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Nec vero contemnendum vulgus interdum est: Vernacular animal names among Theodore Gaza's Latin neologisms*

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The article discusses the origins of four Neo-Latin animal names, denoting a beetle, a bird, a fish and a mollusk, coined by the Greek scholar Theodore Gaza in the third quarter of the fifteenth century: two neologisms of form, or proper neologisms, *gal(l)eruca* and *gallinago*, and two neologisms of sense, *cernua* 'inclined forwards, head foremost' and *patella* 'plate, pan'. These words, still valid in today's zoological nomenclature, were first introduced in Gaza's Latin version of Aristotle's *Historia animalium*, where they stood, respectively, for μηλολόνη, σκολόπαξ/ἄσκαλώπας, ὀρφῶς/ὀρφός and λεπάς. Apparently, they owe their existence to Gaza's acquaintance with Italian dialectal vocabulary, as can be deduced from two sixteenth-century sources: Agostino Nifo's commentary to Aristotle's zoological writings and Ippolito Salviani's encyclopedic work on aquatic animals. Gaza's *galleruca* must have originated from the Lombard *galeruca* 'rose chafer' (the identification of μηλολόνη with the latter probably due to the *hapax legomenon* χρυσομηλολόνηιον, Ar. *Vesp.* 1341), *gallinago* from the Emilian *gallinazza* 'woodcock' (since the only known characteristic of σκολόπαξ/ἄσκαλώπας is that it is similar to a hen, Arist. *Hist. an.* 617b24), *cernua* from the Calabrian *cerna/cernia* (identified with ὀρφῶς/ὀρφός either due to Gaza's use of a bilingual glossary or due to his own experience in the Calabrian bilingual milieu) and *patella* from the Calabrian or Roman *patella* 'pan; limpet' (perhaps identified with λεπάς because Gaza kept in mind the name of a vessel, λεπαστή/λεπάστη, considered deriving from λεπάς by Eustathius). All the said dialects correspond to the Italian regions where Gaza spent parts of his life.

Keywords: Theodore Gaza, Ippolito Salviani, Agostino Nifo, Neo-Latin neologisms, Italian dialects, zoological nomenclature, *galeruca*, *gallinago*, *cernua*, *patella*.

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1. Introduction

In Italy, in the third quarter of the fifteenth century, the Byzantine scholar Theodore Gaza (1400/1410–1475/1476) translated Aristotle's *Historia animalium*, *De partibus animalium* and *De generatione animalium* into Latin. His version enjoyed great popularity in the sixteenth century (Perfetti 1995, 257–260; Monfasani 1999, 214–217; Beullens, Gotthelf 2007, 469–470 and 503–505) and influenced the development of zoological nomenclature in the early modern period (Vorobyev 2015; 2018).

Apparently, some neologisms of Gaza's coinage whose origin cannot be explained by the use of Greek or Latin sources owe their existence to his acquaintance with Italian dialects. Indeed, in the preface, Gaza writes about his principles of translation and remarks:

Nominat (sc. interpres) usu veterum probatissimorum auctorum genera animalium. Si quid novum imponit, ita inserit, ut familiare cognatumque id quoque videri possit. <...> Nec vero contemnendum vulgus interdum est (MS Vat. lat. 2094, f. 3v; Gaza 1476, f. a4v).¹

“He (sc. the translator) names <various> kinds of animals following the use of most excellent ancient authors. If he adds something new, he introduces <it> in such a way that it also seems well-known and familiar. <...> Sometimes one should not despise the vernacular”²

In an effort to please the humanists' purist taste, Gaza tried to avoid any barbarism and drew as many words as possible from classical sources but, following the principle outlined in the above citation, he sometimes disguised Italian vernacular words as Latin. Moreover, he probably surmised (or thought his readers might surmise) that those were reflexes of classical Latin words not extant in known written sources but preserved in the oral tradition.

Gaza must have been familiar with several regional varieties of Italian. He moved from Byzantium to Italy no later than 1440 and lived at least nine years in the Northern cities of Pavia, Mantua and Ferrara, where he most probably became acquainted with the local varieties of Lombard and Emilian dialects. Then he spent about twenty-five years in regions where Central and Southern Italian dialects were spoken, i. e. between Rome, Naples and Basilian monasteries situated on the Cilento peninsula (present-day Campania) and in the south of Calabria.³ Gaza worked on his translation from 1454 until the early 1470s (Beullens, Gotthelf 2007, 484–487), therefore the influence of dialects of all the mentioned areas could be present in his Latin text.

Gaza's attitude to vernacular vocabulary can be illustrated by the history of at least four Latin neologisms of his coinage.

¹ For Gaza's text, two sources have been used: MS Vat. lat. 2094, prepared for pope Sixtus IV in 1473–1474 (see Monfasani 2006), and a copy of the *editio princeps* (Gaza 1476). Spelling and punctuation have been normalized in quotations.

² The English translations are here and henceforth of the author of the article.

