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Columbae Batavorum



*A
present
for
Nico
Van Bente*

**Transcribed
by
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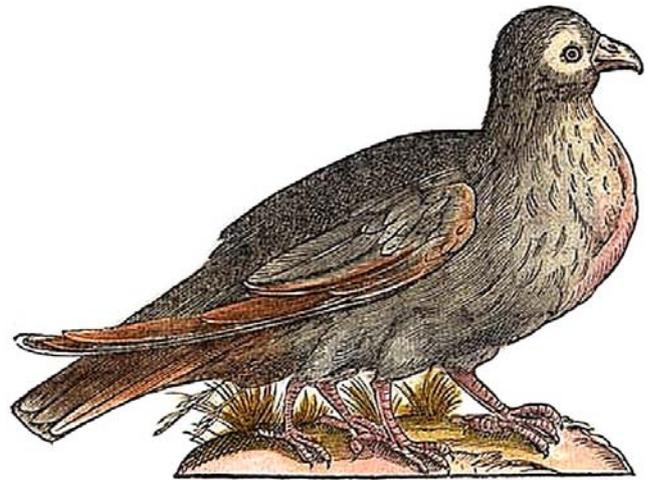
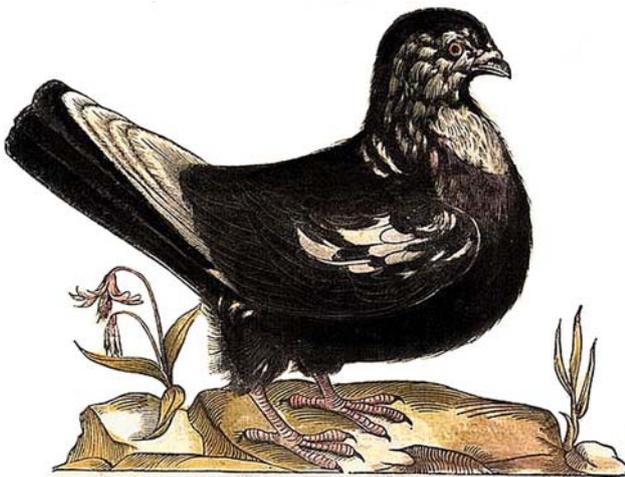
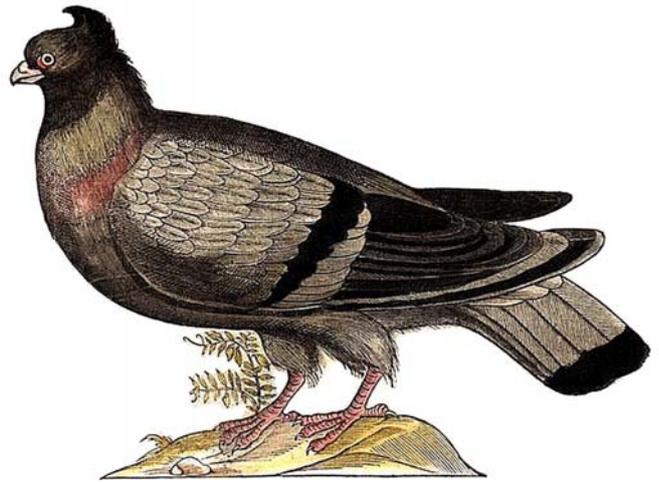
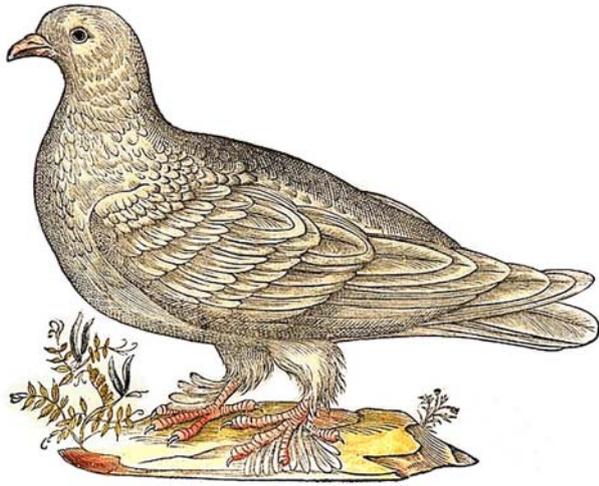
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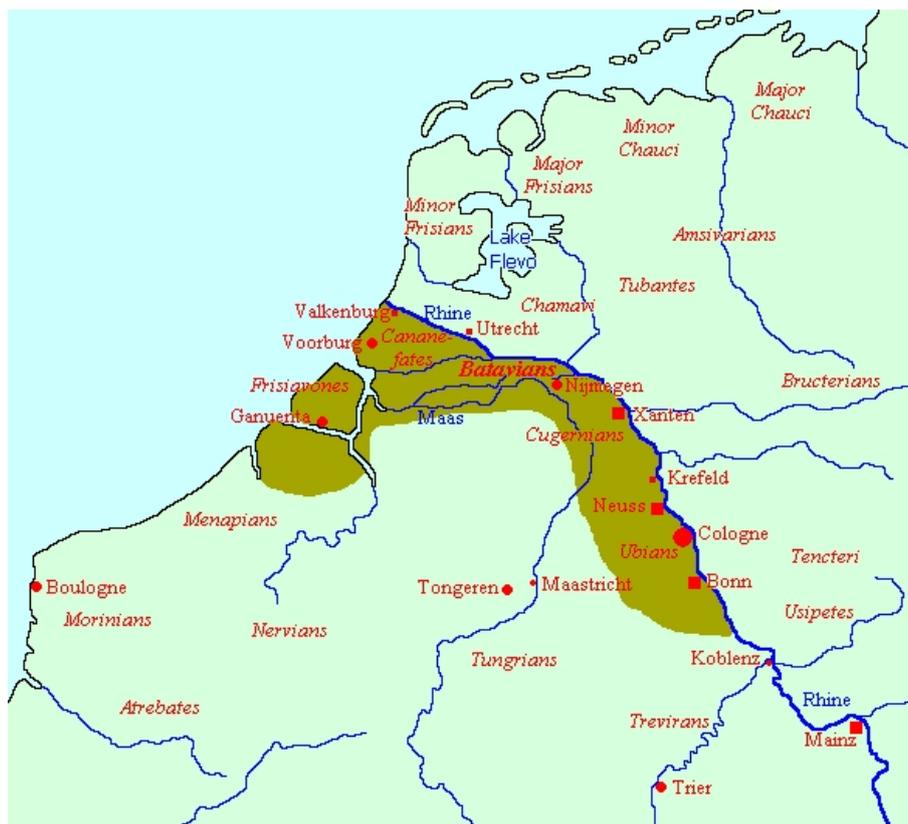
The Pigeons of the Batavians

