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Transcultural *Reynaert*. Dissemination and Peritextual Adaptations between 1479 and 1800

“The medieval Reynaert belongs to world literature”, “A timely tale of our times”, or “een tijdloos meesterwerk dat ons doet lachen en huiveren om onszelf” (“a timeless masterpiece which makes us laugh and shiver about ourselves”) are recent opinions about the ever popular beast epic *Reynaert the Fox*.¹ The narrative’s success story started with the Dutch *Reynaert* verse epic *Van den vos Reynaerde* (“Of Reynard the fox”), which was written in Flanders between 1179 and 1279 by an author called Willem (Bouwman and Besamusca 2009; Schlusemann 2022a). It tells of a trial against the fox Reynaert and the powerful language he uses to avoid punishment. A more extensive adaptation, titled *Reynaerts historie* (“Reynaert’s history”), was composed between 1373 and ca. 1470, also in Flanders. The story of Reynaert’s adventures was first printed, in Dutch prose, by Gheraert Leeu in Gouda with the title *Historie van reynaert die vos* (“History of reynaert the fox”, 1479), and a few years later in Dutch verse by the same printer-publisher in Antwerp (ca. 1487–1490) (Rijns 2007).

These two Dutch editions can be regarded as the main sources for the dissemination, translation, and adaptation of the *Reynaert* epic in about 200 printed editions which recount the adventures of the fox in seven European vernaculars before 1800: Dutch, German, English, French, Danish, Swedish, and Icelandic (the latter in manuscript form).² Not only did various authors modify the contents of the narrative but the presentation of the fox’s adventures in the typography, layout, and illustrations chosen by the printer-publishers reveals how the story was adapted and shaped in time and space. After a summary and an overview of the literary tradition, this chapter will discuss the spatial and temporal *Reynaert* dis-

1 Pleij (2008); Strietman (2021), in a review on Anne Louise Avery’s adaptation of Caxton’s *Reynard the Fox* (2020); and van Oostrom (2023). For the following information about the Dutch *Reynaert* tradition, see Schlusemann (2022a).

2 For a recent survey of European manuscripts about the fox and his adventures, see Wackers (2022). As the Icelandic version (dated ca. 1600) is in manuscript form and a translation of the glosses and prose comments in the margins of Hermen Weigere’s Danish version, it is not included in this chapter. This manuscript is part of a multiple-text unit written by Jón Jónsson (1536–1606). All *Reynaert* editions are referred to with a number according to Menke’s bibliography (here for example Menke 1992, VIII.a.9; on the term multiple-text unit, see the chapter on *Griseldis* in this volume).

semination of the entire printed tradition until 1800 and, in the last part, focus on peritextual characteristics of the Dutch tradition.³

1 Summary of the Narrative

In the different editions throughout the centuries, the narrative either starts with a prologue or directly with the narrating text.⁴ The prologues often emphasize the usefulness of the story and the learning it contains.⁵ After a description of nature at Pentecost, the narrative continues with the lion king's invitation to everyone in his realm to come to the court where grievances can be brought. All creatures arrive except for Reynaert the fox.⁶ The wolf is the first to accuse the fox of different crimes: he raped the wolf's wife and sullied his children. While the badger Grimbert defends the fox, the cock arrives with his dead daughter (in some versions his wife), who was killed by the fox during the King's peace. The king decides to summon the fox to court. After the bear's and the cat's failure to bring the fox to court, the badger succeeds in convincing the fox to accompany him, as otherwise the fox and his family would be declared outlaws. Once in court, the fox is sentenced to death and his main opponents, the wolf, the bear, and the cat, prepare the gallows.

The next part leads up to Reynaert's acquittal: Reynaert is allowed to confess his sins. During his confession he tells of a conspiracy against the king, planned by the bear – who wanted to become the new king of the realm –, the wolf, the

3 In this chapter, Genette's term "peritext" is preferred as the term "paratext" also includes epitexts such as publicity announcements, advertisements, or other messages "outside" the book in question (Genette 1989, 5, and 1997).

4 The term "narrating" text here refers to those parts of the narrative which "tell" the narrative, and should be distinguished from the whole "text" of the literary work which also includes peritexts (title pages, prologues, chapter headings, comments, etc.) (Lahn and Meister 2016).

5 See, for example: "veel schoen leren" ("many fine lessons") (*Reynaert*, 1479; Menke 1992, IV.B.a.2); "vul van wyszheyt vnd guder exempel vnd leren" ("full of wisdom and good examples and lessons") (*Reynke de vos*, 1498; Menke 1992, VI.B.a.1); "En anden nyttelig fortale om denne bogis rette forstand" ("Another useful prologue about the proper meaning of this book") (Hermen Weigere, *En Ræffue Bog*, 1555, 1b; Menke 1992, VIII.a.1); "grande doctrine & instruction" ("great learning and instruction") (*Reynier le Renard*, 1566; Menke 1992, IV.B.b.6). All translations in this chapter are my own (unless otherwise stated). Abbreviated references identify editions in standard reference works; abbreviations are expanded in the list of references at the end of this volume.

6 In this summary the names of the Dutch tradition were chosen for the different characters in the text.

badger, and even the fox's father. Reynaert also casually mentions a treasure which was meant to finance the bear's access to power. The mention of the treasure sparks the king's and the queen's greed and leads them to absolve the fox. He is given a pilgrim's bag made of the bear's fur and is allowed to leave the court to go on a pilgrimage. Reynaert returns to his foxhole together with the hare Cuwaert and the ram Bellijn. He asks the hare to accompany him down the hole. The fox and his family eat the hare and Reynaert sends the ram back to the court with a bag in which he secretly put the hare's head. Upon opening the bag, King Nobel painfully realizes that the fox has betrayed him and cries out in pain and despair. As the king is no longer able to fulfil his task as a ruler, the leopard Firaheel decides to give all the sheep to the wolf's and the bear's families as a present with *carte blanche* to treat the fox and his family as they see fit.

In the second part, the court session is extended, new accusations are brought, and the fox is summoned to court again. At one point, he is lost for words and the ape Rukenauwe⁷ comes to his rescue, pointing out that the fox and his family support the king. When Reynaert speaks again, he mentions a treasure of jewels he gave to the ram Bellijn when he sent him back to the court: a ring, a mirror, and a comb. He combines the description of the value of these items with extensive narrations about the stories engraved on them. Nearly all these stories show how useful the fox's family members are to the king's court as they are clever and helpful advisors. This verbal confrontation leads to a duel between the wolf and the fox. The fox follows the ape's advice and, again, wins by using the power of speech successfully. Reynaert is appointed as "sovereyn baelyoen" ("sovereign bailiff"; Schlusemann and Wackers 2005, 7589), which means that he can act as the king's representative.

2 Literary Tradition

A beast epic can be regarded as a long narrative (in verse and later also in prose), constructed with a beginning, a middle, and an end, resulting in a climax. The leading characters are animals who behave like human beings and display, besides their animal behaviour, human character traits and motives.⁸ This ambiguo-

⁷ The name Rukenauwe, used in the Dutch tradition, means "able to smell well".

⁸ On the Aristotelian notion of beginning, middle, and end as necessary ingredients for a plot, see also Allen (1982). As the main story line does not change, and because the first prose adaptation published by Gheraert Leeu (1479, see later) is a word for word reworking of the verse version into prose (often with the same words only in a different order), in this chapter the term "epic" will be used for the verse and the prose versions. On the relation between the behaviour

ity is maintained in every single version. Although they can speak, think, and act as human beings, the animals mostly behave according to their nature. The fox only eats animals he would also eat in nature and the ram, for example, has to stay outside the fox's hole because he is too big to get into it. The animal protagonists remain recognizable as animals, but the stories draw a certain picture of human behaviour and therefore allow the reader to identify with their traits and the way they act. This contrast can be considered one of the main characters of animal stories. At the same time, since the characters remain recognizable as animals, it is easier for the reader or listener to keep a distance (Schlusemann 2011).

Our knowledge about the development of the medieval beast epic that has become so famous since the Middle Ages until today is almost exclusively based on written Latin and vernacular sources. Hardly anything is known about the oral tradition, which must have existed too. In the nineteenth century, so-called folklorists tried to trace its origin to folk poetry. Jacob Grimm regarded the tale as part of an oral tradition which had been circulating among the Germanic tribes and came into being independently of classical fables (Grimm 1834, LI–LVII). Leopold Sudre thought that medieval fairy tales were the basis for the beast epic (Sudre 1893, 3). On the other hand, the so-called Aesopists supported the thesis of written Latin and vernacular works (in general the fables of Aesop) of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as the direct source for the beast epic in the later Middle Ages (Lulofs 2001, 18–23). Although the prehistory cannot be traced with evidence, there are some important stages in the literary tradition of the beast epic before the Dutch *Van den vos Reynaerde*.