³ For Gaza's biography, see Bianca 1999. I am not aware of any other evidence of his acquaintance with or opinion on Italian dialects. As the abbot of the monastery of San Giovanni a Piro on the Cilento peninsula, he compiled a code of law for the inhabitants of the monastic estates. Its apparently only extant copy dates from the seventeenth century and is in Italian, but it remains unknown in what language it was composed originally (edited in Di Luccia 1700, 32–44; reprinted in Cataldo 1992, 37–45). Of the names of animals, apart from domestic ones, only the fish names *brunco* and *morena* can be found there (Cataldo 1992, 40 § 32).

2. *Cernua*

In an article on the influence of different Latin translations of Aristotle's zoological treatises on the formation of modern fish nomenclature, Pieter Beullens pointed out that the neologism⁴ *cernua*, used by Gaza to translate Aristotle's fish name ὀρφός, later spelled and declined as ὀρφός (*Hist. an.* 543b1, 591a11, 598a10, 599b6),⁵ might have been derived from the Italian *cerna* (Beullens 2008, 115). Beullens refers to the work of the Romance philologist Gianfranco Folena (Folena 1963–1964), but the identification of Gaza's *cernua* with the vernacular *cerna* was actually proposed some four centuries earlier. In fact, Folena just reprints the table of identifications of ancient and modern fish names compiled in the 1550s by the Italian scholar Ippolito Salviani and printed together with his famous reference book on ichthyology. Indeed, Salviani reports that the Sicilians know a fish called *cerna* (in the column *Vulgaria*, i. e. Italian dialects: ***Cerna***. *Siculis*) and identifies it with the Greek ὀρφός/ὀρφός, as well as with Gaza's *cernua* (Salviani 1554–1558, f. 35v, s. v. *Orphas* [sic]). For Calabria, a region linguistically close to Sicily and more relevant than the latter in Gaza's case, the fish name *cernia*, with a variant *cerna*, is attested in the twentieth century (Rohlf's 1932–1939, vol. 1, 185–186).

Perhaps, when he lived in Calabria, Gaza got to know the fish name *cernia*, or *cerna*, identified it for some reason with Aristotle's ὀρφός and decided to Latinize the Calabrian noun, so that it looked as a feminine form of the well-attested word *cernuus*, meaning either 'leaning or falling head down' or 'acrobat'. Maybe Gaza even believed he was bringing back to life the hypothetical Latin proto-form of the contemporary Italian *cern(i)a*, but it is more probable that he did not imagine any etymological reconstruction. Indeed, his reflection on coining Latin neologisms from the vernacular, exposed in the preface and cited above, alludes rather to a merely pragmatical approach, aimed at the readers' perception of a smooth Latin text.

As for the possible motive underpinning Gaza's identification of Aristotle's ὀρφός with the Calabrian *cernia/cerna*, apparently two options exist. The first one is that Gaza had access to a bilingual glossary, because at least two collections of glosses read as follows: "*acernia* ὀρφός", Gloss. III 186, 60, and "*acernum* σφενδάμνινον ὀρφός", Gloss. II 13, 40 (ThLL, s. v. *acharne*, cf. Solopov 2022, 1093). The second possible explanation consists in the fact that ὀρφός, or a similar fish name,⁶ was still in use in vernacular Greek in the

⁴ It would be more precise to use the term 'neologism of sense' here, as opposed to 'neologism of form', or neologism *sensu stricto*. The 'neologism of sense' is a word known before but in a different meaning. For the distinction between the neologisms of form and neologisms of sense, see Helander 2014, 37.

⁵ Ταχὺ δὲ καὶ ὁ ὀρφός ἐκ μικροῦ γίνεται μέγας (*cernua etiam brevi ex parvo insignem magnitudinem accipit*), 543b1; Οἱ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν εἰσι σαρκοφάγοι μόνον, οἷον τὰ τε σελάχη καὶ οἱ γόγγροι καὶ αἱ χάνναι καὶ οἱ θύννοι καὶ λάβρακες καὶ σινόδοντες καὶ ἀμῖαι καὶ ὀρφοὶ καὶ μύραινα (*Alii enim carnivori tantum sunt, ut cartilaginei, ut congri, hyatulae, thunni, murenae, lupi, dentices, hamiae, cernuae* — in Gaza 1476, f. 17v, misprinted as *cerue*, i. e. *cervae*, but the MS Vat. lat. 2094, f. 115v, reads *cernuae*), 591a11; Εἰσὶ δὲ πρόσγειοι σινώδων [sic], κάνθαρος, ὀρφός, χρύσοφρυς, κεστρεὺς, τρίγλη, κίχλη, δράκων, καλλιώνυμος, κωβίδος καὶ τὰ πετράια πάντα (*Littorales sunt dentex, scarabeus (aliter fidicula), cernua, aurata, mugilis, mullus, turdus, draco, pulcher, gobio atque omne saxatile genus*), 598a10; Φωλοῦσι δὲ καὶ μύραινα καὶ ὀρφός καὶ γόγγρος (*Murena etiam latet, et cernua et conger* — in Gaza 1476, f. m3v, misprinted as *ceruua*, but the MS Vat. lat. 2094, f. 123v, reads *cernua*), 599b6. The Greek text is cited here and henceforth according to Balme 2002.

