

ERRANT IMAGES

ILLUSTRATING AN EARLY MODERN GERMAN PLINY

Christopher D. Johnson

21: INQUIRIES INTO ART, HISTORY, AND THE VISUAL
#2-2020, pp. 303–347

<https://doi.org/10.11588/xxi.2020.2.76229>

ABSTRACT

This article contends that woodcuts in a partial German translation of Pliny's *Naturalis historia* function as what Aby Warburg called *Bilderfahrzeuge* (image vehicles). Translated and compiled by Johann Heyden, illustrated by Jost Amman, Virgil Solis, and others, and published by Sigmund Feyerabend in 1565, 1571, and 1584, *Bücher und schriften von der Natur art und eigentschafft der Creaturen [...]* features "description" and "ornament", but rarely epistemological rigour. Specifically, its zoological images are "true" for their aesthetic, pragmatic, and theological value. That most of these images previously appeared in other books published by Feyerabend, in *Thierbuch Alberti Magni* (1545) and Gessner's *Historia animalium* (1551–1557), confirms their mobility was prized more than their accuracy.

KEYWORDS

Pliny the Elder; natural history; translation; Jost Amman; woodcuts; *Bilderfahrzeuge*.

I

Introducing his *Mnemosyne Bilderatlas*, Aby Warburg indicates two ways Renaissance images travelled on “Wanderstrassen der Kultur”:

The Flemish tapestry is the first, still colossal type of mobile vehicle for images [*noch kolossalische Typus des automobilen Bilderfahrzeugs*], which, taken off the wall, is a forerunner – not just in its mobility, but also in its applied technique, with its manifold reproduction of an image’s content – of the paper page printed with images, that is, of the engraving and woodcut, which first made the exchange of expressive values [*Ausdruckswerte*] between North and South a vital event in the circulation process that formed European style.¹

This essay considers how woodcuts in a partial sixteenth-century, German translation of Pliny’s *Naturalis historia* function as such *Bilderfahrzeuge*. It contends that the style, symbolism, and “Ausdruckswerte” propelling these images were critical, ambiguously epistemic elements of vernacular natural history in the Reformation period. Specifically, in *Caii Plinii Secundi [...] Bücher und schriften von der Natur, art und eigentschafft der Creaturen oder Geschöpffe Gottes [...]* (henceforth *Creaturen*), translated and compiled by Johann Heyden, illustrated by Jost Amman, Virgil Solis, and others, and published by Sigmund Feyerabend in Frankfurt in 1565 [Fig. 1], 1571, and 1584 [Fig. 2], the Plinian *copia* of words and things wavers between description (*Beschreibung*) and ornament (*Zierung*).² To make the Book of Nature coincident with God’s Book, the Bible, *Creaturen* mainly copies borrowed images and repeats stock ones, images whose detailed, lively style and, occasionally, marvellous qualities

1

Aby Warburg, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, ed. by Martin Warnke, *Gesammelte Schriften*, II.1, Berlin 2008, 5. All translations are mine. I would like to acknowledge the support during this essay’s composition of the Max Weber Stiftung and the research project “Bilderfahrzeuge: Aby Warburg’s Legacy and the Future of Iconology”.

2

The full title is worth citing for the picture it gives of the translation’s scope and ambitions: *Caii Plinii Secundi / Des fürtrefflichen Hochgelehrten Alten Philosophi / Bücher und schriften / von der Natur / art und eigentschafft der Creaturen oder Geschöpffe Gottes / Als nemlich: Von den Menschen / irer Geburt / Auffziehung / Gestalt / Wandel / Gebreuchen / Künsten / Handtierung / Leben / Kranckheit / Sterben / Begrebnis. Von den vierfüssigen Thieren / die beyde / auff Erden und in den Wassern leben. Von den Fischen / die sich im Meer / süssen Wassern / Seen/ Flüssen / oder Weihern regen. Von den Vögeln / so im Lufft und auff der Erden schweben. Und von den Schlangen/ kreichenden Würmen / mit sampt andern mindern Thierlin / den Eimmissen / Bienen / und ired gleichen. Jetzt allererst gantz verstandlich zusammen gezogen / in ein richtige ordnung verfalst / und dem Gemeinen Manne zü sonderm wolgefallen auß dem Latein verteuscht. Durch M. Johannem Heyden/Eiffender von Dhaun. Mit einem Züsatz auß h. Göttlichen Schrift / und den alten Lehrern der Christlichen / so viel sie von dr Their / Fisch / Vögel und Würn Natur melden / oder Exempels und gleichnis wiese einführen. Sampt vil schönen kurtzweiligen Historien / auss allerley anderen Scribenten / damit die Beschreibung der Natur aller vermeldten Geschöpff Gottes bezeuget / und als gewis erfahren / für Augen gestellt wirt. Kunstreichen Contrafseitung aller und jederer angeregten Stück / und einem ordentlich dienstlichen Register. Getruckt zü Franckfurt am Mayn / Anno 1565.* There are small but important variations in the titles of the subsequent editions, a few of which will be noted in due course. All subsequent references to the Heyden translation in these notes will be to “Pliny” and then the date of the edition.



[Fig. 1]

Pliny, Bücher und schriften von der Natur, art und eigenschafft der Creaturen [...], Frankfurt a. M.: Sigmund Feyerabend, 1565. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Res/2 A.lat.b. 550, title page, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10140858-3.



[Fig. 2]

Pliny, Bücher und schrifften von der Natur, art und eigenschaft der Creaturen [...], Frankfurt a. M.: Sigmund Feyerabend, 1584. Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg, 2 LR 147, title page, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb11199579-1.

appear at first glance to have little epistemic value. Such copia, that is, rarely results from the copying of nature on the basis of direct observation; instead, the images in *Creaturen* would appeal to non-elite, artisanal, pious, and pleasure-seeking readers. At the same time, their complicated genealogy, especially their debts to earlier iconological traditions and to Conrad Gessner's natural history, confirms that they also embody shifting ways of representing and knowing the natural world.

In his review essay pondering recent work on “knowing images”, Alexander Marr queries whether “epistemic images have a style, and if so how do we describe and assess it?”³ As we shall see, Amman's woodcuts were often advertised as being “gründliche” (complete, exact, or simply detailed). In the event, though, the woodcuts by him and others employed to illustrate Heyden's hybrid, truncated version of Pliny's encyclopaedic account of humans, terrestrial and aquatic animals, snakes, and birds, often seem more errant than exhaustive. Typically having migrated to *Creaturen* from other publications (and later redeployed elsewhere by Feyerabend), these illustrations perforce wander away from the corresponding verbal descriptions of animals made by Pliny and other authorities. Yet if the “accuracy” and “objectivity” – to recall Lorraine Daston's criteria for the epistemic image – of the images in *Creaturen* are thus found wanting, then perhaps the broader, arguably more historicist conception of the epistemic image advanced by Christoph Lüthy and Alexis Smets might still apply.⁴ If an epistemic image may “refer to any image that was made with the intention of expressing, demonstrating or illustrating a theory”, then with such “*warer Kunstreichen Contrafeitung*”, as the title page of the 1565 *Creaturen* puts it, the informing *theoria* would be a Reformation way of seeing nature that joins literal and symbolic meanings.⁵ The woodcuts in *Creaturen* are not, therefore, *counterfeit* in the ways Sachiko Kusukawa adduces when considering, for instance, Otto Brunfels's *Vivae eicones herbarum* (1530–1536, whose first volume was translated in 1532 as *Contrafrayt Kreütterbuch*), with its “superbly naturalistic” images drawn and cut by Hans Weiditz and others.⁶ Nor can they be said to directly participate in the emerging

3

Alexander Marr, *Knowing Images*, in: *Renaissance Quarterly* 69, 2016, 1000–1013, here 1002.

4

Lorraine Daston, *Epistemic Images*, in: Alina Payne (ed.), *Vision and Its Instruments. Art, Science, and Technology in Early Modern Europe*, University Park, PA 2015, 13–35; Christoph Lüthy and Alexis Smets, *Words, Line, Diagrams, Images. Towards a History of Scientific Imagery*, in: *Early Science and Medicine* 14, 2009, 398–439.

5

Lüthy and Smets, *Words, Line, Diagrams, Images*, 399.

6

Sachiko Kusukawa, *Picturing the Book of Nature. Image, Text, and Argument in Sixteenth-Century Human Anatomy and Medical Botany*, Chicago/London 2012, 18. Nor does *Creaturen* present a “visual argument” as Kusukawa defines it. Earlier she notes: “The type of picture depicting details of a single object ‘as they were seen’ was often called ‘counterfeit.’” *Ibid.*, 8.

“science of describing” which Brian Ogilvie tracks in his account of Renaissance natural history (mainly botany).⁷ Instead, the zoological images in this German Pliny are “true” because they would represent and reconcile the *liber naturae* and *liber scripturae*. They supplement Heyden’s efforts to translate between Latin and vernacular, pagan and Christian worldviews, efforts rooted in Reformation theology as well as Gessner’s syncretic natural history. Ranging from the symbolic to the nearly verisimilar, the images in *Creaturen* are *res significantes* travelling a Warburgian *Wanderstraße*, a digressive, even sometimes regressive, but always culturally contingent and decidedly material route that sometimes parallels, other times diverges from the more progressive paths taken by the history of botany.

II

Throughout the Renaissance, Pliny’s encyclopaedic *Naturalis historia* provided the chief template and impetus for the pursuit of natural historical knowledge.⁸ The initial reception of *Naturalis historia* was largely philological; it only became increasingly, fitfully, empirical in the second half of the sixteenth century. Yet by the seventeenth century, Pliny’s text, with all its copious facts, marvels, aporias, and errors, with its “physics of qualities”, represented something of an epistemological dead end.⁹ For philological scrutiny had by then allayed most textual concerns, and Plinian natural historians like Gessner and Ulisse Aldrovandi had begun to engage in the thicker description of things themselves, partly by producing “documentary images” which worked closely, even systematically with verbal descriptions.¹⁰ Still, that the images collected and designed by Gessner and Aldrovandi sometimes occupy what War-

7

Brian W. Ogilvie, *The Science of Describing. Natural History in Renaissance Europe*, Chicago/London 2006, esp. 6–11, and 182 on how “[d]escriptions were complemented by woodcut illustrations”. See also id., *Image and Text in Natural History, 1500–1700*, in: Wolfgang Lefèvre, Jürgen Renn, and Urs Schöpfli (eds.), *The Power of Images in Early Modern Science*, Basel 2003, 141–166.

8

See Charles G. Nauert, Jr., *Humanists, Scientists, and Pliny. Changing Approaches to a Classical Author*, in: *American Historical Review* 84, 1979, 72–85; Nauert notes “the rise of the printing industry” played a decisive role in the Pliny revival, as it directed focus to “textual concerns”, *ibid.*, 76; also Nauert, *Caius Plinius Secundus*, in: *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum. Medieval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries. Annotated Lists and Guides*, Washington 1960, 297–422; Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature. Museums, Collections, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy*, Berkeley 1996; Laurent Pinon, *Natural History*, in: Anthony Grafton, Glenn W. Most, and Salvatore Settis (eds.), *The Classical Tradition*, Cambridge, MA 2010, 621–627.

9

Gian Biagio Conte, *The Inventory of the World. Form of Nature and Encyclopedic Project in the Work of Pliny the Elder*, in: *Genres and Readers. Lucretius, Love Elegy, Pliny’s Encyclopedia*, Baltimore 1994, 67–104, here 79.

10

See Angela Fischel, *Natur im Bild. Zeichnung und Naturerkenntnis bei Conrad Gessner und Ulisse Aldrovandi*, Berlin 2009; also Christa Riedl-Dorn, *Wissenschaft und Fabelwesen. Ein kritischer Versuch über Conrad Gessner und Ulisse Aldrovandi*, Wien/Köln 1989.

burg figured as the *Zwischenraum* (interval) between magic and reason, or, as we might put it, between aesthetics and science, confirms again that direct observation of nature was by no means the only basis for sixteenth-century natural historical description.

Although *Naturalis historia* served in the Renaissance as the most important classical authority on art history and artistic techniques of verisimilitude, curiously, Pliny himself discourages images of plants as “misleading” [*fallax*], given the difficulties artists have finding the right colours to depict plants and capturing how they change throughout the seasons (*NH*, 25.4).¹¹ Most Renaissance Latin editions of the *Naturalis historia* spurned images and offered solely commentaries and annotations to clarify the text. Meanwhile, other Latin illustrated natural histories (for example by Aldrovandi, Gessner, Federico Cesi), which borrowed massively from Pliny, endeavoured to make imagery and text closely correspond – even as they continued the search for meanings steeped in various humanist traditions.¹²

As for complete, vernacular, published translations of *Naturalis historia*, these included: Cristoforo Landino’s 1476 influential, but error-filled Italian version, Antoine du Pinet’s meticulous 1566 French translation, and Philemon Holland’s lively 1601 English version.¹³ These versions eschewed illustrations; but the first published Spanish translation by Gerónimo Gómez de la Huerta in 1624 did feature a remarkable sequence of nine indexical *Tablas* keyed to books 6–11.¹⁴ Depicting hundreds of creatures, whose verisimilitude varies wildly, these tables borrow from traditional emblematic imagery, even as they gesture towards distinguishing kinds. And while such visualization [Fig. 3] plays no discernible role in updating and correcting Pliny, it does exemplify how natural-historical *copia* could be synoptically, visually, if inexpertly condensed. More to the point, it confirms how specific images (a handful of which we will encounter below) continued to travel, unmoored from their original contexts, well into the seventeenth century.

