

**Maria Piechocka-Kłos\***

Faculty of Theology, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn (Poland)

*NOMINA ANIMALIUM* IN *LATERCULUS*  
BY POLEMIIUS SILVIUS.  
THE BEGINNINGS OF THE LITURGICAL  
CALENDAR (5<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY)

**Abstract:** Creating *Laterculus*, Polemus Silvius, a 5<sup>th</sup>-century author, was the first to attempt to integrate the traditional Roman Julian calendar containing the pagan celebrations and various anniversaries with new Christian feasts. *Laterculus*, as it should be remembered, is a work that bears the features of a liturgical calendar. In addition to dates and anniversaries related to religion and the state, the calendar contains several other lists and inventories, including a list of Roman provinces, names of animals, a list of buildings and topographical features of Rome, a breviary of Roman history, a register of animal sounds and a list of weights and sizes. Therefore, *Laterculus*, just like a traditional Roman calendar, was also used for didactic purposes.

This paper aims to refer in detail to the zoological vocabulary, specifically the register of animal names and sounds included in this source. *Laterculus* contains in total over 450 words divided into six groups, including 108 words in the four-legged animal section, 131 in the bird section, 11 crustaceans, 26 words for snakes, 62 words for insects and 148 for fish. The sounds of animals, which are also included in one of the lists added to this calendar and titled *Voces variae animantium*, are also worth mentioning. A brief discussion on the history of the Roman calendar and the liturgical calendar certainly helps to present the issue referred to in the title to its fullest extent.

**Keywords:** Polemius Silvius, calendar, animals, early Christianity, ancient history, liturgical calendar.

## Introduction

The first thought that comes to mind with regard to the word “calendar” is the popular reference to the statement that it is a time account conventionally accepted in a given community or culture. In contemporary terms, the term “calendar” is usually applied to describe a board or a book containing a list of

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\* Adres/Address: dr Maria Piechocka-Kłos; ORCID ID: 0000-0002-5909-5521; maria.piechocka@uwm.edu.pl

days of the year, arranged by weeks and months. Essentially, it is a day counting system. (Nowak, 2012, p. 127) At present, the most common and popular form of the calendar is an album or a publication, with a list of days, weeks and months of a given year, often supplemented with information on holidays, name days and also lunar phases. Numerous thematic and artistic calendars are also available, addressed to ordinary people, professional groups or hobbyists.

The term “calendar” is derived from the Latin noun *calendarium* and, according to the dictionary, has three groups of meanings, namely “calendar”, “register, list” and “debt register.” (Jougan, 1948, p. 83) Analysing this term in more detail, it should be noted that the word calendar is a two-word compound. This concept builds on the word *calendae*, which, in reference to the ancient tradition in the Roman calendar, means “the first day of each month” and the noun derived from the verb *calo* in the meaning “to summon”, “to evoke”. (Jougan, 1948, p. 83) It was in ancient Rome that the *pontifex maximus*, on the first day of each month, when the citizens gathered at the Capitol, announced, among other things, the length of the month, the dates of feasts and important events. Taking this into account, the word *calo* (I call) together with *calendae* (time of convocation) creates the term *calendarium*, i.e. a book containing announcements. (Długosz-Kurczabowa, 2003, p. 213)

The purpose of this publication is to refer in detail to zoological vocabulary, specifically the names and the register of animal sounds, included in the 5<sup>th</sup>-century calendar *Laterculus* by Polemius Silvius. The vocabulary concerning animal names has been collected and divided into six sections (*quadrupedum, volucrum, eorum que se non movencium, colobrarum, insectorum sive reptancium, natancium*) by Theodor Mommsen. This German lawyer and historian also presented a register of animal sounds, titled *Voces variae animancium*. Theodor Mommsen published both lists compiled by Polemius in volume 9 of his *Monumenta Germaniae historica. Auctorum antiquissimorum*. (Mommsen, 1892, pp. 543–544, 548; cf. Mommsen, 1893, pp. 256–279)

The topic undertaken seems particularly interesting given the fact that *Laterculus* is, as it should be remembered, a work that bears the features of a liturgical calendar. A brief discussion on the history of the Roman calendar and the liturgical calendar will certainly help to present the issue referred to in the title to its fullest extent. The history of both calendars, outlined in a slightly wider timeframe, will provide a better understanding of the subject. It appears that the issue has not yet been developed in this form.

