commendation. Subsequently, she was a postdoctoral research fellow and then group leader at University College London. She has received several prestigious prizes and awards, most recently one of the coveted ERC Starting Grants for EUR 1.5 million from the European Research Council. She is married to Professor Thomas Mrsic-Flogel, also an associate professor at the Biozentrum; the couple were recruited to Basel as part of a dual career program.

"Basically, I keep asking myself the same questions I asked during my PhD," she explains: What happens in the brain when we see something? How exactly do these processes work in the visual part of the cerebral cortex? What happens with our nerve cells and their connections, the synapses? It's a really complex business – the human brain is made up of an estimated 100 billion nerve cells and 100 trillion synapses, and on top of that there are many different types of cells. Sonja Hofer addresses two more specific issues: The first, more basic one, is how the visual system develops, how the nerve cells are structured and linked together, and how these networks evolve over our lifetime. The second topic follows on from this: How do the connections between the nerve cells change when we learn, make new experiences or our environment changes?

We already know something about the plasticity of the brain, that is: its ability to change and adapt, the professor explains. It is possible to learn new things at any stage of life, as we retain the capacity to do so even at an advanced age. "The visual system – which takes up a relatively large part of our brain – provides us with a model to study precisely how networks of brain cells work and how they change." Thanks to research conducted over the last few years, it has become increasingly clear that vision is a very active process and not just a passive response to external stimuli. Non-sensory information such as expectations, previous knowledge

and experience play a significant role and are integrated within the visual information. “But,” says Hofer, “we still know little about how these various pieces of information are combined in the brain and how they lead to our perceptions.”

Sonja Hofer and her team work with mice, using the latest imaging techniques to monitor their brain activity. Specific cells and synapses in the animals’ brains light up in different colors and to different levels of brightness depending on whether they are activated or communicating with others. This allows the team to watch in high resolution how activity in the brain changes when the animals experience something new, for example when they react to images: “The mice need to learn to associate a particular optical stimulus with a reward,” she explains. When they do, they are given a few drops of tasty soya milk.

Complex microscopes allow the team to observe over long periods how the cells and even their synapses change when the mice learn something new. Scientists hope to learn more about the mechanisms of learning in the brain in these experiments. Although this basic research may not be directly transferable to practical applications, one long-term objective is to establish how to better counteract learning disabilities or neurological disorders such as dementia.

#### An interest in nature

So how did she, a young woman born and raised in Munich, come to study biology? Even at school she had an interest in nature, she says, in how it all works – the behavior of animals, ecological systems, but also how individual cells and their smallest building blocks (such as DNA) are structured. Later, as a student at the Technische Universität München, she specialized more and more and became increasingly interested in the brain. “If you want to understand animal behavior, you need to know more about the brain.” This was a key insight as she began to study sensory systems and the plasticity of the brain.

It was not until university that she first discovered what research actually is and what exactly it entails, she says with a smile. Things progressed after she completed her studies: Her desire to learn more took her to Martinsried near Munich, her hometown, and to the Max Planck Institute for Neurobiology, where she wrote her doctoral thesis. She then moved to University College London, one of the capital’s renowned universities, for her postdoctoral studies. In her last two years at the institution, she led a small research group before being appointed to the Biozentrum and moving to Basel together with her husband.

#### Funded together

Her husband, Thomas Mrsic-Flogel, has an office right next door. An associate professor, he has his own team that also researches neurological networks using very similar methods. The couple was appointed to the Biozentrum as part

of a dual career program, a fairly new concept that enables the University of Basel to fund highly qualified and internationally renowned scientist couples – who are often being wooed by other global research institutes – and allows them to pursue their careers together.

The couple live in Basel, a city they really enjoy, says Sonja Hofer. Much about their everyday life is easier here than in London, not least because of the short distances. It would not be entirely wrong to assume that she and her husband also spend a lot of time at home discussing their research, particularly since they also have some joint publications. When not engaged in her time-consuming scientific research, Hofer occasionally likes to switch off from work. For her, the best way to relax and unwind, but also to find new energy and inspiration is to hike in the mountains – in nature. Something she not only studies but can also enjoy.



Watching brain activities: Sonja Hofer in her laboratory (image: Andreas Zimmermann).