11

On verisimilitude, see Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 10 vols., transl. by H. Rackham, Cambridge, MA 1938–1962, 34.38, 35.4, 35.23, 35.52, 35.145 (all citations from this edition). In *Pliny on Art and Society. The Elder Pliny’s Chapters on the History of Art*, transl. by Henrik Rosenmeier, New York 1991, Jacob Isager comments: “His criterion for good art is the greatest possible realism, the greatest possible likeness with Nature (*similitudo*).” *Ibid.*, 137. But for Pliny’s broader influence on Renaissance art, see Sarah Blake McHam, *Pliny and the Artistic Culture of the Italian Renaissance. The Legacy of the Natural History*, New Haven/London 2013.

12

See Findlen, *Possessing Nature*, 60–75.

13

Cristoforo Landino, *Historia Naturale di latino in volgare tradotta*, Venice 1476; Antoine du Pinet, *L’histoire du monde de C. Pline Second [...]*, 2 vols., Lyon 1562; Philemon Holland, *The Historie of the World. Commonly called, The Naturall Historie of C. Plinius Secundus [...]*, 2 vols., London 1601.

14

Gerónimo G. de la Huerta, *Historia natural de Cayo Plinio Segundo. Traducida por el licenciado Geronimo de Huerta [...] ampliada por el mismo, con escolios y anotaciones, en que aclara lo oscuro y dudoso, y añade lo no sabido hasta estos tiempos [...]*, Madrid 1624, 1629.

Generally speaking, early modern attempts to illustrate Pliny's text, though sometimes informed by imagery in bestiaries and herbals, remained rooted in topical and emblematic approaches.¹⁵ An exceptional case is Pico della Mirandola's 1481 manuscript of the *Naturalis historia*, whose historiated letters masterfully illustrate anecdotes from the text.¹⁶ Also noteworthy is Andrea Alciato, who, spurred by Beatus Rhenanus's 1526 commentary on Pliny,¹⁷ expresses the hope of using the increasingly refined technology of the woodcut to make the *Naturalis historia* available to a wider readership:

I would like for [Rhenanus] to see to it that images [εικονικός] depicting animals, lands, fish, and plants be added to individual chapters, which in my opinion should not be too difficult. And I could in this task even be some help to him, because, as you know, the work of Dioscorides is known to me [...]. Also, here (in Avignon) everywhere to be found are makers of mosaics and woodcuts, who easily can construct blocks for the representations. This means in fact teaching not only the nature of things, which Pliny has done, but also to bring knowledge before the eyes to the ignorant; and perhaps this also would please some of the learned, who until now have sweated to litter margins with annotations?¹⁸

Never realized, such an illustrated Pliny would have to wait a generation for Feyerabend and company to bring it to partial, vernacular, but misshapen fruition. Further, as we shall see, natural-historical images with emblematic meanings thrived throughout the sixteenth century in publications meant for the "learned" as well as the "ignorant".¹⁹ However, by the 1560s, when an illustrated Pliny had become "feasible" because of lexicographical advances tying Latin words to plants and animals that could be observed at first-hand, such an undertaking had already, Laurent Pinon argues, "lost some of its importance", as "there was little reason to illustrate Pliny's

¹⁵

See Lillian Armstrong, The Illustration of Pliny's *Historia naturalis*. Manuscripts before 1430, in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 46, 1983, 19–39.

¹⁶

See Hermann Walter, An Illustrated Incunabula of Pliny's *Natural History* in the Biblioteca Palatina, Parma, in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 53, 1990, 208–216; Sarah B. McHam, Erudition on Display. The "Scientific" Illustrations in Pico della Mirandola's Manuscript of Pliny the Elder's "Natural History", in: Jean A. Givens, Karen M. Reeds, and Alain Touwaide (eds.), *Visualizing Medieval Medicine and Natural History, 1200–1550*, Aldershot 2006, 83–144.

¹⁷

See Nauert, *Caius Plinius Secundus*, 367–369.

¹⁸

From Alciato to Boniface Amerbach, 28 May 1528. See *Le Lettere di Andrea Alciato giureconsulto*, ed. by Gian Luigi Barni, Florence 1953, 73–74.

¹⁹

See *Emblems and the Natural World*, ed. by Karl A.E. Emenkel, Paul J. Smith, Leiden/Boston 2017.

zoology once it had been incorporated into the four volumes of Gessner's *Historia animalium*, with pictures and additional descriptions".²⁰ While the subsequent history of Latin editions of Pliny's text bears this out, Pinon's decision to ignore vernacular versions of *Naturalis historia* and his invocation of *Historia animalium* (1551–1558) as marking an iconographic and natural-historical watershed invite further consideration.

Comprising some 3500 folio pages and 1100 woodcuts, Conrad Gessner's four-volume *Historia animalium*, while originally conceived as a gateway to classical natural history, became the first systematic description of animals in early modernity.²¹ Gessner cites Pliny and hundreds of other sources to help him describe animals, but also to include as many of the meanings, symbolic and otherwise, associated with each creature. Pliny is invoked throughout the *Praefatio* to the first volume, thus alerting the reader, as it were, to a debt that will be exponentially increased over four volumes: "It is an arduous task (to speak with Pliny) to give old things novelty, authority to new things, lustre to disused things, light to the obscure, grace to the loathed, credence to the doubtful: indeed, nature to all things and to nature all that is proper to it."²² Both retrospective and prospective, while consistently combining empirical and textual inquiries within a theological frame, *Historia animalium* exercised immediate and enormous influence, not least because of its pictorial material.²³ This was partly because Gessner furnished "true" *picturas* – drawn by him and others – to accompany, clarify, and supplement the verbal descriptions each chapter undertakes. Yet in the event these are, as Kusukawa has demonstrated, often less than *absoluta* (perfect or complete); indeed, as Wolfgang Harms has argued, Gessner often cultivates symbolic or emblematic meanings with his visual and verbal descriptions.²⁴ In doing so, as we shall

20

Pinon, *Natural History*, 626.

21

Conrad Gessner, *Historia animalium I: De quadrupedibus viviparis*, Zurich 1551; *Historia animalium II: De quadrupedibus oviparis*, Zurich 1554; *Historia animalium III: De avium natura*, Zurich 1555; *Historia animalium IV: De piscium ... natura*, Zurich 1558. See Fischel, *Natur im Bild*, 18–19.

22

Gessner, *Historia animalium I*, b3r. He is quoting *NH*, Pr. 15.

23

Urs B. Leu, *Conrad Gessner (1516–1565). Universalgelehrter und Naturforscher der Renaissance*, Zurich 2016; also id., *Conrad Gessner als Theologe. Ein Beitrag zur Zürcher Geistesgeschichte des 16. Jahrhunderts*, Bern 1990. See also special issue: *Conrad Gessner 1516–2016, Gesnerus 73*, 2016; Ann Blair, *Humanism and Printing in the Work of Conrad Gessner*, in: *Renaissance Quarterly* 70, 2017, 1–43.

24

Sachiko Kusukawa, *Drawing as an Instrument of Knowledge. The Case of Conrad Gessner*, in: Alina Payne (ed.), *Vision and Its Instruments*, University Park, PA 2015, 36–48; ead., *The Sources of Gessner's Pictures for the Historia animalium*, in: *Annals of Science* 67, 2010, 303–328; Wolfgang Harms, *On Natural History and Emblematics in the 16th Century*, in: *The Natural Science and the Arts. Aspects of Interaction from the Renaissance to the 20th Century*, Uppsala 1985, 67–83. See also Karl A.E. Enekel and Paul J. Smith, *Introduction. Emblems and the Natural World (ca. 1530–1700)*, in: id. (eds.), *Emblems*, 1–42, 31.

see, he indicates the *Wanderstraße* taken by images in Feyerabend's vernacular versions of Pliny.

In one paratext, "De iconibus", which helps introduce the fourth volume on fish, Gessner notes that, while he was collecting "picturas", Guillaume Rondelet's *Libri de piscibus marinis* (1554) and *Universae aquatiliū historiae pars altera* (1555), Pierre Belon's *De Aquatilibis* (1553), and Ippolito Salviani's *Aquatiliū animalium historiae liber primus* (1554) appeared.²⁵ Hence he appropriated "many" images from Rondelet, a "few" from Belon, and "one" from Salviani; for either he lacked some of them or they seemed "more accurate [*accuratiūs*]" than the ones he possessed. In general, then, while "our pictures are not everywhere elegant or the most accurate [*accuratissimas*]", due partly to printing costs, "they are true, that is, either made from nature or from another model by an author who is always named". Further, Gessner would distinguish between *verae contrafactae* and *simulacrae*, that is, between realistic and allegorical or mythic images of animals – even if this distinction is greatly complicated by the role iconographical traditions perform play in the *Historia*.²⁶ Briefly put, an image with symbolic value could also function as a *wahrhafte Contrafeitung*.

Such duality was repeated when the *Historia animalium* was translated into German: the *Vogelbuch* (1557) by Rudolf Heußlein; *Thierbuch* (1563) by Johannes Herold and Conrad Forer; and *Fischbuch* (1563) by Forer – all published by Froschauer in Zürich. While these translators variously lessened, augmented, and rearranged Gessner's verbal *copia*, most of the images from the Latin editions were faithfully copied (though data about their provenance was usually omitted).²⁷ This suggests both that the images were big selling points for Froschauer's press, and that, with no semantic difficulties and fewer cultural obstacles to overcome, they could be uprooted and transferred more easily than their textual counterparts. In other words, while the stock phrase "sampt jrer waren Contrafactor" appears in the subtitle to the *Thierbuch*, *Fischbuch*, and *Vogelbuch* may well promise accuracy and objectivity, it signals, too, that much of the original's visual *copia* has been successfully copied to a vernacular setting where it might instruct, edify, and delight a broader, more diverse readership.

25

Gessner, *Historia animalium* IV, b2v–b2r. Part of the subtitle of *De piscibus* reads: *Cum iconibus singulorum ad vivum expressis fere omnib. DCCVI*. Subsequent citations are from these pages.

26

See Fischel, *Natur im Bild*, 55–57.

27

Likewise, in the *Fischbuch* at least, Gessner's textual debts are no longer ascribed to Rondelet, Belon, and others. See Gessner, *Fischbuch / Das ist / Ausführliche beschreibung / und lebendige Conterfactor aller unnd jeden Fischen [...]*, Zürich 1563. On the vernacularization of Gessner's natural history, see Udo Friedrich, *Naturgeschichte zwischen artes liberales und frühneuzeitlicher Wissenschaft: Conrad Gessners "Historia animalium" und ihre volkssprachliche Rezeption*, Tübingen 1995.

III

Against this backdrop I wish to consider how and why a Frankfurt publisher, a Palatine translator, and a Swiss *Reisser* living in Nuremberg collaborated to produce three richly illustrated, folio editions of books 7 to 11 of the *Naturalis historia* in German. Featuring Jost Amman's emblematic woodcut of Orpheus with his lyre surrounded by various creatures listening to his song,²⁸ the title page for the 1565 edition of *Creaturen* indicates its contents ("Of humans, their birth, upbringing, stature ..."), its utilitarian approach ("Now first made completely comprehensible and compiled, and composed in correct order, and translated from the Latin into German especially for the delight of the common man"), and highlights the theological value of its verbal and *visual Beschreibung* ("Supplemented by God's holy Scripture and the venerable teachings of the Christian Church, insofar as they mention nature's animals, fish, birds and worms, or introduce examples and similes of the same. Containing many fine, short histories, from all sorts of other writers, so that the description of nature in all God's known creation be attested and placed before the eyes to be surely experienced"). In short, translation and compilation will be accompanied by "true, artful counterfeiting [*warer Kunstreichen Contrafeitung*] in each and every animated piece". On the 1571 title page the Orpheus woodcut is replaced with another by Amman, this time of *Fama*, Sigmund Feyerabend's printer's mark. Then, to illustrate the 1584 title page, Feyerabend has Amman carve a detailed image of Noah leading animals into the ark.²⁹ And while the 1584 text is nearly identical to the 1571 edition, the former offers more and different kinds of images. Before detailing this, though, I want to underscore how the 1571 *Creaturen* trumpets its changes and further underscores its utility:

Now again revised with special diligence, improved and enlarged with many excellent histories, ornamented with fine new figures, the same never before available [*mit schönen neuen figuren gezirt/ desgleichen vor nie außgangen*]. Very necessary, useful, and serviceable to all pharmitists, house-fathers and housemothers, indeed to all who desire to experience and to know the character, power, and effect of nature.