### Ancient Roman calendars

In modern times, the calendar is an indispensable part of everyday life, and in antiquity, the calendar used to play an equally important role. The first calendars were certainly created for purely practical reasons, as they helped, among other things, to track the seasons. However, it was the observation of the cycle of changes in nature by season, which made it possible to plan, for example, sowing and harvesting times, which were even more important than the counting of days and months. (Winniczuk, 1951, p. 3) A more advanced system of time division was invented later, based on changes in the phases of the Moon (lunar) or related to the Earth's circulation around the Sun (solar). Although the oldest calendars were used by oriental nations, we can find them in all cultures in which astronomy was practiced, that is, by the Chinese, Egyptians and Arabs, as well as Jews and Greeks. Over the centuries, its content has been gradually supplemented by astrological fortune-telling, weather forecasts, practical medical and economic advice, to give a few examples. This has undoubtedly contributed to their great popularity, which has been growing over the centuries. (Skalska, 2009, p. 16) With regard to the Roman tradition, source materials only give an insight into old Roman calendars. The oldest Roman calendar, traditionally attributed to King Numa, is the lunar calendar. A considerable amount of confusion, in terms of dividing into months and counting of days, was also introduced by the calendar used in the times of the republic. (Wesołowska, 2008, pp. 38–39) However, the most important calendar among all the various types used in antiquity seems to be the Roman solar calendar, developed at the request of Julius Caesar by the Alexandrian astronomer and mathematician Sosigenes, following the example of the Egyptian calendar, named after Caesar as the Julian calendar. (Wesołowska, 2008, p. 39) The calendar reform was necessitated by the imprecision of the previously used Roman lunar calendar, as a result of which, in 46 B.C., December actually fell in September in the calendar. In order to bring the calendar back in line with the seasons, the year 46 B.C. was extended by 90 days. (Jurewicz, Winniczuk, 1968, p. 237) It was referred to as "annus confusionis" (Lat. year of confusion), as it had as many as 445 days. The Julian calendar is based on common years (365 days) and leap years (366 days every four years). The average length of the year was 365.25 days. (Opolski, 1948, p. 11) As a result of the reform, the length of individual months changed. It was introduced in 709 *Ab Urbe Condita* (46 B.C.) as the calendar to be followed in the territory of the Roman state. This calendar was in use in Europe for many centuries, although its fate was quite turbulent. Changes in the Julian calendar were introduced by Caesar's successor, Octavian Augustus, who added an extra day to the month of August,

with the shortest month of the year, February, being shortened. Despite this, the year was still 11 minutes and 14 seconds too long as compared to the actual tropical year, because, after 128 years, 69 days, 8 hours and 24 minutes, the Julian calendar recorded a loss of a full day as compared to the actual astronomical situation. (Stomma, 1981, p. 122) Another reform of the calendar was therefore unavoidable, since the date of Easter set by the Council of Nicaea based on 21 March, that is the spring equinox at the beginning of the sixth century (509) fell before the actual date of the equinox. (Naumowicz, 2010, p. 82–90) This situation naturally began to be more frequent in the next centuries, for example, it already happened four times in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Recognizing this alarming phenomenon, St. Bede the Venerable raised in his treatise *Epistula ad Wiethedum de pasche celebratione*, probably in 726, for the first time, a demand for a reform of the calendar, being followed half a century later by Ealhwine, the abbot of Tours. Nevertheless, neither of them gained much publicity. The situation changed only in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, when two Jewish astronomers, Jehuda ben Mose and Isaac ibn Sida, commissioned by Alfonso X the Wise, the King of Castile, calculated the length of the tropical year (365 days, 5 hours and 49 minutes) on the basis of Al-Zarqali's astronomical tables dating back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and thus provided arguments for the need for changes in the time calculation used until then. (Stomma, 1981, p. 123)

