

Selected Works from the Book Collection

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This is a picture tour composed by the Jürg Konzett, the initiator of the MoneyMuseum, presenting some of the most precious works of the museum's book collection. The works are arranged after their date of publication. Thematically, however, they cover the most different topics ...

Anitii Manlii Severini Boethi In Omnibvs Philosophiae Partibvs Inter Latinos & Graecos autores principis Opera (...)

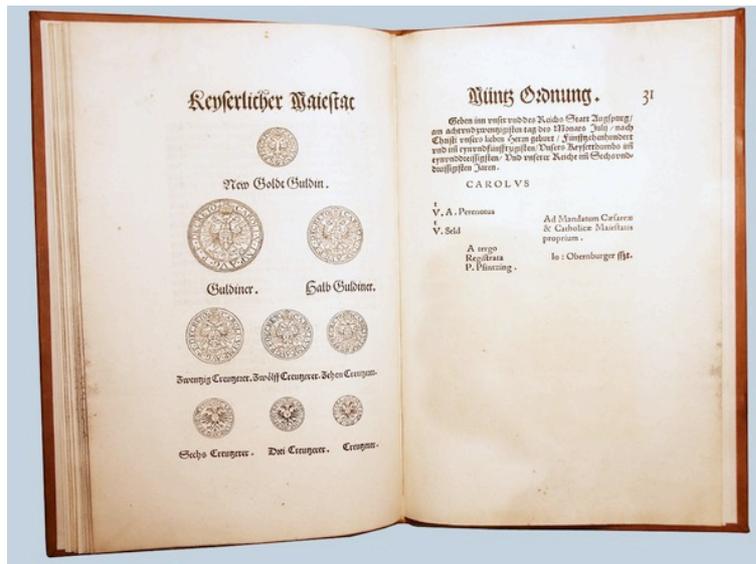


Basileae Apvd Henri Chvm Petrvm. [1546]

The Roman philosopher Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius (*c. 480, †524) lived at the threshold from antiquity to Middle Ages. He translated the ancient Greek authors such as Aristotle into Latin and collected encyclopedic knowledge about mathematics, geometry and music. It was his great contribution to pass the knowledge of antiquity on to the Middle Ages.

However, living in times of change is often dangerous. During the reign of the Visigothic king Theodoric Boethius climbed the political ladder, yet in 524 he was sentenced to death for high treason. Before his execution, in the prison tower of Pavia, Boethius wrote his work *Consolation of Philosophy*. It was to become his most popular book, one of the bestsellers of the Middle Ages.

Keyser Karl des fünfften Neue Muentzordnung / Sampt Valuierung der Guldin und Silberin Muentzen / Und darauff erfolgtem Keyserlichen Edikt / zu Augspurg



alles im Jar M. D. LI. [1551] auffgericht und aufgangen.
Getruckt zu Meyntz, durch Juonem Schöffen

For our modern conception medieval Europe was a chaotic place. Take coinage, for instance – every kingdom, dukedom, bishopric and city issued its own money. Moreover, only few of them really tried to mint high-quality coins. Quite the contrary – many coin authorities used their mints as mere means if income.

Until the 16th century, the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire did not even attempt to stop this mischief. Only Charles V (emperor from 1519-1556) was finally powerful enough to at least try to establish something like common order in the central European coinage.

From 1522 to 1523 preparatory discussions for a united coinage were held in Nuremberg. A year later the first imperial decree on coinage was issued in the town of Esslingen. An imperial currency was to be established on which the title and name of the emperor were to be the sign for consistency. Exact instructions on the weight and the fineness of silver coins were established, and it was written down which denominations were to be issued.

The imperial coinage decree of Esslingen was no big success, however. In 1551 it was therefore decided to try again and issue another decree, this time in Augsburg. After long and difficult negotiations a new coin standard was established – this time it was somewhat lower than the one before.

The imperial coinage decree of Augsburg gave exact instructions on the design of every denomination, and made the arrangements clear by depicting all those different coins. All denominations were to bear the imperial double-headed eagle and the value of the coin in kreuzers on a little globe on the eagle's

chest. The reverse of the coins had to show the coat of arms and the title of the respective coinage authority, together with the date of issue.