In regard to the text, this refers to how Part I (on humans) is now amplified by an avalanche of supplementary sources. As for the illustrations, it alludes to how Amman's woodcuts, most of them not

²⁸

This image can be compared for style and theme with Solis's illustration on p. 5. of the death of Orpheus.

²⁹

On Feyerabend's reuse of Amman's images, Amman's style, and related matters, see Ilse O'Dell, *Jost Ammans Buchschmuck-Holzschnitte für Sigmund Feyerabend. Zur Technik der Verwendung von Bild-Holzstücken in den Drucken von 1563–1599*, Wiesbaden 1993, 11–90.

expressly made for *Creaturen*, have been incorporated to replace those by Solis. But it also may indicate another, even more striking change: the excision of a series of fantastic images depicting aquatic creatures which the 1565 edition borrowed from Gessner's *Historia* and elsewhere – *monstra* whose *Ausdruckswerte* will be contemplated below.

As for the “theory” informing *Creaturen* and its images, the translation promises a useful and pleasing “Beschreibung der Natur” for all kinds of vernacular readers, thereby further kindling their desire “to experience and to know” nature’s creatures. Echoing perhaps the Sprachphilosophie of Luther’s *Sendbrief vom Dolmetschen*, *Creaturen* is cast as a Christian natural history designed to meet cultural, linguistic, epistemological, and especially spiritual needs. In this manner, Pliny’s zoology, with all its truths, half-truths, fables, and errors, achieves a Reformation *Nachleben*. Promising to make nature available “for the eyes” – while skirting textual questions and largely ignoring recent discoveries and observational data – *Creaturen* treats Plinian *scientia* as anticipating Christian *sapientia*.

Arguably the leading German publisher in the later sixteenth century, the learned Feyerabend (1525–1590), founded the Frankfurt and Leipzig book fairs, but gained his greatest fame for lavishly illustrated editions. Exemplary is his 750 folio-page version of Luther’s Bible (1560), with 152 woodcuts mostly by Solis, which was reprinted in 1564 with 137 woodcuts by Amman replacing those of his predecessor.³⁰ Also noteworthy is Hans Sachs’s (1568), featuring 114 woodcuts by Amman.³¹ Here, after promoting the 1565 *Creaturen*, Feyerabend’s *Vorrede* makes a theological and sociological case for manual trades and craftsmanship. It boasts of how this “little book”, thanks to Gutenberg’s invention and Polydore Vergil’s example in *De inventoribus rerum* (1499), is able to offer a “complete and actual description” of all occupations, high and low.³² That such description occurs in verse as well as being “ornamented with artful figures in each and every part” confirms that, at least nominally, word and image were meant to work closely together. Such is the

30

See Hollstein’s *German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts 1400–1700*, vol. LXVI, *Virgil Solis, Book Illustrations*, Part I, comp. by Dieter Beaujean, ed. by Giulia Bartrum, Rotterdam 2006, which lists 185 woodcuts from 165 blocks, though these include the woodcuts on the title page as well as ornamental borders. But Solis’s greatest fame was won by his illustrations for Feyerabend’s 1563 edition of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. See Hollstein’s *German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts 1400–1700*, vol. LXVII, *Virgil Solis, Book Illustrations*, Part II, comp. by Dieter Beaujean, ed. by Giulia Bartrum, Ouderkerk aan den IJssel 2006, 87–131. See also Hollstein’s *German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts 1400–1700*, vol. LXIII, *Virgil Solis*, Part I, comp. by Dieter Beaujean, ed. by Giulia Bartrum, Rotterdam 2004. Bartrum stresses his prolific output, commercial motivation, and “skillful absorption and re-interpretation of other artists’ styles, particularly Albrecht Dürer, Peter Flötner, Sebald Beham and many others of French and Italian origin”. *Ibid.*, xiv.

31

Feyerabend also published a Latin version of the same text, *Panoplia omnium illiberalium mechanicarum* (1568). In the same year, Feyerabend, with Peter Schmid, published Luther’s *Tischreden*, with an illustrated title page by Amman.

32

Hans Sachs, “Vorrede”, *Eygentliche Beschreibung aller Stände*, Frankfurt a. M. 1568, unnumbered page.

case with Amman's woodcut of the *Reisser* [Fig. 4] – a kind of emblematic self-portrait.³³

Promising to convey practical, historical, but also moral and theological knowledge of nature, the paratexts in *Creaturen* by the translator Johann Heyden (ca. 1530–ca. 1600) explicitly place Pliny's legacy into a Christian allegorical frame.³⁴ His translation refuses to be tethered only to Pliny's text but instead becomes an ambitious *compilatio*, whose *inventio* and *dispositio* cuts and pastes from the mostly classical textual tradition associated with the Book of Nature as well as from the Bible and sundry theological texts. Here, then, "Erkenntnis" [knowledge] concerns the *Geschöpffe Gottes*. Copiously supplementing Pliny's text, Heyden literally and allegorically represents the scale of creation: from the marvellous aspects of human beings to the "characteristics" of worms. He would enable German readers to compare their physical and spiritual experience and understanding of the natural world with that of Latin readers, who could draw more easily on the humanist archive.

Interpolating Pliny's text everywhere with translated passages from hundreds of authorities as well as extracts from other parts of the *Naturalis historia*, Heyden's translation of books 7–11 is a philologic monstrosity. Borrowing from, among others, Aristotle, Cicero, Valerius Maximus, Ovid, Solinus, Aelianus, Aulus Gellius, Oppian, Heliodorus, Lactantius, John Chrysostom, Augustine, Isidore, Albertus Magnus, Ravisius Textor, Conrad Lycosthenes, Alciato, Raffaele Maffei, Erasmus, Sebastian Münster, Sebastian Franck, but, above all, Gessner and his German translators, Heyden deforms and complicates further Pliny's already wildly intertextual encyclopaedia.³⁵ More particularly, availing himself of Heinrich von Eppendorff's 1543, fairly faithful, unillustrated German translation of books 7–11 of *Naturalis historia*, Heyden, as the *Vorrede* readily acknowledges, closely follows Part I of Eppendorff's version.³⁶ But

33

Pliny 1584, 54. The chapter is titled: "Von den Malern/ Bildhauern/ Steinschneidern/ Reissern/ Formschneidern/ Seidenstickern." Heyden sends the reader to "Plinius lib. 35. cap. 9. Aelianus lib. 4. de Var. Hist."

34

On how Heyden makes *Creaturen* a "Seitenzweig der volkssprachlichen Gessnerrezeption", a "sachliches Handbuch", and a "Bibelhermeneutik", see Friedrich, *Naturgeschichte*, 188–246.

35

In a similar vein, Heyden compiled for Feyerabend the massive *Biblische Namen Buch / Darinn die Hebreische, Caldeische, Syrische, Griechische, un[d] Lateinische, Namen, Gottes un[d] deß Herrn Christi [...]*, Frankfurt a. M. 1567. Friedrich, *Naturgeschichte*, demonstrates that Gessner and his translators provide Heyden "bei weitem das umfangreichste Material". *Ibid.*, 199. He comments: "Erkenntnis vollzieht sich nicht durch Erklärung, sondern durch Aneinanderreihung oder Gegenüberstellung von Exzerpten, die einzig durch ihre Zitatform miteinander in Beziehung treten." *Ibid.*, 197.

36

Heinrich Eppendorff, *Cajj Plinij Secundi von Veron, Nätürlicher History Fünff Bücher: Namlich das VII Von der Menschen vnd Völcker wunderbarlichen gestalten, weissen, wandel, art, natur, vn[d] gebreüchen, beyderley geschlechten, man[n] und weiberen. VIII Von den Thyrerren, so vff dem Erdtreich wonen. IX Von der Fisch allerley geschlecht vn[d] eygenthschaffen, so im Wasser wonen. X Von dem Gefügel so im lufft lebt. XI Von den Kryechenden, vnd Mynderen Thyeren, so abgespalten an ergänzung irer glyder*, Straßburg 1543.

Adumbrator. Der Reißer.

Phæbus imaginib. quæ ad aucta volumina pul-
Conspicit, egregios et tot ubiq; libros. (Chris
Hæc meritò nostris accepta laboribus olim,
Posteritas calamo grata dabitq; meo.



Quicquid enim leui super assere pingimus, illud
Officio sculptor debet, opiq; meæ.
Quicquid et effectum memorabile pace, vel armis
Phæbus in Oceano spectat utroq; geri.
Dulcibus illustrat manus ingeniosa figuris,
Blanda quibus cernens lumina pascat homo.
C Sculptor

[Fig. 4]

Jost Amman and Hartmann Schopper, *Panoplia omnium illiberalium mechanicarum [...]*,
Frankfurt a. M.: Sigmund Feyerabend, 1568 © Trustees of the British Museum.

then, in Part I of the 1571 and 1584 *Creaturen*, he adopts – perhaps for consistency’s sake or because he did not want to leave unaccompanied by Christian authorities Pliny’s theologically suspect account of human beings – the same topical, intertextual approach characterizing the other parts of the 1565 edition and all of the two later editions.

In brief, like Pliny, Heyden is principally a reader. He nowhere claims to have done any direct observation of animals; instead, he effectively applies Luther’s doctrine of *sola scriptura* to natural history. As a compilation, *Creaturen* is a kind of vernacular mutation of the philological approach to Pliny, which aimed to reconcile the *Naturalis historia* with its Greek authorities. Thus its second chief paratext is an excerpt from Theodorus Gaza’s translation of Aristotle’s *De partibus animalium*, which Heyden titles “On the utility of the knowledge [*Nutzbarkeit des Erkenntnis*] of the nature of animals”.³⁷ Moreover, this same passage in Latin follows Gessner’s *Praefatio* to the first volume of *Historia animalium*, providing thereby further evidence of the genealogy of the German *Creaturen*.

Heyden’s own *Vorrede* begins by citing Augustine on how knowledge of nature will help readers interpret Scripture. It then retells Augustine’s allegorical interpretations of various animals, such as the snake, deer, dove, and eagle.³⁸ Next, Heyden recounts how difficulties interpreting natural things in the Bible prompted him to turn to Pliny and eventually to undertake a translation for his own use. But to interpret Pliny and to polish his translation for publication he constantly had to turn to the “superb, useful-beyond-all-measure books of Doctor Gessner”.³⁹ Particularly useful was Gessner’s “small concordance”, which probably refers to Forer’s Index-Register of Latin and German terms, rather than the massive polyglot indices prefacing the volumes of *Historia animalium*. But, again, the utility of Gessner’s books, in the Latin original and in translation, surely also lies in how they could be mined for supplementary material, both verbal and visual.

The son of a humanist scholar, Jost Amman was born in Zürich in 1539, apprenticed in Basel, but by 1560 had settled in Nuremberg where he soon became one of his generation’s preeminent *Reisser*. Filling the shoes of Virgil Solis, who died in 1562, Amman was for decades the main illustrator for Feyerabend’s press, collaborating on some fifty books before his death in 1591. His output of woodcuts was so large it would have needed a “haywagon” to be transported, one contemporary remarked. Extant are 329 single-sheet prints and over 2800 book illustrations (most, especially after 1568, from his own

³⁷

Pliny 1571, 2 unnumbered pages.

³⁸

Ibid., iir–iiiiv. Tellingly, the *Vorrede* remains unaltered in the three editions.

³⁹

Ibid., iiiir.

designs).⁴⁰ Notably, Amman's pictorial invention is the sole exemplar in Feyerabend's 1578 *Enchiridion. Artis pingendi, fingendi et sculpendi*. Here, over the course of 110 woodcuts, almost all printed for the first time, Amman, with his lively, detailed, somewhat mannered style, depicts costumes, gestures, and emblematic scenes. With this said, his natural-historical images lack many qualities recent scholarship has associated with epistemic images – even if one Quadt von Kinckelbach affirmed in 1609 that Amman “followed life more [*hat dem Leben mehr gefolgt*] than any of his contemporaries”.⁴¹ Insofar as an epistemic image can and should substitute for the thing itself, as Daston contends, Amman's images are certainly a step backwards from, say, Dürer's watercolours, da Vinci's drawings, or Weiditz's woodcuts. For example, Amman's ostrich (*Strauß*), which is the first image in the fourth part (on birds) in the 1565 and 1571 *Creaturen* [Fig. 5], is depicted holding a horseshoe in its beak, a traditional iconographic gesture illustrating Pliny's claim that ostriches can digest everything they ingest.⁴² It is far less naturalistic than, say, Raphael's 1520 allegorical ostrich, “probably drawn from life”, in the Sala di Constantino [Fig. 6].⁴³ Put another way, to pursue his own aesthetic and cultural agenda, or to pragmatically please his employer, Amman ignored Pliny's influential prescriptions for artistic verisimilitude in books 34–35.⁴⁴ His images fooled no hungry birds. And while Ilse O'Dell demonstrates “the after-effect of Dürer's depictions of animals” in a handful of Amman's images, she also refutes speculation that Amman, despite a family connection to Gessner, illustrated any part of the *Historia animalium*.⁴⁵

40

O'Dell, Buchschmuck-Holzschritte, 14; see also Introduction to *The New Hollstein German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts 1400–1700, Jost Amman Book Illustrations Guide to the Catalogue*, comp. by Gero Seelig, ed. by Giulia Bartrum, Marjolein Leesberg, Rotterdam 2003, xix–xxxii. Their Introduction also details Feyerabend's use and reuse of Amman's blocks.