We can assume that the tradition started with Aesop's fables, even though these are much shorter and have a stronger and more direct focus on the moral in comparison to the beast epic.⁹ The Aesop fable of the sick lion (620–560 BCE) can in fact be seen as the basis from which the genre of the beast epic developed. It tells of a sick lion lying in his den. All the animals visit him, except for the fox. The wolf criticizes the fox unfairly by claiming that the fox did not come because he disapproves of the lion. At that moment the fox arrives and proposes a medicine to heal the king: pulling off the wolf's fur and wrapping the lion's stomach and ribs with the still warm fur. The idea is carried out and the fox reacts with a proverb: "He who digs a pit for others falls into it himself" (Perry Index 142).

A major second stage in the development of the beast epic is *Echasis cuiusdam captivi per tropologiam* ("The escape of a certain captive through tropology",

of human beings and animals, see, for example, Jahn and Neudeck (2004), Waltenberger and Wick (2022).

⁹ See the chapter on *Aesopus* by Julia Boffey in this volume.

ca. 1050), the oldest European version of a beast epic in Latin, which recounts a trial at the lion's court (Kindermann 1979). The lion is sick, the wolf proposes to hang the fox because he did not appear at the court session. When the fox arrives, he thinks the wolf's fur is the best medicine. Once the medicine is applied, the lion recovers.

In the Western European tradition, this content gradually changed, especially regarding the reason for the animals' gathering: the lion invites the animals in his realm to the court. The Latin epic *Ysengrimus*, supposedly written by the clerk Nivardus in Ghent (1148–1149, 6,600 verses), consists of different episodes and also relates the day at the court. The wolf is skinned too, but he survives and leaves the court (Mann 2013; Schilling 2020; Knapp 2021; Wackers 2022, 21–23).

Ysengrimus was used as a source for the French *Roman de Renart* ("Narrative about Renart"), the name for short narratives and anecdotes without a fixed structure in the different "branches", which "are clearly marked by their episodic character" (Wackers 2022, 33; see also Flinn 1963; Varty 1998). Pierre de Saint-Cloud wrote the oldest "branche" of the *Roman de Renart* in about 1175 (Martin 1882–1887; Jauss-Meyer 1965; Wackers 2022, 23–25).¹⁰ This "branche" is called *Le plaid* and concerns a trial (also called *Le jugement*, 1,620 verses). We know so far that seventeen other branches of the French tradition were written between 1175 and 1250, most of which were put together in various combinations in fourteen composites.¹¹ These "branches" recount the conflict between the fox Renart and the wolf Ysengrin. In *Le plaid*, Ysengrin and the cock Chantecler accuse the fox who is summoned to the court three times: by the bear Brun, the cat Tibert, and the badger Grimbert. Renart pleads to be pardoned and promises to change his life and travel to the Holy Land. King Noble absolves him but Renart cheats and goes against him, and abuses the hare Coart. All the members of the court chase the fox who manages to flee to Maupertuis, his castle.

These narratives around the lion, the fox, and the wolf, as depicted in the brief overview above, developed from a short narrative about the events around the lion's illness into a well-structured narrative with a climactic construction of a plot about a trial, recounting accusation, summoning, sentence, and pardon. In *Van den vos Reynaerde* (ca. 1179–1279, ca. 3,393–3,469 verses), which, as far as the first part is concerned, can be seen as a reworking of the *Le plaid* in East Flan-

¹⁰ *Roman* is the word for "French", and *Roman de Renart* alludes to different stories about the fox in the French vernacular. In research the different versions of the *Roman de Renart* are usually called "branches", the meaning of which is comparable to the word "limb" in English.

¹¹ Martin (1882–1887); for the terminology for manuscripts, see Gumbert (2004); and Friedrich and Schwarke (2016). For a proposal of a new terminology for prints, see the chapter on *Griseldis* in this volume.

ders, this development reaches a first high point (Bouwman and Besamusca 2009; Schlusemann 2022a; Fuchs 2023). For the most part, its author Willem follows the story of *Le plaid* until the fox's arrival at court, but narrates the causalities more convincingly and inserts new narrative elements (Bouwman 1991). The second part of the work (ca. 1,600 verses) is much longer than that of “branche” I of the French *Roman de Renart* (ca. 300 verses). For example, Willem adds Reynaert's confession which develops as a speech about a conspiracy against the king and mentions a treasure. Apart from French sources, Willem seems to have used Germanic material, like the bear's threat to the throne and the conspiracy which seems to have been financed with King Ermenrik's treasure. In Germanic legends the bear reigned over the country, and the East Gothic King Ermanaric (d. 376) is mentioned in Germanic heroic sagas (Gillespie 1973). *Van den vos Reynaerde* has a unique enigmatic ending as the sheep are given to the bears and the wolves as a legitimate prey, and the fox and his family leave King Nobel's realm (Van Daele 1996; de Putter 2000).

Reynaerts historie (1373–ca. 1470), whose author also calls himself “Willem” – the prologue is taken from *Van den vos Reynaerde* – is the first Dutch verse adaptation of *Van den vos Reynaerde* (ca. 7,810 verses; Wackers 1986; Schlusemann and Wackers 2005; Fuchs 2023). In this narrative the first part is a close copy of its source but with a different ending. Reynaert does not leave the lion's kingdom but stays at home with his family. The basic idea for the second part is *Le duel* (“branche” VI of the *Roman de Renart*; Nieboer 1978): after being summoned to the court again, the fox Renart is able to dismiss the accusations. Ysengrin asks for a duel: he wins and Renart loses. In the second part of *Reynaerts historie*, this structure was adopted on the whole, with the addition of many speeches at court, especially by the fox and the female ape Rukenauwe. Thanks to her clever advice, Reynaert wins the duel and is given the already mentioned position of “second man” in the realm.

3 The Dissemination of the *Reynaert* Epic in European Languages

Reynaerts historie can be called the basis for the entire European tradition as it served as a source for Dutch printed editions from 1479 onwards, and from there for the English, Low German, High German, Danish, French, and Swedish traditions. First, *Reynaerts historie* served as the source for the already mentioned Dutch prose version (1479, see section 4.1). Secondly, the narrating text was printed in verse (also by Leeu, in Antwerp in 1487–1490; Menke 1992, IV.B.a.4),

with the addition of comments in prose and images. This version can be called the (indirect) source for the entire tradition in European vernaculars, starting with the Low German *Reynke de vos* (1498; Menke 1992, VI.B.a.1), the main text of which was also printed in verse. The Low German version in turn was used as a source for the north European tradition.

The *Reynaert* epic was printed in six European vernaculars and published in about 200 editions before 1800. An overview can roughly be depicted as follows (see Diagram 1; green: Dutch prose and Dutch verse; yellow: English; light blue: Low German; red: High German; light grey: French; purple: Danish; dark grey: Swedish; dark green: Latin):

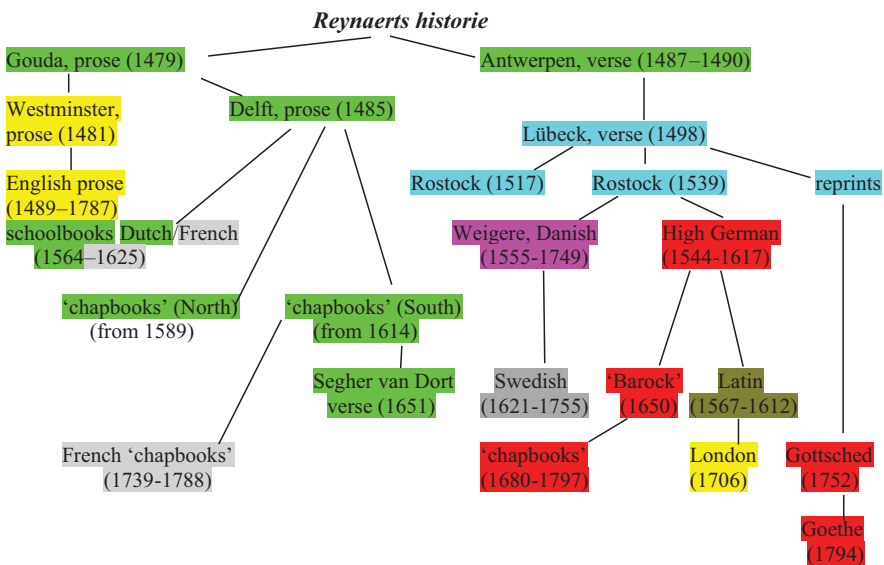


Diagram 1: Rough overview of the *Reynaert* tradition in prose and verse.

An overview of the numbers of editions printed in each century in different language areas is presented in the following table (Tab. 1).¹²

Leeu's 1479 edition was the first printed *Reynaert* narrative in a vernacular (Schlusemann 1991; Rijns 2007), followed by at least 45 *Reynaert* editions in Dutch

¹² The language areas in the table are listed according to the year of the first edition in that language. The figures in the table are based on the results from Menke (1992). One new edition has been added as it only became known after Menke's publication: *Reynaert den vos, oft der dieren oordeel* [...] ("Reynaert the fox, or the animal's judgement [...]"). Dendermonde: Jacobus Ducaju, [1730-1750] (Van Daele 2011).