⁶ Dictionaries of medieval Greek register only the forms ροφός (Kriaras 2014, 305) and ρόφο (Du Cange 1668, vol. 2, col. 1309), in Modern Greek ροφός is apparently the only denomination, cf. Babiniotis 2004, 1556. D'Arcy W. Thompson mentions ορφός as a Modern Greek name of two species of groupers, with reference to four nineteenth-century sources (Thompson 1947, 187). Even though his sources could have

fifteenth century and its identity with *cern(i)a* was a common knowledge in Southern Italy, where speakers of Greek and Italian lived side by side. Indeed, Modern Greek ροφός and present-day Italian *cernia* denote the same group of fishes, namely several species of groupers.⁷

As Beullens notes, Gaza's word *cernua* is still used in today's ichthyological nomenclature and denotes the common ruffe, *Gymnocephalus cernua* (Linnaeus, 1758). In a recent article by Alexei Solopov, the history of another Neo-Latin fish name, *acerina*, is uncovered. Solopov demonstrates that it is an early modern emendation of *acerna*, a misspelling of Late Latin *acernia*, which, in turn, derives from the Greek ἀχάρνα, ἀκάρναξ, or similar (Solopov 2022). If the Sicilian-Calabrian *cern(i)a* also derives from *acernia* (as stated by Rohlf, *loc. cit.*), it means that one Late Latin fish name gave birth to two Neo-Latin ones: *acerina* and *cernua*.

3. *Galleruca*

3.1. *Origin*

There is a widespread genus of leaf beetles whose scientific name is *Galeruca* (Geoffroy, 1762). In the latest edition of Erwin Hentschel and Günther Wagner's authoritative dictionary of zoological terms, prepared by Achim Paululat and Günter Purschke, this word is explained as a compound of *galla* 'gall, cecidium' and *eruca* 'caterpillar', and the loss of the geminate is not commented upon (Paululat, Purschke 2011, 195). Other proposed etymologies include derivation from the rare adjective γαλερός 'cheerful' (McNicholl 1863, 170) or from *galea* 'helmet', in respect to the head of the beetle's larvae (Schenkling 1917, 18). Still, *galeruca* is not a Neo-Latin learned compound, as innumerable other modern animal names, but a fifteenth-century borrowing from one of the North-Italian dialects.

In Aristotle's writings translated by Gaza, the word μηλολόνη, meaning a certain variety of beetle, is encountered seven times (*Hist. an.* 490a7, 490a15, 523b19, 531b25, 532a23, 552a16; *Part. an.* 682b14). In four instances out of seven, Gaza renders it by the generic term *scarabeus* 'beetle',⁸ but on three occasions he uses the word *galleruca*, apparently not attested anywhere previously. Of these three, in the first case (531b25) other species of beetles are named along with μηλολόνη, so Gaza cannot use the generic word *scarabeus* for the latter and needs a specific term for it;⁹ in the second case (682b14), he

been citing reintroduced classicizing names instead of the demotic ones, it is not improbable that the form without metathesis, ορφός or ὀρφος, was still in use at Gaza's time.

⁷ As for the etymology of ὀρφός/ὀρφος, a connection with ὀρφνός 'dark' has been suggested (cf. Strömberg 1943, 21–22). Some of the groupers are actually dark-brown, as *Epinephelus marginatus* (Lowe, 1834), cited by Thompson under its earlier name, *Serranus gigas*.

⁸ Apparently, Gaza avoids choosing a Latin name for this or that variety of beetle, because the word *scarabeus* is more understandable to the reader than any rare vocable. He sometimes renders other names of beetles, κάνθαρος and κανθαρίς (542a9–10, 601a3 etc.), as *scarabeus*, too, because the Latin *scarab(a)eus* is a broader term than the Greek κάνθαρος/κανθαρίς (Beavis 1988, 157). Wherever Gaza renders μηλολόνη with the word *scarabeus*, no harm is done to the meaning, for μηλολόνη is mentioned there as the type species of beetle, namely: as an example of a winged animal with membranous wings (490a7); as an example of a winged insect as distinct from wingless ones (523b19); as an example of a beetle (490a15 and 532a23).

⁹ Οἷον μηλολόνη καὶ κάραβος καὶ κανθαρίς ὅσα τοιαῦτα ἄλλα — *ut gallerucae, fulloni, pilulario et reliquis generis eiusdem* (MS Vat. lat. 2094, f. 55v; Gaza 1476, f. f3r).

prefers this narrower term for an obscure reason — perhaps because this is the only time that *μηλολόνη* is mentioned in *Part. an.*¹⁰ The third occurrence of *galleruca* is the only one where the beetle called *μηλολόνη* is not just mentioned but, at least to some extent, described: αἱ δὲ *μηλολόνη* (sc. γίνονται) ἐκ τῶν σκωλήκων τῶν ἐν τοῖς βολίτοις καὶ τῶν ὀνίδων (552a15–17).¹¹ Here, Gaza not only uses the translation *galleruca*, but also adds a synonym, *scarabeus viridis*: *scarabei virides, gallerucae iam vocari incipientes, vermibus fimo bovis aut iumentis creatis gignuntur.*¹² The name *scarabeus viridis* was apparently borrowed by Gaza from Pliny the Elder, who mentions this ‘green beetle’ once: “*scarabaei viridis natura contuentium visum exacuit*”, *HN* 29. 132. 5–6 (“the properties of the green beetle sharpen the sight of the one who beholds <it>”).