41

Cited by O'Dell, Buchschmuck-Holzschritte, 14.

42

Pliny 1565, 396. Unlike most of Amman's other images in the 1565 edition, this one makes its first appearance here, though tellingly it is not identified as an ostrich. Only in Pliny 1571, 349, is it glossed as a “Strauß”. For more on the genealogy and morphology of this and many other “wandernde Bilder” in Reformation Germany see Paul Michel, *Wandernde Bilder*, <http://www.enzyklopaedie.ch/dokumente/Bildmigration.html#Schedel> (31.08.2020).

43

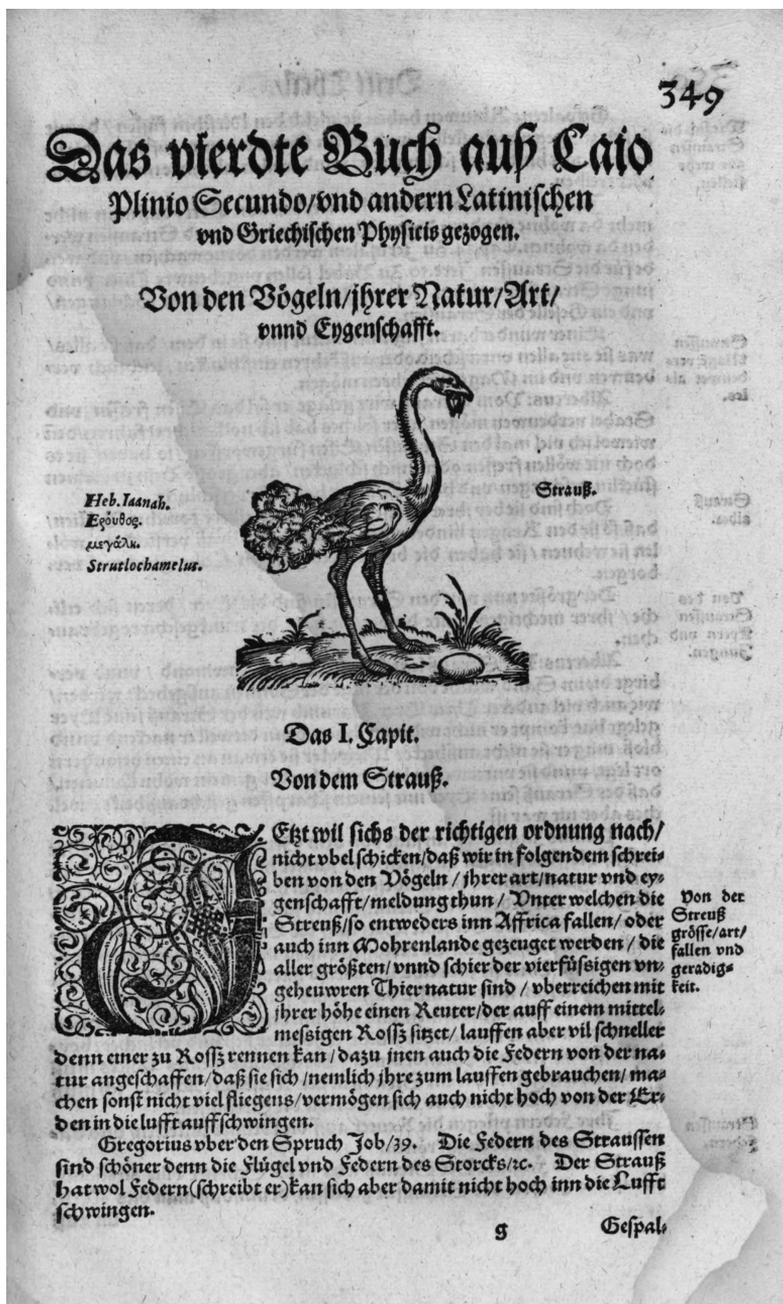
See Una Roman D'Elia, *Raphael's Ostrich*, University Park, PA 2015, 8.

44

On pictorial verisimilitude see *NH*, 34.38, 35.4 (“maxime similes ... figurae”), 35.23 (“cum ad tegularum similitudinem corui decepti imagine aduolarent”), 35.52, 35.145. Jacob Isager notes that Pliny's “criterion for good art is the greatest possible realism, the greatest possible likeness with Nature (*similitudo*)”. See id., *Pliny on Art and Society. The Elder Pliny's Chapters on the History of Art*, transl. by Henrik Rosenmeier, New York 1991, 137.

45

Ilse O'Dell-Franke, Die Nachwirkung von Dürers Tierdarstellungen auf Arbeiten Jost Ammans, in: *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 82/83, 1986/87, 91–99, here 91. Specifically, she compares “eine ornamental-heraldische” drawing by Amman of a lion head with a sheet containing three lion heads by Dürer, which is more life-like though probably not *ad vivum*.



[Fig. 5]

Pliny, *Bücher und schriften von der Natur, art und eigenschaft der Creaturen* [...], Frankfurt a. M.: Sigmund Feyerabend, 1571. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, 2 A.lat.b. 552, p. 349, urn:nbn:de:hbz:12-bsb10140859-4.



[Fig. 6]

Raffaello Sanzio, detail from Sala di Costantino, fresco, ca. 1520-1524. Wikimedia / Commons.

The animated *Contrafeitung* of the 1565 *Creaturen* includes 70 illustrations from 61 blocks by Solis and 39 illustrations from 37 blocks by Amman.⁴⁶ The 1571 edition, despite its claim to feature never-before-used images, contains 169 illustrations from 112 blocks by Amman, but most of them previously employed in the 1568 and the 1569 *Neuw Thierbuch*, a kind of zoological emblem book, which I'll discuss below.⁴⁷ Thus Feyerabend removes Solis's more mythographic images, which dominate Part I of the 1565 edition, and replaces them with Amman's less cluttered, somewhat more objective representations of humans, animals, and everyday life. The 1584 *Creaturen* relies even more on repetition: Amman is made to supply 214 illustrations from 141 blocks.⁴⁸ These include, for example, a marvellous siren [Fig. 7] and a sober depiction of a rabbit, which is repeated three times [Fig. 8].⁴⁹ That the siren is copied from Gessner, who took it from Rondelet, who appropriated it from Olaus Magnus (1490–1557), represents one kind of repetition; but that the rabbit represents not only a familiar, demonstrably real object and that it proliferates in different chapters is symptomatic of another, equally characteristic kind of repetition in which images circulate in a symbolic economy.⁵⁰

For the 1565 *Creaturen*, Feyerabend commissioned a handful of new images from Amman, but mostly redeployed his existing stock of woodcuts by Solis and Amman. He borrowed from the 1560 and 1564 Bibles, but also took images by Amman from a translation of Livy he would publish in 1568. More substantially, Feyerabend pirated dozens of images from the 1545 *Thierbuch Alberti Magni*, a radically condensed, very loose translation by Walter Ryff of Albertus's thirteenth-century *De animalibus*, which itself draws on various sources from Aristotle and Pliny to Olaus Magnus and German folk wisdom.⁵¹ Ranging from crude depictions of crustaceans to vivid

46

Bartrum, Hollstein's German Engravings LXVI, 242–247; *The New Hollstein German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts 1400–1700*, Jost Amman, *Book Illustrations*, Part I, comp. by Gero Seelig, ed. by Giulia Bartrum, Marjolein Leesberg, Rotterdam 2002, 233–243.

47

The New Hollstein German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts 1400–1700, Jost Amman, *Book Illustrations*, Part IV, comp. by Gero Seelig, ed. by Giulia Bartrum, Marjolein Leesberg, Rotterdam 2002, 110–121. Only one image, showing Hercules on the funeral pyre, by Solis remains. See Pliny 1571, 88.

48

The New Hollstein German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts 1400–1700, Jost Amman, *Book Illustrations*, Part VIII, comp. by Gero Seelig, ed. by Giulia Bartrum, Marjolein Leesberg, Rotterdam 2003, 184–193.

49

Pliny 1584, iir, 243–253.

50

Imitations of Gessner's chameleon and porcupine also persist: see *ibid.*, 129, 158.

51

Thierbuch Alberti Magni / Von Art Natur vnd Eygenschafft der Thierer / Als nemlich Von Vierfüßigen, Vögeln/ Fyschen/ Schlangen oder kriechenden Thieren / Vnd von den kleinen gewürmen die man Insecta nennet. Durch Waltherum Ryff verteutschet. Mit jhren Contrafactur Figuren, Frankfurt a. M. 1545.



[Fig. 7]

Pliny, *Bücher und schriften von der Natur, art und eigenschafft der Creaturen [...]*, Frankfurt a. M.: Sigmund Feyerabend, 1584. Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg, 2 LR 147, p. iir, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb11199579-1.



[Fig. 8]

Pliny, *Bücher und schriften von der Natur, art und eigenschafft der Creaturen [...]*, Frankfurt a. M.: Sigmund Feyerabend, 1584. Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg, 2 LR 147, p. 243 (detail), urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb11199579-1.

representations of marvellous creatures, the images in *Thierbuch Alberti Magni* served as both source and model for illustrating Pliny. Telling also is that, as in an emblem book, an image accompanies each entry. Thus “Asinus” [Fig. 9] migrates to the 1565 *Creaturen* where the “Esel” is treated as Heyden translates *Naturalis historia* 8.68 and where other passages by Pliny, verses from Matthew 21, Numbers 22, and excerpts from Aristotle, Jerome, Gregory, and Gessner (translated from the Latin) are also adduced.⁵² Yet even as *Creaturen* adopts here a simplified version of Gessner’s *Philologia*, it spurns his *iconem* [Fig. 10], which is more realistic and nuanced than the *Thierbuch*’s. In the 1571 edition, though, Amman substitutes his own more naturalistic design [Fig. 11]; and, further complicating matters, the 1584 edition twice repeats Amman’s image, adds another Amman woodcut, and, perhaps to increase the *variatio*, inserts the 1545 *Thierbuch* image as well. Such “Figuren” could, in short, wander away from their contexts more easily than images aspiring to greater accuracy or objectivity. Loosely correlated to Heyden’s *cento*-like text, in the course of three editions images are made to appear and disappear, to repeat, or to shift from one context to another. In this sense, Heyden’s selection and arrangement of passages taken from authorities (to say nothing of Gessner’s and Pliny’s own intertextuality) is analogous to the reshuffling of images marking *Creaturen*.⁵³

Briefly put, the agency of the images is widely distributed in *Creaturen*. In furnishing hundreds of mobile images pretending to represent the “Erkenntnis” lurking in Heyden’s motley text, *Creaturen* transposes into the vernacular the humanist attitude, refined with unparalleled rigour by Gessner, that the natural historian’s task is not primarily to judge the veracity of the material conveyed, but rather to make available as much and as varied amounts of it as possible. Generally speaking, then, the “Bilder” for *Creaturen* are not “technical images”;⁵⁴ nor do these generally possess that “[d]ifficulty, acuity, [and] observation” that might qualify them as “epistemic”.⁵⁵ Further, no concern is ever expressed in *Creaturen* as to how image and text should work together to effect *Beschreibung*;

52

Pliny 1565, 219–227; Gessner, *Historia animalium* I, 1, 14.

53

Feyerabend also published a complete 1582 Latin edition, *Historia mundi naturalis*, based on a 1535 Basel edition and including the learned *Castigationes* by Sigismund Gelen (Gelenius), who had made his name as an editor and proofreader for the Froben Press in Basel and as an assistant to Erasmus. Cf. Nauert, *Caius Plinius Secundus*, 312. Feyerabend’s Latin Pliny includes 75 illustrations from 49 blocks by Amman; the title page promotes these with the phrase “vivirusque imaginibus illustrata”. Thus images from the vernacular *Creaturen* migrate back to the Latin text, though most chapters in the latter remain unillustrated. This suggests that images were perceived as being less essential for Feyerabend’s Latin reader or simply that the expense and effort were too great to illustrate all 37 books.