Tab. 1: Overview of printed *Reynaert* editions in European language areas until 1800.

Language area	1479–1500	1501–1600	1601–1700	1701–1800	Total
Dutch	3	4	16	23	46
English	4	6	28	26	64
German	1	29	31	9	70
Danish	–	1	2	2	5
French	–	2	3	4	9
Swedish	–	–	3	2	5
	8	42	83	66	199

before 1800.¹³ Although this means that on average about every seventh year a new Dutch *Reynaert* edition was published, there is a significant difference in production over the centuries. Until 1600 only seven Dutch *Reynaert* editions were produced: three incunabula, two versions in Antwerp (1564, 1566), an edition in Amsterdam (ca. 1584), and an edition in Delft by B.H. Schinckel (1589). Schinckel's edition in particular was the starting point for the enormous success of the Dutch *Reynaert* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as it served as a template, especially for the peritextual elements like the prologue and the illustrations, for many further editions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Schlusemann 2023b). In the seventeenth century, sixteen editions were produced, and in the eighteenth century as many as 23. The spatial distribution shows a predominance of Amsterdam (17) and Antwerp (18), which amounts to 75% of the entire production.¹⁴

The second *Reynaert* edition in a vernacular was published in English, a direct translation of Leeu's version, published by William Caxton in Westminster in 1481 with the title *Historye of reynart the foxe*, mentioned in the incipit (GW 12728; Blake 1970; Schlusemann 1991). The first edition in English with illustrations was probably published by Wynkyn de Worde in about 1499–1500 (Menke 1992, VI.B.a.4). Its existence could be reconstructed thanks to images in other English editions. The oldest preserved English edition with images, attributed to Ri-

¹³ Editions for which no material evidence has survived are generally also included, but not as far as specific names are concerned (for example locations, printers). In general, the numbers presented here are all a quorum because so many editions have been lost. Besides, it is not always absolutely clear whether an edition was published in the seventeenth or eighteenth century when there is no exact date in the edition itself.

¹⁴ The two cities are followed by Delft (three editions), Ghent (two), and Gouda, Kampen, Dendermonde, and Rotterdam (each place one edition). Numbers are based on Menke (1992) and on results of the project "Multimodalität deutscher und niederländischer Erzählliteratur ca. 1470–1800" (since 2021), Freie Universität Berlin, funded by Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Science Foundation) since 2021 (Schl 316/11–1; led by the author).

chard Pynson, was printed between 1501 and 1505.¹⁵ Regarding the oldest nearly fully extant copy of an edition in English with images, we do not know the printer and the year of printing (ca. 1560–1585); besides, it is in private ownership. It is illustrated with 55 images, nine of which are repetitions (Menke 1992, VI.B.a.8). From the early seventeenth century at the latest, new text was added on the title page, in an edition printed by Edward Allde [1620]. We can now read that the history is “most delectable” and that it is “Newly Corrected and purged from all the grosenesses both in Phrase and *Matter*”.¹⁶ However, the “grosenesses” are still present in text and image, for example in the bear’s punishment (C4r) or the mutilation of the priest’s genitals which make his wife Iullocke lament to her son that “thy fathers delight and my Iewell ... is now spoyled” (D4r–D4v).¹⁷

All in all, at least 64 English editions of the *Reynaert* epic were published before 1800, four of them before 1500, six between 1501 and 1600, 28 between 1601 and 1700, and 26 between 1701 and 1800. The increase in the number of editions is comparable to the Dutch situation. For about 125 years (ca. 1625 until ca. 1750), the appetite for the epic in both language areas did not abate. Whereas the production of the story was concentrated in two locations in the Dutch language areas, in the English language area London was the predominant place of printing with nearly the same percentage of editions (45 editions, 70%).¹⁸

In the German language area, the situation was different. The majority of editions (60 of the 70 known editions) were published in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We can basically distinguish two German versions of the *Reynaert* epic: a Low German *Reynke* and a High German *Reineke* tradition (Menke 1992, chapters VI and VII). The German tradition started with the Low German *Reynke de vos*, which was printed in Lübeck in 1498 by the press with the three poppies and probably run by Hans van Ghetelen.¹⁹ This version, published in verse, contains two long prologues, four books, chapter headings, comments in prose, and 89 woodcut illustrations.²⁰

15 Two fragments of this edition have come down to us, only one image has been preserved (Menke 1992, VI.B.a.5).

16 ESTC S119794. The copy of Oxford, BL, is available online; see Menke (1992, VI.B.b.11), for more information.

17 On this scene in different versions through space and time, see Goossens (1988).

18 Followed by Dublin (six) and Westminster (two), with only one edition in Glasgow, Newcastle, Wolverhampton, and Penrith (Menke 1992, chapter V).

19 This version was reprinted at least six times before 1800 (Menke 1992, 273–280).

20 6,844 verses; the four books are divided in 39, 9, 14, and 13 chapters; there are prose comments after many but not all chapters. Overviews and studies of the famous epic were recently published, among many others, by Berteloot and Geeraedts (1998); Schilling (2002); Malm (2017); and Schilling (2021).

A so-called Rostock version of the Low German tradition was first printed by Ludwig Dietz in Rostock in 1539, starting on the title page with the proverb “De Warheyt my gantz fremde ys / || De Truwe gar seltzen, dat ys gewiß” (“Truth is totally strange to me, Faithfulness very rare, that much is certain”), and the title *Reynke Vosz de olde / ny= || ge gedruecket / mit sidlikem vorstande vnd schonen figu= || ren / erluechtet vnde vorbetert* (“Reynke Fox the old, newly printed, in an ethical spirit and illustrated with charming images and improved”; Menke 1992, VI.B.b.9). Although it shares major features with the first Low German edition (printed in verse, two prologues, division in four books, subdivision in 89 chapters), there are some new elements. Comments in prose are added in the margin. The comments at the end of each chapter have been modified and characterized as representing the “grundlegend veränderten, humanistisch-protestantischen Denkhorizont der Zeitgenossen” (“basically changed humanistic-protestant thinking horizon of the contemporary people”) (Menke 1980, 254–257). A new series of woodcuts was made by the famous illustrator Erhard Altdorfer who worked as a painter for duke Henric of Mecklenburg (1479–1556) for several decades (Zumbült 2011). The “Rostock” version was reprinted eleven times before 1660 (Menke 1992, VI.B.b.9–21).

All in all, nineteen editions in Low German and 51 in High German were published (Menke 1992, chapters VI and VII). In comparison with other narratives, the proportion of Low German editions is very high (about 37%).²¹ The first version in High German, also in verse, with a prologue and comments in prose, was published by Cyriacus Jacob in 1544 in Frankfurt am Main (Menke 1981; Menke 1992, VII.B.a.1), as the second volume of the book *Schimpff und Ernst* (“Fun and Seriousness”), a very popular collection of entertaining stories.²² The title page does not mention *Reynicke*, only a “Second Part” (*Ander Theyl*). It is praised as not being less entertaining than several other prominent narratives, and even more useful and better for acquiring wisdom and reason:

21 For example, only one of the nearly 50 editions of *Fortunatus* in German was published in Low German (VD17 7:685005F), and only four of the more than 60 editions of *Historia septem sapientum Romae* in German. See in this volume the chapters on *Fortunatus* by Helwi Blom, and on *Historia septem sapientum Romae* by Rita Schlusemann.

22 The stories in the first volume, with the title *Schimpff vñ Ernst heiset das büch mit namē durchlaufft es der welt handlung mit ernstlichen vnd kurtzweiligen exemplen, parabolē vnd hystorien nützlich vnd gūt zū besserung der menschen* (“The book is called Fun and Seriousness, which especially deals with conduct in the world with serious and entertaining examples, parables and histories, useful and good for the improvement of human beings”), were collected by Johannes Pauli and published by Johannes Grüninger in Strasbourg in 1522 (VD16 P 937; copy: München, BSB, 2 L. eleg.m. 90 h).