What allowed Gaza to identify *μηλολόνη* with Pliny’s ‘green beetle’? Why, at lines 552a15–17, is it accompanied by the alternative translation *galleruca*? The search for reasons among the possible etymologies of the Greek word does not yield convincing results.¹³ The reason consists, apparently, in Gaza’s empirical acquaintance with the denotatum and its vernacular name.

The word *μηλολόνη* is mentioned twice in other writings of Aristotle (*IA* 710a10; *Resp.* 475a6) and twice in Aristophanes (*Nub.* 763; *Vesp.* 1341), and there is almost nothing in these passages that could facilitate the identification of the denotatum. Still, the compound diminutive *χρυσομηλολόνη* (*Vesp.* 1341) allowed the scholiasts to assert that *μηλολόνη* is a beetle of golden colour. Perhaps this is what made Gaza, while he was pondering what kind of beetle Aristotle’s *μηλολόνη* was and how to render it in Latin, recall the golden bugs he had seen. Of the beetles dwelling in Greece and in Italy whose colour may be described as golden, the most conspicuous and frequently seen one is the rose chafer, *Cetonia aurata* (Linnaeus 1758), and other representatives of the subfamily *Cetoniinae* (Beavis 1988, 164–168). The rose chafers are large beetles, green with a metallic, often bronze-like, sheen. Perhaps the empirical knowledge of the combination of green and metallic of the rose chafer allowed Gaza to identify *μηλολόνη* — the ‘golden beetle’ of the scholia to Aristophanes — with the ‘green beetle’ of Pliny. Recognizing in

¹⁰ Οἷον αἶ τε *μηλολόνη* καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα τῶν ἐντόμων — *velut gallerucae et caetera id genus insecta* (MS Vat. lat. 2094, f. 212).

¹¹ “<The beetles> *μηλολόνη* are born from worms that <live> in cow and donkey dung.”

¹² MS Vat. lat. 2094, f. 76r; Gaza 1476, f. b2v (“The green beetles, which are now beginning to be called *gallerucae*, are born from worms that appear in the dung of cows or pack animals”).

¹³ Reinhold Strömberg suggests that it is a compound of *μήλον* ‘sheep, goat’ and *ὄλονθος* ‘wild fig’, since the beetle was thought to frequently ‘graze’ on this particular plant (Strömberg 1944, 1–10; cf. Chant-raine 1999, 694; Frisk 1960–1972, II, 225–226; Beekes 2010, 943). In his overview of the invertebrates mentioned in classical sources, Ian Beavis regards the word *μηλολόνη* as a denomination of the rose chafers and related beetles and considers Aristotle’s opinion about their germination in dung to be a mistake based on popular convergence with *ὄνθος* ‘dung’ (Beavis 1988, 164–168). The latter etymology, from *μήλον* ‘sheep, goat’ and *ὄνθος* ‘dung’, is also taken into consideration by Beavis’ predecessor Luis Gil Fernández. He draws attention to variants with haplology and with a vowel change due to the interference with *ἄνθος* ‘flower’: *μηλόνη*, *μηλόλάνθη*, *μηλόλάνθη* (Gil Fernández 1959, 231–233). If one were to fantasize about the possible etymologies that Gaza might have come up with and that could have given birth to his neologism *galleruca*, one could consider the following. Gaza might have understood the first element as *μήλον* ‘fruit, apple’ and could have transferred it, following the general semantics of the round shape (cf. the meaning ‘round knob’ in *Her.* 1. 195. 7) and galls’ similarity with apples, on the gall, oak apple, called *galla* in Latin. Still, this does not explain the appearance of *eruca* ‘caterpillar’ as the compound’s second root. Moreover, it is unlikely that Gaza was aware of the development of insect larvae in galls, and in any case, Aristotle writes about the emergence of *μηλολόνη* from dung, not from plants. It is equally unlikely that Gaza could have taken the root *μήλον* ‘fruit, apple’ to mean ‘green’ and identified *μηλολόνη* with Pliny’s *scarabeus viridis* for that reason.

μηλόλονθη the rose chafer, he also remembered the rose chafer's name in one of the Italian dialects known to him — *galeruca*. Indeed, the Lombard origin of this word is reported by the philosopher Agostino Nifo, who, in the early 1530s, commented upon the zoological writings of Aristotle using the translation of Gaza.¹⁴ Nifo explains the passage 552a15–17 as follows:

*Propterea Theodorus dixit “gallerucae iam vocari incipientes”, quia ex usu communi et rustico finxit vocabulum. Rustici enim galerucas vocant in Lombardia, quasi Gallicas erucas, ut ego conjicio (Nifo 1546, 145).*¹⁵

“Theodore said ‘already beginning to be called *gallerucae*’, because he invented the word <having borrowed it> from the common, colloquial use. Indeed, the peasants in Lombardy call <these beetles> *galerucae*, that is, I suppose, *Gallic caterpillars*.”