54

Das technische Bild. Kompendium zu einer Stilgeschichte wissenschaftlicher Bilder, ed. by Horst Bredekamp, Vera Dünkel, and Birgit Schneider, Berlin 2012.

55

Marr, *Knowing Images*, 1009.

vonden Thieren.



selber verhaßet / darvon es beginet / sehr laut zuschreien / welches die ja-
ger vernemen / vnd solchs Thier fahen vnd erschlagen.

Anatopes als der alte für-
trefflich erkundiger der Natur
im seinem Thier Buch anzei-
get / ist ein Thier mit sehr
scharpffen hönern / also das es
mit dem geborn die bein durch-
schneidet / so aber dieses Thier
vnterstehet die gestende vnnnd ze-
hen ist sollicher massen durch-
zuschneiden / weichen sie vnnnd
würren sich diesem Thier vmb
sein gebörn / solcher maß / das es
darinn behanger vnnnd sich also



wirdt / gebürt oder empfaht er darinnen nicht / mag auch die frucht nicht
firtbringen. Dieses Thier / wiewoles wie obgesagt / fast arbeitfam / vnnnd
mit schweren bürden vberlestiget wirdt / ist es doch stercker vnnnd mag sol-
che viel leichtfertiger tragen / auff dem hindern theil des Ruckens / wenn
vornen gegen dem hals oder mitte des Ruckens / die fleissigen erkundiger
der Natur segen / dieses ein solliche vrsach / Nemlich / die weil dieses Thier
Melancholischer Natur sei / das des hinderen theils seines leibs / vorn
wegen das an sollichem theil die Melancholei sich niderlasset am sterck-
sten vnd freystigsten / auch trückt ner / wie auch solliches darauff zumercken /
das dieses Thiers röe der schienbein / wa sie zusamen geschlagenn wer-
den / vor anderen geben lauter oder schöner / sein haur ist dick vnnnd harr-
derhalben es der streich gedultig / vnnnd gar wenig damit treibenn laßet /
inn seiner lanngsamkeit / oder so es sich weidet oder spisset / mag er nicht
mit harten streichen dauon getriebenn werden.

Sein Complexion
ist jerdisch kalt vnnnd trückt ner Natur / Derhalbenn dieses Thier sehr grob /
vnterstendig vnnnd vngeleernig ist / ist auch gemeinlich magers leibs / al-
so das es selten feißt wirdt / sollicher vrsach halb wirdt es vielmas mit be-
schweren des haupts angefochten / stirbt auch gemeinlich von der rüzig-

A ij Feit/

[Fig. 9]

Walther Hermann Ryff, *Thierbuch Alberti Magni*, Frankfurt a.
M.: Cyraico Jacobi zum Bart, 1545. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek
München, Res/2 P.lat. 19, p. Aair, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00073687-4.

4

De Quadrupedibus



per contemptum ponatur. Nascuntur aut parui, uel uteri uitio, uel aliam ob causam præter naturam, uel propter loci frigiditatem. Columella ab initio lib. 7. Principiū (inquit) tenebit minor Arcadia, uilis hic uulgarisq̄ asellus, Minor Arcadia, id est Arcadico asino, qui & maior & pretiosus est. 3°

B.

Asinus animal gerulum, plagarum & penuriæ inter iumenta tolerantissimus, tardius reliquis armentis deficit, laboris & famis maxime patiens, corpore macilento & deformi, Frigoris impatiens est; quapropter Pontica & Scythica terra & finitimæ asinis carent, ut etiam Celtica (Gallia supra Hispaniam sita) propter immodicū frigus. Parui sunt in Illyria, Thracia, & Epiro, cum cæteras quadrupedes Epirotica terra magnas ferat. ¶ In mulis etiam, asinis communia quædam dicemus. Asini speciosi & mularum generi seminando commodissimi forma, in mulis infra describetur. Ab aspectu (inquit) non aliter probari debet, quàm ut sit amplissimi corporis, ceruicæ ualida, robustis ac latis costis, pectore musculoso & uasto, feminibus lacertosis, cruribus compactis, coloris nigri uel maculosi, aut etiam rubet, secundum Palladium. Nam murinus cum sit in asino uulgaris, tum etiam non optime respondet in mula. Murinus apud Varronem: Ego, inquit, de asinis potissimum dicam, quod sum Reatinus, ubi optimi & maximi fiunt, è quo seminio ego hic procurauī pullos, & ipsis Arcadibus uendidī aliquoties. Igitur asinorum gregem qui facere uult bonū, primum uidendum ut mares, fœminasq̄ bona etate sumat, utiq̄ ut quàm diutissime fructum ferre possint, firmos, omnibus partibus honestos, corpore amplo, seminio bono, ex his locis, unde optimi exeunt; quod faciunt Peloponneses, cum potissimum eos ex Arcadia emebant, in Italia ex agro Reatino. Non enim si murenæ optimæ fluxæ sunt in Sicilia & helops in Rhodo, continuo hispices omni mari similes nascuntur. Et alibi apud Varronem: Quod similes parentum gignantur, eligendi, & mas & fœmina cum dignitate ut sint. In mercando item (ut cæteræ pecudes) emptionibus, & traditionibus donum mutant, & de fœditate ac noxa solet cauere. ¶ Asino & tauro inter ea quæ animal generant crassissimus & nigerrimus sanguis est. Plinius asinis pinguisimum, homini tenuissimum esse scribit. Caput græde (quanquam Aristoteles in Physiognomicis paruū id facit) aures longe lataq̄. Tum mas, tum fœmina trigésimo mense dentes mittit priores; secundos autem sexto mense, atque etiam tertios quartosq̄ eodem; gnomonas hos quartos à dijudicanda etate nuncupant. Quo dñs prius peperere quàm decidant postremi, sterilitas certa. Cor ei pro portione maximum, ut omnibus timidus, aut propter metum maleficis. Venter unicus, ut & reliquis quæ solidas habent ungulas. Felle caret, ut solipeda omnia. Mammæ binas gerit inter femora, in anteriore dorso parte circa scapulas debilior, ubi & crucis figura in eo apparet; posterius & circa lumbos ualidior. Caudam habet quàm equus longiorem. Cur pili è cicatrice nascantur eis, hq̄ candidi, Aristoteles querit Problema te 29, & 31. sectionis 10. Corpore asinorum exanimato scarabæos gigni putant. ¶ Stygis aqua ex pe- tra profuens insigni frigiditate est, dissilientibus uasis omnibus, asini modo ungula excepta, aut mulla, sicuti alij prodidere, ni mendosa sunt Græcorum exemplaria. Certe in libro de primo frigido Plutarchus

[Fig. 10]

Conrad Gessner, *Historia animalium* [...], vol. 1, Zürich: Christoph Fro-schauer, 1551-1557, p. 4. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (84-B13226).



[Fig. 11]

Pliny, *Bücher und schriften von der Natur, art und eigenschaft der Creaturen [...]*, Frankfurt a. M.: Sigmund Feyerabend, 1571. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, 2 A.lat.b. 552, p. 210 (detail), urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10140859-4.

the main text never even acknowledges the presence of the images adorning it. Instead, the woodcuts in *Creaturen* have a now mimetic, now narrative, now emblematic, sometimes obvious, other times tangential relation to the text. Their errancy and mobility, their status as stylized *Bilderfahrzeuge*, result from the absence of a natural historian directing their design and *mise-en-page*, but also from the exigencies of the market and the transference to a vernacular context of humanist habits of mind that prized *copia* over accuracy and objectivity.

IV

As a kind of vernacular alternative to Gessner's three-volume, encyclopaedic picture-album, *Icones animalium* (1553, 1555, 1560), Feyerabend published in 1569 *Ein new Thierbuch. Eigentliche und auch gründliche beschreibung allerley vier und zweyfüßigen Thieren/vom grossen biß zum kleinsten/ sampt derer Art/ Wesen/ Natur und Eigenschafft [...]*. Pretending to delight and to pragmatically instruct, and featuring 107 new woodcuts by Amman ("ornamented with fine, artful figures for each and every animal described"), this *new Thierbuch* draws on a largely traditional iconology of animals.⁵⁶ Its "description" consists in joining images, whose style wavers between the naturalistic and the symbolic, with didactic verse. Tellingly, it later supplied Nikolaus von Reusner with images for the second book of his 1581 *Emblemata partim ethica et physica, partim vero historica et hieroglyphica*, which Feyerabend published as well.⁵⁷ But Feyerabend also mined the *new Thierbuch* to supply the 1571 *Creaturen* with 86 of its 169 woodcuts.⁵⁸ Likewise, after Amman prepared 18 woodcuts for a 1566 edition of Paracelsus's *Opus chyrurgicum*,⁵⁹ some of these migrated to *Creaturen*: for example, in the 1565 edition a field surgeon's tent is used to illustrate Pliny's discussion of scissors and hair-cutting (barbers often doubled as surgeons); in 1571 a depiction of an anatomy lesson accompanies a chapter on life's brevity; and in 1584 a vivid, but crowded image of doctors and surgeons in a hospital heads the chapter, "On the toil and misery

56

It was reprinted in 1579, 1592, and 1617. Feyerabend's *Vorrede* to the 1592 edition describes it as a "Kunstbüchlein" and identifies Hans Bocksperger as draftsman and Amman as *Reisser*.

57

See Nikolaus von Reusner, *Emblemata Partim Ethica, Et Physica*, ed. by Michael Schilling, Hildesheim 1990, the second book of which is dedicated to animals. See Enenkel and Smith, Introduction, 20. More generally, see William B. Ashworth, Jr., Emblematic Natural History of the Renaissance, in: Nicholas Jardine, James A. Secord, and Emma C. Spary (eds.), *Cultures of Natural History*, Cambridge 1996, 17–37. Ashworth affirms that "knowledge of animal symbolism was considered an essential aspect of natural history". *Ibid.*, 21.

58

Extrapolated from Bartrum and Leesberg, *The New Hollstein German Engravings*, 2003.

59

Paracelsus, *Opus chyrurgicum*, Frankfurt a. M. 1566.

of human life here on earth, excerpted from medical doctors and natural historians”.⁶⁰ Unmoored from the particulars of Paracelsian medicine, these images function as floating *res significantes*.

The errant mobility of images proves still more complicated in the following constellation. *Thierbuch Alberti Magni* supplied some eighty images to the Third Part, “Von den Fischen”, of the 1565 *Creaturen*. But this vernacular Albertus had itself ransacked Olaus Magnus’s 1539 *Carta marina et descriptio septemtrionalium terrarum ac mirabilium rerum* for some of its most fantastic images of marine creatures. “Der groß Fisch Colin” or “Balena” in *Thierbuch Alberti Magni*, for example, swam first in the *Carta marina* before it resurfaced again in *Creaturen* to adorn the opening page of Part III [Fig. 12], where Pliny’s ninth book is transformed, and then again in Part III, chapter 2, “How and whence the biggest animals are found in the ocean”, which also interpolates passages from Genesis I, Psalms 74 and 104, Sirach 43, and, seemingly to strengthen the biblical frame, an anecdote about sirens by Eusebius, taken from Forer’s *Fischbuch*.⁶¹

Alternatively, the 1563 *Fischbuch* supplies the 1565 *Creaturen* with several monstrous figures, such as a whale attacking a ship [Fig. 13], which Forer ascribes directly to Olaus Magnus.⁶² While the immediate source for this image could have been the 1545 *Thierbuch*, the manner in which the 1565 *Creaturen* emulates the sequence of monstrous marine creatures in Forer’s section, “The twelfth part on marine animals, thus delimiting sundry whales, sea-marvels, and tortoises”, suggests it was taken from the *Fischbuch*.⁶³ And while the numerous interpolations from Gessner and Forer throughout *Creaturen* tend also to authorize these more fabulous images, Heyden never includes Gessner’s doubts or prevarications about their veracity. Nor does he mention their provenance. By contrast, in the *Fischbuch*, Olaus Magnus is made responsible for his own “beschreybung”: “Hereafter follow several figures of large terrifying whales, taken from the description of the Arctic Sea by Olaus Magnus; how, how well, and correctly these were counterfeited in print, he himself is responsible [*wie die conterfetet/ hat trucken lassen/ wie-*

60

Pliny 1565, 83; Pliny 1571, 79; Pliny 1584, 72.

61

Albertus, *Thierbuch Alberti Magni*, Riiiiir–Sir; Pliny 1565, 301, 303. See also Pliny 1565, 308, which cites the *Fischbuch*.

62

Pliny 1565, 304; Gessner, *Fischbuch*, XCVIir–XCVIIv. See Albertus, *Thierbuch Alberti Magni*, Viiiir. See Kusakawa, *The Sources of Gessner’s Pictures*, 310; though the image she shows, with its gloss in German and Latin, is from p. 176 of the *Icones animalium* (1560) and not *Historia animalium*.

