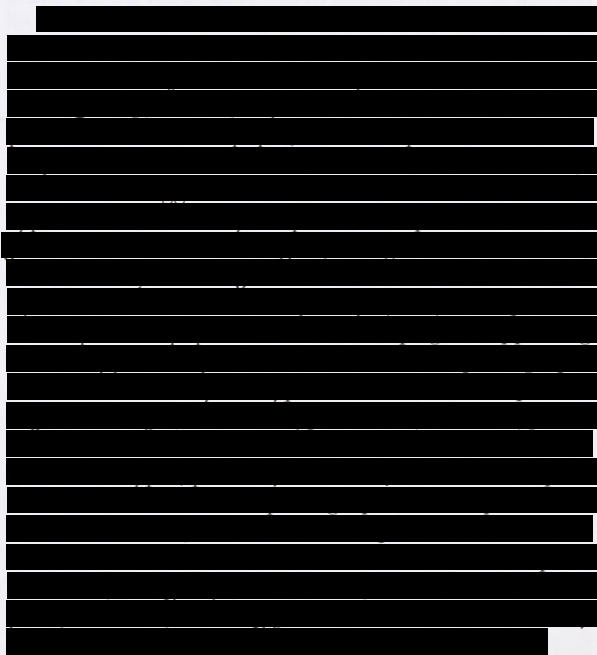


Notes



2002 [2003]); and vol. 90 of the *Illustrated Bartsch*, on *German Book Illustration through 1500: Herbals 1484–1500*, edited by Frank J. Anderson (New York, 1983–84), the latter containing all of the *Gart's* illustrations as well as reprints of all illustrations of all later editions through 1500 and the corresponding botanical identifications. Chapter three analyses the structure of the incunabulum, its image-text relationship, its reprints, as well as all four protagonists known to have been involved in the printing project, reflecting the findings of previous research. Chapter four looks at the image sources of the woodcuts, their colouring, and the depiction of unknown or exotic plants and printed herbals of the first half of the sixteenth century. Chapter five examines the urine wheel contained in the incunabulum and the healing qualities of herbs with regard to the four humours. It also includes an examination of the *Gart's* textual and pictorial methods of producing 'evidence', which for Rudolph means achieving credibility, as well as the artistic means which, according to Rudolph, helped to increase the appearance of three-dimensionality and presence of what was depicted, making it more life-like (pp. 189–200). The author also suggests that herbal pictures and nature prints (*ectypa*) of plants may have had a healing effect on the reader. Finally, in chapter six, by juxtaposing the arguments developed in the introductions to three printed herbals – Brunfels, *Contrafayt Kreüterbuch* (Basel, 1532–37); Fuchs, *De Historia Stirpium* (Basel, 1542); Bock, *New Kreutter Buch* (Strassburg, 1539, illustrated 1546 – Rudolph discusses the much debated question of whether book illustrations were able to convey knowledge accurately.

BREIDENBACH AND REUWICH'S *GART DER GESUNTHEIT*. Pia Rudolph's published doctoral thesis, *Im Garten der Gesundheit: Pflanzenbilder zwischen Natur, Kunst und Wissen in gedruckten Kräuterbüchern des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Cologne/Weimar/Vienna, Böhlau Verlag, 2020, 297 pp., 367 ills., €70; figs. 206 and 207), examines the herbal *Gart der Gesundheit*, edited in German by the dean of Mainz cathedral, Bernhard von Breidenbach, and issued in 1485 by Peter Schöffers's press in the same city. The physician Johann Wonnecke von Kaub wrote the texts on the drugs, while the artist Erhard Reuwich, who had moved to Mainz from Utrecht, designed the 381 woodcuts, which were also cut in his workshop. The *Gart* belongs to a large group of medicinal and natural history incunabula but was the first printed herbal to turn away explicitly from schematizing its pictures, and the third illustrated one ever produced. A number of studies on the subject already exist, but a monograph has been sorely lacking until now and, gratifyingly, it has an art-historical focus such as has received little attention to date.

The introductory chapter on the guiding theses is followed by a thorough assessment of existing research. It would, however, have benefited from the inclusion of more literature on manuscript herbals, such as *Tractatus de herbis*, edited by I. Ventura (Florence, 2009 [2010]); *Historia plantarum*, edited by V. Segre Rutz (Modena,

Rudolph's book addresses a wealth of aspects, yet perhaps a more thorough exploration of fewer issues would have been more revealing. Several points require detailed commentary, which can only be given selectively and briefly here. With the exception of the well-known *Codex Berleburg* and two much older copies of the *Tractatus de herbis*, created in Italy c. 1300 and France c. 1400, the manuscript sources of the *Gart's* illustrations are only touched upon. They should, however, have been analysed more thoroughly, for the incunabulum must have relied primarily on these. The *Gart's* pictorial impact on later printed herbals (chapter four) is difficult to assess correctly unless the influence of herbal drawings and manuscripts, still vigorously produced in the sixteenth century, is also explained. On his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Reuwich spent 24 days in Venice, where he may have been affected by the very accurate northern Italian plant drawings, such as those in the *Codex Rocabonella* (Venice, 1449).



206. Erhard Reuwich, *Group of Scholars in a Garden*, inserted as frontispiece in *Gart der Gesundheit* (Mainz, 1485), handcoloured woodcut, c. 285 x c. 210 mm (Munich, Bavarian State Library).



Affodillus goldwurz **Capitulum. xx.**
 Affodillus latine. Der meÿster auicenna spricht das gold
 wurg hab bleter beinach als lauch vñ hat ein zimliche ste
 gel. Die wurg ist lang vñ rund vnd hat die maiste krafft
 in ir. Dis wurg ist heÿß vñ drucken in d driten grad Solt wurg
 macht seclich dauon gedruncken vñ ist durchdringen die feichtig
 keÿt daruñ macht sy wel harnen. Vnd ist auch nüz den frau wai

The function of the woodcuts in the *Gart* never becomes really clear, for the author notes on the one hand that 'subtle morphological differences and distinguishing features of plants were highlighted for the illustrations of the *Gart*', but also that 'the *Gart* is not a botanical work for the identification of plants' (pp. 36 and 176). She almost completely refrains from comparing the botanical features in the sources with the *Gart's* woodcuts, although this would have brought greater clarity about motif adoptions as well as sharpening the concept of 'evidence', which certainly also referred to accurate botanical rendering. It is noteworthy that Rudolph applied William Ivins's argument, presented in *Prints and Visual Communication* (Cambridge, MA, 1953), to the *Gart*, according to which images of the plants facilitated their supra-regional identification and thus overcame the difficulty of knowledge exchange despite the abundance of synonyms for one and the same plant (p. 118). The analysis of the *Gart's* readership based on later marginalia is highly interesting, as is the study of the religious context of herbal images.

One might not concur with all of Rudolph's observations, yet it is to her credit that she has renewed scholarly attention to the *Gart der Gesuntheit* with a monograph that illuminates it from a variety of angles and conspicuously highlights its value for further research. The book contains numerous black-and-white and colour illustrations and a translation of Breidenbach's introduction into contemporary German. It will interest art historians and book scholars as well as historians of science. DOMINIC OLARIU