January 8 - 2010

ULISSE ALDROVANDI
SECOND VOLUME OF ORNITHOLOGY - 1600



THE BATAVIANS



The Batavi - or Batavians - were an ancient Germanic tribe, originally part of the Chatti, reported by Tacitus to have lived around the Rhine delta, in the area that is currently the Netherlands, "an uninhabited district on the extremity of the coast of Gaul, and also of a neighbouring island, surrounded by the ocean in front, and by the river Rhine in the rear and on either side" (Tacitus, *HISTORIAE* IV). This led to the Latin name of *insula Batavorum* for the area. The Dutch applied the familiar name *Batavia* to their colonial factory on the island of Java, now Jakarta. The same name is applied to several military units, originally raised among the Batavi. The tribal name, probably a derivation from *batawjō* ("good island", from Germanic *bat-* "good, excellent" and *awjō* "island, land near water"), refers to the region's fertility, today known as the fruitbasket of the Netherlands (the *Betuwe*).

The Batavi were mentioned by Julius Caesar in his commentary *DE BELLO GALLICO*, as living on an island formed by the Rhine River after it splits, one arm being the Waal the other the Lower Rhine/Old Rhine. The strategic position, to wit the high bank of the Waal -- which offered an unimpeded view far into *Germania Transrhenana* (*Germania Beyond the Rhine*) -- was recognized first by Drusus, who built a massive fortress (*castra*) and a headquarters (*praetorium*) in imperial style. The latter was in use until the Batavian revolt.

Archeological evidence suggests they lived in small villages, composed of 6 to 12 houses in the very fertile lands between the rivers, and lived by agriculture and cattle-raising. Finds of horse skeletons in graves suggest a strong equestrian preoccupation. On the south bank of the Waal (in what is now Nijmegen) a Roman administrative centre was built, called *Oppidum Batavorum*. An *Oppidum* was a fortified warehouse, where a tribe's treasures were stored and guarded. This centre was razed during the Batavian Revolt.

The Batavi moved into the *Betuwe* in the late 1st century BC. The previous inhabitants of the area were Celtic-speaking Gauls, as evidenced by the two Latinised Celtic names for their chief town: *Batavodurum* and *Noviomagus* (Nijmegen, Neth). [Birley (2002) 42-3] It is unclear whether the existing inhabitants were simply subjugated with the Batavi forming a ruling elite, or the existing inhabitants simply displaced. For this reason it is also uncertain whether the Batavi remained Germanic-speaking or adopted the Belgic Gallic tongue of the *indigenes*.

The first Batavi commander we know of is named *Chariovalda*, who led a charge across the *Visurgin* (*Weser*) against the *Cherusci* led by *Arminius* during the campaigns of *Germanicus* in *Germania Transrhenana* (Tacitus *ANNALES* II, 11). Tacitus (*DE ORIGINE ET SITU GERMANORUM* XXIX) described the Batavi as the bravest of the tribes of the area, hardened in the Germanic wars, with cohorts under their own commanders transferred to *Britannia*. They retained the honour of the ancient association with the Romans, not required

to pay tribute or taxes and used by the Romans only for war: "They furnished to the Empire nothing but men and arms", Tacitus remarked. Well-regarded for their skills in horsemanship and swimming — for men and horses could cross the Rhine without losing formation, according to Tacitus. Dio Cassius describes this surprise tactic employed by Aulus Plautius against the "barbarians" — the British Celts — at the battle of the River Medway, 43: "The barbarians thought that Romans would not be able to cross it without a bridge, and consequently bivouacked in rather careless fashion on the opposite bank; but he sent across a detachment of Germanic tribesmen, who were accustomed to swim easily in full armour across the most turbulent streams. [...] Thence the Britons retired to the river Thames at a point near where it empties into the ocean and at flood-tide forms a lake. This they easily crossed because they knew where the firm ground and the easy passages in this region were to be found; but the Romans in attempting to follow them were not so successful. However, the Germans swam across again and some others got over by a bridge a little way upstream, after which they assailed the barbarians from several sides at once and cut down many of them." (Cassius Dio, ROMAN HISTORY, Book 60:20)

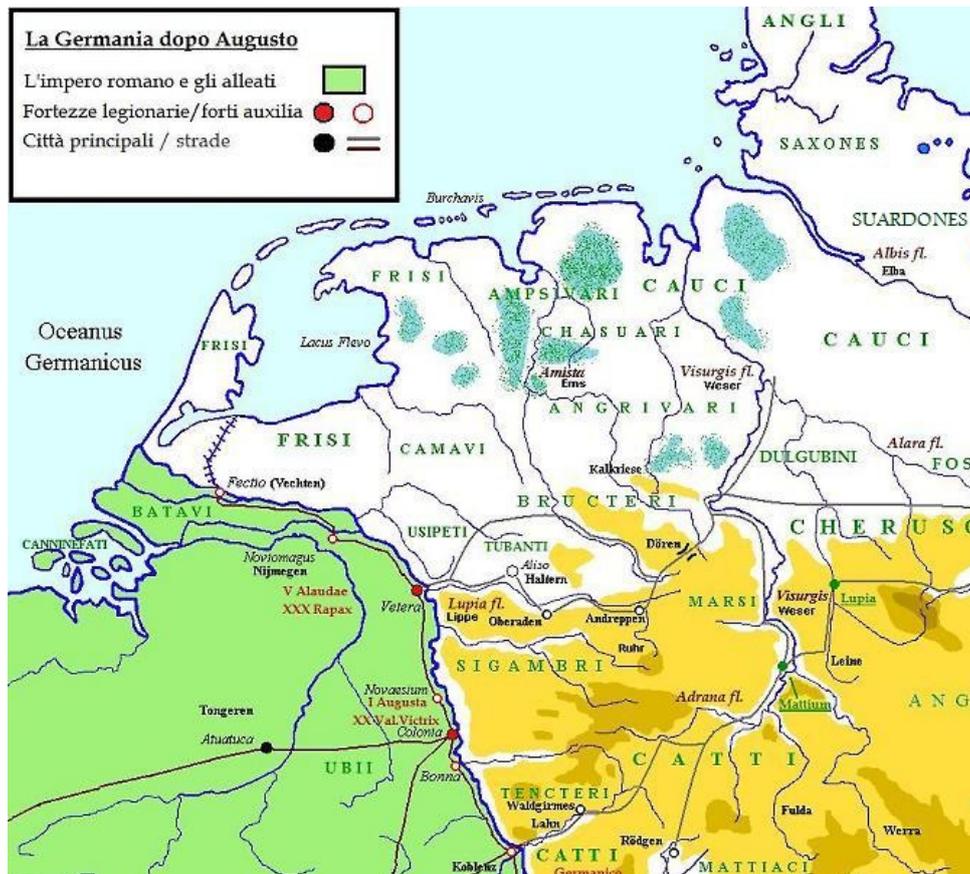
It is uncertain how they were able to accomplish this feat. The late 4th century writer on Roman military affairs, Vegetius, mentions soldiers using reed rafts, drawn by leather leads, to transport equipment across rivers. [Vegetius DE RE MILITARI III.7] But the sources suggest the Batavi were able to swim across rivers actually wearing full armour and weapons. This would only have been possible by the use of some kind of buoyancy device: Ammianus Marcellinus mentions that the Cornuti regiment swam across a river floating on their shields "as on a canoe" (357 AD). [Ammianus Marcellinus XVI.11] Since the shields were wooden, they may have provided sufficient buoyancy. The Batavi also provided a contingent for the Emperor's Horse Guard. Numerous altars and tombstones of the cohorts of Batavi, dating to the 2nd and 3rd century, have been found along Hadrian's Wall, notably at Castlecary and Carrawburgh, Germany, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Romania and Austria.