# Back from greener pastures

An ethnographic film about African reggae musicians returning to their homeland after achieving success in Europe is being produced as part of a dissertation project at the Universities of Basel and Aarhus. Its working title is “Back from the Greener Pastures”. Balz Andrea Alter

In Cameroon, it is not uncommon for entire families to pool their savings in order to smuggle at least one person into Europe. The youngest and strongest member is sent to “greener pastures” – that is Europe and countries like Switzerland. Yet, very few can cope with the African odyssey and the risks it entails. Many never return because they are ashamed of having achieved so little. Therefore, the few who do return and other role models (such as the film’s protagonists and research project) are of huge significance in the mediation between Africa and Europe.

“Back from the Greener Pastures” looks at European society from the perspective of African reggae musicians. Themselves role models for large sections of the mostly young population in West and Central Africa, they pave the way for younger musicians in a variety of genres. The film revolves around images of a better life that these musicians (re)produce through their art. “The young people follow the good things they see,” says the protagonist’s grandmother, getting to the heart of the matter. Since the beginnings of the colonies, these perceptions of a better life have been shaped and exploited by politicians, intellectuals, and artists.

In the global village of the third millennium, however, athletes and stars from the world of show business are increasingly shaping these images. Their multimedia presence on Web 2.0 lends politically active musicians an important role in the mediation process between the global South and North. Often, large swathes of the local population find them more credible than the incumbent presidents. It is therefore no surprise that reggae singers are currently getting involved in a wide range of political campaigns in West and Central Africa – for example, strengthening pan-African and national identity or even promoting peace. It remains to be seen

how successful this political engagement will be. However, there are many indications that the local population takes a very critical stance on such large-scale campaigns.

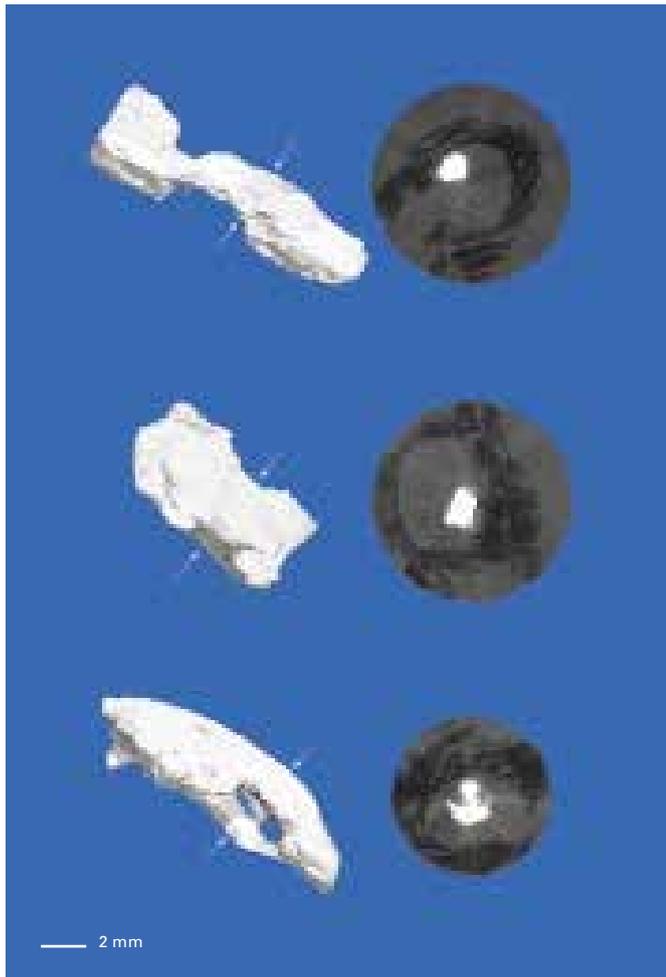
The dissertation project is being supported by a grant from the Fritz and Paul Sarasin Foundation for Cultural Research. This allows doctoral students to spend an academic year at a foreign research institution as part of their doctoral research project. The author of this project will spend the year at the “Eye and Mind Program” in Aarhus (Denmark), working through his around 100 hours of raw film material. He will be supervised by Professor Till Förster, an ethnologist in Basel, and Professor Peter I. Crawford from Aarhus University, an experienced filmmaker, author, and publisher in the field of visual anthropology.