To leverage the new imperial coins it was necessary to link them to the already existing local currencies. The coinage authorities were therefore allowed to continue the issue of local small coins. Yet despite all those measures the coinage decree of Augsburg had inadequate success. The time for a unified coinage in the Holy Roman Empire was obviously not yet ripe – it would take another 320 years until a united German currency could finally be introduced in 1871.

Colloquia



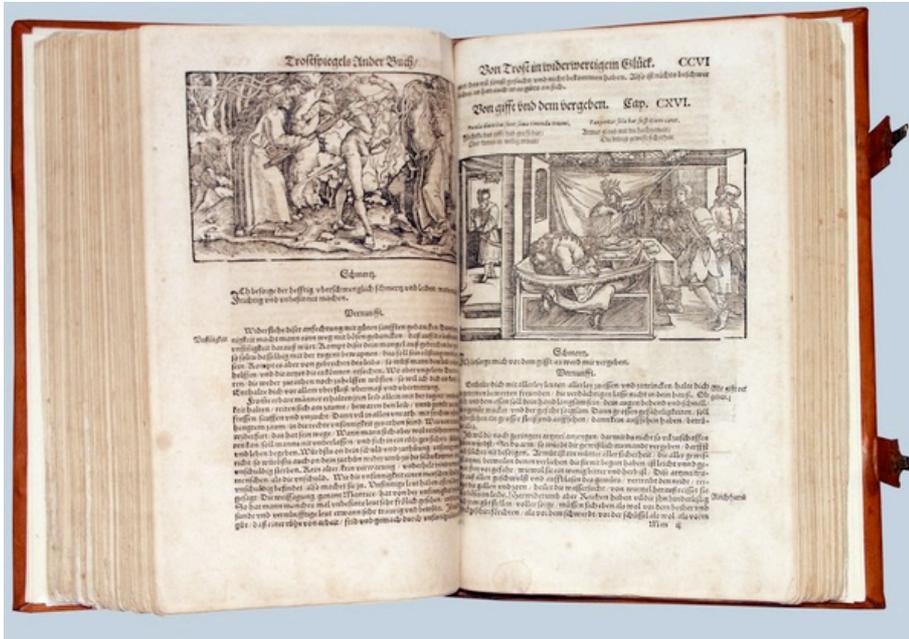
Oder Tischreden dator Martini Lutheri / so er in vielen jaren / die Zeyt seines Lebens / gegen Gelehrten Leuthen / auch hin vnd wider bey frembden Gesten / vnd seinen Tischgesellschaften gefuehret (...)

**Durch Herrn Johann Aurifader.
Gedruckt zu Franckfurt am Mayn/sc. 1567.**

"In the house of Doctor Luther lives a curious crowd of young people, students, girls, old women and children; there is always restlessness, which is why many people feel sorry for Luther," wrote a unknown contemporary about the household of the German reformer Martin Luther (*1483, †1546). Since 1525, Luther lived with his wife Käthe, their children and an aunt, as well as with educated colleagues, students and a changing number of guests in a kind of scholarly flat-share. His house was a place of pilgrimage for people from all over the world who wanted to meet and converse with the famous doctor in person.

Throughout this turbulence Luther sat in his study writing, or discussed with his guests about god and the world, about theology, politics, church and family. In this atmosphere he produced the *Tischreden* (After-Dinner Speeches). These speeches were collected and issued for the first time in 1566, 20 years after Luther's death. This collection was to become one of the most influential books of meditation of German evangetic literature. Many of Luther's formulations went down into German parlance – for instance "Gleich und Gleich gesellt sich gern" (Like draws to like), a phrase that becomes understandable if one knows the background in which it was created.