The changes were finally implemented and the Julian calendar was replaced by the Gregorian calendar, which is now the most widely used calendar in the world. The Gregorian calendar was introduced in 1582 by Pope Gregory XIII and is based on the length of the tropical year. The main principles of the new calendar were laid out in the papal bull *Inter Gravissimas*. (Stomma, 1981, pp. 122–123) At present, the length of the years does not raise any objections because, as a result of the system of common and leap years, it is already sufficiently consistent with the tropical year.

The interest of Church authorities in the calendar is easy to explain. Regardless of the period in history, the method of counting the number of days in the year, or various subsequent difficulties in building the calendar, it was often the priests who determined the timeline based on observations of the Sun or the Moon. Numerous factors influenced specific systems of counting years and months, such as astronomical measurements, religious beliefs, local conditions, traditions and customs. The final objective was to celebrate some holidays, not only at the same time of year but even on the same day every year. The use of the Julian calendar made, for example, the calculation of the date of Easter and other mobile feasts much more complicated. (Opolski, 1948, p. 12) Christians, and specifically Church authorities, not only got involved in the introduction of the Gregorian calendar, but also influenced the way the years

were set. It was finally decided to introduce the so-called Christian era, taking the year of Christ's birth as the beginning of the count of years.

### History of the liturgical calendar

In pagan times, the custom of annotating important dates on slates helped people to remember about important holidays, celebrations and other anniversaries and events significant for the community. Christians also followed this custom. Jacek Nowak, conducting research on the history of the liturgical calendar, claims that the record of Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna martyrdom (156) should be considered the oldest anniversary date recorded in the liturgical calendar. (Nowak, 2012, p. 129) It was this anniversary that was marked in the calendar of the Church of Smyrna. (PG 5, 1043-1045) At this point, in the context of the oldest sources with regard to research into the history of the liturgical calendar, it is also necessary to mention the Paschal Cycle of St. Hippolytus (ca. 226). Nevertheless, the slate, engraved in marble and dating from the first half of the third century (ca. 226), contains only guidelines for reading holy books for the entire year. (Nowak, 2012, p. 129) Alternatively, a letter by Cyprian from Carthage, also dating back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (250), is considered to be the oldest list of martyrs (PL 4, 331-332; cf. PL 13, 675-687). Unfortunately, this oldest *Martyrologium* has not been preserved. More than a hundred years later, at the commission of Valentine, a wealthy Christian, and for his use, Furius Dionysius Filocalus prepared *Chronograph* in 354. (Duchesne, 1981, pp. 2-8) In the first part of this calendar, Filocalus placed a list of weekdays and traditional holidays in a seven-day system, adding their astronomical characteristics. In the second part of the calendar, the author first included a fairly rich collection of information on secular life, and then ended up with some clear Christian guidelines, which, however, he did not explain. (Nowak, 2012, p. 129; Mommsen, 1893, pp. 254-279, 335-339) Filocalus's calendar also contains the first testimony of the celebration of Christmas, recorded under the date of 25 December and bearing the note *Natus Natus Christus in Bethleem Iudae* (Stomma, 1981, p. 48; cf. Naumowicz, 2016, p. 416). Nevertheless, the calendar by Filocalus is still not a liturgical calendar.

In research on ancient calendars, two lists of anniversaries should also be briefly mentioned, namely *Depositio episcoporum* and *Depositio martyrum*. (Duchesne, 1981, pp. IX-X, 10; pp. 11-12) The first list, compiled in 336 and renewed for the next eighteen years, contains a list of deaths, together with the burial places of the non-martyred holy popes, from St. Lucius I (date of death 254) to St. Sylvester I (date of death 335). The second inventory is the list of

martyrs, which begins with the entry on St. Callixtus I (date of death 222). The inventory subsequently lists martyrs whose feasts, according to the calendar from January to December, were solemnly celebrated in Rome at that time. *Depositio martyrum* also records the burial dates and places. The most numerous group of entries are the names placed on the list during the Diocletianic Persecution of Christians. The list includes not only the names of Roman martyrs but also the names of the martyrs of the African Church. (Nowak, 2012, p. 130)