This audio-visual research method enables the author above all to approach the topic from a sensual perspective – visually and aurally – and at the same time to reflect this process in greater depth in textual form. The project builds on his 2010 licentiate work, “Europaland”, which examines how Europe is viewed by young people in Cameroon and is also devised as a film. It won the audience prize and was named “Best University Film” at the 2011 Science et Cité film festival in Bern.

MA Balz Andrea Alter, lecturer at the University of Basel, works as a doctoral student on the project described here.

# Measuring arterial calcification precisely

Blood vessels that have been narrowed and calcified by atherosclerosis can be measured accurately to within several micrometers. These three-dimensional images form the basis for flow simulations, so that mechanosensitive nanocontainers for targeted drug release can be designed. For that purpose, Basel-led researchers in materials science have combined existing X-ray methods. Bert Müller



Multi-step procedures for the identification of the vessel walls and surrounding tissues: visualization of calcifications (white) and muscle tissue (black) [image: Biomaterials Science Center, University of Basel].

In atherosclerosis, the leading cause of death worldwide, deposits build up in the blood vessels. This leads to calcifications that appear similar to bone in radiographs, in stark contrast to the blood vessels that in turn consist of soft tissue. Previously, soft tissue right next to calcifications was either barely visible or entirely invisible in X-ray images. Research teams from three European countries have developed a method to measure the calcified and narrowed blood vessels. The data of these constrictions can be used to simulate blood flow and allow the determination of the local shear stress. This is increased at the constrictions and forms a basis for the development of mechanosensitive nanocontainers, from which vasodilating drugs release locally and specifically.

The imaging procedure combines well-known methods and is suitable not only for the measurement of calcified blood vessels, but also for any other combination of strongly and weakly X-ray absorbing materials, such as cartilage around the bone. It uses not only classical X-ray absorption, but also the X-ray phase contrast, as measured for instance using grating interferometry. Since the phase shifts of the X-rays are less dependent on the atomic number of the elements that make up the matter they pass through, the soft tissues in the vicinity of hard tissues become visible.

Professor Bert Müller directs the Biomaterials Science Center at the University of Basel.



### Sparta's economy

Ancient Sparta, the capital of the region of Laconia in the Peloponnese, is said to have been a city without a monetary economy and has thus been regarded as Athens's "antediluvian opponent". Its economy has also been termed a classical anachronism. Sparta's decline has been attributed not least to the arrival of money at the end of the Peloponnesian War (404/403 BC), although it survived as a city-state for a long time to come. Research carried out over the past few decades has significantly revised this picture of material simplicity and isolation, but a comprehensive survey of Sparta's economy has been lacking until now.

This work examines all aspects of Sparta's economy, tracing its economic development phase by phase from the archaic period, through the classical and Hellenistic eras, to Roman times. After describing the topographical background to the Spartan economy, the city's social groups, and their contributions to its economy, it looks in more detail at questions such as agriculture, animal husbandry, production of goods, and Sparta's trade. From this analysis, it is clear that Sparta's citizens were much more economically active than is generally assumed. Sparta also had an impressive budgetary regime, run by the state, and was no stranger to monetary transactions. The author, Professor Lukas Thommen, teaches ancient history at the universities of Basel and Zurich. As well as ancient Sparta, his research interests include the Roman republic and the history of the body and the environment in the ancient world.

Lukas Thommen, *Die Wirtschaft Spartas*, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart, 2014. 191 pages with two illustrations. Hardback. 54.60 CHF

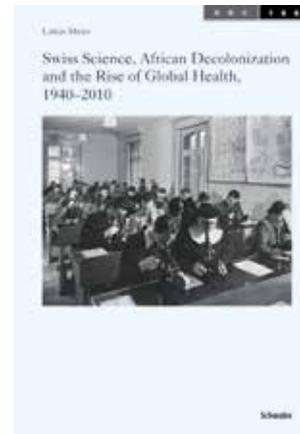


### Engaging in Urban Planning

Who determines how cities are planned and developed? What do planners use as the basis for their ideas? What invested interests do they have – aside from those declared? These are some of the questions closely examined by Lucius Burckhardt (1925–2003) and Annemarie Burckhardt-Wackernagel (1930–2012). Both from well-to-do families, they initially became involved with the Liberals, and then later with the Progressives and the Greens. They engaged critically with urban and landscape planning and considered how to design creative and participatory urban spaces. As part of their civic involvement at academic, political and artistic levels, they advocated combining preservation with participatory design.