Revolt of the Batavi - Despite the alliance, one of the high-ranking Batavi, Julius Paullus, to give him his Roman name, was executed by Fonteius Capito on a false charge of rebellion. His kinsman Gaius Julius Civilis was paraded in chains in Rome before Nero; though he was acquitted by Galba, he was retained at Rome, and when he returned to his kin in the year of upheaval in the Roman Empire, 69, he headed a Batavian rebellion. He managed to capture Castra Vetera, the Romans lost two legions while two others (I Germanica and XVI Gallica) were controlled by the rebels. The rebellion became a real threat to the Empire when the conflict escalated to northern Gaul and Germania. The Roman army retaliated and invaded the insula Batavorum. A bridge was built over the river Nabalia, where the warring parties approached each other on both sides to negotiate peace. The narrative was told in great detail in Tacitus' History, book iv, although, unfortunately, the narrative breaks off abruptly at the climax. Following the uprising, Legio X Gemina was housed in a stone castra to keep an eye on the Batavians.

The fate of the Batavi - The Batavi were still mentioned in 355 during the reign of Constantius II (317-361), when their island was already dominated by the Sali, a Frankish tribe that had sought Roman protection there in 297 AD after having been expelled from their own country by the Saxons. Constantius Gallus added inhabitants of Batavia to his legions, "of whose discipline we still make use." [Zosimus, NEW HISTORY. London: Green and Chaplin (1814). Book 3.] It has been assumed they merged with the Sali shortly before or after and, after having been expelled by another tribe (it has been proposed this were the Chamavi), shared their subsequent migration to Toxandria, an ancient name for current Brabant after 358.

The Batavian myth - In the 16th-century invention of a suitably antique origin myth for the Dutch people that would be expressive of their self-identification as separate from their neighbors in the national struggle with Spain of the Eighty Years War for Dutch independence, the Batavians came to be regarded as their eponymous ancestors. The mix of fancy and fact in the CRONYKE VAN HOLLANDT, ZEELANDT ENDE VRIESLAND (called the Divisie-kronike), first published in 1517, brought the spare remarks in Tacitus' newly-discovered Germania to a popular public; it was being reprinted as late as 1802. Contemporary Dutch virtues of independence, fortitude and industry were rendered fully recognizable among the Batavians in more scholarly history represented in Hugo Grotius' LIBER DE ANTIQUITATE REIPUBLICAE BATAVICORUM (1610). The myth was perpetuated by ROMEYN DE HOOGHE'S SPIEGEL VAN STAAT DER VEREENIGDEN NEDERLANDEN ("Mirror of the State of the United Netherlands", 1706), which also ran to many editions, and it was revived in the atmosphere of Romantic nationalism in the late eighteenth-century reforms that saw a short-lived Batavian Republic and, in the colony of the Dutch East Indies, a capital (now Jakarta) that in 1619 was named Batavia until 1942. Modern variants of the Batavian founding myth are made more credible by pointing out that the Batavians were only part of the ancestry of the Dutch people, together with the

Frisians, Franks and Saxons, and by tracing patterns of DNA. Echoes of this supposed cultural continuity may still be found in popularisations of the history that follows.



**ULYSSIS ALDROVANDI
ORNITHOLOGIAE TOMUS ALTER - 1600
LIBER DECIMUSQUINTUS
QUI EST DE AVIBUS, QVAE SIMUL SE PULVERANT, ET LAVANT.
PAGINAE 353-574**

**ULISSE ALDROVANDI
SECOND VOLUME OF ORNITHOLOGY -1600
15TH BOOK
ABOUT THE BIRDS BOTH DUST AND WATER BATHING
PAGES 353-574**

**I - DE COLUMBIS IN GENERE
I - GENERALLY ABOUT THE PIGEONS
354**

Nonne et apud nos nobiles familiae fere omnes Columbaria habent, in quibus habitant, educantur, ac nidulantur? Sed etsi nos emolumentum causa eas alamus, Gallos tamen, maxime autem Belgas, ac inter hos Batavos ferunt adeo Columbarum studiosos esse, ut vel quarta saltem eorum pars eas ad animum duntaxat explendum enutriat. Aiunt insuper eosdem, quotquot reperiri queunt Columbarum genera, diligenter investigare, magno semper mercari pretio, laudes singularum in publico, privatoque conventu, in quo patritios etiam viros pauperioribus sese immiscere minime pudeat, modo de Columbibus sermo sit, enarrare,

Is it not perhaps true that also among us - Italians - almost all noble families have dovecotes, in which the pigeons live, are raised and nest? But even if we raise them to draw a profit from them, nevertheless they report that French people, but above all the Belgians, and among them the Batavians, are passionately fond of the pigeons to such an extent that at least a fourth of them raises them only to satisfy his own mind. Furthermore they say that they investigate with diligence all the breeds of pigeon that can be found, that always they deal them at a high price, that they raise the praises of each pigeon both in public and private meetings in which also the noblemen are not ashamed to mix themselves to more poor people,

adeo ut quod Plinius olim de Romanis, id nos etiamnum de Batavis dicere queamus, Columbarum scilicet amore insanire¹.

provided that they speak about pigeons, so that what formerly Pliny said speaking of Romans, still now we can say about Batavians, that is, to go crazy of love for the pigeons.