Adriano Garbini's compendium of Italian dialectal zoonyms, indeed, registers numerous variants of a beetle name similar to Gaza's *galleruca* in different dialects of Northern Italy, the closest being the Novarese *galaruga* and *garaluva* (Garbini 1925, 1424–1427).¹⁶ Judging by the variants like *sgarliüfra* (attested in Alessandria), Garbini argues that this group of Piedmontese and Lombard words derive ultimately from *scarabeo* under the influence of *eruca* ‘caterpillar’ (Garbini 1925, 1427). Garbini lists these words as names of the maybug, *Melolontha melolontha* (Linnaeus, 1758), not the rose chafer, *Cetonia aurata* (Linnaeus, 1758), and the maybug is neither green, nor does it have metallic shine, but Garbini stresses the tendency to use the same names for the maybug and the rose chafer (Garbini 1925, 1196, 1217).¹⁷

3.2. Reception

In Lombard dialects, no opposition of geminate and simple *l* exists, so Gaza's variant *galleruca* must have been an intentional Latinization of the vernacular *galeruca* or similar. Both in the presentation manuscript and in the *editio princeps* of Gaza's translation, the word *galleruca* is spelled with a double *l*. So is it in the 1504 Aldine (Gaza 1504, f. a7v *et passim*), too. However, in Antonio de Nebrija's 1492 Latin-Spanish dictionary, which included i. a. words attested in Gaza's translation, it was printed as *galeruca* — probably by mistake (Nebrija 1492, f. g1v, *Galeruca e(stá) por el escaravajo que verdeguea*, ‘Galeruca means a beetle of greenish colour’). This form was preserved in later editions of Nebrija's authoritative dictionary. Agostino Nifo, the aforementioned commentator of Aristotle,

¹⁴ On Nifo's commentary see: Perfetti 1996 and Perfetti 2000, 85–120.

¹⁵ Here and henceforth, page numbers refer to the part of Nifo's commentary referring to the *Hist. an.* — Gaza's formula *iam vocari incipientes* is clearly intended to emphasize that this is a *new* word. It is not clear though, whether he means that this word is new for Latin vocabulary or that it comes from a new language, i. e. Italian, as opposed to the old, classical Latin language. The latter option is not excluded, because in other cases when Gaza introduces a neologism, he uses simpler formulas (like *quem ... appellamus*).

¹⁶ The variants Garbini registers for Pavia, a city where Gaza spent several years, are *garüvla*, *galüvia*, *garüla*, *sgaliüría* (Garbini 1925, 1424–1425).

¹⁷ “Le Cetonie con il loro mantello verde o dorato a riflessi metallici e con la loro forma parallelepipeda si distinguono nettamente dalle Melolonte con tinte sobriamente oscure e forma a bariletto; tanto che i naturalisti ne fecero due gruppi ben separati della grande famiglia dei Lamellicorni: i Melolontini e i Cetonini. Ebbene, i ragazzi, invece, di tutta Europa — e la causa mi sfugge, se non fosse il ronzio uguale che producono durante il volo — le avvicinano fra di loro così da chiamarle quasi ovunque con nomi pressoché uguali, o distinguendo le Cetonie con i suffissi: *d'oro, verde, delle rose*” (Garbini 1925, 91).

while quoting from Gaza's translation, uses the variant with double *l*, but spells it with a single *l* elsewhere. The latter variant is also used in the treatise *On the Differences of Animals* by Edward Wotton (Wotton 1552, f. 192r). Although in the first reference book on entomology, edited by Thomas Muffet, the spelling is *galleruca* (Muffet 1634, 158),¹⁸ it was the variant with a single *l* that eventually got established in the nomenclature.

It should not be considered confusing that nowadays the word *galeruca* is used to denote a genus of leaf beetles, i. e. of beetles whose larvae develop on living plants, and not the rose chafers or maybugs, which lay their eggs in rotten wood or in the ground, nor any beetles hatching in dung, as Aristotle reports of the *μηλολόνη*. Indeed, redistribution of taxa and their names is frequent in zoological nomenclature. Since, in the early modern entomological tradition, Gaza's word *gal(l)eruca* was not employed as a designation of any insect (for denoting the rose chafer, maybug or similar species, the word *melolonthē/melolontha* was used), *gal(l)eruca* remained a mere vocable, devoid of nomenclatural denotatum.¹⁹ Hence, when Étienne Louis Geoffroy, the author of the *Histoire abrégée des insectes qui se trouvent aux environs de Paris*, needed a name for the introduction of a new taxon close to Linnaeus' *Chrysomela* (von Linné 1758, 368–377), he resorted to the vacant word *galeruca*, and thus the genus *Galeruca* was born (Geoffroy 1762, vol. 1, 251). The fact that, in Geoffroy's times, the word *galeruca* was non-nomenclatural and therefore available as a potential new taxon name, can be proved by the following overview of his sources. Indeed, they either prefer *melolonthē/melolontha* to *gal(l)eruca*, or do not mention any of these words at all.

