

**24 UNFORGIVABLE MISTAKES
OF ULISSE ALDROVANDI
CONTAINED IN ONLY 170 PAGES OF
ORNITHOLOGIAE TOMUS ALTER – 1600
LIBER DECIMUSQUARTUS
QUI EST DE PULVERATRICIBUS DOMESTICIS**



**Ut simplex et una est veritas
ita mendacium multiplex
Like the truth is simple and unique
so the lie is manifold**

**Ulisse Aldrovandi – Ornithologia I – 1599
De Vulture - page 245**

The errors are only partly of typographical nature
being quite a lot those of conceptual sort.

948 is the total of the errors identifiable through the character {
1,196 is the total of the errors identifiable through the character <
1,072 is the total average number of the errors

The reported Greek text doesn't correspond to the typographical one
being the latter crammed with mistakes
and that's why it has not been included in the computation
whose total would result very higher.

Total of the Latin words: 87,385
Percentage of the Latin errors: 1.226%

**Ulisse Aldrovandi offended the Netherlands
by eclipsing Volcher Coiter**

Volcher Coiter (1534-1576), regarded as the father of the embryology, absolutely never is quoted by Aldrovandi in his three treatises of Ornithology, despite the former had represented the milestone in the daily study of chicken embryo's development, done on Aldrovandi's stimulation - so becoming his godfather - and being Coiter his disciple at university of Bologna. If it was not enough, neither the name nor the last name of the famous Dutchman appear in the list of the authors used by Aldrovandi in his 3 volumes of Ornithology, a list which opens the beginning of the 3rd volume (1603). Like a true first lady, Ulisse debuts at page 216 by affirming: "quotidie unum [ovum] cum maxima diligentia, ac curiositate secui - daily I have dissected with the maximum of diligence and curiosity an egg ". Of Coiter no trace, neither in *De observatione foetus in ovis* (1564) of Aldrovandi transcribed and translated by Nicola De Bellis and appearing as precious appendix of Sandra Tugnoli's job OSSERVAZIONE DI COSE STRAORDINARIE Il *De observatione foetus in ovis* (1564) di Ulisse Aldrovandi (Bologna, 2000). No trace of Coiter also in a recent article of Luciano Sterpellone about Marcello Malpighi: without writing explicitly, our historiographer of medicine dethroned the Dutchman, defrauding him of the title of father of embryology, universally recognized, also by the American Ralph Major, and assigning this title - by chance - to a Bolognese of adoption who lived in the following century: Marcello Malpighi (*Il giornale della Previdenza* 5, 2009 – page 18 & 19).

Page 184 and 239

Just in AEQUIVOCA – AMBIGUITIES at page 184 Aldrovandi reports Megabyzus instead of Megabazus (a mistake occurring also at page 239) as well as Alectryon in place of Electryon

184

Megabyzus instead of Megabazus

Megabyzus, in Greek *Megábyzos*, in Latin *Megabyzus*, is the name by which in the ancient Persian empire were designated the castrated priests of Artemis: then, commonly, this name meant eunuch. Such a name was also brought by some fellows of the Persian court, among whom the more important was a general, child of Zopyrus: this Megabyzus (around 515-440 BC) regained Babylon to Xerxes I (484) and was among his generals in the war against the Greeks (480). Later, underneath Artaxerxes I, he subdued the rebellious Egypt (453). Therefore Aldrovandi makes an error in associating Darius with Megabyzus: in fact the latter was born when Megabazus was already about to subdue Thracia and Macedonia in favour of Darius I immediately after 513 BC.

Megabazus, in Greek *Megábazos*, in Latin *Megabazus*, was a general of Darius I king of Persia (522-486 BC). After the sovereign's return from the Scythian expedition (513 BC) he subdued the Thracia also getting the subjugation of the Macedonia. It is Megabazus - and not Megabyzus - to be quoted by Aristophanes together with Darius in the comedy *The birds*, 483. Without doubt the mistake is drawn from Conrad Gessner *Historia animalium III* (1555) page 404: "Alectryon olim tyrannidem gessit, et Persis primus imperavit, etiam ante Darium et {Megabyzum} <Megabazum>." Gessner could have drawn the error from some text like that of Aldo Manuzio (1498) which gives: *πρῶτον πάντων δαρείου καὶ μεγαβύζου* - ... megabýzou.

Quidam Alectryon nomine tyrannidem quondam gessit, et Persis primus imperasse dicitur, etiam antequam vel Darius, vel {Megabyzus} <Megabazus>: unde etiam Gallus, ut post dicemus, ales Persica appellatur.

Once, someone named Alectryon ruled as tyrant, and they say that he has been the first ruling the Persians, even before both Darius and Megabazus: whence the rooster is also called the Persian bird, as I shall later say.

Alectryon instead of Electryon

For assonance, when speaking about the word Alectryon, which in Greek if masculine means rooster, besides being the name of some fellows, among whom a youth that Ares, during his loving meetings

with Aphrodite put as bodyguard in front of the door in order to be informed of Sun's rising who would have been able to shame the two adulterous Gods, for assonance, we were saying, Aldrovandi reports Alectryon instead of Electryon, a fellow of Greek mythology - child of Perseus and Andromeda - who was father of Alcmena and governed in Mycenae when he was accidentally killed by his son-in-law&nephew Amphitryon.

Alectryon item nomen ducis est Philippi Regis, qui a Chare<te> Atheniensi interemptus fuisse fertur: at num cum superiori idem fuerit, vel, quod magis credo, diversus, non ausim affirmare: docet autem historia, hunc Charetem saepius, et nimis arroganter istius facti verba apud populum Atheniensem fecisse, adeo ut hinc postmodum natum sit proverbium **Φιλίππου ἀλεκτρυών**, id est *Philippi Gallus*: ubi quis de levi quopiam facinore perinde ut maximo se iactaret. {Alectryon} <Electryon> quoque dicebatur {Amphitryonis} <Amphitryonis> {pater, filius} <patruus, frater> vero Alcei, cuius meminit Hesiodus.

Alektryon is the name of a commander of king Philip 2nd too, about whom they say he was killed by the Athenian Chares: whether he was identical with the former or, as I incline to believe, was a different person, I do not dare to assert: on the other hand history shows that this Chares related about this event too much often and with too much arrogance to Athenian people, so much so that subsequently hence arose the saying *Philippou alektryon*, to wit, *Cock of Philip*: when somebody was bragging about a trivial undertaking as though it was the biggest one. Was ~~also~~ called Electryon the uncle of Amphitryon, the former being brother of Alceus, mentioned by Hesiod.

239

Megabizus instead of Megabazus

Aristophanes aves hominibus, Persis vero in primis imperasse per iocum scripsit: ait autem.