GENERA
BREEDS
360-361

[360] Verum nunquid M. Varro, Aristoteles, alique veteres domesticarum Columbarum species, quas nostra tempora modo suppeditant, agnoverint, non dubito duntaxat, sed non adducor etiam, ut id credam, etsi antiquos Romanos Columbarum amore insaniisse probe norim, et ex Plinio ante retulerim. Tanta enim iamnum in Europa Columbarum reperitur diversitas, maxime, ut audio, apud Belgas, hosque inter apud Batavos, ut narranti mihi viro alioqui fide dignissimo vix fidem adhibere potuerim. Hos populos si quae ulla alia gens, Columbis impense delectari, ideoque quam plurima earum genera alere supra quoque memini. Dicebat autem vir ille praeter communes domesticas, et saxatiles, quarum insuper immensam habeant copiam, genus quoddam esse domesticis vulgaribus duplo fere maius, pedibus hirsutis, hoc est pennatis, quod inter volandum, et dum murmurat, id est vocem suam edit, fauces in tumorem ingentem adducit, quem quo maiorem, maxime in volatu ostendunt, eo nobiliores censerit, dici vero id genus Kroppers Duve, hoc est Columbas gutturosas, quo nomine pariter nobis veniunt nam quandoque etiam ad nos afferuntur.

In reality I not only doubt that Varro, Aristotle and other authors knew the ancient breeds of domestic pigeons still supplying in abundance the time we live, but I am not even induced to believe it nevertheless I perfectly know that ancient Romans went crazy of love for the pigeons, and previously I reported this, drawing it from Pliny. In fact also now in Europe a so great diversity of pigeons is found, above all, as I hear, between Belgians, and, among them, among Batavians, that hardly I would have been able to believe that man who was telling me this, on the other hand he was absolutely worthy of faith. Also previously I mentioned the fact that these people, more than any other, are pleased a lot with the pigeons and that therefore they raise a lot of breeds. In fact that man said that besides the domestic and the rock pigeons, of which moreover they have an enormous abundance, a breed exists which is larger almost the double in comparison with the common domestic ones, with hairy legs, that is feathered, which during the fly's breaks and while it is cooing, that is when it utters its voice, enormously blows up the throat, and as more as these pigeons show it blown up, above all during the flight, so much they are judged excellent, and this breed is named Kroppers Duve, that is, cropper pigeons, and they arrive among us with the same name, in fact sometimes they are exported also among us.

Ornithologus se Venetiis Columbas observasse tradit, quae Gallinaceos fere magnitudine aequarent². Verum quod eas e Palubarum maximarum cicuratarum genere esse credit, prorsus meo iudicio fallitur; Palumbes enim nunquam cicurantur. Caeterum num illae, quas in Batavia haberi vir ille narrabat, eadem sint cum Campanis Plinii, qui in Campania maximas nasci scribit, non ausim affirmare, [361] quanvis interim id minime negarim. Bellonius certe eius plane sententiae est, et hallucinari eos asserit,

The Ornithologist - Conrad Gessner - reports to have observed in Venice pigeons that for size almost were matching the chickens. In truth, for the fact to believe that they come from the breed of the enormous tamed wild pigeons, in my opinion he is completely wrong; in fact the wild pigeons never become tamed. Besides I would not dare to affirm that those pigeons that that man told to be present in Batavia are corresponding to those of Campania of Pliny, who writes that in Campania they are born of very big size, even if nevertheless I would not entirely deny. Without doubt

¹ Plinius *Naturalis historia* X,110: Quin et internuntiae in magnis rebus fuere, epistulas adnexas earum pedibus obsidione Mutinensi in castra consulum Decumo Bruto mittente. Quid vallum et vigil obsidio atque etiam retia in amne praetenta profuere Antonio, per caelum eunte nuntio? Et harum amore insaniunt multi. Super tecta exaedificant turres iis nobilitatemque singularum et origines narrant, vetere iam exemplo. L. Axius eques Romanus ante bellum civile Pompeianum denariis CCCC singula paria venditavit, ut M. Varro tradit. Quin et patriam nobilitavere in Campania grandissimae provenire existimatae.

² Conrad Gessner *Historia animalium* III (1555) DE PALUMBE pagina 299: In columbaceo genere maximo corpore sunt palumbes, [GR]: inde [GR], ut in A. ostendi. Oenas maior est columba, minor palumbe, [GR]. phassa vero (id est palumbus maior) magnitudine est gallinacei, colore cinereo, Athenaeus Aristotelem citans: et Eustathius. haud multo minor parvis gallinaceis, Nic. Leonicensus. nonnullis locis gallinaceum aequat, Vuottonus. Ego tantas fere columbas memini videre Venetiis advectas, quae forsan huius generis palumbes cicuratae erant.

qui Plinium, aliosque veteres eas non agnovisse putant. Christophoro Columbo Indi quoque Columbas obtulerunt inter alia munera nostratibus multo maiores, et gustu pariter suaviores, sed gustus itaque iudicaret, si cum superioribus eadem sint, an diversae.

Affirmabat vir ille, reperiri aliud genus hirsutis pariter pedibus, ac magnum, si communibus domesticis compares, parvas vero, si illis, id nostrates vulgo Tronfo vocant. Alere quoque Cyprias, seu, ut Ornithologus nominat, Russicas, et Anglicas, et Monachicas, Ferrarienses Sorellas, has appellare Kappers, hoc est, cucullatas, a crista nimirum, quae cucullum, quem Kappam vocant, propemodum aemulari videtur, et harum duo habere genera, unum pedibus pennis ornatis, alterum nudis: rursus omnes hasce diversorum colorum esse. Dari et aliud genus Cypriis simillimum, sed crista carens, et pedibus semper nudis, rostro nempe admodum exiguo: hoc dicere Cortbecke, id est, brevis rostri: esse ibi et aliud genus, quod {indigete} <indigente> voce a gestu Overslayers nuncupent, quoniam in honorem faemellae vel suae, vel aliarum post longa murmura a terra sese elevet, et ultra illas volando alas quatit.

Quas vero ut nobilissimas colunt, eas appellare Draijers, quae non eodem, ut illae, modo, inter volandum duntaxat alas quatiant, verum etiam in orbem circum volitent, idque maxime supra faemellas tam fortiter alas quatiendo, ut duorum asserum simul collisorum sonitum superent, unde remiges earum pennae semper ferme fractae conspiciantur, ac quandoque etiam volare inde nequeant. Hoc genus aiebat in Venerem admodum pronum esse, faemellas, cum partui vicinae sunt, aliis etiam sui copiam dare, incolis autem in maximo pretio haberi, utpote quarum unum saepe par quatuor vendatur aureis; pedibus esse nudis, coloris varii, hoc est, dari cuiuscunque coloris, capite quandoque exigua crista plumea ornato, quandoque plano, has bollen, id est, planas vocare, illas gecopte, id est, capitatas.