Geoffroy's sources are known from their critical assessment provided in the preface to his 1762 *Histoire*. He names Thomas Muffet, Ulisse Aldrovandi and Jan Jonston as the pioneers of entomology (and admits that the latter often copied from the former two); he approves John Ray as a more precise descriptor, but deplores the absence of any classificatory system in his work; Martin Lister is cited as comparable with Ray; then Geoffroy praises the authors of books of insect drawings, Nicolas Robert, Jan Goedart, Maria Sibylla Merian and Eleazar Albin, and mentions German naturalists Johann Leonhard Frisch and August Johann Rösel as the authors of books that due to their language remained illegible for him; he names then those who studied the anatomy and behaviour of insects, i. e. Francesco Redi, Jan Swammerdam, Marcello Malpighi and Antonio Vallisneri, and ends up by praising his contemporaries, René-Antoine Réaumur (the coleopterological part of whose work on insects remained unpublished until the twentieth century though), the latter's follower Charles De Geer (who had published only the first volume of his opus by the time Geoffroy was writing his) and, especially, Carl von Linné (Geoffroy 1762, IV–XIV).

Apparently, none of these authors used the word *gal(l)eruca* as a valid insect name. Thus, the posthumously printed entomological volume of Ulisse Aldrovandi's zoological encyclopedia contains a clear reproach of Gaza's version:

<Scarabaei> colore differunt, quia alii sunt nigri, alii alio quovis colore insigniti, albo, quod sciam, nulli; qui autem virides sunt, Galerucas vocant Aristotelis aliquot interpretes, praesertim Gaza, quanquam id, quod sciam, nomen nullibi apud probatum authorem reperi in hac significatione (Aldrovandi 1618, 176).²⁰

¹⁸ Page 158 is mistakenly numbered 160.

¹⁹ Cf. the similar case of the bird name *sylvia*, discussed in Vorobyev 2018.

²⁰ The sentence apparently contains an asyndeton: the words *quod sciam* would require rather *reperitur* than *reperi* in the main clause. — When Aldrovandi writes that he has not found the word *galleruca* 'in

“<Beetles> differ in colour, for some are black, others of various other colours, but to my knowledge none are white; those which are green are called *galerucae* by some translators of Aristotle, most importantly Gaza, although [to my knowledge] I have not found this name in this meaning by any good author.”

Aldrovandi establishes the nomenclatural validity of the word *melolontha* by printing it in the margin, as the title of the paragraph. By “some translators” Aldrovandi most probably means, apart from Gaza, Pietro Alcionio, who, in early sixteenth century, translated i. a. Aristotle’s *De respiratione* and *De incessu animalium*, where the word *μηλολόνη* also occurs (710a10; 475a6): following Gaza’s example, Alcionio rendered it as *galleruca* (Alcionio 1521, f. u6r; F5v).

As for Thomas Muffet, whose important book on insects was published posthumously in 1634, he identifies the Greek *μηλολόνη* with rose chafers or similar beetles and, at the same time, cites Nifo’s etymology *gal(l)eruca* < *Gallica eruca* (‘Gallic/Gaulish caterpillar’). Therefore, since rose chafers do not look similar to caterpillars, Muffet rejects Gaza’s identification of *μηλολόνη* with *gal(l)eruca*. Indeed, speaking of *μηλολόνη*, he writes: *Gaza gallerucam vertit, sed nihil simile obtinet* (“Gaza translates <it> as *galleruca*, but does not get anything similar”, Muffet 1634, 160). In Jan Jonston’s compilatory work, the word, apparently cited from Muffet, is misprinted as *galenica*, and is reported just as a synonym of *melolontha* (Jonston 1653, 94).

The Latin translation of Jan Goedart’s treatise on insects, originally published in Dutch, mentions *melolontha* several times but does not include *gal(l)eruca* at all.²¹ Jan Swammerdam’s *Historia insectorum generalis* does not speak of either *melolontha/melolontha* or *gal(l)eruca* (Swammerdam 1685). These words are absent also from John Ray’s *Historia insectorum* and from Martin Lister’s appendix to it (Ray 1710). In the famous tenth edition of his *Systema naturae*, Carl von Linné uses the word *melolontha* (*Scarabaeus melolontha*, von Linné 1758, 351) and does not mention *gal(l)eruca*. That is why, when Geoffroy renamed the Linnaean genus *Chrysomela* (von Linné 1758, 368–377) as *Galeruca*, this taxonomic intervention did not create any nomenclatural confusion.

4. *Gallinago*

The *hapax legomena* *σκολόπαξ* (*Hist. an.* 614a33) and *ἀσκαλώπας* (*Hist. an.* 617b23) are nowadays considered variant readings of one word.²² Gaza was of the same opinion: he rendered both bird names with the neologism *gallinago*, from *gallina* ‘hen’²³

this meaning’ in any classical author, it does not imply that he encountered it in classical sources in other meanings. This must be a mere precaution: indeed, it can be hardly imagined that Aldrovandi or the editors of his posthumously published work had access to classical texts or lexicographical sources not known nowadays.

²¹ The fact that the transliteration *melolontha*, unlike *gal(l)eruca*, became a common Neo-Latin word is supported also by the fact that Goedart used it in an apparently *ad hoc* translation from the Old Testament, Joel 1:4 and 2:25 (Goedart s. a., vol. 1, 182; vol. 2, 166).