63

Gessner, *Fischbuch*, LXXXVv–CVIIIv. Emulating Gessner’s Liber IIII, this section of the *Fischbuch* contains sections dedicated to Albertus and Olaus Magnus.

301
Das Neundte Buch / Capitel

Plinij Secundi / Sampt einem Zusatz auß
allen andern seinen Büchern /

Von den Fischen / die sich im Meer / Seen /
Flüssen / Bächen / vnd andern süßen
Wässern regen.



Vorrede vnd erstes Capitel vber
dieses Buch.



DS daher haben wir die Thier/
welche sich auff erden enthalten/
vñ mit de menschen etwas beywo
nens treiben / souil wir anders von
ihrer Natur vñnd eigenschafft er
künden mögen / nach allem mögli
chen fleiß beschrieben vñnd für au
gen gestellt / Weil aber dz Seudgel/
vnter die geringste vnd kleinste Thier / als billich / von jeder
meniglich gezelt vñnd gattirt werden / So wollen wir zu
uor vnd ehr wir dieselbigen zühanden nemen / oder von
ihrer art ectwas meldung thun / die Fische / die sich entwe
ders im Meer / oder in Flüssen / oder aber in Seen regen /
mehren vnd finden lassen / wie sie heissen / vñnd was ein je
der vnter ihnen für eigenschafft / wesen vnd natur an ihm
habe / erkleren vnd anzeigen. c

[Fig. 12]

Pliny, *Bücher und schriften von der Natur, art und eigenschafft der Crea-
turen [...]*, Frankfurt a. M.: Sigmund Feyerabend, 1565. Bayerische Staatsbi-
bliothek München, Res/2 A.lat.b. 550, p. 301, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10140858-3.



[Fig. 13]

Pliny, *Bücher und schrifften von der Natur, art und eigentschafft der Creaturen [...]*, Frankfurt a. M.: Sigmund Feyerabend, 1565. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Res/2 A.lat.b. 550, p. 304 (detail), urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10140858-3.

wol unnd recht mag er selbs verantworten].”⁶⁴ Still, it is worth noting that, given Olaus Magnus’s scarce descriptive details about the creatures populating his map, Gessner’s and Forer’s own *Beschreibungen* are perforce primarily ekphrastic. Further, as Gessner admits, since Olaus Magnus sometimes only depicts part of a creature’s body, he is forced to imagine the remaining parts. Such licence is a far cry, though, from what we find in *Creaturen*, which never interrogates any of its images. Nor, again, does Heyden bother to ascribe them. Conversely, even the title pages and paratexts in the later editions of *Creaturen* continue to omit Amman’s name, despite his well-established fame. Instead, the text constantly insists on a scriptural hermeneutic. To gloss Pliny’s generic whale a passage from Job 41 is interpolated together with a marginal annotation by Luther commenting on the same: “The big whale in the sea he names Leviathan, though thereunder he describes the devil with his followers in the topmost world.”⁶⁵ Pliny’s textual legacy is thus given theological weight rather than epistemological rigour; while Gessner’s vicarious, fantastic vision of the whale is transposed and made into an anachronistic authority for the Roman natural historian. As for the images themselves, their fabulous aspects seem to make them more mobile, more available for appropriation, and thus more useful in the translation between old and new, pagan and Christian, worldviews.

Consider, likewise, the “Fisch Barcora”. First sighted in the *Carta marina*, it ornaments *Thierbuch Alberti Magni*, before being appropriated by Gessner’s *Historia Animalium* and *Fischbuch* [Fig. 14]; in the latter, it is named the “Bartwall”, with a nod to Albertus.⁶⁶ Then it migrates to the 1565 *Creaturen* where it helps figure the motley fifteenth chapter, “On the names of tuna and characteristics of several other fish”. Here, though, it is completely unmoored from two short extracts from Pliny on the tuna, which precede it, and from the long, subsequent passage from Tobias 6, where the story of the fish and the Angel Raphael is recounted. Appearing in a chapter containing images of a variety of other fish, crustaceans, and molluscs, together with a bevy of additional authorities – all to accompany the translation of *NH* 9.17–21 – this image is deployed, seemingly, to slake the reader’s thirst for the marvellous, but also, perhaps, to bridge natural history and Scripture.

⁶⁴

Gessner, *Fischbuch*, LXXXVIv–LXXXIXr; see also Gessner, *Historia animalium* IV, 245–251.

⁶⁵

Pliny 1565, 305.

⁶⁶

Albertus, *Thierbuch Alberti Magni*, Riiiiiv; Gessner, *Fischbuch*, LXXXIXv.



[Fig. 14]

Conrad Gessner, *Fischbuch* [...], Zürich: Christoph Froschauer, 1563, p. LXXXIXv (detail).
Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries.

Olaus Magnus's map provides the *Thierbuch Alberti Magni* with the image of the "Meerschwein" (porpoise to us).⁶⁷ Following Pliny's account of the *porcus marinus* (*NH* 9.17, 32.53), Albertus/Ryff treat the creature as real and find various analogues with the terrestrial *Schwein*. Tellingly though, the image had already appeared in 1537 in an anti-Lutheran pamphlet published in Rome, *Monstrum in Oceano Germanico*. Exiled to Rome because of religious persecution in his native Sweden, Olaus Magnus appropriated it for his map of his native North; but Ryff and later Sebastian Münster and Conrad Lycosthenes borrowed it from him – a *Wanderstrasse* whose implications would have intrigued Warburg.⁶⁸ Then, in *Historia animalium*, the creature appears in the context of a sequence of *icones* taken directly from the *Carta marina*, which Gessner prefaces with the warning: "But he appears to have depicted this and many other images from stories by sailors, not from life [*non ad vivum*]." ⁶⁹ Nevertheless, Gessner then declares he will name this "abundance [*copia*] of many cetaceans ... by analogy [*ad similitudine*] with terrestrial creatures" and thus he dubs the creature in question a *Hyæna Cetacea*.⁷⁰ Forer also includes the image and cites Olaus Magnus; but he is less certain how to name it and therefore precedes more circumspectly with analogies.⁷¹ Then, in the 1565 *Creaturen*, this image is twice deployed: first, above a passage translating *NH* 9.2, which discusses analogies between terrestrial and marine animals; and, second, to ornament Pliny's claim (9.17) that "[a] fish very like a sea-pig [*porculo marino*] is drawn out with teams of oxen, especially in the river Main in Germany, and in the Danube with weeding-hooks" [Fig. 15]. This Heyden renders as: "In the Danube one catches sturgeon which are almost entirely similar to sea-pigs [*den Meerschweinen fast durchaus gleich*]." ⁷² Hence while Pliny does not specify the species, Heyden confidently calls it a "sturgeon", thereby yielding a more concrete, if erroneous analogy. And though unconcerned by the image's lack of verisimilitude, *Creaturen* does support the analogy with more recent natural history. It offers a digest of Forer's treatment in the *Fischbuch* of "Hausen" that swim in the Danube, while ignoring Forer's comment about the very dif-

67

Albertus, *Thierbuch Alberti Magni*, Viiv. It is also later depicted and described by Olaus Magnus in his *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus*, 1559, bk. XXI, 183–184.

68

See the discussion of the "Papstesel" and "Mönchskalb" in Aby M. Warburg, *Heidnisch-Antike Weissagung in Wort und Bild zu Luthers Zeiten*, in: Horst Bredekamp and Michael Diers (eds.), *Gesammelte Schriften*, I.2, Berlin 1998, 518–522.

69

Gessner, *Historia animalium* IV, 246.

70

Ibid., 247.

71

Gessner, *Fischbuch*, XCr.

72

Pliny 1565, 306, 332.



[Fig. 15]

Pliny, *Bücher und schriften von der Natur, art und eigenschaft der Creaturen [...]*, Frankfurt a. M.: Sigmund Feyerabend, 1565. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Res/2 A.lat.b. 550, p. 306 (detail), urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10140858-3.

ferent, more naturalistic image he reproduces from the *Historia Animalium*: “This is a complete counterfeit [*grundtliche conterfacher*] of the sturgeon.”⁷³

Heightened by difficulties involved in classification, the confusing *copia* of things and the semantic fluidity of names cause further iconographic complications when *Creaturen* and its sources consider the *Lachs* (our salmon) and its supposed kindred species. While the images in this instance tend less towards the marvellous, philological description never completely yields to description based on direct observation. The *Thierbuch Alberti Magni* depicts a rather generic fish [Fig. 16], which it calls, borrowing from Pliny *NH* 9.15, an “Ezox”, but then compares it to a *Lachs*, only to distinguish both from the sturgeon found in the Danube. Then, in a subsequent chapter, titled “Salmo ein Salm”, the same image reappears.⁷⁴ In Gessner’s *Historia* the salmon makes three appearances. First there is an equivocal attempt at naming: “The *esox* is a fish, which some call *salmon*; but some Hungarians and Germans name it sturgeon [*husone[n]*], according to Albertus, a big fish in the Danube and some of the waters flowing into it.” No image is offered here of the salmon, though a somewhat rudimentary one of the sturgeon (sent to him by a merchant) heads the chapter. Meanwhile, the conflation of the salmon with the sturgeon, together with a host of conflicting authorities, including Pliny (*NH* 9.17), leads, via some convoluted etymological reasoning, briefly back to the “Morschwein” or “porcos marinos”.⁷⁵ Then, some nine hundred pages later, Gessner dedicates an entire chapter to the salmon.⁷⁶ This begins by copying an extract from Rondelet’s *Universae aquatilium historiae pars altera*, and, as Gessner indicates, amplifying Rondelet’s single *iconem* into two quite naturalistic images of his own (one depicting the female, the other the male, with its characteristic hooked lower jaw) [Figs. 17, 18]. Thus, even as he initially piggybacks on Rondelet’s (and later Belon’s) fine verbal descriptions, Gessner outdoes them with the detailed accuracy of his images which try to capture the salmon’s remarkably metamorphic appearance. He adds, too, an image of a juvenile salmon, boasting: “The image [*Eicon*] is ours; Rondelet provided none.” His own *Corollarium* then offers a dense philology of names along with further description of the salmon’s appearance and habits. In describing the salmon’s epic “migration” to spawn, its wide geographical range, its various physiologic transformations, etc., Gessner would lessen the errant relation between word and image. However, when he later describes the trout in the chapter *De*

73

Gessner, *Fischbuch*, CLXXXVr–CLXXXViv.

74

Albertus, *Thierbuch Alberti Magni*, Tir; Viiiir–Viiiiv.

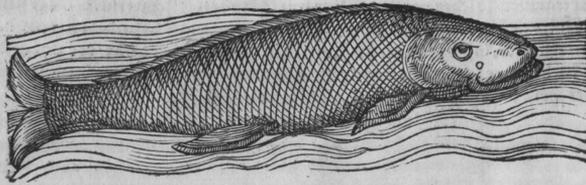
75

Gessner, *Historia animalium* IV, 59–61.

76

Ibid., 968–979.

Das Dritt Buch



anderen süßen wassern findet / außgenommen in stillstonden wassern. Dieser Fisch wie Plinius schreibt / ist bei den alten für den besten gehalten worden / sonderlich der / den man im Aquitanischen Meer fahet / aber dieser zeit sind die Rhein Salmen vil besser / werden im ganzen Rhein / biß ins Schwetzer landt hinauff gefangen / auffi. vnd zweier ellen lang / einer spannen dick oder breidt / vnd mehr.

Der Salm ist ein langsamer Fisch / aber starck vnd krefftig von leib / so er ein hindernuß eines fischs oder gaens vor jm findet / so springt er wundtbarlichen hinüber denn er thut den kopff vnd schwanz zusammen / vnd springt also hinweg / wie die kessmaden / sein fleisch ist schön roet vnd fetze / am geschmack süß vnd lieplich / doch fettiger vast wol. So man jm abthut aufzuschneiden / vnd jm das hertz auß dem leib herauß nimpt / so lebt er vast lang / wie man auß der langen bewegung vermercken mag.

[Fig. 16]

Walther Hermann Ryff, *Thierbuch Alberti Magni*, Frankfurt a. M.: Cyraico Jacobi zum Bart, 1545. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Res/2 P.lat. 19, p. Viiiiv (detail), urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00073687-4.

De Salmone. Lib. III.