Lucius and Annemarie Burckhardt, who repeatedly challenged powerful figures, themselves became figures of influence: At the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich and the University of Kassel, they shaped several generations of architecture students, who with hindsight see a particular benefit to their somewhat philosophical and sociological approach to teaching. In this richly illustrated book, an interdisciplinary team including researchers from the University of Basel examines the couple's life and impact. Important sources for the study include unpublished correspondence and numerous conversations.

Ueli Mäder, Markus Bossert, Reto Bürgin, Simon Mugier, Hector Schmassmann, Aline Schoch, Peter Sutter, *Raum und Macht. Die Stadt zwischen Vision und Wirklichkeit: Leben und Wirken von Lucius und Annemarie Burckhardt*. Rotpunktverlag, Zurich 2014. 304 pages, with numerous illustrations, paperback, with DVD: Lucius und Annemarie Burckhardt. *Rückblick in Gesprächen*. 54 CHF



### Swiss Science and decolonialization

After World War II and especially during the time of decolonialization, Switzerland became more closely involved in African affairs. Swiss research institutions were established in the early 1950's in both East and West Africa, such as the Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques (CSRS) in Côte d'Ivoire and the Swiss Tropical Institute field laboratory in Tanganyika (Tanzania). Both these institutions played a key role in the exchange of individuals, ideas, and objects between Switzerland and Africa. Over time, they developed into scientific centers led today by African researchers and firmly anchored in the healthcare systems of these countries.

This work provides an analysis of the ongoing developments and the paradigm change in Swiss science in Africa – from the study of nature and collection of specimens to development aspirations through to more recent research partnerships. Descriptions are given, for example, of the change from Swiss-focused science to active research cooperation with the Southern hemisphere. The analysis covers a period ranging from the late colonialism of the 1950's through to recent history and thereby contributes to a better understanding of today's activities in the area of global health. The author, Dr. Lukas Meier, completed his doctoral studies in 2012 at the University of Basel and is currently a research associate at the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute.

Lukas Meier, *Swiss Science, African Decolonization and the Rise of Global Health, 1940–2010*. Basler Beiträge zur Geschichtswissenschaft (BBG), Volume 186. Schwabe-Verlag, Basel 2014. 323 pages, 14 figures, 3 maps, paperback, 58 CHF

# Herbert Zech



## Doctors and Judaism

Medicine was a focal point of the cultural change experienced by Germany's Jews during the Haskalah – the Jewish Enlightenment – and the subsequent reform era, up to around 1850. Through a series of in-depth studies, this postdoctoral 'Habilitation' thesis shows how Jewish doctors at the time developed a modern understanding of what it means to be Jewish and a complex Jewish identity, and describes how medical topics fed into this discussion. Drawing on examples from cities like Berlin, Hamburg, Göttingen and Dresden, it looks at issues such as Jewish doctors' enthusiasm for reform and their secularized view of themselves as a profession, as well as the debates surrounding reform of 'early burial', Jewish circumcision or societies for visiting the sick.

Modern Jewish self-understanding had a complex 'architecture' that went beyond mere assimilation or the adoption of bourgeois values. In debates about reform, Jewish doctors acquired the status of secular experts in Judaism, developing an understanding of the concept that was based on modern guiding principles and forms of legitimation but which avoided a complete break with tradition. Their complex self-understanding as Jews was an attempt to stabilize their identity at a time of change. It was an independent cultural achievement that reflected a wish to modernize, rather than just to gain acceptance in mainstream Christian society. The author of this interdisciplinary study is lecturer at the University of Basel.

Eberhard Wolff, *Medizin und Ärzte im deutschen Judentum der Reformära. Die Architektur einer modernen jüdischen Identität*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 2014 (*Jüdische Religion, Geschichte und Kultur*, vol. 015). 292 pages, €49.99 (print), €39.99 (e-book).



Professor Herbert Zech, born 1974, has been at the University of Basel's Faculty of Law for two years now, where he holds the new Professorship of Life Sciences Law and Intellectual Property Rights. Previously, he acted as Chair of Civil, Business and Technology Law at the University of Bayreuth, where he later completed his postdoctoral 'Habilitation' in 2012. After studying law in Erlangen and Munich, he did a doctorate at the University of Konstanz in comparative civil law and worked as a lawyer for Freshfields. Pursuing his interest in biology, he chose to take a second degree in Kaiserslautern in 2007.