*Quod autem non Dei igitur hominibus imperarunt antiquitus,
Sed aves et regnabant: multa sunt signa horum:
Statim autem vobis primum ostendam Gallum quod regnabat
Imperabatque Persis primum omnibus, Dario, et {Megabizo} <Megabazo>:
Quare vocatur {Persicus} <Persica> avis a dominatione adhuc illa.*

Aristophanes wrote in jest that the birds ruled over men, but first over the Persians: for he says:

*But therefore in ancient times the gods did not rule men
but also birds did rule: there are many proofs about the latter ones:
at once, I shall point out firstly the rooster since he ruled
and as first dominated over all Persians, over Darius and Megabazus:
whence he is still called Persian bird starting from that hegemony.*

Page 185

Saint Heron transformed into Saint Gallus

Saint Heron deacon of Saint Ignatius of Antioch is turned by Aldrovandi into an imaginary Saint Gallus, he also deacon of Saint Ignatius, but who never existed. Here is the text of Bede - inexplicably amputated by Aldrovandi - drawn from the *Martyrologium* and contained in *Patrologia Latina* edited by Jacques-Paul Migne (Paris, 1850, page 1074, vol. 94): B. XVII Calend. Novemb. – Depositio sancti Galli confessoris, cujus vita plena virtutibus conscripta habetur. Apud Lugdunum beati Antiochi episcopi. Apud Viennam sancti Theodati episcopi, item Heronis, qui post beatum Ignatium Antiochenam rexit Ecclesiam. Erat enim hic beati martyris Ignatii diaconus; qui episcopus factus, viam magistri pius imitator sequitur, et pro commendato grege amator Christi occubuit.

Est et Gallus Sancti Confessoris nomen, ut refert Beda, cuius vita plena virtutibus conscripta habeatur. Erat autem beati martiris Ignatii diaconus, qui episcopus factus viam magistri pius imitator sequutus, pro commendato grege, Christi amato<r> occubuit.

As Bede tells us, Gallus is also the name of a holy confessor, whose biography would be overflowing of virtuous acts. In fact - Heron - was deacon of the blessed martyr Ignatius, and when became bishop he followed the way of his master as a scrupulous imitator, and being fond of Christ he fell for the flock entrusted to him.

Page 191

Phantasmagoric dissertation about Hadrianae hens

The disquisition on *Hadrianae* hens by Aldrovandi is phantasmagoric and distressing. Insofar, if we want to learn something about these hens, it is worthwhile to read the text of Conrad Gessner drawn from page 380 of his *Historia Animalium III* (1555) quoted below.

Page 193

The breeders of Delos become writers of Delos

Aldrovandi falls into a banal and discounted mistake for which however he will make amends at page 197, as well as at page 232 when speaking of the chickens to be fattened up. The error is due to the bad habit of Ulisse in thoughtlessly plundering the text of Gessner, which erroneously at page 381 of his *Historia animalium III* (1555) sounds as follows: " Et rursus, Deliaci (scriptores) quoniam procera corpora et animos ad praelia pertinace{is} requirebant, [...] - And again, Those of Delos (~~writers~~ breeders) since were looking for bodies of tall height and stubborn spirits in fights, [...]". In fact those of Delos were not writers, but breeders. The fortune and the fame of the inhabitants of Delos as breeders of chickens is confirmed by Varro (*Rerum rusticarum*, III,9,2), Pliny (*Naturalis historia* X,139) and Columella (*De Re Rustica*, VIII,2,4), as well as by Cicero (*Academica* II,57). Delos remained in the Athenian orbit until toward 325 BC, becoming again independent in the Macedonian epoch, when was ruled as democratic republic and protected by the sovereigns of Macedonia, becoming store of cereals, which obviously were used also for raising chickens on a small and very arid island, unsuitable to any cultivation.

Quibus verbis dum non multum moribus a vernaculis differre tradit, a Varrone, et Plinio dissentire videri possit, nisi alias ita scriberet: *Deliaci*, nempe scriptores, *quia procera corpora, et animos ad praelia pertinaces requirebant, praecipue Tanagricum genus, et Rhodium probabant, nec minus Chalcidicum, et Medicum, quod ab imperito vulgo litera mutata Melicum appellatur.*

While by these words he is telling that regarding their behaviour they do not differ too much from our chickens, it might appear that he is dissenting from Varro and Pliny unless elsewhere he writes as follows: *Those of Delos, the ~~writers~~ breeders of course, being that they looked for tall bodies and stubborn spirits in fighting, overall appreciated Tanagran and Rhodian breeds, as well as Chalcidian and Median, which with one changed letter is called Melian by incompetent folk.*

The mistake doesn't occur at page 197, where we can read: *Deliaci, qui Gallorum educationem praecipue celebrare, Tanagricum genus, et Rhodium probabant, nec minus Chalcidicum, et Medicum (quod ab imperito vulgo litera mutata Melicum appellatur) quoniam procera corpora, et animos ad praelia pertinaces requirebant; author est idem Columella. - The Delians, who more than everybody usually bred roosters, appreciated Tanagran and Rhodian breeds as well as Chalcidian and Median (which with one changed letter is called Melian by incompetent folk) since they sought for tall bodies and spirits persistent at fighting; Columella himself is witness.*

**One of his biggest falsehood:
he never saw neither chickens
nor other five toed birds
while he saw a phantom pentadactylous bird received from Spain
the purple gallinule - Porphyrio porphyrio
as he affirms in his Discorso naturale.
Apart from everything else
and certainly not in order to don't contradict himself
he scotomize the pentadactylous cock and hen of page 312 / 313**

Et Columella etiam Gallinas probat, quae quinque digitos habent, ita tamen ne cruribus emineant transversa calcaria. Quare quid de eiusmodi digitis dicam, plane ignoro: cum alioqui pedes {pentadactili} <pentadactyli> neque in avium hoc genere, nec in alio observari, nisi in monstris ex abundantia materiae videamus: qualis ille pes {pentadactilos} <pentadactylus> est, quem mihi olim nescio a quo donatum in museo meo reservo.

And Columella appreciates also those hens which have five toes, so that however no spurs are sticking out transversally from their legs. Therefore, I am at all at a loss what to say about such toes: since in other respects we see from an abundance of matter that five-toed feet are not observed neither in this genus of birds nor in any other, except in monsters: like it is that pentadactylous foot which was given to me I don't know by whom and which I keep in my museum.

DISCORSO NATURALE - 1572/1573 - Et fra questi alcuni se ne ritrovano hanno tre dita nella parte davanti et uno di dietro, sì come sono la maggior parte degl'uccelli - altri sono che hanno due dita nella parte dinanzi et due di dietro, a guisa di papagalli et picchi, et altri che vivono di vermicelli su gl'arbori, che col becco li forano et tirano a sé gl'animaletti che vi sono dentro, de quali si nutriscono empiendosene la lor lingua e tirandoseli poi a sé, quai animaletti erano rinchiusi fra la corteccia et il legno. Fra questi ancora sono alcuni uccelli, detti spininori, che vivono fra le spine, sì come il cardellino, il salo, cioè fanello, il picchile, cioè varia - altri sono chiamati caruphagi, cioè magnatori di frutti e semi - altri sono scoligophagi, che magnano i vermi, come l'alcinoo, floro, detto caurenzolo a Bologna, et ematopos, chiamato gambiletta. Se ne ritrovano alcuni detti pamphagi dal Philosopho, cioè magnatore d'ogni cosa, come l'uppupa, gallo del paradiso detto a Padova. **Fra questi uccelli altri se ne trovano che hanno cinque dita, sì come il porphirio, quale ho avuto di Spagna,** chiamato in lingua loro telamone.