*Ander Teyl Des Büchs Schimpff vnd Ernst Welches nit weniger kurtzweillig denn Centum Nouella, Esopus, Eulenspiegel, Alte weisen, Weise Meyster, vnnd alle andere kurtzweilige Bücher, Aber zulernen weißhey vnd verstand weit nütlicher vnd besserer. Wie aus der Vorrede zuuernemen ist.*²³

It is not until A5v, after the preface, that “Von Reinicken Fuchs” is mentioned for the first time. In this *Reinicke* version, which has been attributed to Michael Beuther,²⁴ the verse text was shortened by about 33%, but the comments were expanded. The fact that the title mentions four other of the ten narratives in this book (*Aesopus*, *Griseldis* [as part of *Il Decamerone*], *Historia septem sapientum Romae*, and *Ulen Spiegel*) firstly shows that Jacob felt the need to place his *Reynaert* within the tradition of these narratives. Secondly, the choice of the adjective “kurtzweilig” (“entertaining”) highlights that he clearly regarded them as famous examples of entertaining literature. Thirdly, this title shows that the advertising potential of these narratives was recognized in the 1540s. We cannot establish whether the omission of the title of the *Reynicke* was intentional or a mistake, but in the second and third edition of the second book of *Schimpff vnd Ernst* (1545 and 1556), the title *Reinicken* [sic] *Fuchß* was printed on the title pages (Menke 1992, VII.B.a.2–3), in the editions from 1562 *Von Reinicken Fuchß* (Menke 1992, VII.B.a.4–21). The edition as the second part of *Schimpff und Ernst* was very successful and reprinted at least twenty times before 1617, from 1564 with woodcuts by Virgil Solis.²⁵

More than half (36) of the German *Reynke/Reinicke* editions were published in Frankfurt in High German, yet some Low German editions were published in

²³ “Second Part of the Book *Fun and Seriousness* Which is not less entertaining than *One Hundred Novellas*, *Aesopus*, *Owlglass*, *Old Wise Men*, *Wise Masters*, and all other entertaining Books, But much more useful and better for learning wisdom and reason. You can read this in the Preface.” Boccaccio’s *Il Decamerone*, with its one hundred novellas (*Griseldis* as the last), was often named *Centum Novella* (see the chapter on *Griseldis* in this volume). On *Aesopus* and *Ulen Spiegel*, see the respective chapters by Julia Boffey and Krystyna Wierzbicka-Trwoga in this volume. *Alte weisen* alludes to the *Directorium humanae vitae* by Johannes de Capua (ca. 1250–ca. 1310) and was translated into German by Anton von Pforr (before 1420–ca. 1477) as *Buch der Beispiele der alten Weisen* (“Book of Examples of the old Wise Men”); *Weise Meyster* (“Wise Masters”) is another title often used for *Historia septem sapientum Romae* (see the chapter on the tradition in this book).

²⁴ The attribution of the work to the historian Michael Beuther (1522–1587) goes back to Hartmann Schopper (1542–1595), who mentions him in his Latin adaptation of the High German *Reineke Fuchs* (Hartmann 2012; on this edition, see Menke 1992, II.B.b.2; for later editions, Menke 1992, II.B.b.3–7).

²⁵ Virgil Solis (1514–1562) was a prominent woodcutter and engraver. His woodcuts were also used for Schopper’s Latin translation of the text published by Sigmund Feyerabend and Simon Hüter in 1567 (Menke 1992, II.B.b.2).

the High German region of Frankfurt too: for example, by Cyriacus Jacob in 1550 (Menke 1992, VI.B.b.11), by David Zöpfel in 1562 (Menke 1992, VI.B.b.13), and by Johann Wolf in 1572 (Menke 1992, VI.B.b.15).²⁶ This does not only show the wide popularity of the Low German version in the High German region but also the printers' ability in the High German language area to publish Low German texts expecting to find a market for these editions. This supra-regional method used by printer-publishers can also be found in the Danish tradition.

In Danish five editions of the *Reynaert* epic were published before 1800, starting with an exceptional edition entitled *En Eæffue* [sic] *Bog || som kaldes paa Tyske Rei=| | nicke Foss, Oc er en deylig oc lystig || Bog met mange skønne Historier, || lystige Rim, Exempel, och herlige || Figurer, som aldri føre haffuer været || paa Danske, nu Nylige fordanskit || aff Hermen Weigere [...]* (Fig. 1, Menke 1992, VIII.a.1),²⁷ which was published by Jürgen Richolff the Younger in Lübeck in 1555 in a folio format. Hermen Weigere adapted the Low German version published by Ludwig Dietz in Rostock (1539) (Menke 1992, VIII.a.1).²⁸ As in the Low German version, the narrating text was written in verse and was divided into four books which were subdivided into chapters, with glosses in the margin. The volume is illustrated with 46 images in the text (six of them are repetitions), which are copies from the Rostock edition, and 56 smaller images illustrating the glosses.

A portrait of King Christian III of Denmark (1503–1559), who at that time was also duke of Schleswig, Holstein, Stormarn, and Dithmarschen (1v), and a three-page dedication to the king (2r–3r) make it even more special compared to the *Reynaert* editions in other languages.²⁹ The preface, addressed to King Christian III, laments the lack of secular literature in Danish. In addition, the writer ex-

²⁶ Eight of the Low German editions were published in Rostock, four in Hamburg, two in Eutin, Leipzig, and one, for example, in Berlin, Itzehoe, and Wolfenbüttel. The place of printing of 21 editions (dated 1660–1680) is unknown but because of their astonishing similarities, it can be assumed that they were printed in the same place (see Menke 1992, VII.B.d.26; VII.B.d.27; VII.B.d.28).

²⁷ To be corrected as *Ræffue* ("A Fox Book which in German is called Reinicke Foss, it is a beautiful and pleasant Book with many charming Histories, pleasant Rhymes, Examples, and wonderful Images which has never been in Danish before, now Newly translated by Hermen Weigere"; with thanks to Anna Katharina Richter for her help with the translation); in the rest of this chapter named *Ræffue Bog*.

²⁸ The woodcuts are recuts of the illustrations from the 1539 edition by Dietz (Menke 1992, VIII.a.1). For the 1539 edition see, for example, the copy in Tomsk, Tomsk State University Research Library, B-2466 (olim: Hamburg, SUB, SCa VI: 226); <http://vital.lib.tsu.ru/vital/access/manager/Repository/vtls:000670899> (6 March 2023). For a comparison with the Low German version, see Rohr (2006–2007).

²⁹ On the Scandinavian tradition, see Munske (1970); Engel (1989); edition: Møller (1915–1923).



Fig. 1: *En Ræffue Bog som kaldes paa Tyske Reinicke Foss [...]*. Lübeck: Jürgen Richolff the Younger, 1555, 1r (Antwerpen, The Phoebus Foundation). By courtesy of The Phoebus Foundation, Antwerpen.

presses his hope that the king might take delight in books which do not offend God or His Holy word (5v). The Danish tradition consists of two reprints of the first edition (in 1656 and ca. 1730)³⁰ and two adaptations (1649; 1747).³¹

In the printed French tradition, the first French edition of the *Reynaert* epic³² was not published as a standalone text but in a synoptic edition with the Dutch text. The book was titled *REYNAERT || DE VOS. || Een seer ghenouchlicke ende vermakelicke historie: || in Franchoyse ende neder Duytsch. || REYNIER LE || RENARD. || Histoire tresioyeuse [sic] & recreatiue, en François || & bas Alleman* (“Reynaert the fox. A very enjoyable and entertaining history: in French and Dutch”).³³ It was published in 1566 by the very successful and innovative printer/publisher Christoffel Plantijn (1520–1589) in Antwerp (Menke 1992, IV.B.b.6; Rijns 2007).³⁴ The edition comprises an illustrated title page followed by the privilege, a dedication in Latin by the translator Johannes Florianus, a table of contents, a table of figures, a preface before the beginning of the narrative (all in Dutch and French), and 42 illustrations. It was clearly intended as a schoolbook. However, it did not lead to a rich tradition of French printed *Renart* editions. All in all, only eight French *Renart* editions were printed before 1800,³⁵ which shows that the narrative was clearly not as popular in the French regions as with northern and eastern neighbours.³⁶

In Swedish, five *Reynaert* editions were printed. The first, with the title *Reyncke fozz*, was attributed to Sigfrid Aron Forsius and printed, with the king’s privilege, in stanzas and with pairing rhymes by Ignatius Meurer in Stockholm in

30 The woodblocks of the first Danish edition were used again for the second Danish edition (Menke 1992, VIII.a.2); the third Danish edition was not illustrated (Menke 1992, VIII.a.3).

31 In the 1649 edition, chapter one of Weigere’s *Ræffue Bog* was adapted in alexandrines (Menke 1992, VIII.a.4).

32 Earlier French editions with a fox and his wife as main characters are not taken into consideration because they are not as such part of the *Reynaert* epic. Editions with the title *Le liure de maistre Regnard et de dame hersant* (“The book of master Regnard and of lady Hersant”), for example, are prose adaptations of Jacquemart Gielée’s *Renart le nouvel* (see Menke 1992, III.B.a.1–7).

33 The language which is called “neder Duytsch” and “bas Alleman” here, is Dutch and was still often called “neder Duytsch” until the nineteenth century; at that time, the term could actually refer to the low parts of the Germanic (Dutch and Low German) speaking areas.