Haberi item ibi aliud genus aspectu elegantissimum, quod Helme dicunt, quasi galeatas. Harum enim alias capite, cauda, et alarum remigibus coloris esse albi, caeteras alterius coloris, puta nigri, rubri, lutei, caerulei: alias vero ex horum colorum aliquo caput, caudam, et remiges habere, caetera vel ex albo,

Pierre Belon is completely of his opinion and affirms that those people who believe that Pliny and the other ancients didn't know them, are making a mistake. Among the other gifts, the Amerinds also brought to Cristoforo Colombo some pigeons greater than ours, as well as of more pleasant taste, and therefore the taste was able to express a judgment if they were identical to the just quoted ones or different.

That man was affirming that another breed is found ever with hairy legs, and of great build if you compare it to the common domestic ones, but small if compared to those the Italians commonly call Tronfo. It seems that they compete in raising also those of Cyprus, or, as Gessner calls them, of Russia, as well as the English ones, the Nuns, the Sisters of Ferrara called Kappers, that is, hooded, just by a tuft, which is the hood they call Kappe, and that of these pigeons two varieties are existing: one with legs adorned with feathers, the other with naked legs; moreover, that both show various colours. Another breed also exists, very similar to those of Cyprus, but without tuft, and still with naked legs, and precisely with an extremely small beak: this breed is said Cortbecke, that is, with a short beak: there is also another breed that being without voice, according to its behavior, they name Overslayers, since it gives honor to the female, both of it own and of other breeds, it gets up from earth after long whispers, and overtaking them in flight it flaps the wings.

But those they revere as excellent they call Draijers, which not only flap the wings like the previous ones while flying, but they also fly in a circle, and flapping the wings so strongly, above all over the females, to exceed the noise of two poles beaten each to other, whence their remiges are seen with some almost always broken feathers and that therefore sometimes they don't even succeed in flying. He said that this breed is extremely inclined to sexual intercourse, that the females, when near the laying, abundantly offer themselves also to other breeds, and that in actual fact by his fellow countrymen they are held of big value, so that if often their value is of a golden coin each, it is sold for four gold coins; they have naked legs, the colour is various, that is, they have whatever coloration, sometimes with the head adorned by a small tuft of feathers, sometimes flat, these are the 'bollen', that is, they call them flattened, the former ones 'gecopte', that is, with big head.

Likewise another breed is found with a very elegant aspect they call Helm, as if they were endowed with a helmet. In fact some of these pigeons show a white coloration at the head, tail and flight feathers, the other feathers have a different coloration, that is, black, golden, blue: but others show these colorations in other points, at head, tail, remiges; for the remainder

vel ex alio quovis diverso, adeo, ut caput, cauda, remiges semper alius coloris sint, quam reliquum corpus. Quod modo ad tertium genus spectat, quod M. Varro miscellum vocat, id non solum ex Columbo domestico, et agresti faemina, vel contra, utile innuere videtur, generatur, sed ex domesticis ipsis diversae speciei procreari potest, atque id etiam quotidie conspicimus. Sed haec domesticis dicta sufficient.

they are white or of any other colour, so that the head, the tail and the remiges are always of another colour in comparison to the rest of the body. As far as the third breed is concerned, which Varro calls variegated, it is begotten not only by the domestic pigeon with a wild female, or it seems that it is useful to point out the contrary, but from the same domestic pigeons can be begot subjects of different aspect, and also every day we can observe this. But about the domestic ones it is enough what we have just said.

LOCA COLUMBIS - ABUNDANTIA
PLACES CONCERNING PIGEONS - ABUNDANCE
366

In regno Pegù, Columbae pariter abundant, ut Cornelius Iudaeus Antverpianus³ testatur. Fessa⁴ {Aphricae} <Africae> urbs, ut author est Io. Leo {Aphricanus} <Africanus>⁵ immensum harum avium numerum suppeditat. Batavia quantum fortassis quaevis alia etiam decuplo maior regio Columbas numerosas enutrit, easque diversorum generum, quoniam, ut narravimus, plurimi incolarum cuiuscunque fere gradus, ac conditionis earum aspectu plurimum oblectentur.

Also in the kingdom of Pegu - in Burma - the pigeons abound, as it is witnessed by Cornelis de Jode from Antwerp. The African city of Fessa, as Joannes Leo Africanus writes, supplies an enormous number of these birds. The Batavia raises numerous pigeons as far as any other region ten times greater, and they are of different breeds, since, as I said, a lot of inhabitants of whatever position and social condition are very pleased in seeing them.

LOCUS HABITATIONIS - NIDUS
PLACE WHERE THEY DWELL - THE NEST
380

Apud Batavos nonnulli tenuioris fortunae rustici exigua in mediis saepe areis faciunt Columbaria, at in quibus non poenitendum numerum Columbarum enutriunt, hoc modo fabricant. Columnam ligneam quindecim circiter pedes altam erigunt, huic rotam imponunt, ac super hanc tria, aut quatuor

Among the Batavians some less moneyed farmers build small dovecots often at the center of the courtyard, but in which they raise a non negligible number of pigeons, and they build it in the following way. They erect a wood column around 15 feet tall (29 cm x 15 = 4.35 m), they put a wheel above it, and above this 3 or 4 tables (so many they think the wheel can accept)

³ Cornelis de Jode (Antwerp, Belgium 1568 - Mons, Belgium 1600) was a cartographer, engraver and publisher from Antwerp. He was the son of Gerard de Jode, also a cartographer. Cornelis studied science at Academy of Douai, France, and travelled to Spain and elsewhere in Europe. When his father died in 1591, Cornelis took over the work on his father's uncompleted atlas, which he eventually published in 1593 as *SPECULUM ORBIS TERRAE*.

⁴ I. REGNO DI FESSA. Il regno di Fessa incomincia dal fiume di Ommirabi, dalla parte di ponente; e finisce, verso levante, nel fiume di Muluja: verso tramontana è una parte che termina al mare Oceano: ci sono altre parti che compiono al Mediterraneo. Questo regno si divide in sette provincie, le quali sono Temesne, il territorio di Fez, Azgar, Elabet, Errif, Garet, Elcauz. Anticamente ciascuna di queste provincie aveva particolar signoria: eziandio Fessa, diprima, non fu sedia reale. È vero che fu edificata da certo rubello e scismatico, e durò il dominio nella sua famiglia circa a centocinquanta anni: ma dopochè vi regnò la famiglia di Marin, questa fu quella che le diede titolo di regno, e fece in lei la sua residenza e fortezza, per le cagioni narrate nelle croniche de' Maumettani. Ora io ve ne farò particolar narrazione di provincia in provincia e di città in città, siccome assai pienamente mi par aver disopra fatto. (*DESCRIZIONE DELL'AFRICA* - stampato a Venezia da Luigi Plet, 1837) - I. KINGDOM OF FESSA. The kingdom of Fessa at western side begins from the river Ommirabi, and eastward it ends in the river Muluja; northward there is a part ending in the Ocean; there are other parts ending in the Mediterranean Sea. This kingdom splits into seven provinces, which are Temesne, the territory of Fez, Azgar, Elabet, Errif, Garet, Elcauz. In ancient times everyone of these provinces had a particular dominion: also Fessa, before, was not a royal throne. It is true that it was built by a certain rebel and schismatic, and the dominion of his family lasted around one hundred and fifty years: but after the family of Marin reigned there, it gave to Fassa the title of kingdom and did there its residence and fortress because of the reasons narrated in the chronicles of Muslims. Now I will do a detailed narration of each province and city, like it seems to me that I previously did very fully. (translated by Elio Corti)

