

Ivan Gerát

## The Anti-Legend: Judas Iscariot in *Liber depictus*

The so-called *Liber depictus* (Cod. Vind. 370), one of the largest collections of illuminated hagiographic narratives in Central Europe, features numerous mutual dependencies between the Gospels, legends, and exempla. This article focuses on an anti-legend with Judas Iscariot that offers a dense network of mutual relationships with images from other parts of the codex: the Biblical typology and the hagiographic legends. Consequently, Judas's story splits between at least three different chronological perspectives that inhibited an interest in the individual life in favor of the governing supernatural perspective. This governing perspective acquired psychological intensity by integrating pre-Christian narrative sequences selected from Moses and Oedipus's life. Judas's human fate only gets attention when it touches on large meaning structures that construct a unified Christian vision of biblical events. The ideas of Saint Bonaventure (1221-1274) play a crucial role in understanding the real and symbolic transactions associated with the images. His rule, written for the Poor Clares at Longchamp, was still directing the Poor Clares' everyday lives and their Franciscan brothers in the Český Krumlov monastery. For Bonaventure, Judas was the embodiment of avarice, as he sold his soul for money. Bonaventure's treatise *On the Reduction of the Arts to Theology* might contribute to an understanding of the structure of narratives, described in this article, as it invites the reader to focus on theological meanings that are more substantial than human art and understanding. This approach might explain the selection of the motives and meanings appropriate as a contrasting background for the shining example of Jesus and his saints. As the anti-hero figure marked the darkest point on this contrasting background, any relativizing of its dark nature and evil intention would work against the resulting message's clarity. Any unbiased consideration of Judas's human fate would create an obstacle in the way of firm persuasion, necessary for the cloistered life of the manuscript's intended readers.