969

SALAR piscis ab Aufonio dicitur, sine dubitatione is est, quem vulgò Truttam appellamus, Gillius. Cuius sententiam Ge. Agricola quoque comprobauit, nos plura de Truta pisce, quæ Germani *ein Foren* uel *Fosine* nominant, infra in T. elemento. ¶ Carolus Figulus in libello suo de piscibus ab Aufonio nominatis: Thedonem (inquit) opinor esse piscem quem vulgò Trutā nominant, Germani uerò & Galli Forellam (*Gallis ubiq; usitatus puro nomen Trutte*): eundemq; Salarē & Farionem alijs nominibus dici, Confirmari hoc Aufonij uersibus potest, qui sunt: Purpureisq; Salar stellatus tergora guttis, Et nullo spinæ nociturus acumine Thedo. Et paulò infra de Farione: Teq; inter geminas species, neutrumq; & utrumq;. Qui necdum Salmo, nec iam Salar, ambiguusq; Amborum medio Fario (*alij, Sario*) intercepte sub aeo. Audis hic Thedonem esse paruulam & adhuc teneram Forellam: quæ postquā fuerit grandiuscula, nomen suum amittit, & Salar uocatur, Audis hic etiam ab Aufonio Farionem dici medium inter Salarem & Salmonem, atq; Farionem ab Aufonio describi in hunc modū: Fario est adultior Forella, Salare maior, & Salmonem minor: hoc est, quæ iam desijt esse salar, & quæ nondum est salmo, (mare autē ingressa Salmonis formam assumit), Hæc ille. Ego Thedonem prorsus diuersum esse arbitror: (Vide supra in Corollario de capitone fl. A.) Farionem autem ab Aufonio existimari quidem à Salmone ætate tantum differre, esse Forellam vulgò dictum piscem, Salmoni quidem non dissimilem, sui tamen generis à Salmonibus diuersum. ¶ Paulus Iouius, & eum secutus Io. Langius medicus in epistolis suis Carpionem Benaci, Salarē Aufonij esse putat, sed cum è Salare Salmo fiat, carpio autem ille, qui Trutarum generis est, idem & re & nomine piscis maneat, quomodo erit Salar Aufonij? Hic sanè nihil aliud est quam paruulus Salmo, *ein Selmling* Germanis.

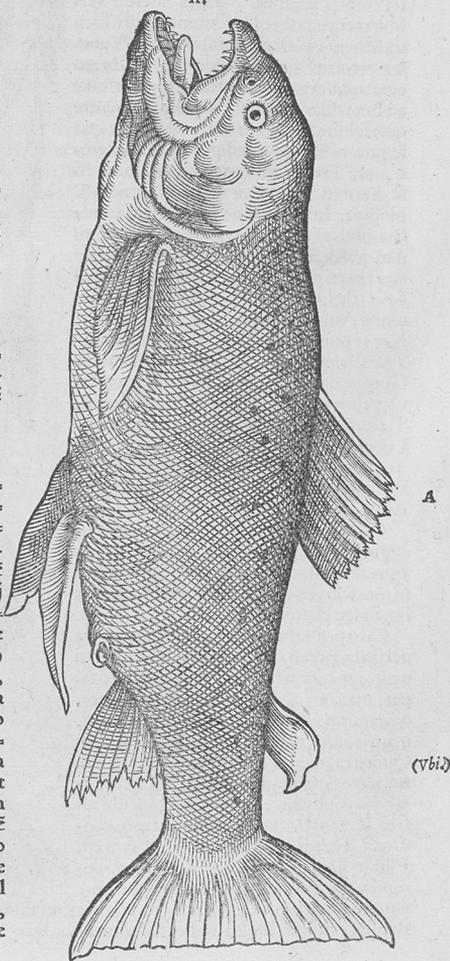
SALENA inter pisces Larij lacus à Benedicto Iouio nominatur, hoc uersu: Scardula & Incobia ex Pignis, & Plota, Salena. Videtur autē piscis esse qui capitur gregatim: sicut apud nos leucisci species, quam Galli Vendosia uocat, nostri *Lauck* / *Laugelen*.

DE SALMONE.

RONDELETIVS.

Pro una Rondeletij icone (quæ squamas nimis magnas habere mihi uidetur) duas nostras posuimus: unam A. Salmonis ante partum, hoc est uerni & æstiu: alteram B. autumnalis & hyberni: sub partu & à partu, qui rostro recuruo & maculis pluribus facillè dignoscitur.

40 **S**ALMONVM differētia aliquot diuersa etiam nomina ex uaria ætatis inclinatione imposita esse dicitur: maximum enim & qui iam senuit, Salmonem propriè uocant, hoc minorē quicq; mediæ ætatis Sarionem, siue ut alij legunt, farionem ex Aufonio in Mosella, cuius uersus citauimus quum in lacustribus de Trutta loqueremur: (nos paulò antè in Salare.) 50 Galli differentias duas agnoscunt, magnos, Salmones uocant: paruos, Tacons. Preterea mare à femina distinguunt: hanc enim ob rostrum magis aduncum, hami modo, Beccard appellant, Salmo in Oceano tantum nascitur, qua de causa fluuios tantum eos subit qui in Oceanum influunt, fallunturq; ij qui in Rhodano capi existimant, Plinius Salmonē nuncupauit. Græcis incognitū fuisse, & ideo Græco nomine carere nihil mirū, cum Græci ueteres in Oceanum non penetrarint. Gal 60 li hodie idem nomē retinent: item Germani, si recens sit piscis: sin saluus, mutato nomine



[Fig. 17]

Conrad Gessner, *Historiæ animalium* [...], vol. 4, Zürich: Christoph Fro-schauer, 1551-1557, p. 969. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (84-B13226).

970 De Aquatilibus.

Lachs ab eis nominat. A Fládris Saclim.

Vere ex Oceano in flumina se recipit, in Rhenum in Germania; Garumná & Dordonam in Aquitania; Ligerim, Sequanam in Gallia; Tamesim in Anglia.

C Gregatim natat Salmones cum Alofis. sese in altum saepe efferunt. In aqua dulci pinguescunt, & falso omni succo deposito dulces, suavesq; fiunt, & eo magis quo longius à mari recesserint. (Vide Corollarium nostrum.) In fluuijs nonnunquam pariunt.

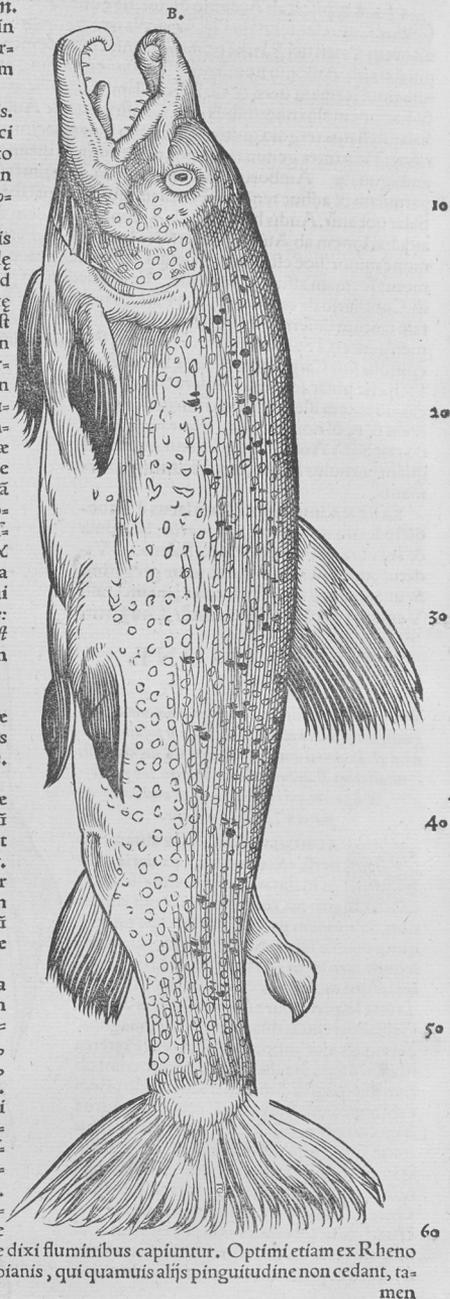
B. De partibus externis.

Thunnos aequant magnitudine. Paruis squamis teguntur, quibus maculae rotundae asperse sunt: ijs etiam notatū est caput, sed frequentioribus & maioribus in foemina que dicitur, quam in mare. Dorsum caruleo est colore, ad nigrum uergente. Venter argentei coloris æmulus. Maxilla inferior sursum recurua est, sed in foemina magis. Dentes habent in utraq; maxilla longos & acutos, item in lingua: oculos magnos, branchias quaternas. Pinnis totidem natat: duae ad branchias sitae sunt, aliae duae in uentre quae subsunt ei quae in dorso est maior: qua sequitur alia minor, adiposa quam Salmonum & Truttarum generi communem esse diximus. A podice unica est carnosae & pinguis. In piram deficit bifida cauda lata, ut ab ea Salmo merito *marvag* & nominari possit. (De platyuro Oppiani diuerso pisce: nam Oceani pisces ignorauit Oppianus, dictum est supra.) Ex his externis notis praecipuas non omisit Aufonius in Mosella quum dixit: Nec te puniceo rutilantem uiscere Salmo Transferim, late cuius uaga uerbera caudae Gurgite de medio sumas referunt in undas Occultus placido qui pdit equore pulsus. Tu loricate squamosus pectore, frontem Lubricus, & dubiae facturus fercula coenae Tempora longarū fers incorrupta morarū Praesignis maculis capitis, cui pdiga nutat Aluus, opimatoq; fluens abdomine ueter.

F De partibus internis.

Quantum ad internas partes attinet cor angulatum habet, uentriculum oblongum cum permultis appendicibus, hepar rubrum in quo fellis ex uiridi nigricantis uesica haeret. Splen ex rubro niger est.

F Caro priusquam coquatur, albicat: cocta uel salita, rubescit, pinguis est, maxime in uentre, tenera, friabilis, dulcis, ob id cito fatiat: maxime capitis & abdominis partes, quae quum elixae in aqua solum eduntur, uentriculum replent, & nauseam faciunt. Quocirca magis eos probauerim, qui in uino, aceto & sale multo elixant: uel qui assulas caryophyllis confixas in craticula asstant, & cinnamomo, saccharo, acetoq; condiunt. Recens salitus uituperandus non est. Plinius fluuiatilem Aquitaniae, marinis omnibus praefert, idque iure: carnis enim tene ritudine & suauitate praestantes in his quae dixi fluminibus capiuntur. Optimi etiam ex Rhenobasileae eduntur, multo meliores Antuerpianis, qui quamuis alijs pinguitudine non cedant, ta-



[Fig. 18]

Conrad Gessner, *Historiae animalium* [...], vol. 4, Zürich: Christoph Fro-schauer, 1551-1557, p. 970. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (84-B13226).

truttis, despite (or perhaps because of) the help of Rondelet, Belon, Salviani, and others, he is unable to neatly distinguish between kinds of trout and salmon.⁷⁷ The four images and one branching diagram illuminate somewhat the matter, yet the *copia* of names and things again seems to pose an insurmountable obstacle. For its part, the section, “Von den Salmen”, in the *Fischbuch* tries to simplify matters.⁷⁸ Considerably shorter than the corresponding section in *Historia animalium*, it reproduces only the second of Gessner’s salmon images.⁷⁹ Noting instead that the salmon was unknown to the Greeks, Forer emphasizes its familiarity to the “Teütschen” since it originates “bey dem Teütschen meer”.⁸⁰ And yet, Forer suggests, the salmon’s morphological transformations still make it difficult to find stable nomenclature.

When the salmon appears in the 1565 *Creaturen* (also in Part III, chapter 15), the confusion of names and errancy of images only increases. The chapter opens by noting the great size of the tuna, which Pliny compares to “the sheatfish in the Nile and the *esox* in the Rhine”.⁸¹ But then it reproduces the 1545 *Thierbuch* image of a salmon [Fig. 19] (as well as its *mise-en-page*, which also depicts the sturgeon) and glosses it with five names, *Silurus*, *Waller*, *Scheidfisch*, *Esox*, and *Lachs*, before briefly quoting Albertus, Gessner, and Lonicerus on the question.⁸² The same image is then used again to illustrate Pliny’s incredible description of the destruction caused by the “Scheidfisch”.⁸³ Further, at the end of chapter 18, it is employed to illustrate an interpolated passage from *NH* 32.9 on the “Goldstreimer” (salema porgy to us). This could be explained by the confusion of names (that is, salmon and *salpa*); but it also may be that Feyerabend simply needed an image to adorn the chapter and thus selected a plausible and readily available woodcut.⁸⁴

77

Ibid., 1198–1213, esp. 1203. For the subsequent appropriation of Gessner’s salmon and other fish by emblematic natural history, see Sophia Hendrix, *Ichthyology and Emblematics in Conrad Gesner’s *Historia piscium* and Joachim Camerarius the Younger’s *Symbola et Emblemata**, in: Enenkel and Smith, *Emblems*, 184–226.

78

Gessner, *Fischbuch*, CLXXXIV–CLXXXIIIr.

79

Ibid., CLXXXIIr (translating Gessner, *Historia animalium* IV, 970).

80

Ibid., CLXXXIIr.

81

Pliny 1565, 331.

82

Adam Lonicer [or Lonitzer] was best known for his *Kräuterbuch* (Frankfurt 1557).

83

Pliny 1565, 331.