⁵ Joannes Leo Africanus (Granada c. 1485 - Tunisia c. 1554) or al-Hasan ibn Muhammad al-Wazzan al-Fasi, was an Arab diplomat and author who is best known for his book *DESCRIZIONE DELL'AFRICA* (Description of Africa) describing the geography of North Africa.

tabulata (quot nempe rotam ferre posse coniciunt) ex asseribus conficiunt, atque ita concinnant, ut horum singula viginti, et amplius nidulamenta capere possint: sed haec etsi a mustelis tuta sint Accipitribus tamen maxime exposita. Nonnulli item Columbaria Columnis rotundis, laevigatisque super piscinas mediasque aquas collocant, quo simul et a noxiis animalibus sint tutiores, et quia aquis limpidis contemplari gaudent, quoties lubet lavari possint, id quod incubantes facere expedit. Et sane multi volunt, praecipiantque, ut aquam habeant e regione; sed alii vicinam, alii remotam: qui remotam laudant, collecta grana longiquitate itineris quodammodo inter volandum alterari existimant, atque ita pullis tradere, qui eo facilius illa digerant, et in nutrimentum suum convertant: praeterea et hoc etiam commodi inde emanare, quod redeuntes a potu pedibus siccis ova contingant, cum alias humiditate aquae refrigerantes spem prolis saepe fallant.

Qui vero vicinam probant, antequam secure domum redeant, saepius vel a rapacibus, vel ab insidiantibus hominibus intercipi, atque ita ova, si incubent, irrita fieri, pullosque teneriores adhuc emori altoribus suis privatos. Quapropter, ut omnibus satisfiat, ego locum eligerem, qui neque ab aqua remotus sit, neque etiam nimis vicinus. Porro multi Columbaria vel nimis alta, vel nimis humilia improbant laudantque quae mediocrem habent altitudinem, quoniam ad ea defessae volucres sine ulla molestia redeant: et Varro quoque altiora improbare videtur, sed ob aliud incommodum, quia scilicet devolantes ad conspecta per fenestras aliorum grana capiantur.

drawing them from beams, and they place them in such way that everyone of them can accept 20 and more shelters: but even if these are safe from weasels / beech martens, nevertheless they are exceedingly accessible to sparrow hawks. Likewise some put the dovecots on round and smooth columns above the basins and in the middle of the water so to be at the same time more sure from harmful animals and since they please in looking at their reflection in clear waters every time they have the pleasure to be able in washing themselves, a worthwhile thing for those that are brooding. And indeed, quite a lot of people want and recommend that they have the water from the zone; but some want it from the proximities, others from far: those praising the water that it is found far, think that the picked grains change during the long route as it happens during the breaks of the flight, and that so they give them to the youngsters who digest them very more easily and turn them into nourishment; besides from this there is also the following advantage: when coming back from drinking they touch the eggs with dry legs, being that otherwise cooling them with the damp of the water they often frustrate the hope to have offspring.

Those approving the water of proximities, before to be back home in safety they are rather often captured either by birds of prey or by men in ambush, and so the eggs, if they are brooding, become fruitless, and the very youngsters come even to die having been deprived of those who feed them. Which is why, so that all people feel satisfied, I would choose a place that is neither far from the water nor too much nearby. On the other hand many people disapprove the dovecots either too much tall or too much low and they extol those having an intermediary height since the tired birds would come back to them without any breathlessness; and also Varro seems to disapprove the taller ones, but for another drawback, that is, because throwing themselves on other people's grains they saw through the openings of the dovecots, they would be captured.

LOCUS HABITATIONIS - NIDUS
PLACE WHERE THEY DWELL - THE NEST
381

Nam domesticis, et cicuribus, quae intra tecta aluntur, nisi ipsis locum in aedibus privatum assignes, (nam sic felicius soboli incumbunt) sibi ipsis in angulis sub trabibus, aliisque locis nidos construunt. Has veteres, ut ex Iuvenale paulo ante probavimus, in eminentiori domus parte habebant, uti quoque et iam mos est, maxime apud Batavos, qui eiusmodi Columbaria voce {indigete} <indigente> appellat een tille, een duveslach, quae postrema vox eam partem significat, quae extra fenestram prominet, quibus advenas Columbas

In fact if you don't assign an appropriate place to the domestic and tamed ones fed under the roofs (for in this way they devote themselves to the offspring in a more productive way), they build for themselves the nests in the angles under the beams and in other points. The ancients, as a little before we have shown basing ourselves on Juvenal, held them in the highest part of the house, as also now it is custom, above all among Batavians who, being that a term doesn't exist, call such dovecots 'een tille', 'een duveslach', and the last word means that part sticking out beyond the opening, from which the migratory pigeons are usual

fallere solent. Quod modo ad nidos, seu Columbaria, ut Varro, et Columella vocant seu loculamenta attinet, et haec variis modis fieri possunt. Apud nos ex viminibus fiunt: Grapaldus ita fictilia Columellae exponit, ovalia, atque cooperta: atque his utimur in Columbariis agrestium. Horum {Calphurnius} <Calpurnius> meminisse videtur inquiring: *Textilibus nidis ausas prodire Columbas.*

Batavi, ut audio, fiscellas faciunt e stramine rotundas, non coopertas, quo facilius stercus cum matrices, tum pulli egerant, sed has loco alligare, aut ita collocare oportet, ne laxatae, quando insiliunt aves, moveantur, nam sic ova eliduntur, et confringuntur. Domesticae Columbae sibi ipsis nidos parant ex collecto stramine: aut stipulis, quod et agrestes facerent, nisi nidi a dominis darentur, aut locus in Columbario sufficeret. Etenim debili nido contentae sunt, teste Alberto, eo quod calida earum sint corpora, et non multum indigeant calore nidi.

to escape. As only nests is concerning, or dovecots as Varro and Columella call them, or cells, also these can be realized in various ways. Among us they are done with wickers: Francesco Mario Grapaldi interprets those of clay of Columella as if they were oval and covered: we also use these in the dovecots of the farmers. It seems these were mentioned by the poet Calpurnius, when saying: The pigeons that have dared to go out of the interwoven nests.