rostspiegel in Glueck vnd Unglueck



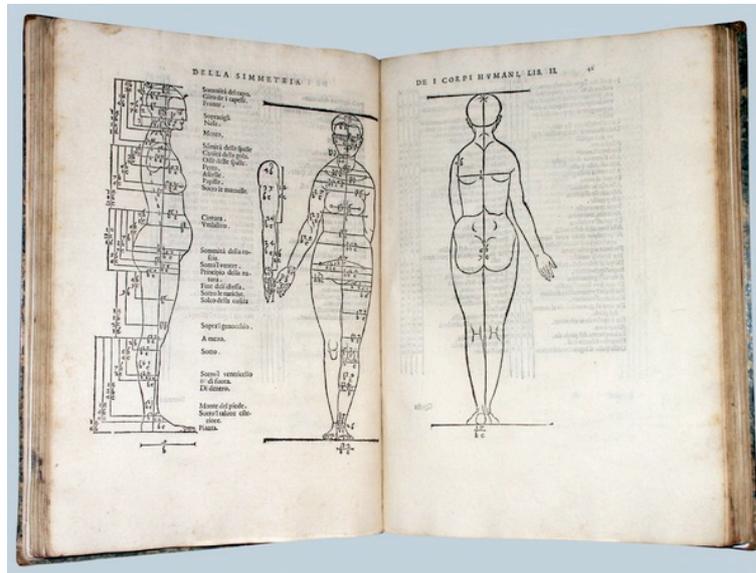
Francisci Petrarche / des Hochberuempten / Fuertrefflichen / vn[d] hoch weisen Poeten vnd Oratorn zwey Trostbuecher / Von Artzney vnd Rath / beides in guotem vnd widerwertigem Glueck (...)

Getruckt zu Franckfort am Meyn / Bey Christian Egenolffs Erben. M. D. LXXII. [1572]

The Florentine Francesco Petrarca (*1304, †1374) was a poet, scholar and one of the humanists who influenced the view of the world lastingly. He collected ancient texts according to the humanists' motto "ad fontes" (back to the sources).

In the 14th and 15th centuries, Petrarca's fame was based on the writing *De remediis in utriusque fortunae* (Remedies for Both Good and Bad Fortune) that had been published in 1366. The edition here is the German version. *De remedies* gave instructions for living in a Christian sense, but also contained bits of stoic philosophy. Happy and nasty situations of the human existence form an impressive synthesis in beautiful illustrations. This guidebook for daily life was again and again republished. In its time it was as successful as, for example, Dale Carnegie's *How to Stop Worrying and Start Living* in our days.

Della Simmetria De I Corpi Hvmani



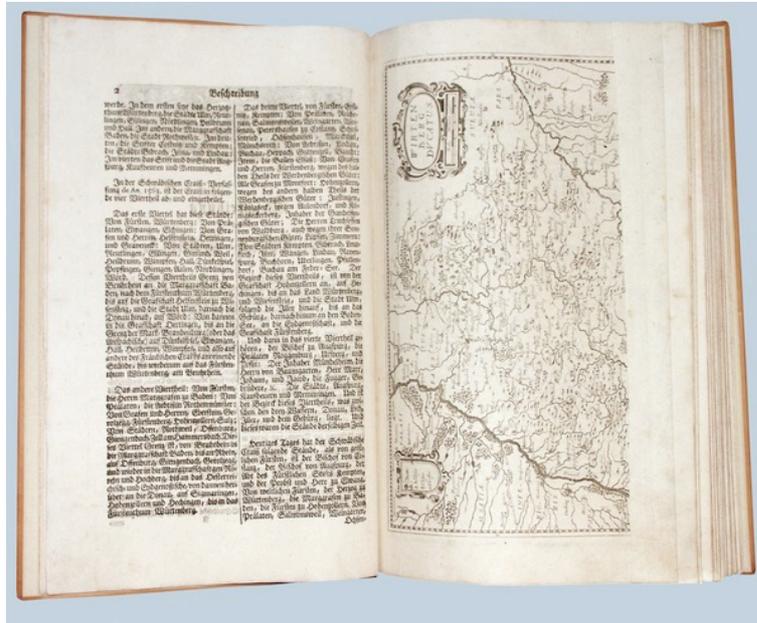
Di Alberto Dvrero Pittore, E Geometra Chiarissimo. Libro Quarto.

In Venetia, M D XCI [1591]. Apresso Domenico Nicolini.

Albrecht Dürer (*1471, †1528) from Nuremberg was a painter and a graphic artist of enormous creative power. His works lead from the late Gothic period into the Renaissance. He became famous through the woodcuts of Johannes' revelation in which he illustrated the apocalyptic atmosphere of his time. His prints established his reputation across Europe when he was still in his twenties, and he has been conventionally regarded as the greatest artist of the Renaissance in Northern Europe ever since.