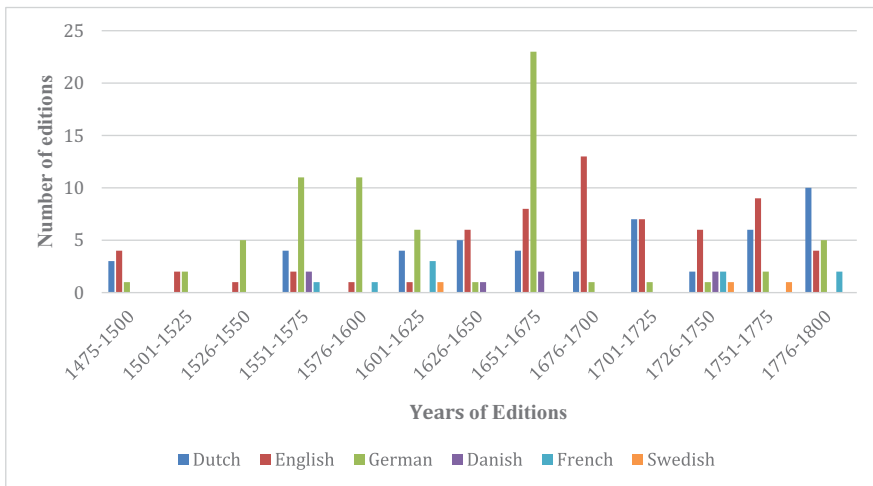
34 In French the name of the printer is Christophe Plantin. In this chapter he will be called Christoffel Plantijn because of his activity in Antwerp and because he calls himself Plantijn in the *Reynaert* edition (copy: München, BSB, Rar. 714; title page: <https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/view/bsb10858293?page=4,5> [8 February 2023]).

35 Three of them were translations of the southern Dutch ‘chapbook’ printed in 1614 (Menke 1992, III.8–15).

36 There are no printed editions of the *Roman de Renart* either.

1621. It is based on the Low German version published by Paul Lange in Hamburg in 1604 and illustrated with 42 images, four of which are repetitions (Menke 1992, VIII.b.6).³⁷ On fol. a2r the book is dedicated to illustrious men: to the king and other prominent Swedish noblemen such as Axel Oxenstierna (1583–1654), since 1612 Lord High Chancellor (*Rikskansler*) of the Privy Council, and Philipp von Scheiding (1578–1646), governor of Kopparbergslagen. *Reinick Fuchs, Eller Michel Råf*, a Swedish prose version written by Eric Ljung Pädersson and published by Peter Jöransson Nyström in Stockholm (1746), is an adaptation, with augmentations of the prose comments, of Weigere's *En Ræffue Bog* (Menke 1992, VIII.b.7). Another Swedish prose edition, attributed to Pädersson, was published by Carl Stolpe in Stockholm in 1775 (Menke 1992, VIII.b.8).

All in all, the dissemination of the *Reynaert* epic is restricted to the west, middle and north of European language areas, and there are no known printed versions in the south and east of early modern Europe (see Graph 1).



Graph 1: Temporal Dissemination of Printed *Reynaert* editions until 1800.

With regard to the temporal dissemination there is a major increase of editions in the third quarter of the sixteenth century. In contrast to the production of *Grieldis*, for example, there is another rise in the third quarter of the seventeenth

³⁷ The text is divided into four books, subdivided into chapters, which are commented on in prose glosses. Short texts (for example proverbs and other sayings) are printed in the margins. This version was published in at least two other “Druckfassungen” (“print editions”, Menke 1992, 383–384). For the complete title, see the list at the end of this chapter (Tab. 2).

century. In the second quarter of the eighteenth century, the number of language areas grows. On the whole, except for the first and second quarters of the fifteenth century, the dissemination of *Reynaert* editions is very stable in the early modern period, with one (especially German) peak in the third quarter of the seventeenth century, and some smaller peaks (German, English, and Dutch) in other periods. These language areas were at the same time the centres of dissemination of the *Reynaert* epic in early modern Europe.

4 Peritextual Characteristics in Dutch Editions before 1800

The importance of peritexts has been studied extensively in the last decades.³⁸ Peritexts add a sense-creating meaning to the main text of the narratives. They transport meaning in two directions: to the main text, and to the world outside the book as they address the reader or buyer (Speth 2017, 194). Peritexts can convey the meaning of the main text but they can also contribute to a pluralization of the sense of the narrating text. In this part the peritexts, their typography and layout in selected Dutch *Reynaert* editions before 1800 will be compared in order to identify their specific similarities and differences, and constitute a first step towards a holistic and more comprehensive comparison between *Reynaert* editions in different language areas. The Dutch *Reynaert* editions can be divided into four main groups: incunabula (three); Antwerp schoolbooks (three); northern Dutch ‘chapbooks’ (20); and southern Dutch ‘chapbooks’ (17).

4.1 Incunabula

The first Dutch *Reynaert* edition mentioned earlier was published by Gheraert Leeu and begins as follows: “Dit is die tafel van desen boecke datmen hiet die hystorie van Reynaert die vos (“This is the table of contents of the book which is called the history of Reynaert the fox”, a1r).³⁹ This initial table of contents introduces the reader to the title and the main character in the book. On the four fol-

³⁸ Genette (1989); with a slightly different focus, see McGann (1992); Ott (2010); Speth (2017).

³⁹ Schlusemann (1991); Rijns (2007); Schlusemann (2018–2019). A second edition of this text was published in Delft in 1485 (GW 12726). The original copy used is Den Haag, KB, 169 G 98. Because of the already mentioned English translation, Caxton must have regarded the Dutch *Reynaert* as a successful book.

lowing pages (a1r–a2v), the different chapter titles in the table of contents inform the recipient not only of the fox's adventures but, in fact, about the contents of the whole book. Each chapter title is right-aligned, and at the end of the title a page number in cardinal numerals indicates where the chapter begins. This is possible because the folio numbers are right-aligned at the bottom of the pages, while the printer also provides page numbers in cardinal numerals in the middle of the last line.⁴⁰

The second part is announced at the end of the table of contents: “Hier beghint die prologhe van desen teghenwoerdigen boeck gheheten reynaert die vos” (“Here starts the prologue of this present book titled Reynaert the fox”). Although the topoi used are very general, there are clear elements of the Latin *accessus* tradition in the table of contents and the prologue (Schlusemann 1991, 82–86; Pleij 2004). The table of contents presents the *ordo*, the prologue the *operis inscription*, the *operis intentio*, and *utilitas*. The prologue starts by repeating the title of the book again, another means to ensure that the recipient is properly informed about the name of each peritext and about its contents (Schlusemann 1991; Pleij 2007, 209). It stresses that the narrative describes many fine lessons and memorable aspects through parables, and that the book is intended “tot nutscap ende tot profijlt alre goeder menschen” (“for the use and benefit of all good people”, a3r) to help them understand the “subtile scalcheden die dagelics in der werelt gebruijct worden” (“subtle malignities which are used every day in the world”). The prologue ends with the following words:

ende soe wie dan volcomen verstant hier of wil ontfangen die moet hem poegen dicwyl hier in te lesen ende naerstelic aen te mercken dat ghene dat hi leset. wanttet seer subtiyl gheset is. ghelijck als ghi al lesende vernemen sult. also datmen met een ouerlesen den rechten sin of dat rechte verstant niet begripen en can. mer dicwyl ouer te lesen. soe ist wel te verstaen. ende voer den verstandelen seer ghenuechtelijck ende oeck profitelijck (a3r)⁴¹

The reading instruction emphasizes that the text should be read over and again. Obviously, these words are intended as a help for those readers who were not used to reading texts themselves and were therefore encouraged to read the text again and again. As *Reynaert* was one of the first narratives printed in Dutch, Leeu thought it

⁴⁰ As the lower part of the copy of the book in The Hague has been cut off, some page numbers are partly cropped.

⁴¹ “He who would like to get a full understanding has to try and read it more often and remember well everything he reads, because it is set in a very subtle way, as you will see when reading it. It is not possible to understand the right sense or meaning when reading it only once, but when reading it again and again, it can be easily understood, and for clever people it is very enjoyable and also beneficial”. The reception mode “lesen” is mentioned six times in the prologue. See the edition by Rijns (2007); see also Schlusemann (1991, 82–86); Pleij (2007, 209–211).

was necessary to provide such a reading instruction. The epilogue, on the other hand, mentions two means of communication, hearing and reading: “So wie v nv van reynaert meer of min seit dan ghi hebt ghehoert dat sijn al loghenachtighe woerden Mer dat ghi hier van hem voer ghehoert hebt ende ghelesen des moechdi wel ghelouen” (“So, whoever tells about Reynaert more or less than you have heard, these are all mendacious words. But what you have heard and read about him here, you can believe”, A3r). This epilogue tends more towards the dual modes of reception (hearing and reading) in the Middle Ages, whereas the prologue tells the reader carefully how to read the text again and again (Pleij 2004).