As I hear, the Batavians make round baskets with straw, without coverage, so that both mothers and young let out more easily the dung, but it is necessary to bind them to the place, or to arrange them in such way that when the birds climb they don't move not being bound, for in this way the eggs would break and ruin themselves. The domestic pigeons prepare the nests for themselves using the straw they picked up; or with stems, and also the wild ones would do this if they were not given nests from their owners, or if the space in the dovecot was enough. In fact they are satisfied with a meaningless nest, as Albertus Magnus testifies, since their bodies are warm and don't have a lot of need of the heat of the nest.

COLUMBA VALENTINA



The town of Valenza, with around 20,000 inhabitants, is in Northern Italy, Piedmont region, Alessandria province. Its first nucleus probably dates back to the settlement of Ligurian tribes around 10th century BC, probably pre-Indo-European people. From 2nd century BC until 476 AD the locality passed on the hands of Romans. Two famous Latin authors wrote about Ligures: Cato the Censor (234-149 BC) and Cicero (106-43 BC), expressing very discordant points of view. In fact according to Cicero they were robust farmers (Ligures duri atque agrestes - *De lege agraria* II,95) whilst Cato accused them to be ignorant and deceitful (Ligures illitterati mendacesque - *Origines* II).



Coat of arms of Valenza

Relying on Pliny, as usual very questionable, depending on the editions of his *Naturalis historia* (III,49), Valenza was named Forofulvi quod Valentinum / Foro Fulvi quod Valentinum, where Fulvi is vocative and not genitive of Fulvius, later adapted in a correct FORUM FULVII QUOD VALENTINUM, a toponym that others on the contrary would like to attribute to Villa del Foro, hamlet of Alessandria, not on the right bank of the river Po as Valenza, but on the right bank of the river Tanaro. Valenza and Villa del Foro are far from each other around 15 km as the crow flies, the former being a little bit northeastern located if compared to the latter. In the coat of arms of Valenza we can read FFV, acronym of Pliny's toponym, which is often decoded into FATEVI FURBI VALENZANI, that is, People of Valenza please become cunning. Forum was the place where they gathered to fulfil juridical duties and to participate in markets. Fulvii seems to be attributed to the Roman magistrate and consul Marcus Fulvius Nobilior, active from 195 to the 158 BC, he who in 158 BC perhaps started off the Via Fulvia joining Derthona (Tortona), Hasta (Asti) and Augusta Taurinorum (Turin), except he was Marcus Fulvius Flaccus, consul in 125 BC.



**The ancient Liguria with Valenza – Forum Fulvii Valentinum
on the right bank of the river Po – Padus or Eridanus**

It seems that in 5th century AD the inhabitants of the three main nucleuses into which the territory of Valenza was split - Astigliano, Monasso and Bedogno - moved northwards from their hill area which was far from the river Po. This happened with the purpose to set up a closely packed urban nucleus where the town still nowadays rises, in such a panoramic location to allow to sight fairly in advance a possible enemy coming from Po Valley. For it seems that the desertion of the previous living areas was motivated by the need to be guaranteed by a greater security from Barbarians who repeatedly attacked and destroyed the town: in fact it was subdued in 476 by Odoacer (434-493) - leader of Heruli mercenary troops - and in 493 by Theodoric (454-526) king of the Ostrogoths.

The popular tradition attributes the merit of the new and current urban nucleus to St. Massimo - Maximus - who would have persuaded the inhabitants to gather there where a dove, purposely freed, had settled. This happened in that quarter still today called Colombina - Little Dove, in a dominant position on Po Valley's landscape, well visible for he who looks at Valenza arriving from the Po and vice versa. "The Saint, picked up a Dove, and blessing her in name of the Lord, let her to fly where she more liked, and the innocent bird, after a lap, went to alight on the tallest part of Valenza near the river Po, also today etymologically said Colombina. Then the people unanimously went to dwell in the site pointed out by the Dove, and the present Valenza was formed." (VITA DI SAN MASSIMO DI PAVIA E PROTETTORE DI VALENZA by Padre Massimo Bertana - Milano, 1726)



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St. Massimo was born in 450 in Astigliano from parents of noble lineage, and after he became parish priest of the church of St. George in Astigliano, he rose to spiritual guide of Valenza's people. According to the historians, during one of the wars fought by Theodoric against Odoacer - the former won him at Isonzo river (489), at Verona and at Adda river (490) - St. Massimo just looked for defending the inhabitants of the three small centers by locating an area in strategic position, entrusting a dove for the choice of the point to be strengthened and relying on the divine support. The dove settled in the present-day area of Colombina so-called in honor and in memory of this event.



Reliquary bust of St. Massimo

In 496 St. Massimo was appointed bishop of Pavia where he died on January 8th, 511. After the beatification he was chosen as patron of the town of Valenza and he is just celebrated on January 8th. The mortal remains were in Pavia in the Roman basilica of San Giovanni in Borgo erected before 216, now destroyed; since 1866 they are in the basilica of St. Michele in Pavia. The Martyrologium Romanum, otherwise than Padre Massimo Bertana does, gives 514 as year of his death instead of 511. Nevertheless, about the mortal remains of St. Massimo, it is worthwhile to specify what follows. Supposing that they don't belong to somebody else, some bones of St. Massimo are kept at the base of his reliquary bust in the Museum of Valenza's Cathedral.

WATERCOLOURS OF ULISSE ALDROVANDI

Colombo tronfo asturnellato vulgo
colae negro, uropygio albo maculis
albis viridibusq; et pedibus rubris.



Columba domestica aegyptiaca forte
caleris quia pascitur dicitur castris
aegypti alio, cauda cinerea, capite
nere alboscutum pedibus pascuosis.