The *Calendar of Nicomedia*, dating back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century, was created in the eastern part of the Empire in 363. Although the Greek text of the calendar was lost, because of the abbreviations made in Syrian (411), we know that it also contained the names of martyrs. Interestingly, the names recorded from before Diocletian's rule were annotated as "Ancients". Furthermore, the *Calendar of Nicomedia* contains the names of martyrs from Mesopotamia and Armenia. (Augé, 1988, p. 61; Nowak, 2012, p. 130)

It is only the *Laterculus* compiled by Polemius Silvius, Bishop of Sion (about 435 and 455) that has a church character. (PL 13, 676-688; cf. Mommsen, 1893, pp. 254–279, 335–339) Among numerous pieces of information, the calendar still contains a quite limited number of Christian feasts. However, it mentions the Epiphany, the days of death (25 March) and resurrection of Christ (27 March), and the Nativity (25 December). In addition, the calendar lists several feasts dedicated to holy martyrs, that is Peter and Paul (22 February – laying to the grave), Vincent, Maccabee, Lawrence, Hippolytus and Stephen. The calendar by Silvius Polemius is also a rich source of knowledge on paganism. In addition to the above-mentioned Christian celebrations, the author also mentions pagan feasts: *Carmentalia*, *Lupercalia*, *Terminalia*, *Quinquatria* and *Laratio Cereris*. A quite large group of entries includes information concerning, among others, imperial anniversaries. The calendar also mentions birthday anniversaries of such writers as Cicero and Virgil. The meteorological information contained therein and, among others, the list of names and sounds of animals also seem to be interesting.

More Christian feasts are listed in the synodal statutes promulgated in the first half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century (ca. 620) by Bishop Somatius of Reims. The list includes the Nativity of the Lord, the Circumcision, Epiphany, the Annunciation, the Resurrection with Octave, the Ascension, Pentecost, the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, the Assumption, the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Andrew the Apostle and all Sundays. (Nowowiejski, 1916, p. 109, note 4)

To conclude this brief analysis of the history of the liturgical calendar, it is important to mention the impact of martyrdom on its development. *Martyrologium*

*Hieronymianum*, dating back to the mid 5<sup>th</sup> century (431–450) is considered the oldest source, where, apart from annotations concerning the names of the saints and indications of the places and dates of their death, brief information on the circumstances of their death or martyrdom is additionally included. (Nowak, 2012, p. 131; Nowowiejski, 1916, p. 114) The next epoch will bring further changes, because martyrologies in the Middle Ages will include short biographical information about saints, which means that they began to be created on the basis of scientific criteria. (Nowak, 2012, p. 131)

Thus, the number of feasts and celebrations, provided in the calendar of the Roman Church, was constantly growing. This is perfectly illustrated by the differences seen when comparing the calendar from Verona, the Gelasian calendar, or finally, the Gregorian calendar. A noticeable difference between the Roman calendar and the Jerusalem, Constantinople, Africa or Gallican calendars is that the latter were characterized by a particular spirit. (Nowowiejski, 1916, p. 114)