This is a rare Italian edition of Dürer's art theory that was published under the title of *Vier Bücher von menschlicher Proportion* (The Four Books on Human Proportion) in 1528 already. The illustrations appear peculiar to modern eyes, but at the time of publication the book was a smash hit. Dürer succeeded in masterfully putting theory into practice.

Topographia Sveviae



das ist Beschreib: vnd Aigentliche Abcontrafeitung der fürnembsten Stätt vnd Plätz in Ober vnd Nider Schwaben, Hertzogthum Württemberg, Marggraffschafft Baden vnd andern zu dem Hochlöbl: Schwabischen Craisse gehörigen Landschafftten vnd Orten

An Tag gegeben vndt Verlegt durch Matthaeum Merian. Franckfurt am Mayn M.DC.XLIII. [1643]

"Topography" comes from Greek and means a detailed description of a place. This is the *Topographia Sveviae*, an illustrated travel book on Swabia, illustrated by the famous Basel copperplate engraver Matthäus Merian (*1593, †1650). The work gives account on the history of Swabia and explains the geographical and economical situation, for instance the occurrence of salt in Hall. It also describes points of interest such as the castle of Lichtenstein and, in alphabetical order, Lindau, Tuebingen, Stuttgart and other important towns; all the locations are illustrated by Merian's copperplates.

Merian's etchings of the German and other European towns were so famous that the Merian travel books of today have been named after this great engraver.

Topographia Helvetiae, Rhaetiae, Et Valesiae



Das ist Beschreibung vnnnd eygentliche Abbildung der vornehmsten Staette und Plaetze in der Hochloeblichen Eydenosschafft Graubuednten / Wallis / vnd etlicher zugewandten Orthen

Franckfurt am Mayn / Zum Truck verlegt von denen Merianischen Erben. Im Jahr M DC LIV. [1649]

Matthäus Merian (*1593, †1650) was engraver, publisher and the most famous illustrator of his time. Born in the town of Basel, yet educated in Zurich, Lorraine and Paris, he reached the peak of his creative work in the early 1620s in Basel. In 1624, he took over the publishing house of his departed father-in-law Jan T. de Bry in Frankfurt on the Main.

Merian soon became famous for his topographical views. His main work was the *Topographia Germaniae*, for which Martin Zeller wrote the texts. The work was published from 1642 to 1654 in initially 16 volumes; until 1688 more volumes about other European countries. The complete work contains altogether 92 maps – city maps, maps on landscapes, and a world map – as well as 1486 copperplate engravings and 2142 single views on towns, villages, castles, fortresses, and monasteries. The first volume of the *Topographia Germaniae* is dedicated to Switzerland: *Topographia Helvetiae, Rhaetiae et Valesiae*.

Matthäus Merian, by the way, had an equally talented daughter. Anna Maria Sibylla Merian was a naturalist and scientific illustrator. She studied plants and insects especially in Suriname, and made detailed paintings about them. Her comprehensive observations and documentation of the metamorphosis of the butterfly make her a significant, albeit not well known, contributor to entomology.

Topographia Bohemiae, Moraviae Et Silesiae



das ist, Beschreibung vnd eigentliche Abbildung der vornehmsten vnd bekantisten Stätte und Plätze in dem Königreich Boheim vnd einverleibten Landern Mähren vnd Schlesien

An tag gegeben vndt Verlegt durch: Matthaem Merian zu Franckfurt [a. M.]. 1650

This volume of Matthäus Merian (*1593, †1650) is dedicated to a particularly history laden region in the heart of Europe: Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia have been scenes of wars again and again.

Prague, the "golden city," became the capital of the Holy Roman Empire under Emperor Charles IV (1355-1378). Charles founded the first German university in Prague and turned the town into an intellectual and artistic centre in Central Europe. Moreover, Prague was an international trading centre through the nearby silver mines of Kutna Hora. The mines had delivered the silver for the money supply of the whole country from the 14th century. Merian's lovely views of Prague are a highlight of this *Topographia*.