Herbert Zech's core research area is the role of the law, particularly intellectual property rights, in the field of new technologies. This includes patenting discoveries in biotechnology and nanotechnology, ownership of information and liability issues in the use of novel technologies. The Professorship of Life Sciences Law mainly concerns the areas of medicine, pharmaceuticals, and agriculture and encompasses the regulatory tasks of supporting innovation, technology transfer, technology safety (risk limitation), ethical boundaries when using technology, and questions of liability (risk distribution). In early 2014, Herbert Zech launched the "Center for Life Sciences Law" at the Faculty of Law. This is currently being set up.

## Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property

[www.ige.ch](http://www.ige.ch)  
The Federal authority responsible for intellectual property concerns in Switzerland. The website provides information on the range of intellectual property rights (copyright, trademarks, patents, and designs) and helps visitors to navigate the world of intellectual property. It is also useful for research and registering commercial property rights.

## Sic!

<https://www.sic-online.ch>

A comprehensive overview of editorial contributions and court rulings published since 1997 in the specialist publication "Sic! Zeitschrift für Immaterialgüter-, Informations- und Wettbewerbsrecht" on intellectual property rights, information and competition law. The further references to current contributions and discussions are also helpful.

## Center for Life Sciences Law

[ius.unibas.ch/lslr](https://www.unibas.ch/lslr)  
This website presents the Center for Life Sciences Law at the University of Basel and provides information on the role played by the law in the field of life sciences, that is, those sciences dealing with the use (biotechnology) and treatment (human medicine, veterinary medicine and plant protection) of living beings. It also has information on courses, current research, and events in the life sciences.

## Biotechnology information platform

[www.biotechnologie.de](http://www.biotechnologie.de)

An initiative by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, this platform contains information on science, business, funding, and policy in the area of biotechnology.

## Interpharma

<http://www.interpharma.ch>

The website of the association for Switzerland's researching pharmaceutical companies uses the "Biotech-Lerncenter" subpage (<http://biotechlerncenter.interpharma.ch>) to offer information from modern biological and medical research for lectures or as background material for tutors.

**Foundations****Fall Semester 2014****Social Responsibility of Foundations**

Lecture series organized by the Faculty of Law and the Center for Philanthropy Studies at the University of Basel. On Tuesdays, Sept 23, Oct 21, Nov 11 and Dec 16, 7pm, Kollegienhaus, lecture hall 120, Petersplatz 1, Basel.

**Archaeology I****September 25 until December 19****Small Islands, Large Stones – Archaeology on Malta**

Exhibition in the foyer of Rosshof, Department of Classical Studies. Free entry. Open weekdays 9am–6pm (except Nov 28) and on the following Saturdays Sept 27, Oct 25, Nov 22, Dec 13, 10am–3pm, Petersgraben 51, Basel.

**Diss:Kurs****October 7****Diss:****Kurs event for doctoral researchers**

Doctoral researchers from the University of Basel give presentations of their research projects. From 1pm, Kollegienhaus, lecture hall 102, Petersplatz 1, Basel. Further information and registration: [www.unibas.ch/disskurs](http://www.unibas.ch/disskurs)

**Science Slam****October 10****4th Science Slam Basel**

With students and doctoral researchers from the University of Basel, organized by Science Slam Club Basel, 8pm, Theater Basel, Kleine Bühne, Basel.

**God****October 14****“Gott und die kleinen Punkte”**

Public inaugural lecture by Professor Jan Rüdiger, Professor of Medieval History. 6:15pm, hall of the Natural History Museum, Augustinergasse 2, Basel.

**Archaeology II****October 14****Archeology and Materiality**

Public inaugural lecture by PD Dr. Philipp Wolfgang Stockhammer, lecturer for pre- and early history, 6:15pm, hall of the Natural History Museum, Augustinergasse 2, Basel.

**Philosophy****November 18****Passionate Thinking**

Public inaugural lecture by Professor Gunnar Hindrichs, Professor of the History of Philosophy, 6:15pm, hall of the Natural History Museum, Augustinergasse 2, Basel.