### ***Laterculus* – names and sounds of animals**

Polemius Silvius (5<sup>th</sup> century), by creating his *Laterculus*, was the first to attempt to integrate the traditional Roman Julian calendar containing pagan celebrations and various anniversaries with new Christian feasts. (Traina, 2009 p. 180) *Laterculus*, sometimes also referred to as *Fasti*, dates back to around 448–449 and was developed in south-eastern Gaul when Valentinian III ruled the Western Roman Empire. (Beard, North, Price, 1998, p. 69; Adams, 2007, p. 295) Theodor Mommsen believes that this work should be dated to the beginning of 449. (Mommsen, 1892, p. 513) Unfortunately, we know little about the author. Polemius Silvius certainly lived in Gaul and probably belonged to the Gallic Christian cultural elite. (Paniagua Aguilar, 2007 p. 227) He was probably friends with Hilari from Arles. (Adams, 2007, p. 295) The Gallic chronicle, mentioning the author of the calendar, described him as *turbatae admodum mentis post militiae in palatio exactae munera aliqua de religione conscribit*. (Mommsen, 1892, p. 513) *Laterculus* was dedicated to and commissioned by Eucherius, bishop of Lyon (ancient Lugdunum), who died on 10 November 450. (Traina, 2009, p. 180) When accepting the order for the calendar, Polemius Silvius faced a considerable challenge. While the established Christian holidays were still not numerous, the calendar had to follow the conventions of the traditional Roman calendar with the names of the holidays. Furthermore, it should be remembered that in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, pagan holidays, still widely known, practised, and most importantly, still popular, should theoretically be forbidden according to Roman law and religious legislation issued by

Theodosius. (Piechocka-Kłos, 2010, pp. 64–73) Thus, although Filocalus in his calendar of 354 still freely referred to traditional religious holidays, a hundred years later, at a time when the Christian state, gradually introducing laws against other religions, began the process of separating the religious heritage of Rome from the culture and civil life of the Empire, (Salzman, 1990, p. 235), Polemius Silvius limited himself to writing down only a few of those above-mentioned. Nevertheless, Polemius Silvius' calendar meets the criteria of the Roman calendar. The days are arranged in three parallel columns under the name of the month, and each day is written on a separate line. Thus, in the first column, Polemius placed the days of the month, in the second column he included all the special days of both traditional pagan and Christian holidays, as well as the birthdays of emperors. In the third column, in turn, the author provided information on weather conditions. The inclusion of meteorological references was perhaps influenced by the first-century treaty by Columella, dealing with issues related to agriculture, which probably inspired Polemius. (Lee, 2000, p. 146) However, it should be remembered, first of all, that the traditional Roman calendar was also used for didactic purposes. In addition to dates and anniversaries related to religion and the state, *Laterculus* contained several other lists, including a list of Roman provinces, names of animals, a list of buildings and topographical features of Rome, a breviary of Roman history, a register of animal sounds and a list of weights and sizes. These are not all of the lists in the 5<sup>th</sup>-century calendar. It is known that not everything that Polemius Silvius decided to put in his calendar has been preserved. The content of some lists and inventories can only be guessed from the names retained.

Nevertheless, these deficiencies are of little importance for the research on the names of animals, which the author has located in various places on the calendar. Those names were collected in their entirety by Theodor Mommsen and published in Volume 9 of his *Monumenta Germaniae historica. Auctorum antiquissimorum*. (Mommsen, 1892, pp. 543–544) All names of animals collected by Theodor Mommsen were divided into six groups. The first section lists names of four-legged animals (*quadrupedum*), the second – terms related to birds (*volucrum*), the next section lists crustacea (*eorum que se non movencium*), the fourth section – snakes (*colobrarum*), the names of insects or reptiles are subsequently mentioned (*insectorum sive reptancium*), and finally, the sixth section contains words referring to fish (*natantium*). A closer examination of these words shows that, although well over 450 are listed in all six sections in total, their number is actually lower. This is explained by the French linguist Antonine Thomas, who observes that some words are doubled, for instance, *elefans* (four-legged), *strix* (birds) or *scarlis* (fish). There are also entries which ultimately mean the same animal, but which are written using two