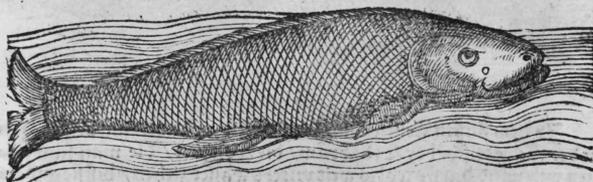
84

Ibid., 349–350; the same image appears earlier as well (332). But compare with Gessner, *Fischbuch*, XXXIVv–XXXVr, where the “Goldstreimer/Salpa” is treated.

Von dem Wäller Fisch.

331

Man findet auch in ertlichen fließenden Wassern Fisch / die nicht vil kleiner sind / denn die Thunnen / als den Scheidfische im Tulo / vnd den Esog im Kein.



Silurus,
Wäller/
Scheid-
fisch.
Esog,
Lachs.

Albertus: Es ist der Fisch den wir Lachs oder Lacheforne heissen / welcher sich fast mit dem Salmen vergleichet / allein daß sein fleisch nicht so rot vnd süß ist / als des Salmen. Disen Fisch sagt etwan der Stör / vnd reibt sich so hart an ihn / daß sie etwan miteinander gefangen werden. Gesnerus: Lachs wirt der Salmen geheissen / nach S. Jacobs tage im Herbst vnd Winter. Lonicerus: Der Salmen wirt eingefalzen wie der Käring / vnd alßdenn nennet man ihn Lachs.



Artilus,

In dem fluß Pado findet man Stör / die vom lauten faulengen Stör in de etwan so schwer werden / daß sie auff die tausent pfund kommen / wer den mit einem grossen Hacken gefangen / vnd durch ertliche Joch im Welsch Ochsen auß dem Wasser gezogen. Die Klein Else sezt einer sonderne lande. Aßern am Hals diser vngehewren Thier mit grosser begirlicheit beßtig zu / vnd pickt dieselbige auff / vnd tödret also den Stören.

Celius Calcagninus apud Gesnerum: Der Fisch Artilus ist so vil die gestalt belangen thut / dem Stör nicht vnähnlich / allein daß er im alter seine schult oder spitzen die er am bauch vnd auff dem rücken hat verrieret / vnd ganz glar wirt. Der Stör eber behelt solche spitzen biß an sein ende / Es hat auch der Stör ein weiß gesund fleisch / dagegen ist des Artili fleisch weich vnd nicht fast lieblich zu essen.

Clupea,
Else.

Der Scheidfisch thut vberall grossen schaden / wo er sich finden leß / sezt allen Thieren beßtig zu.

e liij In dem

[Fig. 19]

Pliny, Bücher und schriften von der Natur, art und eigenschaft der Creaturen [...], Frankfurt a. M.: Sigmund Feyerabend, 1565. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Res/2 A.lat.b. 550, p. 331, urn:nbn:de:bv:12-bsb10140858-3.

In sum, Gessner and Forer try to describe visually and verbally each species considered above in distinct and precise terms. Yet in doing so, they now credulously, now circumspectly, incorporate data of all kinds, data that enables readers and viewers to make their own decisions about its value, epistemological or otherwise. As for *Creaturen*, both following and ignoring Gessner's and Forer's lead, it treats natural history principally as a form of utilitarian but also symbolic knowledge. It declines to reproduce the *Fischbuch's* more verisimilar and surely more expensive images and instead mines it (and the 1545 *Thierbuch*) for images of dubious epistemic, but tangible cultural value. Meanwhile, it undertakes a sustained, if unsystematic effort to thicken and complicate Pliny's verbal description with old and new authorities. Indeed, that *Creaturen* cites Rondelet directly but has no use for Rondelet's images epitomizes the disjunction between how borrowed images and borrowed words are deployed.⁸⁵

V

Why, though, did Feyerabend decide to excise every image but one from *Von den Fischen* in the 1571 and 1584 *Creaturen*? The 1571 edition offers only a single, inaugural, emblematic figure of a marine *monstrum* taken from the 1545 *Thierbuch*.⁸⁶ Then, in the 1584 edition, this icon is replaced by a genial Amman woodcut of pairs of men and women fishing with nets – an image that first appeared in the 1582 *Figuren von Jag und Weidtwerck* and the 1582 Latin Pliny, both published by Feyerabend.⁸⁷ In describing an activity rather than a creature, mythic or real, this last image is more narrative or perhaps “documentary”, than “epistemic”. Nonetheless, Feyerabend's reasons for these changes are nowhere explained within the text or, to my knowledge, anywhere else. Further, why he did not replace the excised images with other ones remains a mystery. Still, one can speculate. Perhaps, Feyerabend felt that competition with the seven hundred images or so in the 1563 *Fischbuch* was futile. (By competition I mean both a share of the market and what now is often crassly called the marketplace of ideas.) That *Creaturen* had already appropriated a good deal of Gessner's “detailed description” [*Außführliche beschreibung*], as the *Fischbuch's* title page has it, confirms that Heyden at least must have been aware of how ambivalent Gessner was about the more monstrous images he supplied. That these may have fallen out of style or have lost some of their allegorical value by 1571 are possibilities that should be entertained as well. Or per-

85

Pliny 1565, 313.

86

Pliny 1571, 281.

87

Pliny 1584, 257.

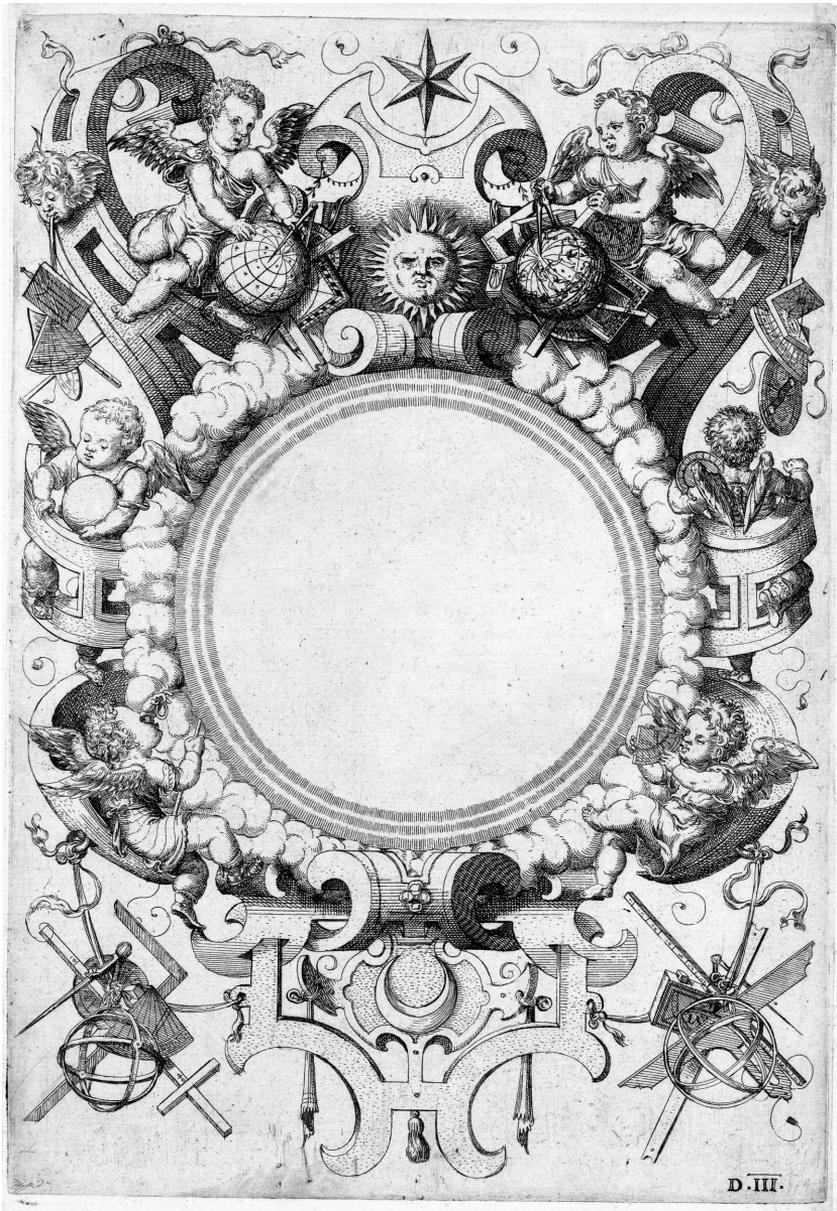
haps it simply was that Amman had no chance or time to find suitable models, live, skeletal, or borrowed in Nuremberg? Or perhaps Feyerabend believed that the other images in Parts I, III, and IV were already “geziert” enough to satisfy his readership. One can only guess.

To conclude: in the other Parts of the 1571 and 1581 *Creaturen*, rather than soliciting more “technical images”, Feyerabend increasingly drew from his stock of images by Amman, images mainly taken from the *neuw Thierbuch* and the *Eigentliche Beschreibung aller Stände*. Such transpositions sometimes roughly correspond with the natural object at hand, other times hardly at all. Moreover, only six images in the 1571 *Creaturen* and just one in the 1584 *Creaturen* make their initial appearance in these editions – and all are unremarkable, save for the title page images. And, again, as the text never comments on the accompanying images, no anxiety or doubt about their veracity is ever expressed. Most are products not from direct observation of nature, but from traditional iconological approaches to animals that still reigned in Reformation Germany – Dürer, Weiditz, and Gessner notwithstanding. Epistemologically errant, but culturally valuable, the images in *Creaturen* are migrants – they wander all too easily towards and away from the objects they are supposed to depict. When it comes to Plinian zoology, iconological traditions are, paradoxically, at once too mobile and too static. More particularly, Amman’s obvious mastery of and delight in detail may heighten his aesthetic effect, but it also prevents his “ware[] Kunstreiche[] Contrafeitung” from having that “absolutissima” aspect Kusakawa and others associate with epistemic images. Still, as many have noted, attention to detail does not guarantee an epistemic image. Bosch’s paintings are extraordinarily detailed, but they are “epistemic” only if this rubric includes images that bear symbolic knowledge as well as artisanal and theoretical knowledge of things.⁸⁸ For their part, the woodcuts by Amman and others, like Heyden’s extracts from authors other than Pliny, ornament and supplement a text whose anachronistic encyclopaedism can never be made *absolutissima*. At the same time, as *res significantes* they do variously express mid-sixteenth-century German symbolic values closely associated with Reformation theology as well as the centuries-old iconology associated with Pliny. Mobile and retaining symbolic currency, they have undeniable *Ausdruckswerte*, as Warburg might say.

Finally, one wonders what would have become of Amman if he had been able to collaborate more with his fellow Nurembergers, Wentzel Jamnitzer and Joachim Camerarius, the Younger. Working as *Formschneider* on Jamnitzer’s 1568 *Perspectiva corporum regularium* [Fig. 20], Amman cut 50 extremely exacting engravings after Jamnitzer’s designs as well as etching the title page and the borders for the various sections. But by all accounts, Feyerabend left the

88

See Joseph Koerner, Impossible Objects. Bosch’s Realism, in: *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 46, 2006, 73–97.



[Fig. 20]
Wenzel Jamnitzer, *Perspectiva corporum regularium*. Nuremberg
1568, title page © Trustees of the British Museum.

overworked and surely underpaid Amman little time or licence to collaborate in this manner. Or, perhaps, Amman might have done more botanical illustration, as he and others carved the fine woodcuts based on Gessner's drawings and Leonhard Rauwolff's designs from the then unpublished manuscript of Gessner's *Historia plantarum*, woodcuts that Camerarius included in his *Hortus medicus et philosophicus*, published by Feyerabend in 1588.⁸⁹ Yet, as fate would have it, Feyerabend pointed him in another direction, towards a species of visual "Beschreibung" that errantly, if fruitfully, translated Plinian *copia*.

Christopher D. Johnson is an associate professor of Spanish, German, and Comparative Literature in the School of International Letters and Cultures at Arizona State University. Previously, he taught at Northwestern University, Harvard University, UCLA, and was a research associate at the Warburg Institute. He is the author of *Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images* (2012) and *Hyperboles: The Rhetoric of Excess in Baroque Literature and Thought* (2010). He created and edits the website, *Mnemosyne: Meanderings through Aby Warburg's Atlas*: <https://warburg.library.cornell.edu>. In 2015, he was a fellow at the American Academy in Berlin and currently he is writing a book about Baroque expression in literature and painting for Princeton University Press.

89

An Amman woodcut graces the title page for this and Mattioli's *Kreuterrbuch* (1586), which is published by Feyerabend and augmented by Camerarius. Meanwhile, Camerarius's *Symbolorum & emblematum ex animalibus quadrupedibus desumtorum centuria altera*, Nuremberg 1590, 1595, 1596, 1604, rates as "the most important emblem collections on natural history". Cf. Enenkel and Smith, Introduction, 25.