**Documentation Techniques****November 19****Commercial documentation techniques and data storage from 1750 until 2014**

Evening event held at Basel University Library with Irene Amstutz, lic. phil., and Dr. Martin Lüpold (Swiss Economics Archive), 6pm until 7:15pm (approx.), University Library (Business and Economics), foyer of the Swiss Economics Archive, Peter-Merian-Weg 6, Basel. Future evening events: [www.unibas.ch](http://www.unibas.ch)

**Brain and Psyche****November 20****Insights into the Brain – Images of the Psyche**

Lecture by Professor Stefan Borgwardt, consultant at the adult psychiatric clinic and Professor of Neuropsychiatry, University of Basel, 7–8pm, University Psychiatric Clinics (UPK Basel), Plenum 1, Ökonomiegebäude, Wilhelm-Klein-Strasse 27, Basel.

**History of Objects****November 25****“Königliche Objektgeschichte: Ein Mantel wandert”**

Public inaugural lecture by PD Professor Dr. Almut Höfert, lecturer in Medieval and Modern History, 6:15pm, hall of the Natural History Museum, Augustinergasse 2, Basel.

**Archaeology III****December 11****In the footsteps of Heinrich Schliemann – Geoarchaeology in the Mediterranean and Black Sea Areas**

Lecture by Professor Helmut Brückner, University of Cologne, organized by the Geographisch-Ethnologische Gesellschaft Basel, followed by a discussion and drinks reception, free entry (collection), 6:15pm, Geography building, lecture hall, 5th floor (elevator), Klingelbergstrasse 27, Basel. Future lectures in the series “Vermessung der Erde – Erfassung der Welt”: <http://www.gegbasel.ch> > Vorträge

**Radioactivity****Until January 31, 2015****Radiation.****The dual face of radioactivity**

Exhibition in the Pharmacy Museum Basel on radioactivity as a phenomenon in pharmacy, medicine and daily life. Open Tuesday to Friday, 10am–6pm, Saturdays until 5pm, closed holidays, Totengässlein 3, Basel.

Further information on future public events: [www.unibas.ch](http://www.unibas.ch) > events

UNI NOVA,

Research Magazine of the University of Basel. Published by the University of Basel, Communications & Marketing (Head: Matthias Geering).

UNI NOVA is published twice a year; the next edition will be published in March 2015. Subscriptions are available for CHF/EUR 18 per year and can be ordered by email via [uni-nova@unibas.ch](mailto:uni-nova@unibas.ch) or via the editorial office. Free copies are available at several locations throughout the University of Basel and at other institutions in the Basel region.

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UNI NOVA online:

<http://www.unibas.ch/uninova>,  
<http://www.issuu.com/unibas/docs/>

Design concept and layout:

Lukas Zürcher, Visuelle Gestaltung, Riehen.

UNI NOVA is also available in German. Translation from German by Sheila Regan and team, UNIWORKS ([www.uni-works.org](http://www.uni-works.org))

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Ursula Sprecher (cover and pages 6–13, 20, 24, 32, 38), Andreas Zimmermann (pages 5, 42, 47).

Proofreading: Birgit Althaler (German edition), Lesley Paganetti (English edition).

Print: Werner Druck &amp; Medien AG, Basel

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UNI NOVA is a member of the Swiss Science

Pools ([www.swiss-science-pool.com](http://www.swiss-science-pool.com))

Print run: 11,000 copies (German),

800 copies (English)

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ISSN 1661-3147 (German print edition)

ISSN 1661-3155 (German online edition)

ISSN 1664-5669 (English print edition)

ISSN 1664-5677 (English online edition)

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# Masterstudium in Luzern

Attraktive Studlengänge, persönliche Atmosphäre



**Infoabend: Mittwoch, 29. Oktober 2014**

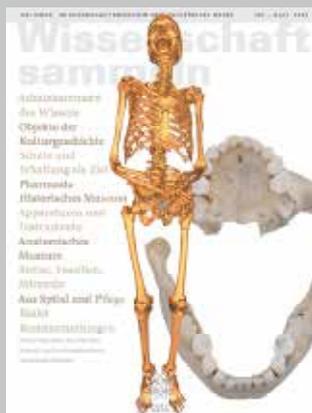
Theologie, Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften, Rechtswissenschaft

**Masterwoche: 27.–31. Oktober 2014**

Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften: Vorlesungen, Informationen und Beratung



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