different terms. A. Thomas refers to the example of *biber* and *feber*, which basically denote the same animal – beaver. The difference between the words is in their origin, as *biber* is of Germanic or Celtic origin, while *feber* (*fiber*) originates from Latin. Additionally, it should be noted that some animal names were misclassified and wrongly included into a given group, for instance, *buteo*, *epileus*, *gallus*, *noctua*, *pantagatus*, *vultur*, which should be included in the bird section. Certain words were also slightly distorted by numerous errors resulting from, among other things, wrong transcription of the text for example Plinius. (Thomas, 1906, pp. 163–164) In an attempt to correct misspelt words, based on the work by A. Thomas after the research he carried out and published, for example the following words should be corrected: *ansisbena* to *amphisbaena*, *bannacus* to *bonnacus* or *bonacus* or *bonasus*, *cacoplepa* to *catoblepas*, *cabarus* to *carabus*, *cibinnus* to *cybindis*, *ciclamnus* to *cychramus*, *cinnamulis* to *cinnamolgus*, *cirus* to *ciris*, *gradius* to *gladius*, *gromis* to *chromis*, *dasipies* to *dasyputs*, *opips* to *epops*, *terspicerus* to *strepsicerus*, *theus* to *thos*, *ticris* to *tigris*, *pectunctus* to *pectunculus*. (Thomas, 1906, p. 164)

A complete picture of the collection of zoological words referred to by Polemius Silvius in *Laterculus*, organized by Theodor Mommsen, is received only after analysing it in the following list, provided with the Latin title *Nomina cunctarum (sic) spirancium atque: four-legged (quadrupedum):* *efefans, tauro, cameloparda, orix, elefans, camelus, asinus, lupus cervarius, theus, igneumon, aris, canis, lus, capra, oves, pardus, lupus, ursus, lacerta, lacrimusa, adis, ban-nachus, leontofanio, scincus, parander, vultur, moneocron, oxurincus, rinoce-ron, corocatta, leucocruta, manticora, tieris, leo, leopardus, biber, visons, ur-sus, bos, bubalus, eocle, uena, eleia, licaon, buteo, epileus, onacer, platacervus, cervus, tragelafus, damma, addax, dorcas, tabla, feber, ludra, linx, caus, muscus, ceppus, ipotamus, mirmicoleo, sus, mula, sfinx, simius, circopiticus, callitrix, satiriscus, mustelopardus, arpe, gallus, pantagatus, ibix, camox, mus-simus, sindrix, muftron, histrix, taxo, irioius, cattus, arcomus, arcoleon, furnel-laris, mus mustela, mus montanis, mus eraneus, talpa, darpus, scirus, glir, vul-pis, cuniculus, lepus, furo, fungalis, noceua, nerdis, cacoplepa, rana, rupicaper, terspicerus, nitela, pilargis, dasipes, furnica, engistrus; birds (volucrum):* *finix, struchio, aquila, trogopan, finicopter, cinamullis, siptachus, melancorifus, orsi-fragis, nession, eumorfus, alietus, accipiter, hercinia, galgulis, luscinia, cibun-nus, alceus, iacolus, falco, ciris, senator, fringuellus, rex, barbio, picus, passer, gaius, turdus, strurnus, merulus, ficetula, buscas, taurus, penelopela, gragulis, apellion, milvus, strix, siren, honocrotalis, porfrion, ibis, strix, linusta, corus, acalantis, grux, anser, ganta, avis tarda, olor, cignus, fasiana, gallerita, suessa-lus, gabia, nisus, oenanante, trocibus, lagopus, egittus, caprimulgo, attagen, perdex, rustecula, coturnix, pullus,*