**He was putting for incubation 22 eggs under only one hen
forgetful of the suggestions of Hippocrates to use two or more hens
and of the experience of Bolognese women
who recommended no more than 17 or 19 eggs for each broody hen**

Ut enim trivialis huius controversiae inter medicos, ac philosophos veritatem indagarem, ex ovis duobus, et viginti, quae Gallina incubabat, quotidie unum cum maxima diligentia, ac curiositate secui, et Aristotelis doctrinam verissimam esse reperi.

In order to search out the truth in this cheap controversy between physicians and philosophers, each day, with the greatest care and curiosity, I dissected one of twenty-two eggs which a hen was incubating, and I found that Aristotle's teaching is the true one.

Page 223: Sed nostrae mulieres semper fere non ultra septemdecim, vel novemdecim glorientibus incubanda exhibent. - But our women – the Bolognese women – almost always give the broody-hens no more than 17 or 19 eggs for incubation. But he snubs them, entrusting on the contrary 22 eggs, but only in order to try to mystify somehow the true source of his data, that is Coiter, who used 23 eggs and 2 hens.

Page 230

He makes Aelian to say that Vulcan rather than Mars was snared with an invisible chain

Aelian is clear: to prevent a rooster just bought, or received as gift, to run away and to reach the poultry pen whence he comes, we have "to put near him a warden and to tie him with a chain even more invisible than that of Vulcan in Homer's poem" (*On the Nature of Animals* II,30). Vulcan made this chain to capture Mars who with Venus, had by Vulcan as bride from Jupiter, was cuckolding him in plenty just in his house, as Homer is telling in *Odyssey* (VIII, 266-366). On the contrary Aldrovandi exchanges the fellows and who is captured is the same craftsman of the invisible chain: Vulcan the cuckold. Luckily Aldrovandi redeems himself at page 275, when the fateful affair is narrated in a correct way resorting to *The dream or the rooster* of Lucian.

Aelianus eiusmodi Gallum recentem sponte fugitivum ad suos familiares, et compascales, utcunque procul allatus fuerit, se recipere tradit, ideoque custodia ipsum muniendum, et vinculis occultioribus, quam quibus apud Homerum {Vulcanus} <Mars> irretitur, coercendum, idque hunc in modum effici, si ei fidem adhibes, (nam revera fabulam sapit) mensam super qua cibum capere soles, in medium cortis siste, et Gallum ter circa ipsam circumfero, atque ita cum caeteris avibus domesticis liberum dimittito. Sic enim tanquam vinctus nusquam aufugiet. Sed Gallus ad suos non revertetur, ut ille ait, nisi a vicinis tuis illum emas, nam tunc propter veterem pellicum amorem facile domum repetit.

Aelian reports that such a recently arrived rooster spontaneously runs away to his friends and feeding partners, from however far off he has been brought, and thus must be guarded and bound with chains more invisible than those by which Mars, according to Homer, is snared. It can be done in this manner, if you have faith in him (for in fact his words smack of a fable): place the table on which you are accustomed to take your food in the middle of the barnyard and carry the rooster three times around it. Then let him run free with the other domestic birds. For in this manner as if chained he will run away nowhere. But a rooster does not return to his friends, as Aelian says, unless you buy him from your neighbors, for then, because of an old love for his concubines, he easily seeks his home again.

Page 235

He makes Aristotle to say that the cock sits on eggs if the hen dies so Aristotle shares the fantasies of Aelian

Aristotle - or pseudo Aristotle - in *Historia animalium* IX,49 writes as follows:

Ἦδη δὲ καὶ τῶν ἀρρένων τινὲς ὥφθησαν· ἀπολομένης τῆς θηλείας αὐτοὶ περὶ τοὺς νεοττοὺς τὴν τῆς θηλείας ποιούμενοι σκευωρίαν, περιάγοντές τε καὶ ἐκτρέφοντες οὕτως ὥστε μῆτε κοκκύζειν ἔτι μὴτ' ὀχεύειν ἐπιχειρεῖν.

On the death of a hen a cock has been seen to undertake the maternal duties, leading the chickens about and providing them with food, and so intent upon these duties as to cease crowing and indulging his sexual propensities. (translation of D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson, 1910)

Pliny in *Naturalis historia* X,155 synthetically affirms what is referred by Aristotle:

Narrantur et mortua gallina mariti earum visi succedentes in vicem et reliqua fetae more facientes abstinentesque se cantu.

They tell that after the death of a hen, males have been seen relieving them and like a woman after childbirth doing the things left over to be done and abstaining from crow.

Only Aelian allows himself to make poetry by turning a baby sitter rooster into a brooding rooster, which implicates a hormonal background that in a true rooster - not in a rooster who thanks to a

gynandromorphism has sprung from a hen, as perhaps it happened to that poor rooster of Basel sent to the stake in 1474 - a hormonal background, we were saying, that in a true rooster never has been documented, neither in ethology have been described roosters devoted to brooding. Aelian never saw this brooding rooster, but in *On the Nature of Animals* IV,29 describes him as follows, telling tales thanks to the text of Aristotle:

Τῆς δὲ ὄρνιθος ἀπολωλείας, ἐπαράζει αὐτὸς, καὶ ἐκλέπει τὰ ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ νεόττια σιωπῶν· οὐ γὰρ ἄδει τότε θαυμαστῇ τινὶ καὶ ἀπορρήτῳ αἰτία, ναὶ μὰ τὸν δοκεῖ γάρ μοι συγγινώσκειν ἑαυτῷ θηλείας ἔργα καὶ οὐκ ἄρρενος δρῶντι τηνικάδε.

When the hen died, he himself is brooding, and he makes open his little children keeping silent; why he doesn't crow in that period of time it is due to some strange and mysterious reason, by Zeus; in fact it seems me that he is aware that so he is doing the duties of a female and not of a male.

At page 226 Aldrovandi correctly refers the statements of Aristotle, nearly opposing them to those of Aelian:

Verum ipsemet Aristoteles Gallos nonnullos visos esse testatur, qui cum forte {faemina} <femina> interiisset, ipsi officio matris fungerentur, pullos ductando, fovendo, educando, ita ne de caetero, vel cucur<r>ire, vel coire appeterent. Et Aelianus Galli laudes prosequens {;}<, > *Matrice Gallina*, <i>nquit, *extincta, ipse incubat; et pullos ex ovis excludit, ac tum silentio utitur.*

Truly Aristotle himself reports that some roosters have been seen who, when by chance the female had died, assumed the duties of the mother in leading, warming, and rearing the chicks, so that they not bother about other things, neither crowing nor copulating. And Aelian, going on with the praise of the rooster, says: *When a laying hen dies, he himself incubates, and hatches out the chicks from eggs, and at that time he keeps silent.*

But nine pages later, that is, at page 235, he makes also Aristotle to say that the rooster broods if the hen dies:

Verum visus est aliquando Gallus, teste Aristotele, mortua Gallina, eius munus obire, hoc est, vel incubare ova, vel iam natos pullos educare, insigni sane benevolentiae signo.

In fact, according to Aristotle, sometimes, when a hen is dead, a rooster has been seen to take on her tasks, that is, or to incubate eggs, or to rear the already born chicks, undoubtedly as evident sign of fondness.

