

In general terms, the principal aim of this MA thesis is to explore the iconography of the Wandering Jew in both Czech and world fine art. Initially, some room is dedicated to the historical evolution of the legend of the Wandering Jew, who is originally referred to as Cartaphilus or Malchos, later Ahasverus. According to a narrative, taken down already in the first half of the thirteenth century in its essential setup, the so called "Wandering Jew" had punched Jesus, for which he was condemned by him to a ceaseless wandering until his second advent on earth.

The delineation of the ahasveric topic in the broader context of Czech and world literature, music, drama and cinematography is followed by a rather extensive section dedicated to the field of visual arts. According to some scholars, the first depictions of the Wandering Jew could have originated already in the twelfth century. However, more serious proposals situate their first emergence into the period between the thirteenth and the sixteenth century. Furthermore, it cannot be fully excluded that some figurations of the Wandering Jews are inspired in the iconography of the Carrying of the Cross. Since the beginning of the seventeenth century the iconography of Ahasverus reaches its full development: the most noticeable is the progression from initial and rather static depictions towards latter figures captured in motion.

Original popular woodcuts and graphic pamphlets dealing with the ahasveric theme, which were being spread predominantly through doorto-door trade, are since the nineteenth century joined by book and

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newspaper illustrations of the Wandering Jew, as well as by sculptural, painted and graphical figuration by prominent artists such as Wilhelm von Kaulbach, Gustave Doré, Gustave Moreau, Georges Rouault and Marc Chagall.