After a prose edition, Leeu printed the narrative again in Dutch, this time in Antwerp and in verse (between 1487 and 1490; Schlusemann 1989). The peritextual differences between the editions are striking. In the new edition, preserved in seven fragments, the narrative is in verse, divided into numbered chapters with comments in prose preceding the chapters they refer to, and is illustrated.⁴² Leeu obviously recognized the importance of a clearer structure, with comments to support the reader in understanding the text, and illustrative material to attract attention. In respect of these peritextual elements, this verse edition was the source for the Antwerp schoolbooks. The narrative and the peritextual characteristics of Leeu’s verse edition also served as the indirect source for the Low German *Reynke de vos* (1498) (Witton 1980; Goossens 1983a; Schlusemann 1999).

4.2 Antwerp Schoolbooks

After Leeu’s verse edition, the production of *Reynaert* editions in Dutch stopped for three quarters of a century. In 1564 Christoffel Plantijn printed a schoolbook in Antwerp for the bookseller Peeter van Keerberghen (Martin 1876; Menke 1992, IV.B.b.5). The title is printed at the top of the title page in two different typefaces over six lines arranged in a triangle. The first part of the title is printed in Gothic capital letters: *REYNAERT DE VOS* || *EEN SEER GHENVECHLIIC* | *KE ENDE VERMAKELIJCKE* [...] (“Reynaert the fox, a very enjoyable and entertaining [...]”). The first line presents the main title and names the hero. The second and third lines, in a smaller typeface, emphasize the story’s entertaining qualities. The adjective “ghenvechlicke” is cut in two and spread over two lines and while this affects the readability of the text, it allows to keep the triangle shape. The following three

⁴² Breul (1927); Goossens reconstructed the textual parts and the illustrations (Goossens 1983a; 1983b). See Goossens (1998) about the prose comments in the seven fragments of this so-called verse incunabulum. We do not know if there was a prologue in the verse edition.

lines are printed with a *civilité* in italics: *Historie, met haer Morali | | satien ende corte wtleg | | ghingen* (“History, with its Moralizations and short explanations”).⁴³ Here, too, words have been cut because of the layout requirements for the triangle shape.⁴⁴

The table of contents can be confusing for the reader as it lists in a rather incomplete and random way the chapters up to number 70.⁴⁵ It is followed by a prologue addressed to the reader (A3r and A3v), and a table of figures in two columns (A3v). As the prologue emphasizes that one learns best when learning with enjoyment, it is safe to assume that the book was intended for teaching purposes.⁴⁶

The narrating text starts in *civilité* with a repetition of the title and, in the second line, the word “Moraël” (“Moral”). The next three lines, printed in Gothic typeface, could in fact be called the announcement of the first chapter because they contain the first chapter title.⁴⁷ However, after sixteen lines of narration about the animals attending the court day, another title, again in *civilité*, presents the accusations against the fox. This is followed by “Dat eerste Capittel” (“The first Chapter”), also in *civilité*. The subsequent narrative text is also printed in *civilité*. The rest of the book displays a clear typographic difference between the narrating text and the titles of the chapters printed in *civilité*, and the prose glossaries, which are introduced with the title “Moraël”, in roman letters. In this way, the typography supports the division between narrating text and prose glossaries, and helps the reader to distinguish at a glance between the different parts.

A second schoolbook was printed shortly afterwards in Antwerp, also by Plan-tijn (1566) (Menke 1992, IV.B.b.6). The Dutch text remains the same but is now accompanied by a parallel French translation by Johannes Florianus (1522–1595).⁴⁸ The edition is decorated with 40 illustrations by the Parisian woodcutter Jean [II] de

⁴³ For more detailed information about the edition, see Menke (1992, IV.5); for an edition Martin (1882–1887). The *civilité*, designed by Robert Granjon and first used in 1557–1558, was an imitation of a lettertype that was used at the time for learning to read (Vervliet 2018).

⁴⁴ At the bottom of the title page, also in italic *civilité*, we find the information that the book can be bought at Peeter van Keerberghen’s shop in Antwerp.

⁴⁵ In fact, in the list (A2r and A2v) there is a double reference to some chapter numbers (e.g. 15, 52) while some are missing (e.g. numbers 14, 17, 20, 22, 24, 33, etc.).

⁴⁶ “Ende aengesien men niet beter en soude connen gheleeren, dan tghene datmen met ghe-nuechten leert, so hebben wy gheerne desen Boeck aenghenomen om den seluigen in Neder-duytsch te laten drucken” (“Because you cannot learn better than what you learn with enjoyment, we gladly chose this Book to be printed in Dutch”). See also Verzandvoort (1988–1989).

⁴⁷ “De leeuwve als Coninck van alle dieren, doet eenen vasten vrede creyieren [...]” (“The lion as the King of all animals decrees lasting peace [...]).

⁴⁸ He was a teacher at the Latin school in Antwerp (Verzandvoort 1988–1989, 241). See also Willems (1922b).

Gourmont after drawings by Geoffroy Ballain (Verzandvoort 1988–1989, 240–246).⁴⁹ By using decorative frames, Plantijn clearly intended to make his *Reynaert* edition look like an emblemata collection. These frames resemble the illustrations Ballain had made for Sambucus' emblem book (1564) published by Plantijn (Rooses 1903). The texts are printed in two columns: the Dutch text in the middle, and the French in the outer columns of each double page.

On the title page Plantijn chose red for the main titles and black for the subtitles.⁵⁰ The Dutch title is printed in a larger typeface than the French one. For the French subtitle Plantijn chose an italic typeface. Plantijn no longer used the triangle shape, preferring instead to adapt the layout to the contents, at least in the Dutch part: the first line introduces the hero, the second line clarifies what kind of animal he is. The third line emphasizes the narrative's entertaining qualities, and the fourth line that the book is written in French and Dutch. In the French title this principle is no longer maintained: "Renart" is printed in the second line of the title but the definite article relating to it is printed in the first line. The translation "en François" is printed in another line. This means that the layout of the Dutch title and subtitle and that of French translation do not correspond.

After a privilege in French (A2v) and a prologue by the translator (in Latin and Greek, A2v and A3r), a table of contents is inserted, with the Dutch and French titles facing each other. These are printed in separate columns in the same capital roman letters, but the text of the chapters is printed in different typefaces: for the Dutch parts Plantijn chose a Gothic typeface and for the French a roman typeface, a distinction maintained throughout the whole edition. The chapter titles and the word "Moraël" are printed in roman typeface in the Dutch text, and in *civilité* in the French text. The distribution of language areas as well as the difference between narrative text and peritext is evident at first sight to any reader. Therefore, different typefaces seem to have been an important tool for the printers for guiding the reader.

4.3 Northern Dutch 'Chapbooks'

The series of northern Dutch 'chapbooks' started with an edition by Bruyn Harmansz Schinckel (1567–1625) in Delft in 1589.⁵¹ This edition is titled *Van Reynaert* | | *die Vos / een seer genoechlijcke* | | *ende vermakelijcke Historie / met haer* | |

⁴⁹ Plantijn had even ordered 72 drawings by Ballain in April 1565 (Verzandvoort 1988–1989).

⁵⁰ Copy: Bruxelles, BR, L.P. 3678 A; <https://opac.kbr.be/LIBRARY/doc/SYRACUSE/13018314> (22 February 2023).

⁵¹ The Phoebus Foundation in Antwerp owns a copy, which formerly belonged to W. Grauwels. For an introduction to this version and a picture of the title page, see Schlusemann (2023b).

Moralisatien ende korte wtlegginghen || voor die Capittelen gestelt / van nieuws || oversien ende verbeterd. || Met schoone Figueren gheciert ("On Reynard the fox, a very enjoyable and entertaining History, with its Moralizations and short explanations placed before the Chapters, newly reviewed and corrected. Embellished with charming Images"). This edition can be called the catalyst for the *Reynaert* editions in the northern Dutch-speaking regions in subsequent centuries.⁵² The title page consists of three parts: 1. the title and subtitle at the top, repeating the title of the earlier schoolbook editions but with added information about the moral considerations, the corrections, and the charming images; 2. an illustration; 3. impressum.

The title is printed in the same typeface in these seven lines but in different sizes, from larger to smaller.⁵³ The first part of the title until "wtlegginghen" is the same as in the Plantijn edition, but the fifth and seventh lines have been added and are printed in red. Although typography/layout and content do not coincide to the same extent as in the earlier edition printed in 1566, with these words Schinckel emphasizes the accuracy and attractiveness of his edition. The subsequent parts (preface, table of figures, and the beginning of the narrative text) are indicated with titles placed in the middle of the page. In the preface titled "Totten Leser" ("To the Reader"), the printer also inserted manicules for a new subject starting with "In den eersten" ("At first"). He obviously used different methods in his attempts to structure the text clearly.⁵⁴ The announcement of a new chapter is printed in roman type, for example "Dat vijfste Capittel" ("The fifth Chapter", A6r).⁵⁵ If a chapter title is longer than one line, the first line of the chapter is printed in a larger typeface than the following lines. The narrating text of a chapter always starts with an initial. On the first pages the printer has not really always been consistent as he uses the same typeface for the "Morael", the text of the "Morael", the subtitles of a chapter, and the text of that chapter (e.g. on A3r). The second chapter has two "Moraels", one in the middle and one at the

52 This is one of the outcomes of a project from the Freie Universität Berlin (see footnote 14). See also for an overview Menke (1992, 129–145), and Feliars (2006). Nearly all editions were printed in Amsterdam. The only exceptions are one edition printed in Kampen, and one edition in Rotterdam but no material evidence of these editions has been preserved.