Page 258

He makes José de Acosta to say that Amerindians rather than Athenians worshipped the roosters

The mistake of Aldrovandi is huge. In fact who adored the roosters were not the Incas, on the contrary the Athenians. José de Acosta affirms this in *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* Libro quinto Capítulo V DE LA IDOLATRÍA QUE USARON LOS INDIOS CON COSAS PARTICULARES - No se contentó el demonio con hacer a los ciegos indios que adorasen al sol, y la luna, y las estrellas, y tierra, y mar y cosas generales de naturaleza; pero pasó adelante a darles por dioses, y sujetallos a cosas menudas, y muchas de ellas muy soeces. No se espantará de esta ceguera en bárbaros, quien trajere a la memoria que de los sabios y filósofos dice el Apóstol, que habiendo conocido a Dios, no le glorificaron ni dieron gracias como a su Dios; sino que se envanecieron en su pensamiento, y se escureció su corazón necio, y vinieron a trocar la gloria y deidad del eterno Dios, por semejanzas y figuras de cosas caducas y corruptibles, como de hombres, de aves, de bestias, de serpientes. Bien sabida cosa es el perro Osiris, que adoraban los egipcios, y la vaca Isis, y el carnero Amon; y en Roma la diosa Februa de las calenturas, y el ánser de Tarpeya; **y en Atenas la sabia, el cuervo y el gallo.** [...] (Fué impreso en Sevilla, casa de Juan de León, junto a las Siete Revueltas, 1590)

Verum quod maius est Indos Gallum adorasse Iosephus Acosta scribit, et Lucianus pro Deo olim cultum fuisse.

Truly, and this is more significant, José de Acosta writes that Amerindians worshipped the rooster, and Lucian says that formerly it has been venerated as a god.

Page 274

Thanks to Erasmus of Rotterdam he ascribes a verse of the poet Nicander of Colophon to the physician Numenius of Heraclea

The verse is not due to Numenius of Heraclea, on the contrary to Nicander of Colophon, and is contained in the 2nd book of his *Georgics*. It is possible to affirm this with certainty by the edition of the *Deipnosophistai* of Teubner (recensuit Georgius Kaibel, 1888 - Teubner, Stuttgart, 1985) written by Athenaeus of Naucratis. The exchange of persons is due to Erasmus of Rotterdam. Gessner deduced the error from Erasmus but quotes him as source and believes him. Aldrovandi on the contrary omits the source, so that we could not accuse Erasmus of this umpteenth misdeed and only a stroke of luck has been able to resolve the quid pro quo which otherwise would remain a conundrum.

Et rursum eodem libro adducit ex {Numenio} <Nicandro>. Ἡδ' ὅπερ ὄρνιθος καλέεται γάλα, id est. *Atque quod Gallinae dicitur Lac.*

And still in the same book he [Athenaeus *Deipnosophistai* IX,12,371c] quotes from Nicander – not from Numenius of Heraclea: Ἐδ' ὅπερ ὄρνιθος καλέεται γάλα, that is: *Also that which is said milk of hen.*

Page 275

Thanks to Erasmus of Rotterdam Leda becomes the daughter of her husband Tyndarus instead of Thestius Aetolia's king

The errors pass from hand to hand as the candies, or, to be more *à la page*, as a joint. The source of the mistake according to which Leda was daughter of Tyndarus and not his wife, and daughter of Thestius, is represented as usual by Erasmus of Rotterdam, from whom Conrad Gessner seizes the error *sic et simpliciter*. Then Aldrovandi makes it his own, looking for feeding us on it, adding however a *Tyndaris* which in Gessner correctly sounds *Tyndari*. - Conrad Gessner *Historia Animalium III* (1555), page 457: "Siquidem est in poetarum fabulis Ledam Tyndari filiam, ex Iovis concubitu duo peperisse ova, e quorum altero prodire gemini Castor et Pollux, insigni forma iuvenes: ex altero nata est Helena, cuius forma literis omnium est nobilitata, Erasmus."

Siquidem est in poetarum fabulis, Ledam {Tyndaris <Tyndari>} <Thestii> filiam ex Iovis concubitu duo peperisse ova, e quorum altero prodire gemini Castor, et Pollux insigni forma iuvenes: ex altero nata est Helena, cuius species literis omnium est nobilitata.

Since in the fables of the poets it is found that Leda, daughter of Thestius - wife of Tyndarus, from an intercourse she had with Jupiter gave birth to two eggs, from one of which the twins Castor and Pollux were born, boys of outstanding beauty: from the other egg Helen was born, whose appearance has been extolled by literary works of everybody.

Page 276

Because of Aldo Manuzio he transforms into an inexistent Gabrius/Gabria the Greek poet Babrius

Babrius constantly turns into Gabrius in the edition of his *Fables* by Aldo Manuzio in 1505. Lind (1963) translates the text of Aldrovandi as follows: Concerning this fable the following poem is extant by a Greek author named Gabria: "Once a hen laid a golden egg, and a certain miser, deceived in his mind, killed the hen to obtain her gold. But his hope destroyed the greater gift of fortune." But in the footnote Lind specifies: "Gabria: This is Babrius, *Fabulae Aesopeae* (ed. by O. Crusius, Leipzig,

Teubner, 1897), fable 123." Perhaps Lind didn't want to contradict and to humiliate Aldrovandi when translating his text.

De hac fabula tale carmen {Gabriae} <Babrii> exstat authoris Graeci. Ἐτίκτε χρυσοῦν ὄν ὄρνις εἰσάπαξ, | Καὶ τις πλανηθεὶς χρυσεραστῆς / χρυσεοαστῆς τὴν φρένα, | Ἐκτείνει ταύτην χρυσὸν ὥς λαβεῖν θέλων. | Ἐλπίς δὲ, μείζον δῶρον ὠλέκει τύχης. id est. *Ovum aureum Gallina semel peperit, | Quidamque avarus deceptus animo | Eam occidit aurum accepturus. | Sed spes perdidit maius fortunae donum.*

On this fable the following composition is existing by the Greek author Babrius: Ἐτίκτε χρυσοῦν ὄν ὄρνις εἰσάπαξ, | Καὶ τις πλανηθεὶς χρυσεραστῆς / χρυσεοαστῆς τὴν φρένα, | Ἐκτείνει ταύτην χρυσὸν ὥς λαβεῖν θέλων. | Ἐλπίς δὲ, μείζον δῶρον ὠλέκει τύχης. that is: *Only once a hen laid a golden egg. | And a miser man, deceived in his reasoning, | killed her to take the gold. | But the hope destroyed the greatest gift of fortune.*

Page 294

**He leads to think that has been Horace
to put a fig in the anus of the rooster
to make it more tender
but the source of this recipe remains unknown**

Just before he quotes Horace: *If suddenly an evening guest* etc. Then he continues as follows without specifying the source of the culinary suggestion (which is not Horace) and without specifying who put the fig in the anus of the rooster: "You will accomplish the same purpose placing a fig in the anus, hence we read that having indeed presented among dishes a rooster just immolated to Hercules tender and almost friable, he referred such a tenderness of the skin as due to the fig." It would be spontaneous to attribute to Horace the culinary addition of Aldrovandi, but, as we said, the things are not this way.