L'Ambassade De la Compagnie Orientale Des Provinces Unies Vers l'Empereur De La Chine, Ou Grand Cam De Tartarie

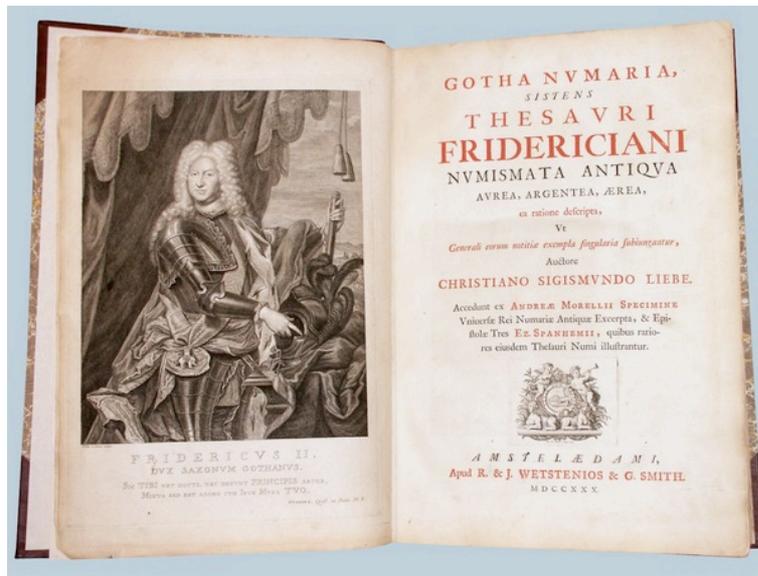


**Faite Par Les Sts. Pierre De Goyer, & Jacob De Keyser
A Leyde. (...) 1665**

Just as we are interested in Feng Shui, Zen Buddhist gardens and the rites of the aborigines today, the people of the 17th century were fascinated by distant China. Yet since only very few people were able to travel at that time, illustrated volumes like this one represented the only possibility to get an idea of the country, its architecture and its customs.

This travel documentary on China was commissioned by Jean Maatzuiker, general governor of the Dutch East Indian Company. He sent Jacob de Keyser and Pierre de Goyer from Batavia on a two-year journey in 1655. The book was the result of their travel. How highly valued it was shows the dedication, addressing Jean Baptiste Colbert, counselor and finance minister of Louis XIV, the Sun King.

Gotha Nvmaria, Sistens Thesavri Fridericiani Nvmismata Antiqua, Avrea, Argentea, Aerea



Auctore Christiano Sigismvndo Liebe.

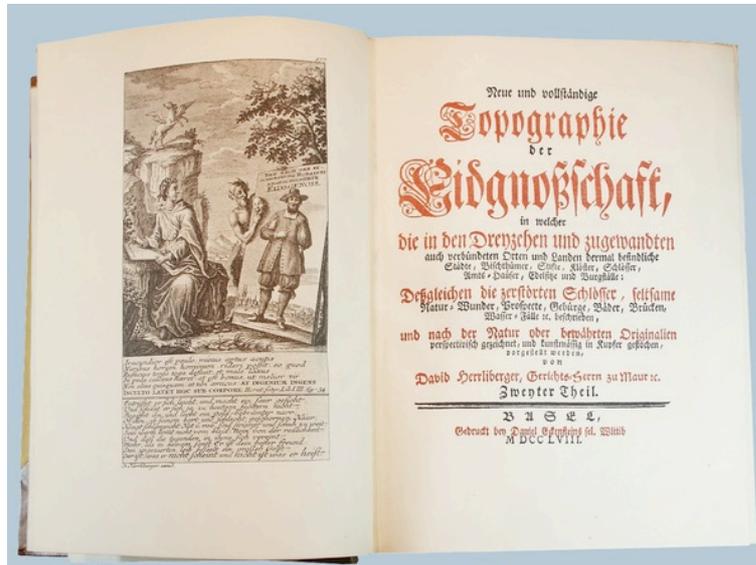
Amstelædami, Apud R. & J. Wetstenios & G. Smith, MDCCXXX. [1730]

Europe was caught by a actual obsession for collecting in the time of Renaissance. The newly awakened interest in the origin of Europe's culture led to a widespread occupation with antiquity. In the 16th century numerous cabinets of curiosities or treasuries were founded, where worldly and churchly counts, dukes and kings as well as wealthy noblemen and citizens assembled rare or curios objects.

Not only art was collected, but everything that seemed to be special or remarkable: paintings, copperplate engravings and sculptures, books, coins, medals, astronomical or medical tools and instruments, globes, atlases, skeletons, fossils and minerals, fine works of ivory, engraved ostrich eggs, valuably girded coconuts, and so on.