53 Under the title we find an illustration showing the court session with the lion king, his wife, and several animals in a circle, with underneath information about the printer, the printing place, and year of publication.

54 However, he repeats the mistake (already contained in the Plantijn edition) of giving the title "Morael" to the first part (A2r). In fact, the subsequent text is not a moral but the title of the first chapter.

55 There is no chapter 22. The numbering jumps from 21 to 23. Therefore, the whole text consists of 69 chapters although the numbering runs to chapter 70.

end, but the third chapter does not have a “Moraël”. From A6v onwards, he sometimes places a manicule before the word “Moraël” in order to make it more explicit. All in all, Schinckel’s structuring shows that the role of a chapter title and a moral at the end of a chapter were clearly not yet self-evident or maybe he just did not bother to change his model, the Plantijn edition, which displays the same features (Wackers and Verzandvoort 1989, 156).

In the edition published in 1603, Schinckel adds on the title page that the narrative is “seer playsant ende lustich om lessen” (“very pleasant and enjoyable to read”, Menke 1992, IV.B.c.9). Schinckel repeatedly emphasizes the accuracy of his edition, the external attractiveness (“with figures”), and the internal value (pleasant and enjoyable contents). Following Schinckel’s edition, all northern Dutch editions until 1800 include the following parts: a title page with a woodcut, a table of contents, a list of figures, (most of the) 69 chapters, moral considerations, and between 22 and 31 woodcuts in the narrative text. But there are changes in the typography. Whereas Schinckel uses the same typeface for the narrating text and the “Moraël” parts, indicating them with a manicule, Otto B. Smient, in his 1642 edition, prefers another typeface for the “Moraël” parts, using large roman letters for the chapter numbers and printing a black line before each new chapter. This makes it easier for the reader to distinguish between different parts of the text. On balance, the northern Dutch editions are consistent for about two hundred years, even when published by different printer-publishers, such as Broer Jansz (1635), Jan Bouman (1668), Hendrickje Blaeu, the widow of Gijsbert de Groot (1694), or Joannes Kannevet (1752).⁵⁶ There was obviously no need to change the formula which had been successful since the end of the sixteenth century.

The dissemination of the *Reynaert* epic in print was restricted to the western and northern European languages. In the early modern period no editions are known, be it in Polish, Czech, Hungarian, Italian, or from the Iberian Peninsula. Interest in the stories about the fox changed after Goethe published his *Reineke Fuchs* in 1794. In Polish, for example, the first version, composed by Ludwik Jenike under the title *Lis Mykita*, is an adaptation of Goethe’s epic in verse published in 1860. Nowadays the hero’s name is nearly always associated with the fox’s (verbal) skills and is used all over the world, for example in the Japanese mobile game *The Battle Cats* in which the fox is called “Raynard” (2012).

⁵⁶ There are at least thirteen editions with more or less the same sequence of illustrations, and sometimes just one or two illustrations switched around (Menke 1992, IV.c.9; IV.c.10; IV.c.11; IV.c.13; IV.c.14; IV.c.15; IV.c.16; IV.c.17; IV.c.23; IV.c.24; IV.c.25; IV.c.26; IV.c.27).

4.4 Southern Dutch ‘Chapbooks’

In the south, the book was included the *Index librorum prohibitorum, cum regulis confectis per patres a Tridentina synodo delectos, auctoritate sanctissimi Domini nostri Pii III pontificis maximi comprobatus. Cum appendice in Belgio, ex mandato regiae catholicae majestatis confecta*, a list of forbidden books announced by an edict of King Philip II in 1570, and published by Christoffel Plantijn.⁵⁷ The southern Dutch ‘chapbooks’ share similarities with the northern Dutch ‘chapbooks’ as the structure of the text remains the same, but with some differences. An edition published by Hieronymus [V] Verdussen in Antwerp, probably between 1695 and 1713, is the oldest surviving edition of this tradition (Menke 1992, IV.B.d.34),⁵⁸ followed by thirteen reprints with minor changes until 1800 (Menke 1992, IV.B.d.36–IV.B.d.48).

Their main characteristics are an illustrated title page, a prologue, a list of figures, the narrative itself, and the images. The title page can be divided into four parts: 1. main title; 2. subtitle; 3. illustration; 4. impressum (Fig. 2).

The title and subtitle differ from the northern Dutch titles: after the name of the main character (in Gothic letters) and its species (in roman letters), they emphasize the judgement of the animals, which is printed in large bold Gothic letters. The following three lines, printed in a much smaller typeface, explain the elements of the court procedure: the name of the judge, the crime, and the verdict. By mentioning the judgement and not revealing the end when the fox is not only discharged but also appointed as the king’s representative in his realm, the author intends to suggest that the story is about a peaceful kingdom ruled by law and order. The following two lines (in small Gothic letters) provide meta-information about the narrative itself, highlighting both its entertaining and didactic value. The illustration also gives the impression of peace and happiness in the empire, especially between the king

57 “The list of forbidden books, as drawn up by the fathers chosen by the Synod of Trent, confirmed by the authority of our most holy Lord, Pope Pius III. With an appendix in ‘Belgio’, completed by order of his royal Catholic majesty.” See also Wackers (2000, 76).

58 Menke 1992, IV.B.d.35, mentions a press correction of this edition. Verzaandvoort and Wackers (1983, 25) identify further press corrections (the copy in Amsterdam, UB, 1514 G 1, differs from the two copies in Antwerp). The production of the southern ‘chapbooks’ in the *Reynaert* tradition probably started in the early seventeenth century, with editions attributed to Hieronymus [II] Verdussen ([1614] and [1631]) although there is no material evidence of these. However, there are indications suggesting they do exist and that two other seventeenth-century editions exist as well (Menke 1992, IV.B.d.29, IV.B.d.30; IV.B.d.31; IV.B.d.32). For the later editions by Hieronymus [V] Verdussen, see Menke (1992, IV.B.d.34; see also IV.B.d.35); see also Van Rossem (2014).

Reynaert
DEN VOS,
OFT
Der Dieren Oordeel.
In het welck door Coninck LION ende sijne
Heeren,
de schalckheydt van Reynaert den Vos wort
ondersocht ende gheoordeelt.
t' Verhael seer ghenuchelijc, ende profijtighe
Morale
Beditselen mede-brenghende.



Fig. 2: *Reynaert den vos* [...]. Antwerpen: Hieronymus Verdussen, [1695–1713], a1r (Antwerpen, EHC, C 14464, copy 1). By courtesy of Erfgoedbibliotheek Hendrik Conscience, Antwerpen.⁵⁹

and the queen snuggling up to her husband. The gallows can be regarded as an allusion to the subsequent development of the story.⁶⁰

In 1651 a version in trochaic verse, adapted from the Antwerp ‘chapbook’ tradition, written by the Antwerp solicitor Segher van Dort (Fig. 3; see also Rijns 2007, XXXI), was published by Jacob Mesens and illustrated with woodcuts based on drawings by Erasmus Quellijn the Younger (1607–1678), an apprentice of the famous Flemish painter Pieter Paul Rubens, and engravings by Jan Christoffel Jeghers (1618–1662).⁶¹ Whereas the woodcut on the title page is the same as in the other editions, the title was changed again.⁶²

The title itself can be divided into four parts, all printed in different typefaces: 1. main title; 2. subtitle; 3. characteristics; 4. author. Although the first line is

⁵⁹ “Reynaert the fox, or The Animals’ Sentence. In which Reynaert’s roguishness is studied and judged by King Lion and his Lords. The Story is very enjoyable and also offers useful Moral Teachings.”

⁶⁰ The same illustration was chosen for (at least) ten editions before 1800.

⁶¹ For more information about the famous Antwerp engraver, see the website of the Netherlands Institute for Art History RKD: <https://rkd.nl/nl/explore/artists/42128> (9 February 2023).

⁶² Other peritextual parts, like the prologue, were changed too: for example, in Schinckel’s edition the fox is described as “goed” (“good”) at the end of the prologue (probably to be understood ironically). In the *Reynaert* edition by Hieronymus [V] Verdussen his “schalckheydt” (“evilness”) is emphasized, and the priests are no longer mentioned anymore in the prologue.



't VONNIS DER DIEREN, OVER
 REYNAERT
 DEN VOS,
 OFT
 Spiegel der Archlisticheyt.
 Waer-inne beschreven wordt het leven vanden Vos,
 ende
 aff-beldinghe vande Hypocriten.
 Met schoone Figuren verciert / met profijtelicke
 ende
 moraele bedietselen tot onderwijsinghe vande
 Ionckheydt.
 Erst in dichte gestelt door S.V.D. ende vermeerdt
 door
 een Lieff-hebber der konst.