Absque vero longa saginatione tenerescet, si Horatio credimus. *Si vespertinus subito te oppresserit hospes*<,> | *Ne Gallina malum responset dura palato,* | *Doctus eris vivam musto mersare {falerno} <Falerno> | Hoc teneram {facies} <faciet>.* Idem praestabis imposita in anum ficu, unde Gallum immolatum Herculi recentem tenerum et pene friabilem cum quam inter obsonia obtulisset, tam {citis} <cutis> teneritudinem ficui acceptam retulisse legitur.

But she will become tender also without a long fattening, if we believe Horace: *If suddenly an evening guest will overtake you, in order that the hen doesn't come out unpleasantly hard for the palate, you will be crafty in dipping her alive in new Falernian wine: this will soften her.* You will accomplish the same purpose placing a fig in the anus, hence we read that having indeed presented among dishes a rooster just immolated to Hercules tender and almost friable, he referred such a tenderness of the skin as due to the fig.

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**He ascribes to Spartianus instead of Lampridius
the Heliogabalus' biography**

Aelius Spartianus (IV c. AD) has been, like Aelius Lampridius (III c. AD), one of the authors of *Historia Augusta*, but he didn't write the biography of Heliogabalus, due to Lampridius. Spartianus wrote the biography of some other emperors, for example, of Adrian, Caracal and so on.

Et Heliogabalus, cui nulla fuit vita nisi in voluptatis novae exquisita ratione, saepius ex {Apitii aemulatione} <Apicii imitatione>, ut [295] {Spartianus} <~~Spartianus~~ – Lampridius> prodit, cristas Gallinaceis viventibus voravit, item camelorum calcanea, Pavonum linguas, et Lusciniarum. Cerebrum etiam coquitur, editurque maxime leviter assum cum pauco sale. Acuit autem privatim intellectum.

And Heliogabalus, who had no other kind of life than to seek the way to get a renewed pleasure, quite often in order to imitate Apicius, as Aelius Lampridius reports, ate the combs of alive roosters, as well as the shins of camels, the tongues of peacocks and

nightingales. Also the brain is cooked, and it is especially eaten slightly roasted with a little salt. In truth it sharpens in special manner the mind.

Page 298

**Aldrovandi doesn't give the source
then it is very likely that the fact that for religious reasons
in Socotra the chickens weren't eaten
is a his bright falsehood
being that to breed chickens in Socotra was extremely arduous**

We can suppose that Aldrovandi elaborated this information - about the fact that in XVI century in Socotra they didn't eat chickens - from the letter of Andrea Corsali (Firenze/Empoli 1487 -??) dated September 18th 1517 addressed to Lorenzo de' Medici and contained in *Navigazioni e Viaggi* (1550) of the Italian humanist, geographer and historian Giovanni Battista Ramusio (1485-1557). However Aldrovandi gives no quotation for Socotra's source at the edge of page.

But Corsali in this letter confines himself to say what was eaten in Socotra, not what they didn't eat, and he doesn't mention any religious reasons adopted by the inhabitants of the island about the alimentary resources. As usual, Aldrovandi is fudging, since Corsali doesn't affirm at all in an explicit and unequivocal way - as on the contrary is doing Julius Cesar for Britain and rightly quoted by Aldrovandi at edge of page as Liber 5 de bello Gallico (*Commentarii de bello Gallico* V,12,6: Leporem et gallinam et anserem gustare fas non putant; haec tamen alunt animi voluptatisque causa) - that in Socotra they didn't eat chickens. Corsali confines himself to say what they ate - mostly - the Christian shepherds of the island: milk and butter, dates in place of bread, sometimes rice.

Corsali doesn't specify if the Christian shepherds of Socotra raised cattle, or sheep, or goats, or all these three types of animals, all of them being able to furnish milk and butter, even if today we prefer to get the latter from bovine milk. It seems however that the first mammals were introduced on the island only around 2000 years ago and are of only domestic kind as goats, sheep, donkeys, camels and cows.

Neither Corsali lingers in specifying that certainly also the meat of these animals entrusted to the shepherds served them as food, obviously when the subjects had come at the end of their productive career of milk, offspring and wool (and this not certainly used to manufacture mantles and winter knitwear), or when the subjects had an accident and died or the shepherds were forced to suppress them, as it often happens.

And there had to be a crowd of grazing animals, considering that the shepherds "vivono di latte e butiro, che qui n'è grandissima abbondanza - they live of milk and butter, and here they are quite abundant." Neither Corsali specifies that in order to reduce the redundant meat, both alive and butchered, perhaps the shepherds exchanged it with the rice which every now and then the sailors unloaded on the island.

All we have just now specified is not written, but it is easily meant in an absolute respect of the reasonableness. I believe I can affirm - even if Corsali doesn't say - that the shepherds, besides milk, butter, dates and rice, they also ate the meat of their quadrupeds, except to be compelled to bury it or to give it as gift to vultures, perhaps to Egyptian vulture, *Neophron percnopterus*, still observable in groups on the island. In fact to feed themselves on meat of quadrupeds was not an offense to God, except on Friday, admitted that the Christian shepherds of Socotra followed the rule of the abstinence so well-loved by the Catholic Church. Then, with great disappointment of the fishmongers, only from February 17th 1966 the Apostolic Constitution *Paenitemini* limited the abstinence from meats to Ash Wednesday, to Fridays in Lent and to Good Friday and allowed their substitution with works of spiritual or bodily charity for other Fridays of the year.

And finally we come to the chickens of Socotra. After all, would have these shepherds the possibility of raising chickens? In theory yes, being the chickens omnivorous, so to greedily gulp down also the human faeces, but if in place of the faeces we would give corn to the chickens of which they are as much greedy, then Corsali affirms "La terra non è molto fruttifera, ma sterile e deserta com'è tutta l'Arabia Felice - The earth is not very fertile, but sterile and desert as the whole Happy Arabia". Thence to the islanders it was worthwhile to be shepherds rather than growers of grain. They didn't even

cultivate the wheat to make bread, replaced by dates. And we have to don't forget that Conrad Gessner at page 381 of *Historia animalium III* (1555), quoting Strabo, about the Yemen – the *Arabia Felix* par excellence and located opposite to Socotra – writes: "The part of Arabia facing the wind Austro - facing south - and raising opposite to Ethiopia, has in abundance birds of every kind except geese and hens, Strabo." Then, if the source of Ulisse has been the letter of Corsali, Ulisse fudged for the umpteenth time.

Hodie apud Indos quosdam in Socotera insula religio est Gallinam, aut quamlibet avem contingere, nedum gustare: et Britannis olim Iulius Caesar testatur, nefas fuisse leporem, et Gallinam, et Anserem gustare: haec tamen alere animi voluptatisque causa.

Today among some Indians of Socotra Island there is the religious custom of not to taste, nor least of all to eat the hen or whatever bird: and, once, as Julius Caesar testifies, for the British people it was forbidden to feed on hare, hen and goose: they raised them for pure delight.