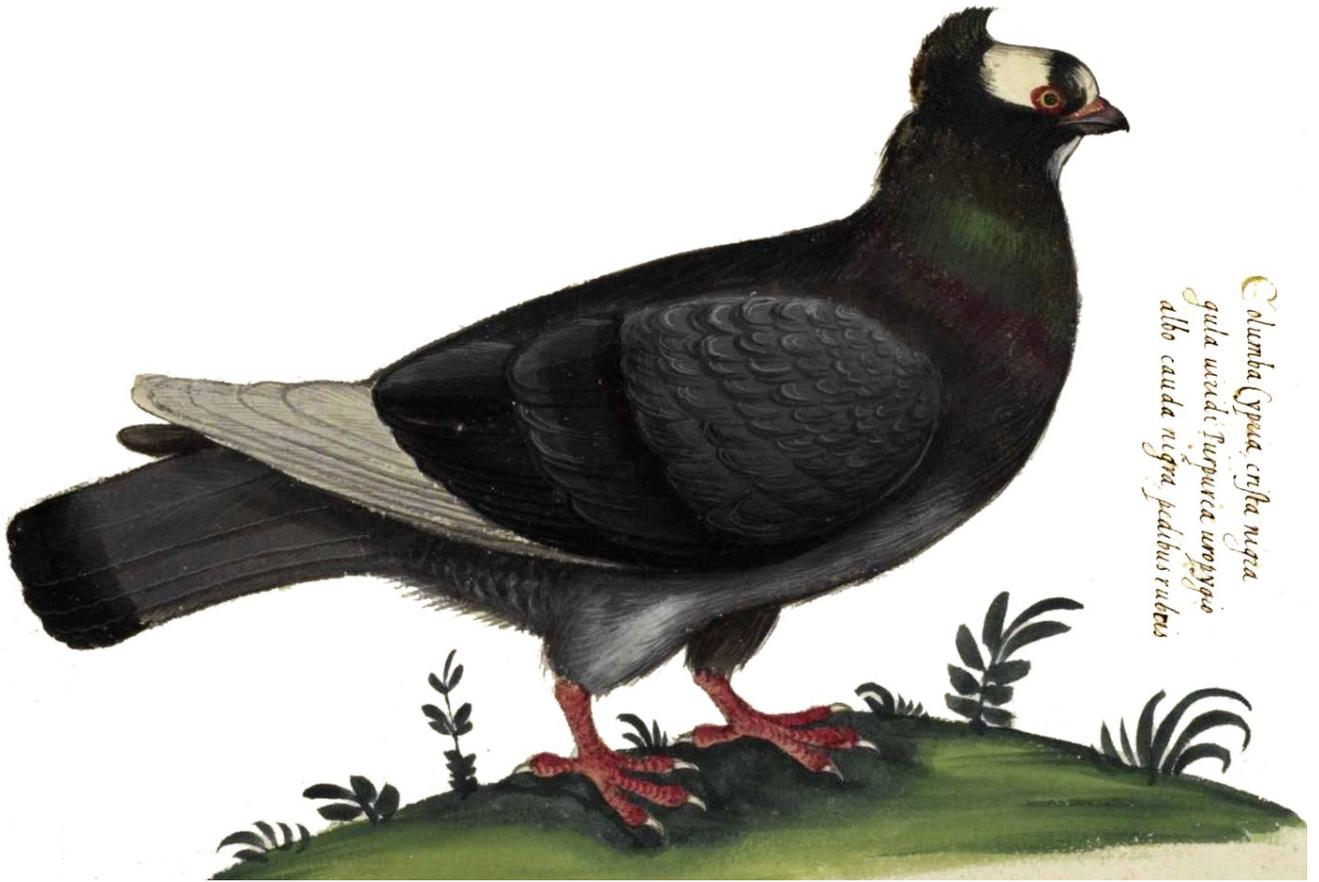




Columba alba domestica
Sisfutus pedibus.



Columba cyropa alba cristata
capite cinereo obscuro



*Columba Cypræ, cristæ nigra
gula uicidæ purpurea uropygia
albo cauda nigra pedibus rubris*



*Columba Cypræ mas
Trompido quatuorjuss*

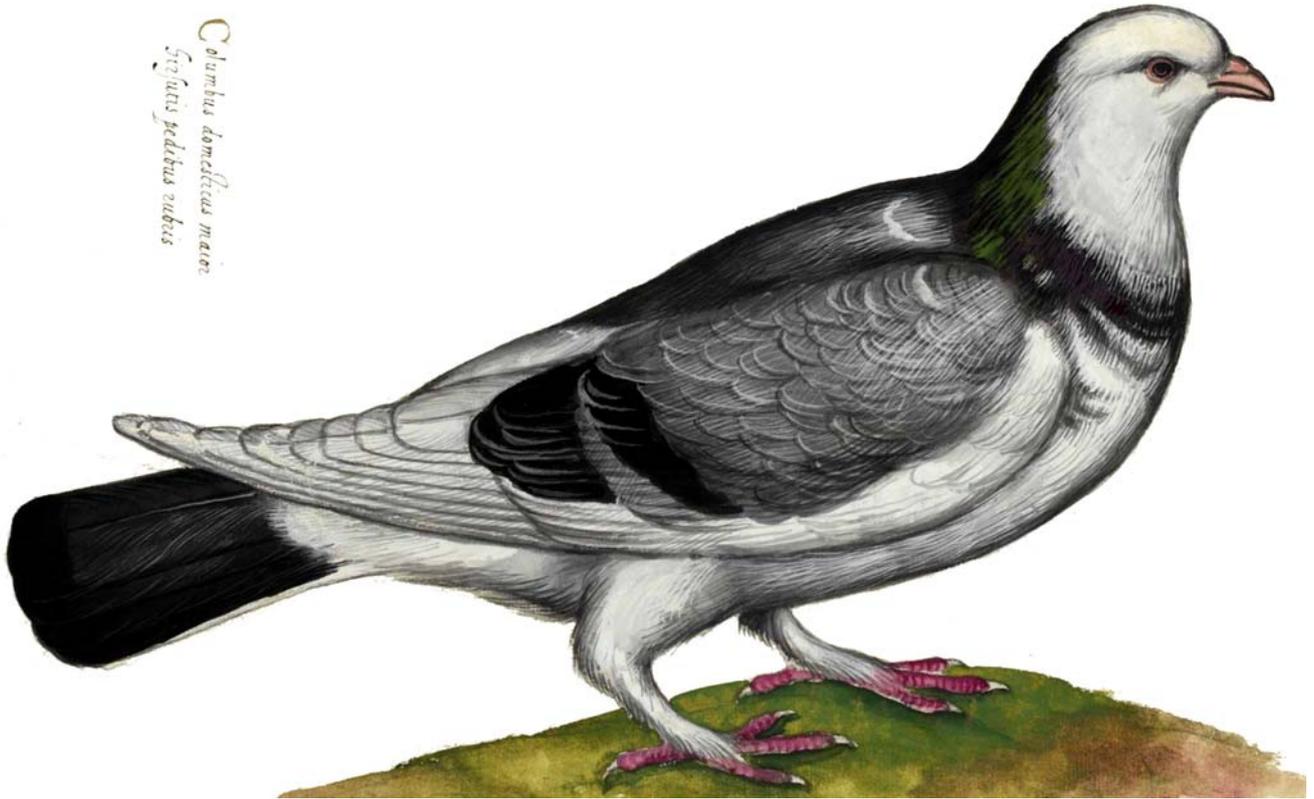
Columba linca
Columbo castaneus



Columba macrotus gutturosus brevis
rosto Ironfo uulgo.



Batavarum Columbarum finis



End of the Batavian Doves