²² Possibly derived from *σκόλοψ* ‘stake’, after the shape of the beak (such as the beak of a snipe), although it can also be a folk etymology (Chantraine 1999, 1020; Frisk 1960–1972, II, 735; Beekes 2010, 1356; Arnott 2007, 29, 316).

²³ *Νεοστέουσι δ’ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ὥσπερ εἶρηται, οἱ τε ὄρνυγες καὶ οἱ πέρδικες καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἔνιοι τῶν πτητικῶν.* Ἐτι δὲ τῶν τοιούτων ὁ μὲν κόρυδος καὶ ὁ σκολόπαξ καὶ ὄρνυξ ἐπὶ δένδρου οὐ καθίζουσιν, ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς (*Nidulantur humi, ut dixi, tum coturnices, tum perdices, atque etiam aliae quaedam eiusdem parum volantis generis. Ex his item alauda et gallinago et coturnix nunquam in arbore consistunt, sed humi*),

The reason for this translation must have been that, according to Aristotle, this bird is the size of a chicken: τὸ μέγεθος ὅσον ἀλεκτορίς (617b24). The idea of creating such a neologism was apparently suggested by the presence, in one of the Italian dialects known to Gaza, of the word *gallinazza*, *gallinella*, *gallinetta* etc. ‘little hen’ as a designation for one of the wild birds similar to domestic chicken. Indeed, regarding the bird that Gaza calls *gallinago*, Agostino Nifo writes: *Haec vulgo gallinella appellatur* (Nifo 1546, 157), “in vernacular it is called *gallinella*”. According to Garbini’s sources, it is attested in various dialects, including the regions where Gaza lived: in Ferrara (*galinazza*) and Pavia (*galinassa*) it was used in the meaning ‘Eurasian woodcock’, in Naples and the Calabrian city of Cosenza (*gallenella*, *gaddinieddu*) it denoted the water rail, in Mantua (*galineta*) the common moorhen (Garbini 1925, 496–498, 519–520); perhaps, Gaza meant *gallinazza* ‘woodcock’, for it corresponds much better to Aristotle’s description of the σκολόπαξ/ἀσκαλώπας (614a31–34, 617b23–26) than the water rail or the moorhen.²⁴

In modern nomenclature the word *gallinago* is used as the name of a bird much similar to the abovementioned Eurasian woodcock, namely the common snipe — *Gallinago gallinago* (Linnaeus 1758).²⁵

5. *Patella*

Like *cernua*, the word *patella* is a neologism of sense, not a neologism of form: it is attested in ancient authors, just not as a zoonym. It denotes a sort of cooking or dining utensil, namely ‘small pan’, ‘dish’, ‘plate’, ‘saucer’ etc. Gaza was apparently the first to suggest using it as the Latin name of a mollusk. Namely, he rendered Aristotle’s λεπάς (*Hist. an.* 528a14, 528b1, 529a31, 529b15, 530a19, 530b22, 547b22, 548a27, 590a32; *Part. an.* 679b25, 680a23) as *patella*.

Neither of the two possible etymologies of the Greek word (from λέπας ‘rock’ or from λέπος, λεπίς ‘shell’, ‘scale’)²⁶ can explain Gaza’s zoonym *patella* as a calque. At the same time, Eustathius suggests that λεπαστή/λεπάστη, a kind of bowl or cup mentioned by Athenaeus, Aristophanes and other authors, is named so because of its resemblance to the flat shell of the mollusk λεπάς.²⁷ This affinity of the word λεπάς with a vessel name in

614a31–34; Ἀσκαλώπας δ’ ἐν τοῖς κήποις ἀλίσκεται ἔρκεσιν· τὸ μέγεθος ὅσον ἀλεκτορίς, τὸ ρύγχος μακρόν, τὸ χρώμα ὁμοίον ἀτταγήνι· τρέχει δὲ ταχύ, καὶ φιλόνηθρον ἐστὶν ἐπιεικῶς (*Gallinago dicta per sepes hortorum capitur, magnitudine quanta gallina est, rostro longo, colore attagenae, currit celeriter et hominem mire diligit*), 617b23–26 (MS Vat. lat. 2094, f. 139r–v, 143r; Gaza 1476, f. n5v, n8r).

²⁴ Probably Gaza was imitating the vernacular word *gallinazza*, or similar, rather than *gallinella* or *gallinetta*, also because the Italian diminutives could have been easily transformed into a Latin diminutive (e.g. *gallinula*), while the suffix *-azz-* might have evoked Latin words in *-ago*. On the complex semantics of this Latin suffix, see Ernout 1941, 107–109 (cf. especially its use for “substantifs désignant des objets <...>, des états de choses caractérisés par leur couleur, ou leur aspect”; also, “cette formation <...> a servi à créer des noms désignant des objets qui en rappellent d’autres par leur toucher, leur consistance, etc.”; *ibid.* 108). Cf. Gaza’s other neologisms with the same suffix *-(ā)go*: *vinum* > *vinago* and *fringilla* > *fringillago* (Vorobyev 2015, 163).