Page 300

He affirms that the annotations to a Galen's treatise are of Ermolao Barbaro instead of Janus Cornarius

In the note at page's edge Aldrovandi writes about Ermolao Barbaro: In annot. in I. Gal. de comp. med. sec. loc. But Lind (1963) annotates: "Neither the BM nor BN catalogues list this work, although Barbarus edited Aristotle, Pliny, Dioscorides and Pomponius Mela, among ancient authors." Lind is perfectly right. In fact the *annotationes* to Galen's treatise - if we trust Gessner - are of Janus Cornarius and not of Ermolao Barbaro. Conrad Gessner *Historia Animalium III* (1555) page 436: "Sed verbum Graecum ἀναδεύσαντες, quo Galenus et Aegineta utuntur, non conspergere, sed subigere et permiscere significat: quod miror nec Hermolaum, nec alios (quod sciam) praeter Cornarium animadvertisse. Is enim in annotationibus suis in Galeni libros de compos. medic. sec. locos, haec Aeginetae verba super his ovis, [...] - But the Greek verb *anadeúsantes*, used by Galen and Paul of Aegina, doesn't mean to sprinkle, but to dip and to mix: I marvel that neither Ermolao Barbaro nor others (as far as I am aware) realized this, except Janus Cornarius. He in fact in his annotations about the books of Galen's *De compositione medicamentorum secundum locos*, the following words of Paul of Aegina regarding these eggs, [...]"

{Hermolaus} <Janus Cornarius> enim haec Aeginetae verba super his ovis ἀναδεύθεντα ὠμά μετὰ γάρου καὶ οἴνου καὶ ἐλαίου, καὶ ἐν διπλόμασι συμμέτρως πηγνύμενα: Sic vertit: *cruda cum garo, vinoque ac oleo subacta*.

For Janus Cornarius is translating in this way the following words *anadeúthenta omá metà gárou kaì oínou kaì elaíou, kaì en diplómasi summétrōs pēgnúmena* of Paul of Aegina about these eggs: *raw, beaten with fish sauce and with wine and oil*.

Page 303

He reports an inexistent carabes

First of all we have to mark that Aldrovandi doesn't give the source of what he is reporting, so not allowing us to have a checking of his errors. In ancient Latin *carabes* doesn't exist, but only *carabus* that meant shrimp, coming from Greek *kárabos*, or meant a small wood or wicker row boat. Neither in Greek it is possible to find an equivalent of *carabes*. Today with *Carabus* is meant a genus of Coleoptera belonging to the family of the *Carabidae* composed by around 25.000 species with dimensions from small to great. For the *Carabidae* are not described particular employments in human field, as on the contrary it happens for the coleopter cantharis, *Lytta vesicatoria*, producing toxic and irritating secretions, and the cantharis was used once, and today by some madman having serious side effects, with aphrodisiac purpose.

Lind (1963) has looked for a solution of the riddle by translating *carabes* with *carabaccium* in cursive, perhaps to put in evidence the uncertainty of his translation and the wood *carabaccium* – as you can read in French - has a perfume bordering on that of clove.

The following data are also contained in *Encyclopédie méthodique, médecine, par une société de médecins* (Paris, Panckoucke, 1792): BOIS DE CARABACCI – LIGNUM CARABACCICUM - CARABACCIIUM, (*Hist. nat. bot.*) c'est le nom que l'on donne à un bois aromatique des Indes, dont l'odeur ressemble beaucoup à celle du clou de girofle, excepté qu'elle est plus douce & moins pénétrante; extérieurement il est brun, ou de la couleur de la cannelle: on lui attribue la qualité d'adoucir l'acrimonie de la lymphe, & d'être un excellent remède contre le scorbut; il fortifie l'estomac, & facilite la digestion. On le prend en décoction, ou infusé comme du thé & du café. Les droguistes n'ont encore pu se procurer de justes renseignements sur l'arbre qui le fournit.

Being big the abundance of Latin errors in this short excerpt of Aldrovandi, *carabes* is translated with the imaginary Aldrovandian *carabes*.

Aliter ad faciem mangonizandam: Accipe Gallinam pinguem, a pennis mundam, contunde ubi interanea exemeris, sanguinem absterseris, ac in frusta parva consideris: dein simul cum pulveris gummi<,> {eleni} <helenii>, carabes [?], {armoniaci} <ammoniaci>, myrrhae, bdellii, vernicis, thuris, boracis ana uncia in alembico destilla: destillationi moschi grana duo, aut tria adde, et camphorae octavam: hac aqua mulier faciem abluat, postquam prius aqua pluviali usa fuerit.

To embellish artificially the face in another manner: Take a fat hen polished up from feathers, crush there whence you extracted entrails, clean up the blood and chop up: then distill in an alembic along with one ounce each [27,28 g] of gum powder, elecampane - perhaps the Egyptian one, *carabes*, ammoniac gum, myrrh, bdellium, varnish - or sandarac, incense, borax: add to the distillate two or three grains of musk, and an eighth part of camphor: the woman has to wash her face with this water after she first used rain water.

He transforms Theodolinda into Theogilla
 unavailable also in the web
 and without reliable historical data
 he assigns to her the merit of Monza's mother hen with 7 chicks



It is impossible to go back with certainty to the historical source of the wrong 12 chicks reported by Morigia and then by Aldrovandi, rather than 7 as is attesting the artefact we are still possessing today. Here is what we find in *Historia dell'antichità di Milano* (1592) I,8 - quoted as source by Aldrovandi - when Morigia is listing what *Teodolina* gave as present to the Church of St. Giovanni Battista of Monza: "[...] e vi lasciò ancora un tesoro, e una Pitta con docici (sic!) Pulcini d'oro masiccio (sic!) [...] - [...]" and she still there left a treasure and a mother hen with twelve gold chicks in massive gold [...]." It is very likely that 12 rather than 7 is an enormous error of Paolo Morigia. Girolamo Tiraboschi (Jesuit, historian of literature and erudite Italian, 1731-1794) wrote about him: "His works are absolutely lacking of critical spirit." This is reported by www.provincia.va.it. If it was not enough, the *Enciclopedia Biografica Universale Treccani* (2007) adds: "He wrote a lot, accompanying to an extreme credulity the care to pick up the greater possible number of news and facts."

Untraceable in the web *Theogilla* as well as *Theogilia*. Rare *Teodelinda*. In English she sounds both as *Theodelinda* and *Theodolinda*. Paolo Morigia used *Teodolina*. We could hypothesize that Aldrovandi renamed Theodolinda with Theogilla, but the inference about which we are speaking in the following note makes rise the suspicion that Aldrovandi has drawn Theogilla from another source of which he doesn't give reference. Lind (1963) translated with Theogilla.

It is an inference of Aldrovandi to affirm that the artefact was performed by order of Theodolinda, being that Paolo Morigia neither in I,8 of *Historia dell'antichità di Milano* (1592) to which Aldrovandi is referring, nor in other points of this work dreams to affirm that the mother hen with the 7 chicks - 12 for Morigia - was realized as order of Theodolinda. Here newly the words of Morigia, listing what the queen gave to the Church of St. Giovanni Battista of Monza she built as *oraculum* in 595: "[...] e vi lasciò ancora un tesoro, e una Pitta con docici (sic!) Pulcini d'oro masiccio (sic!) [...] - [...]" and she still there left a treasure and a mother hen with twelve gold chicks in massive gold [...]."

Monzae in Gallia Transpadana Gallina videtur una cum pullis ex auro Theodorico rege ibi facta. Paulus Morigia hanc auream Gallinam cum duodecim [septem] pullis pariter aureis Theogillae reginae Christianarum rerum studiosissimae iussu confectam testatur, eamque ab illa in templo, quod Monzae D. Io. Baptistae voverat, inter alia regia dona memoriae consecrasse.