*pavus, alauda, aceva, cicisa, carnotina, ardea, agatullis, mergis, hirundo, anas, querquidula, plumbio, falacrocorax, corvus, pica, cornix, bubo, spinternix, pirrocorax, cebeva, seleucis, mennonis, meleagris, diomedia, ulula, perseus, incendearia, tremulus, alcion, tetrao, glottis, otis, cidammus, falaris, numidica, subter, chuua, ptelea, opips, vibio, trigron, appodis, pletea, cdnelapix, commagina, cordolus, antus, glandaria, ciconia, orcilus, titus, titiunglus, riparia, parra, eritace, feniculus, cordus, pumplio, scopis, asteria, carifera, columba, cardolus; **crustacean** (eorum que se non movencium): pecun, veneriosa auris, ostrium, spondilium, purpura, conchilium, morix, perna, musculos, bucina, ecinus; **snakes** (colobrarum): basilicus, draco, camedra, vipera, iaculus, natrix, anguis, cerasta, ipnalis, dip-sas, aspis, ofis, boa, seps, et morrois, prester, cenoris, ansisbena, echidra, schitale, pagurus, salpugna, hamodita, elefanstias, celidrus, anabulio; **insects, reptile** (insectorum sive reptancium): solifuga, blata, bubo, tetigonia, sala-mandra, cabro, scolopendra, apis, bumbix, formica, vespa, oester, teredo, scintis, musca, lucusta, fucus, iulus, gristus, culix, cimix, pulix, pedusculus, sexpedo, sunhos, musomnium, tinea, delpa, uruca, inuolus, ablinda, liscasda, papilio, emirobius, cancer, scorpius, stillo, centipeda, cabarius, popia, lugalus, petalis, ruscus, laparis, piralbus, corgus, lubricus, termis, limax, cefenis, grillus, acina, asio, ficarius, minerva, lanarius, mulo, tubanus, cervus, aranea, cicada, sfalagia; **fish** (natantium): balena omnium vivencium maior, gradius, musculus, serra, marisopa, rota, orca, fisiter, cucumis, pistris, equis, asinis, aries, triton, elefans, coclea, testudo, serpido, ambicus, ceruleus, auricularius, caraulis, carahuo, terpedo, nautulis, pisces piscatur, acopienser, encataria, scarus, scarda, mullus, acerna, scorpena, lupus, aurata, dentix, corvus, pardus, delfin, euga, congres, tirsio, canicola, pastinaca, rombus, ciprinus, horfus, exormisda, mugilis, lucusta, astachus, lucurparta, hirundo, lutarius, placensis, solea, naupreda, asellus, salpa, mus marinius, corocacinus, iulis, anguilla, mirrus, squilla, pinotera, turdus, parvus, merula, mustela, loligo, polipus, sepia, mure-na, porcus, tinnus, adonis, exocitus, eufratis, scorber, ecinais, cetera, lucerna, draco, milvus, picis, pectunctus, tecco, coluda, lacerta, cena, conce, heracliota-cus, cleomena, gerris, mitulis, ortica, vaguris, pulmo, lepus, stella, araneus, gromis, elops, daltilus, cersina, esox, salma, apolester, cannis, sargus, scarus, cornutus, eppoe, rebellio, silurus, culix, acus, trocus, antia, ancoravus, larbus, barba, truncta, gubio, umbra, squatus, capeto, lucius, levaricinus, pelaica, amu-lus, redo, salar, abelindeas, porca, tinca, sofia, alburnus, alausa, rottas, plotta, ricinus, lactrinus, samosa, tirus, ausaca, samauca. (Mommsen, pp. 543–544)*

Most of those words belong to common Latin, rare words most probably originate from Plinius, but there are also some terms, for instance, of German, Gallic-Roman or Celtic origin.

Another interesting feature of *Laterculus* is the list of animal sounds, the so-called *Voces variae animantium*, which also includes zoological terminology. This part should be cited in its entirety, as follows: *Ovis balat (corr. ex babat), canis latrat, lupus ululat, sus grunnit, bos mugit, aequis (sic) hinnit, asinus rudit, ursus servit, leo fremit, corvus crocit (corr. ex crocat), merulus frendit, turtur gemit, turdus trucilat, anser glangit, grus gruuit, milvus linguat, apis bubbit, hirundo minurrit, rana coaxat, populus strepit, ignis crepitat, cursus aque murmurat, terra stridit, aes tinnit.* (Mommsen, 1892, p. 548)

The reference to the list containing names of animals and the description with animal sounds seems to exhaust the subject assumed to be investigated in this paper. The research demonstrated that the range of animal names cited by Polemius Silvius was extensive.

## Conclusion

The effort undertaken by Polemius Silvius resulted in an extremely interesting work of very diverse content. Even assuming that the author did not go beyond the framework of the tradition of his time with regard to such writings, his calendar should be regarded as a “bridge” between the pagan and Christian traditions. *Laterculus*, although it still refers to pagan feasts, gives rise to new forms, that is liturgical calendars.