²⁵ The use of Gaza’s neologism *gallinago* was not limited to the zoological literature. For instance, in Nicolas Nancel’s 1599 *Petri Rami vita*, the word appears among the names of different kinds of game that the humanist Pierre de la Ramée (1515–1572) would eat for dinner (Sharratt 1975, 232). Thanks to this occurrence, the word was included in René Hoven’s dictionary of Renaissance Latin (Hoven 2006, 227).

²⁶ Chantraine 1999, 630; Frisk 1960–1972, II, 105; Beekes 2010, 848.

²⁷ [Τ]άχα γὰρ διὰ τὸ καὶ λεπτὸν καὶ ἐκπέταλον δὲ κατὰ τὰς λεπάδας ἔσχε τὸ καλεῖσθαι λεπαστή, “for, perhaps, it (i. e. this type of cup) received the name λεπαστή — due to its small size and flat shape — from

Greek could have made Gaza infer that, so as to translate that mollusk name into Latin, one should look for some Latin mollusk name associated with eating or drinking vessels, too. Apparently, he never found a suitable Latin word, but he did find a modern one. Indeed, according to the aforementioned ichthyologist Ippolito Salviani, the word *patella* ‘dish’, ‘pan’, ‘plate’ is employed in the Roman dialect of Italian as the name of a mollusk (in the column *Vulgaria* one can read: **Patella. Romae**, Salviani 1554–1558, 38v, s. v. *Patella*). The usage of *patella*, or *patedda*, as the name of an edible mollusk was probably common also in Calabria: at least, it is attested there in the twentieth century (Rohlf 1932–1939, vol. 2, 127).

In present-day zoological taxonomy, the Latin word *patella* is used to denote the genus of gastropods known in English as limpets: *Patella sp.* (Linnaeus, 1758).²⁸

6. Conclusion

Sixteenth-century writings, namely Salviani’s ichthyological encyclopedia and Nifo’s commentary to Aristotle, which provide animal names in Italian dialects, have helped establishing the origin of four Latin neologisms introduced by Theodore Gaza and still valid in today’s zoological nomenclature. In addition to the case of the word *cernua*, known before, three more examples of the use of Italian vocabulary by Gaza have been thus discovered. In case of *cernua* and *patella*, we are dealing with neologisms of sense: drawing on similar Italian nouns, Gaza was the first to use these well-known Latin words as zoonyms. *Galleruca* and *gallinago* are neologisms *sensu stricto*, i. e. neologisms of form.

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<the shell of the mollusk> λεπάς”, Eust. *Il.* 4. 537. 10–11.

²⁸ *Paella*, the name of a Spanish dish (cf. modern Italian *padella* ‘frying pan’), is an etymological twin of the name of the mollusk.

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Nec vero contemnendum vulgus interdum est:

Народные названия животных среди латинских неологизмов Феодора Газы

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В статье рассматривается происхождение четырех зоонимов, введенных греческим ученым Феодором Газой при переводе «Истории животных» Аристотеля на латинский язык в XV веке: название жука — *gal(l)eruca* (μηλολόνη), птицы — *gallinago* (σκολόπαξ/ἀσκαλώπας), рыбы — *cernua* (ὄρφως/ὄρφος) и моллюска — *patella* (λεπάς) (последние два засвидетельствованы у классических авторов, но не в зоологических значениях). Вероятно, эти латинские слова обязаны своим существованием знакомству Газы с итальянскими зоонимами. На происхождение неологизма *galleruca* из ломбардского *galeruca* ‘бронзовка; майский жук’ указал комментатор Аристотеля Агостино Нифо в первой половине XVI века, но его предположение не было замечено, хотя оно подтверждается позднейшими диалектологическими данными. Отождествление Газой зоонима μηλολόνη с бронзовкой, возможно, связано с интерпретацией гапакса χρυσομηλολόνηθιον (Ar. *Vesp.* 1341). Этьенн-Луи Жоффруа в работе 1762 г. присвоил название *galeruca* далекому от бронзовок роду листоедов, поскольку в сочинениях XVI–XVII веков этот зооним почти не упоминался, считался названием неопределенной разновидности жука и тем самым оставался вакантным для использования в качестве имени нового таксона жесткокрылых. Об орнитониме *gallinago* выдвигается предположение, что редкое слово σκολόπαξ/ἀσκαλώπας передано таким образом, потому что важнейшая характеристика этой птицы у Аристотеля — сходство с курицей. К применению словообразовательной модели *gallina* > *gallinago* Газу, видимо, подтолкнуло знакомство с итальянским *gallinella*, *gallinetta* или, вероятнее, *gallinazza*. Эти слова зафиксированы и в северных, и в южных диалектах в качестве названий камышницы, водяного пастушка и вальдшнепа, причем неологизм Газы впервые сближается с итальянским словом у того же Нифо. Что касается зоонимов *patella* и *cernua*, схожие народные названия моллюска и рыбы — *patella*, *cern(i)a* — засвидетельствованы в ихтиологическом справочнике Ипполито Сальвиани середины XVI века и подтверждаются данными диалектной лексикографии XX века.

Ключевые слова: Феодор Газа, Ипполито Сальвиани, Агостино Нифо, новолатинские неологизмы, итальянские диалекты, зоологическая номенклатура, *galeruca*, *gallinago*, *cernua*, *patella*.

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