At Monza in Transpadane Gaul a hen can be seen with her chicks here made out of gold by the King Theodoric. Paolo Morigia testifies that this golden hen with seven equally golden chicks was made at behest of Queen Theodolinda, keen student of Christian things, and that she consecrated her to memory along with other royal gifts in the church she devoted in Monza to Saint John the Baptist.

Umpteenth demonstration
of Aldrovandi's Greek unreliability
since on ancient coins we read
SELINONTION and not SELINONTION



Umpteenth demonstration of the errors contained in the Greek text given by Aldrovandi. It is possible to contradict Ulisse even if we don't have available the text of Hubert Goltz from which he got the numismatic data. The several coins of Selinus available in the web have as legend SELINONTION and not SELINONTION.

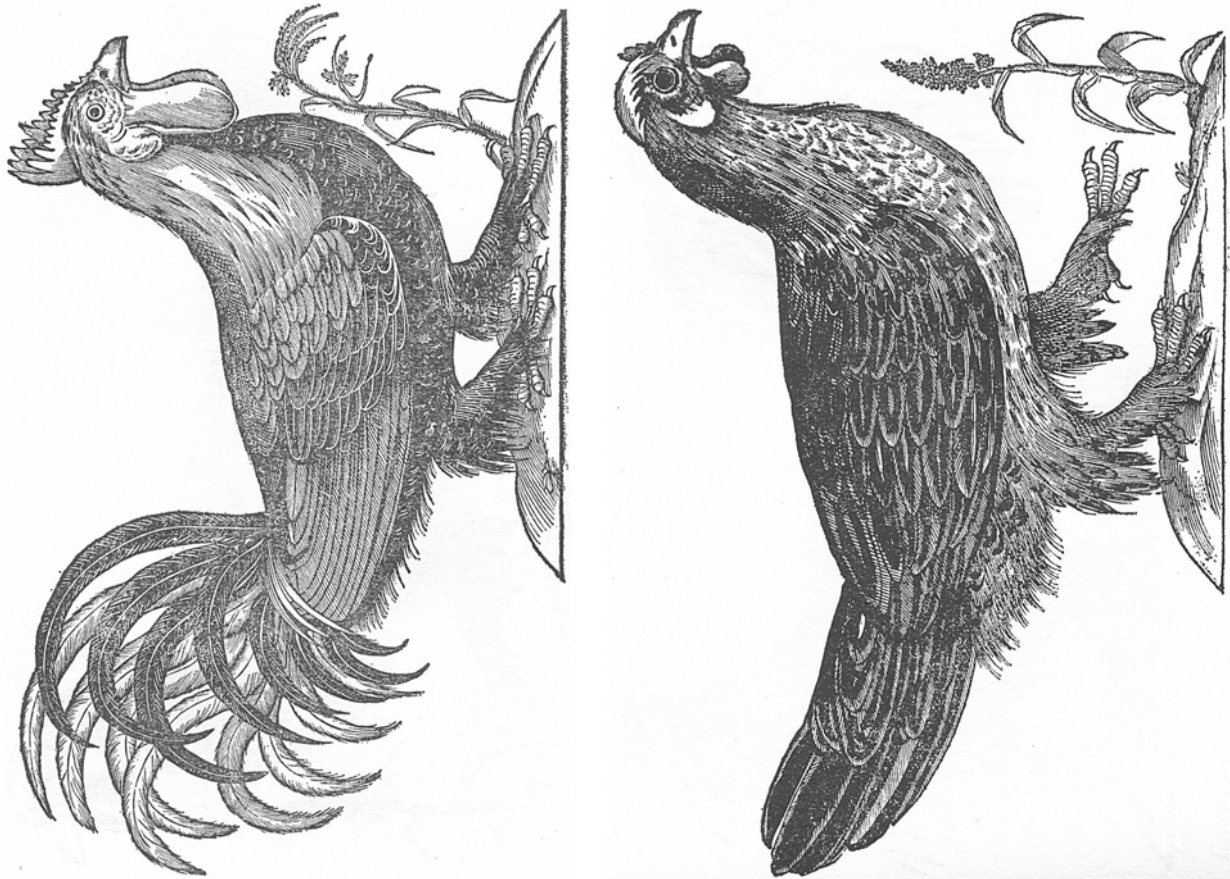
Hubertus {Goltius} <Goltzius> {Selenontinorum} <Selinuntiorum> numismata, in quibus icon Galli conspicitur, [...] Inscriptio numi est {ΣΕΛΙΝΟΝΤΙΩΝ} <ΣΕΛΙΝΟΝΤΙΩΝ>. Ab altera numi parte biga est, [...] Tertium a primo differebat, quod ab utraque parte numi eadem inscriptio est {ΣΕΛΙΝΟΝΤΙΩΝ} <ΣΕΛΙΝΟΝΤΙΩΝ>, item in eo quod ab utraque cippi parte lauri ramus dependet.

Hubert Goltz supplies reproductions of coins of Selinus' inhabitants on which the image of a rooster is seen: [...] The inscription of the coin is SELINONTION. On the verso of the coin there is a two-horse chariot [...] The third coin differed from the first because on both sides of the coin there is the same inscription SELINONTION, and likewise because at both sides of the cippus a branch of laurel is hanging down.

Page 312 and 313

At page 197 he affirms that
never he saw neither chickens
nor other five toed birds
and scotomize the pentadactylous cock and hen
so snobbing the photographic precision of his engravers

DE GALLO, ET GALLINA PEDIBUS PENNATIS. - CAP. V.
CHAPTER V - ROOSTER AND HEN WITH FEATHERED LEGS



[313] Sunt quoque in hoc avium genere pedibus quandoque hirsutis, quales sunt, quos nunc damus, Gallus, et Gallina, Gallus collo, et dorso erat castanei coloris. Alae primum nigrae albicantibus maculis decoratae, dein nigrae erant, remigae candidae extra, intus nigrae. Mentum, pectus, venter coxae, tibiae nigra, albicantibus maculis insignita. Pedes lutei, crista duplex non admodum magna rostrum luteum: paleae magnae; cauda partim albis, partim nigris pennis constabat. Gallina tota flavescebat, {feri} <fere> atris ubique, si solum collum demas, maculis, modo parvis, modo magnis, at ubique oblongis conspersa; cristam habebat omnium minimam et paleas admodum breves, rostrum, et pedes luteos.

Also in this genus of birds there are subjects which sometimes have bristly legs, such as those I am showing now, a rooster and a hen; the rooster had the neck and the back of chestnut color. The wings in the forefront were black adorned by whitish spots, then were black, the remiges were white outside, black inside. The throat, breast, belly, thighs and legs were black, decorated with whitish spots. The feet were yellow - and five toed, the comb was double not too much big, the beak was yellow: the wattles were large, the tail was made up by partly white and partly black feathers. The hen was entirely buff, sprinkled everywhere, except only the neck, by almost black spots, now small, now large, but anywhere they were appearing oblong, she had the smallest of combs and very short wattles, the beak and feet yellow.

**He doesn't even can count the toes
of a monstrous chick
counting 5 instead of 6
so snobbing the photographic precision of his engravers**



Skeleton hoc pulli monstrifici est, et superiori pullo fere similis, nisi quod pes e podice natus {quinque} <sex> digitis sit instructus.