In addition to constructing a calendar with a traditional list of days of the entire year divided into months showing, first of all, important religious holidays and state anniversaries, Polemius Silvius made it more attractive by including additional information, not necessarily related to time. A chronological list of religious ceremonies was supplemented by the author with an abundance of information relating to the real history of Rome. The calendar contains numerous references to history, politics, geography, meteorology, and even, by mentioning Cicero and Virgil, to literature. In this way, the author gave it not only a practical, but also a didactic dimension, in line with the tradition of the Roman calendar, as such a calendar could also be treated as an instrument for disseminating knowledge.

For these reasons, the work of Polemius Silvius makes an interesting source not only for historians. *Laterculus*, with its wealth of information, rightly arouses interests of philologists and linguists, inspiring them to explore the vocabulary it contains. Information related to zoological terminology also makes it excellent research material. Animal names, among other things, provide numerous examples of Latin vocabulary, including those of Germanic, Gallic-Roman or regional variations of the Latin language, together with locally used varieties. These words have been preserved as a result of their inclusion in the

calendar. *Laterculus* contained the total number of over 450 words divided into six groups, including 108 words in the section of four-legged animals, 131 in the bird section, 11 crustaceans, 26 words for snakes, 62 words for insects and 148 for fish. Animal sounds, which are also included in one of the lists added to this calendar, are also worth mentioning.

An additional reason for the reference in this paper to the names and sounds of animals included in the 5<sup>th</sup>-century calendar by Polemius Silvius is to emphasize, among other things, the fact that apart from practical information related to the counting of time, these types of works fulfilled the role of the treasury of knowledge about the world of that time, where the authors introduced various types of information and trivia, giving their writings an original and interesting character. Identifying such a large group of words, in this case in the field of zoology, in a source that shows the features of a liturgical calendar, in comparison with contemporary works of this kind, proves that the liturgical calendar has changed over the centuries, not only in view of the development of theological and liturgical thought, but also in terms of its contents.

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## **Nomina animalium w Laterculus Polemiusa Silviusa. Początki kalendarza liturgicznego (V w. n. e.)**

**Streszczenie:** Żyjący w V w. Polemius Silvius, tworząc *Laterculus*, jako pierwszy podjął próbę zintegrowania tradycyjnego rzymskiego kalendarza juliańskiego z wpisanymi w niego pogańskimi świętami i różnego rodzaju rocznicami z nowymi chrześcijańskimi świętami. *Laterculus* jest, o czym należy pamiętać, opracowaniem noszącym znamiona kalendarza liturgicznego. Oprócz dat i rocznic związanych z religią i państwem kalendarz mieści kilka innych list i wykazów, m.in. spis prowincji rzymskich, budynków i wykaz nazw zwierząt i cech topograficznych Rzymu, a także zawiera brewiarz rzymskiej historii, rejestr głosów zwierząt oraz listę wag i rozmiarów. Zatem *Laterculus*, podobnie jak tradycyjny rzymski kalendarz, służył również celom dydaktycznym.

Założeniem autorki artykułu było szczegółowe przywołanie słownictwa zoologicznego, konkretnie nazw i rejestru głosów zwierząt zawartych w tym źródle. W sumie w *Laterculus* wśród ponad 450 słów, podzielonych na sześć grup, znalazło się aż 108 słów w sekcji czworonożnych, 131 w sekcji ptaków, 11 skorupiaków, 26 słów w odniesieniu do węży, 62 wyrazów związanych z owadami i 148 w sekcji ryb. Godne uwagi są również głosy zwierząt, które również zostały zawarte na jednej z list, zatytułowanej *Voces variae animantium*, stanowiącej dodatek do owego kalendarza. Aby ukazać spectrum zagadnienia przywołanego w podjętym temacie, należy całość problematyki sytuować na tle historii kalendarza rzymskiego oraz liturgicznego.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Polemius Silvius, kalendarz, zwierzęta, wczesne chrześcijaństwo, historia starożytna, kalendarz liturgiczny.