Fig. 3: Segher van Dort. *'t Vonnis der dieren over Reynaert den vos* [...]. Antwerpen: Jacob Mesens, 1651, a1r (Zürich, ZB, Gal. XXV 1793 / 1). © Zentralbibliothek Zürich.⁶³

printed in smaller letters than the name of the main character, the focus shifts to the animal's judgement from the start, and to the narrative's meaning as a mirror of deceit. In the subtitle the plural of the word "Hypocriten" ("Hypocrites") indicates that many characters behave in a hypocritical way. The third part does not only accentuate the images but exclusively mentions the didactic meaning of the narrative for young people, leaving out the entertainment value frequently stressed in previous editions. All in all, the reader is presented with the most serious version of announcing the narrative of all editions, which favoured advertising the combination of *delectare* and *prodesse* as a quality feature.

5 Conclusion

Whereas the editions described so far present a harmonious court situation on their title page, this chapter finishes with a picture showing a quite different title image. The short study of this image is also intended as an encouragement to

⁶³ "The animal's judgement of Reynaert the fox, or Mirror of Deceit. Wherein the life of the Fox is described with an illustration of Hypocrites. Embellished with beautiful Images, with useful and moral considerations for the education of Young People. First written in verse by S.V.D. and improved by an art Lover."

look deeply into the different peritextual characteristics of the rich printed editions of the story throughout the centuries in different language areas. In his 1550 edition published in Low German in Frankfurt, Cyriacus Jacob chose the following title:

*Van Reyneken Vosse || dem Olden, syner mennichuoldigen lyst || vnd behendicheyt, eyne schone vnnd nütte Fabel, vull || wyßheit vnd guder Exempel. Darin vast aller menschen we- || sent / handel / || vntruwe / lyst / geswindicheit / nydt vnd hat / || Figurert / vnd anghethô- get wert / mit schonen || figuren erluchtet vnd vorbetert (Fig. 4)*⁶⁴

The title page and the image do not only introduce the fox as the main character but also his cunning and subtlety.⁶⁵ It presents the charming and useful “Fabel” as a story full of wisdom and good examples.⁶⁶ The subtitle underscores that the narrative figuratively depicts different kinds of human behaviour, their nature, trade, perfidious behaviour, cunning, envy, and hatred.

In the foreground the picture shows the fox as a humanized animal on the left. He is standing upright on two feet like a human being. He is dressed like a recluse, but his tail can still be seen sticking out. This emphasizes the ambiguity of his being. In the right “hand” of his two front paws he holds a rosary, a symbol of his pious life, and in the left a letter, the king’s edict about peace in the realm. He looks at the cock who is standing on the right looking at the fox. The cock’s composure, standing with his tail upright and looking at the fox, shows that he does not fear the fox. In the narrative the fox intimates to the cock that he doesn’t have to fear him anymore. The attitudes of the animals in the foreground of the image match the narrative well. The cock believes the fox and also wants to believe him because he enjoys going outside the monastery walls. He tells his family that they can go and look for food outside the walls. The consequences of the cock’s trustfulness and

⁶⁴ “On Reyneken Fox, the Old, his various tricks and skills, a charming and useful Fable, full of wisdom and good Examples. Therein is shown and told the nature of human beings, their trade, unfaithfulness, tricks, pace, envy, and hatred, Illustrated with beautiful images and improved”.

⁶⁵ The image is an adaptation of a very comparable image which had already been used in Gheraert Leeu’s *Reynaert* edition in verse (although there is no material evidence for this, see the reconstruction by Goossens 1983b). In the Low German *Reynke de vos* (1498), we find the image with the fox presenting himself as a recluse (c6v). This motif was also chosen for the Danish and Swedish editions.

⁶⁶ “Fabel” in this title must be understood as a story invented as the opposite to the telling of truth; see 2 Timothy 4:4: “And they shall turn away [their] ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (<https://www.abarim-publications.com/Interlinear-New-Testament/2-Timothy/2-Timothy-4-parsed.html> [10 February 2023]). In this translation “fable” is chosen as a translation for the Greek “μῦθος”, the equivalent of the German translation “Fabel”.



Fig. 4: *Van Reyneken Vosse dem Olden [...]*. Frankfurt am Main: Cyriacus Jacob, 1550, a1r (Antwerpen, The Phoebus Foundation). By courtesy of The Phoebus Foundation, Antwerpen.

his willingness to believe the fox can be seen in the background on the right. The fox carries in his mouth a chicken. Following his conversation with the cock, the fox uses the cock's family's trustingness to catch a chicken very easily. For the reader, the double scene in a single image reveals the fox's behaviour and that of this opponent – and all the other opponents – at a single glance. To my mind, the fox's behaviour as an animal combined with his behaviour as a human being, communication with other animals, his successful use of words and manipulation of his opponents who are taken with him because they are weak as their behaviour is often entirely dictated by emotions, can be regarded as one of the main reasons for the narrative's enduring popularity in so many European language areas, not only in the early modern period but even now.

Tab. 2: Earliest extant editions of *Reynaert* in European vernaculars, 1479–1621.

Language	Author's name and title	Title (English translation)	Place, printer-publisher and year	Reference (no. in Menke 1992)
Dutch	<i>Die historie van reynaert die vos</i>	The history of reynaert the fox	Gouda: Gheraert Leeu, 1479	IV.B.a.2
English	<i>The history of reynard the foxe</i>	—	Westminster: William Caxton, 1481	V.B.a.1
Low German	<i>Reynke de vos</i>	Reynke the fox	[Lübeck: press with the three poppies, probably run by Hans van Ghetelen], 1498	VI.B.a.1
High German	<i>Reinicken Fuchs. Das Ander Teyl des Buchs Schimpff vnd Ernst, Welches nit weniger kurtzweiliger, denn Centum Nouella, Esopus, Eulenspiegel, Alte weisen, Weise Meyster, vnd alle andere kurtzweilige Bücher</i> ⁶⁷	Reinicken Fox. Second Part of the Book Fun and Seriousness Which is not less entertaining than One Hundred Novellas Aesopus, Owlglass, Old Wise Men, Wise Masters, and all other entertaining Books	Frankfurt am Main: Cyriacus Jacob, 1544	VII.B.a.1

⁶⁷ The first two words “Reinicken Fuchs” are not part of the first edition by Jacob, but are quoted from his second edition, printed in 1545.

Tab. 2 (continued)

Language	Author's name and title	Title (English translation)	Place, printer-publisher and year	Reference (no. in Menke 1992)
Danish	Hermen Weigere, <i>En Ræffue Bog som kaldes paa Tyske Reinicke Foss, oc er en deylig oc lystig Bog met mange skønne Historier, lystige Rim, Exempel, och herlige Figurer, som aldri føre haffuer været paa Danske</i>	A Fox Book which in German is called Reinicke Foss, it is a beautiful and pleasant Book with many charming Histories, pleasant Rhymes, Examples, and wonderful Images which has never been in Danish before	Lübeck: Jürgen Richolff the Younger, 1555	VIII.a.1
French	REYNAERT DE VOS. <i>Een seer ghenouchlicke ende vermakelicke historie: in Franchoyse ende neder Duytsch. REYNIER LE RENARD. Histoire tresioyeuse [sic] & recreatiue, en François & bas Alleman</i>	REYNAERT THE FOX. A very enjoyable and entertaining history: in French and Dutch. REYNIER LE RENARD. [A] Very enjoyable and entertaining history, in French and Dutch	Antwerpen: Christoffel Plantijn, 1566	IV.B.b.6
Swedish	[Sigfrid Aron Forsius], <i>REYNCKE FOSZ. Thet år: En skôn och nyttigh Dicht, full medh Wijßheet, godh Lâro, och lustige Exempel: Vthi hwilken alle Menniskiors wâsende, Handel, Otroo, List och Snillheet affmålât warder,</i>	REYNCKE FOX. That is: A charming and useful Poem full of Wisdom, good Instruction, and pleasant Examples: In which every Man's character, Deeds, Infidelity, Cunning, and Wit is	Stockholm: Ignatius Meurer, 1621	VIII.b.6

Tab. 2 (continued)

Language	Author's name and title	Title (English translation)	Place, printer-publisher and year	Reference (no. in Menke 1992)
	<i>sampt medh thet sedliga förståndet och thenne Books bruuk. Allom Menniskiom i thenna sållsamma tijden ganska tienligh och nödigh at weta, sc. Medh sköne Figurer beprydd.</i>	portrayed, together with the moral understanding and the use of this Book. In these remarkable times quite useful and necessary to know for all People. Embellished With charming Images. ⁶⁸		

⁶⁸ With thanks to Anna Katharina Richter for her help with the translation of the Danish and Swedish titles.