The dukes of Saxony-Gotha indulged in collecting, too. Especially the art-minded duke Frederick II (*1676, †1732) enlarged the stock of the ducal treasure cabinet significantly. He initiated an inventory of the entire collection in the early 18th century, and in 1712 had the numismatic collection separated from the rest of the art cabinet and incorporated to the ducal library. The collection of ancient coins was inventoried, and in 1730 *Gotha numaria, sistens Thesauri Fridericiani numismata antiqua* was published, the inventory of the ancient coin collection of Gotha.

Neue und vollstaendige Topographie der Eidgnossschaft



Zweyter Theil.

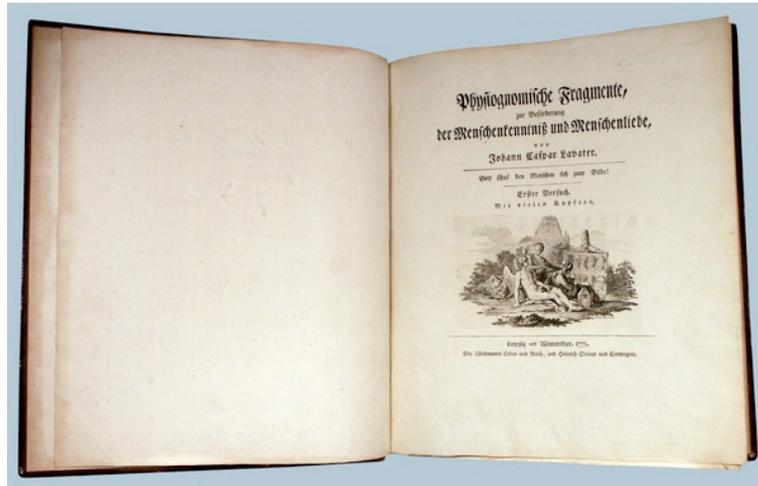
Von David Herrliberger, Gerichts-Herrn zu Maur sc.

Basel, Gedruckt bey Daniel Eckensteins sel. Wittib. M DCC LVIII. [1758]

Hardly anybody interested in Swiss history has not held this book in his hands – whether in original or as a facsimile: The *Neue und vollständige Topographie der Eidgnossschaft* of the engraver David Herrliberger from Zurich (*1697, †1777).

Herrliberger was not "only" engraver, but also publisher. He issued works of greatest significance for illustrated letterpress printing, for Zurich as well as for the whole of Switzerland. With his *Topographie der Eidgnossschaft* (Topography of Switzerland), Herrliberger tried to unite art and science, therewith following the example of the Stumpf chronicle which had been issued in 1547. Moreover he regarded his illustrations of Switzerland, the depictions of villages, towns and landscapes, but also of natural phenomena, as supplementation to the *Schweizerische Lexicon* (Lexicon of Switzerland) of Hans Jakob Leu that had been published from 1747 to 1765. Herrliberger's *Topographie der Eidgnossschaft* contains 328 etchings and is a joint work of different artists who delivered sketches on Herrliberger's commission. The authors remain unknown.

Physiognomische Fragmente, zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntniss und Menschenliebe



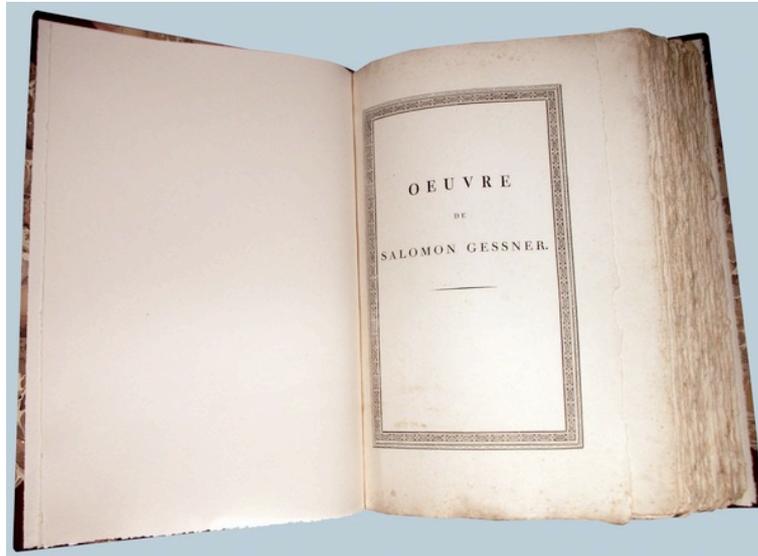
von Johann Caspar Lavater
Leipzig und Winterthur, 1775. Bey Weidmanns Erben und Reich, und Heinrich Steiner und Compagnie