This skeleton is of a monstrous chick almost similar to the previous one except that the foot which grows out from the rump has six toes.

He doesn't even can count the long tail's feathers
of the tridactylous eared rooster
which are only 6 and not 9
as discovered by Fernando Civardi
during the chromatic refashioning



DE PEREGRINIS QUIBUSDAM GALLINACEIS DICTIS,
ET PRIMO DE GALLO INDICO AURITO {TRIDACTILO} <TRIDACTYLO>. - CAP. IX.

CHAPTER IX - ABOUT SOME EXOTIC SUBJECTS CALLED COCKS,
AND FIRST THE THREE-TOED AND EARED INDIAN ROOSTER

Cauda duplex, prior exigua, et quinque tantum pennis constans, iisque ruberrimis, et admodum brevibus, si secundae caudae comparentur. Secunda cauda {novem} <sex> longissimis pennis constat, quarum aliae aliis longiores sunt, et diversum colorem obtinent.

The tail is double, the first one is small and composed by only five feathers which are very red and very short if compared with those of the second tail. The second tail is made of six very long feathers, some of which are longer than the others and have a different color.

THE HADRIANAE HENS DESCRIBED BY CONRAD GESSNER

HADRIANAE gallinae (Ἀδριανικαί, nimirum a regione, non ut Niphus suspicatur quod forte ab Adriano Imperatore observatae sint, vixit enim Adrianus multo post Aristotelis tempora) parvo quidem sunt corpore, sed quotidie pariunt, ferociunt tamen, et pullos saepe interimunt, color his varius, Aristot. Et alibi, Multa admodum pariunt. fit enim propter corporis exiguitatem, ut alimentum ad partionem sumptitetur. Hadrianis laus maxima (circa foecunditatem,) Plinius. Adrianas sive Adriaticas gallinas (τοὺς Ἀδριατικούς ὄρνιθας) Athenienses alere student, quanquam nostris inutiliores, utpote multo minores. Adriatici vero contra nostras accersunt, Chrysippus apud Athenaeum lib.7. Gallinae quaedam Adriani regis vocantur, quae apud nos dicuntur gallinae magnae, et sunt magni oblongi corporis, abundant apud Selandos et Hollandos, et ubique in Germania inferiore. Pariunt quotidie, minime benignae in pullos suos, quos saepe interficiunt. Colores earum sunt diversi, sed apud nos frequentius sunt albae, aliae aliorum colorum. Pulli earum diu iacent sine pennis, Albertus. sed hae forsitan Medicae potius vel Patavinae gallinae fuerint. Gallinae Adrianae non magno et oblongo corpore sunt, ut somniavit Albertus, sed contra ut Aristoteles et Ephesius tradiderunt, Niphus. Gyb. Longolius Germanice interpretatur Leihennen, Varias sunt (inquit) rostro candidiusculo. pulli earum columbarum pipiones colore referunt. Ab Adriaticis mercatoribus primum in Graeciam advectae videntur, et inde nomen tulisse. Quod autem ferocire Aristoteles eas scribit, factum esse puto ob patriae mutationem, cum in calidiores regiones devectae et ferventioris ingenii redditae sunt, Haec ille. Varro Africanas, quas non alias esse constat quam Hadrianas, varias et grandes facit, Turnerus. Ego Africanas ab Adrianis multum differre puto, cum Numidicis vero easdem esse. Hispanus quidam amicus noster gallinam Adrianam, Hispanice gallina enana nominat. nimirum quod corpore nana et pumila sit, quale genus in Helvetia apud nos audio nominari Schotthennen, alibi Erdhennle, alibi Däsehünle. Sed Gyb. Longolius gallinas pumilas Germanice vocat kriel. Vulgares sunt (inquit) et passim extant. per terram reptant claudicando potius quam incedendo. Licebit autem gallinaceos huius generis pumiliones, gallinas pumilas cum Columella nominare. sunt enim in omni animantium genere nani, ut dixit Theophrastus. Pumiliones, alias pumilas, aves, nisi quem humilitas earum delectat, nec propter foecunditatem, nec propter alium reditum nimium probo, Columella. Est et pumilionum genus non sterile in {iis} <his>, quod non in alio genere alitum, sed quibus {certa} <centra> foecunditas rara et incubatio ovis noxia, Plinius.

The *Hadrianae* hens (*Adrianikai*, evidently from a region, not as Agostino Nifo hypothesizes, that is, because perhaps they would have been observed by Hadrian emperor; in fact Hadrian lived very afterwards the times of Aristotle) are in fact of small body, but they lay every day, nevertheless they become aggressive, and often kill the chicks, they are varicolored, Aristotle. And in another treatise: They lay a lot of eggs. In fact because of their small body it happens that the food is used for the procreation. To the *Hadrianae* goes the greatest praise (apropos of the fecundity), Pliny. The Athenians do their best in raising *Hadrianae* or Adriatic hens (*toûs Adriatikoûs ὀρνίθας*), despite they are more useless than ours, since they are very smaller. But, on the contrary, the peoples of the Adriatic sea are getting ours, Chrysippus in Athenaeus, book VII. Some hens are called *of Hadrian king*, those that among us are called big hens, and they are of great and oblong build, they are abundant among inhabitants of Zeeland and Holland, and anywhere in the province of Germania Inferior. They lay every day, they are not fond towards their chicks at all, and often kill them. Their color is various, and among us more often are white, others of other colors. Their chicks remain for a long time without feathers, Albertus Magnus. But perhaps these would have been hens of Media, or better, of Padua. *Hadrianae* hens are not of big and oblong body, as day-dreamed Albertus, but the contrary, as handed down Aristotle and the Ephesinus - Michael of Ephesus, Agostino Nifo writes this. Gisbert Longolius translates them in German with *Leihennen* - laying hens, and he says: They are of different colors with a whitish beak. Their chicks remind in color the chicks of pigeons. It seems that they were brought the first time in Greece by the merchants of the Adriatic sea, and that they were named after this. On the other hand, since Aristotle writes that they become aggressive, I think that this happened for a change of their origin's place, since moved to warmer regions they also became of more fiery nature, these are the words of Longolius. Varro defines variegated and big the African ones, and they are nothing else than the *Hadrianae*, William Turner. I think that the Africans are quite different from *Hadrianae*, and that the former are corresponding to the hens of Numidia. A Spanish friend of mine calls in Spanish

gallina enana the *Hadriana* hen: certainly because it is dwarf and small in build, that breed which among us in Switzerland I hear is called *Schottbennen*, elsewhere *Erdbennle*, elsewhere *Däsehünle*. But Gisbert Longolius in Dutch calls *kriel* the dwarf hens. He says: they are common and are found everywhere. They crawl on earth limping rather than walking. Therefore it will be right to call, as Columella does, *gallinae pumilae* the dwarf chickens of this kind. In fact among the whole animal kingdom there are dwarfs, as Theophrastus said. Dwarf hens, except that someone likes their small size, I don't appreciate them excessively neither for their fertility nor for whatever other profit, Columella. There is also a dwarf breed not sterile among these, not present in other species of birds, but those with spurs are infrequently fertile and their brooding is harmful to eggs, Pliny.



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Latin text transcribed by
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