Is it possible to read character traits of people off their faces? This question has occupied scholars since ancient times – Aristotle already busied himself with this problem. But as from the 18th century, physiognomy is intrinsically tied to the name of Johann Kaspar Lavater (*1741, †1801).

Lavater, priest in Zurich, divided his contemporaries into two parties with his work *Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntniss und Menschenliebe* (Physiognomic Fragments for the Enhancement of Knowledge of Human Nature and Human Kindness). Friedrich Hegel called the method of physiognomy "abysmal," Immanuel Kant thought it was "loveless." Johann Wolfgang Goethe, on the other hand, was thrilled with Lavater's work and even contribute to it: he edited Lavater's texts and delivered silhouettes cut after antique sculptures and works of Raphael and Rembrandt.

Physiognomische Fragmente was released in the years 1775 to 1778 in four volumes. Before long it became a bestseller all over Europe: English, French, Dutch and Russian translations followed in the wake of the German edition, all with additional silhouettes and etchings. Even the tsar in St. Petersburg is said to have had a copy. Lavater owned a collection of silhouettes, by the way, that covered more than 22,000 pages and is kept in the National Library of Vienna today.

Oevre de Salomon Gessner



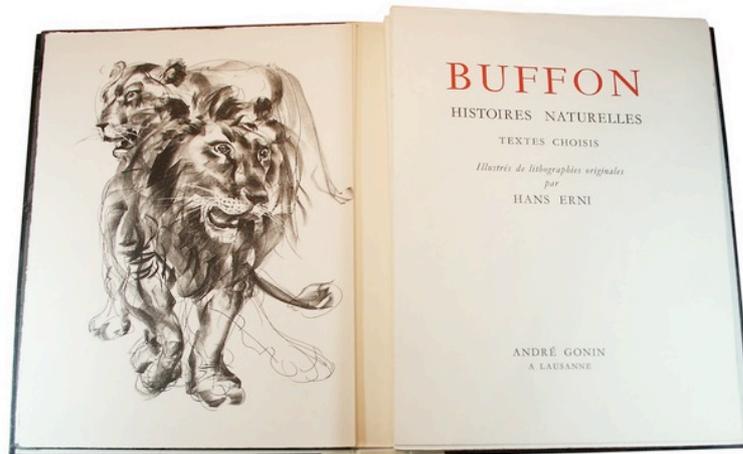
[Orell, Gessner, Füssli & Co., Zurich 1796]

He was poet, painter, politician, journalist and publisher, he founded a porcelain manufacture and the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, and he was one of the most widely translated Swiss authors of the 18th century: the list of things with which Salomon Gessner (*1730, †1788) busied himself during his lifetime is long and miscellaneous.

Gessner became known as writer of pastoral poems and as a painter. He illustrated his works himself, and his books were so popular that around 1770 he supposedly was the best-known Swiss author abroad. His bucolic and mythological motives found great resonance among his contemporaries.

Gessner died unexpected and much too young. As a commemoration his family and closest friend issued the *Oeuvre de Salomon Gessner*, a compilation of Gessner's most beautiful etchings. The special edition was published in only 25 exemplars; the book shown here is one of them. It contains 395 etchings of Salomon Gessner in two volumes and was produced from the original printing plates.

Buffon. Histoires Naturelles



**Textes Choisis. Illustrés de lithographies par Hans Erni
André Gonin, A Lausanne [1954?]**

The *Histoires Naturelles* (Natural History) of Georges-Louis Leclerc (*1707, †1788) is somewhat dry. This was perhaps the reason why not the entire text was printed in later editions of his work, but merely selected passages. Nevertheless the work is considered as one of the great accomplishments of Enlightenment because it concentrated on research and not on old myths.

The Swiss artist Hans Erni has transposed these single text passages into lithographies that illustrate the significant traits of each creature.