



### Plinius d. Ä. über Hermaphroditen und Geschlechtswechsel

*In seinem enzyklopädischen naturkundlichem Werk Historia naturalis berichtet Plinius († 79) mehrfach von Menschen, die mit doppelten Genitalien geboren wurden und/oder die ihr körperliches Geschlecht wechselten; zwei solcher Berichte sind unten wiedergegeben. Die Historia naturalis war im Mittelalter und der Frühen Neuzeit unter Gelehrten weit bekannt und genoss hohes Ansehen; vor allem frühneuzeitliche Autoren, die zum Thema „Hermaphroditismus“ schrieben (Caspar Bauhin, Ambroise Paré usw.), zitieren regelmäßig Plinius.*

*Edition und Übersetzung: Pliny the Elder, Natural history in ten Volumes: with an English translation by B. O. Foster [et al.] (Loeb Classical library 330, 352, 353, 370, 371, 392, 393, 418, 394 & 419), 10 Bde., Cambridge, Mass. und London 1959–67, hier Bd. 2, 528-531; also available online at <http://archive.org/stream/naturalhistory02pliniuoft#page/528/mode/2up>*

*Literatur: Maaïke van der Lugt, Sex difference in medieval theology and canon law: a tribute to Joan Cadden, in: Medieval feminist forum 46 (2010), 101–121.*

Gignuntur et utriusque sexus quos Hermaphroditos vocamus, olim androgynos vocatos et in prodigiis habitos, nunc vero in deliciis. Pompeius Magnus in ornamentis theatri mirabiles fama posuit effigies ob id diligentius magnorum artificum ingeniis elaboratas, inter quas legitur Eutyichis a viginti liberis rogo inlata Trallibus enixa xxx partus, Alcippe elephantum, quamquam id inter ostenta est, namque et serpentem peperit inter initia Marsici belli ancilla et multiformes pluribus modis inter monstra partus eduntur. Claudius Caesar scribit hippocentaurum in Thessalia natum eodem die interisse, et nos principatu eius allatum illi ex Aegypto in melle vidimus. est inter exempla in uterum proptinus reversus infans Sagunti quo anno urbs<sup>1</sup> deleta ab Hannibale est.

Persons are also born of both sexes combined – what we call Hermaphrodites, formerly called *androgyni* and considered as portents, but now as entertainments. Pompey the Great among the decoration of his theatre placed images of celebrated marvels, made with special elaboration for the purpose by the talent of eminent artists; among them we read of Eutyichis who at Tralles was carried to her funeral pyre by twenty children and who had given birth 30 times, and Alcippe who gave birth to an elephant – although it is true that the latter case ranks among portents, for one of the first occurrences of the Marsian War was that a maidservant gave birth to a snake, and also monstrous births of various kinds are recorded among the ominous things that happened. Claudius Caesar writes that a hippocentaur was born in Thessaly and died the same day; and in his reign we actually saw one that was brought here for him from Egypt preserved in honey. One case is that of an infant at Saguntum which at once went back into the womb, in the year<sup>2</sup> in which that city was destroyed by Hannibal.

<sup>1</sup> Urbs add. Rackham

<sup>2</sup> 218 B.C.



IV. Ex feminis mutari in mares non est fabulosum. Invenimus in annalibus P. Licinio Crasso C. Cassio Longino coss. Casini puerum factum ex virgine sub parentibus, iussuque harispicum deportatum in insulam desertam. Licinius Mucianus prodidit visum a se Argis Arescontem, cui nomen Arescusae fuisset, nupisse etiam, mox barbam et virilitatem provenisse uxoremque duxisse; eiusdem sortis et Zmyrnae puerum a se visum. ipse in Africa vidi mutatum in marem nuptiarum die L. Constitium civem Thysdritanum...<sup>3</sup> Editis geminis raram esse aut puerperae aut puerperio praeterquam alteri vitam, si vero utriusque sexus editi sint gemini, rariorem utrique salutem; feminas celerius gigni quam mares, sicuti celerius senescere; saepius in utero moveri mares, et in dextera fere geri parte, in laeva feminas.

V. Ceteris animantibus statum et pariendi et partus gerendi tempus est: homo toto anno et incerto gignitur spatio, alius septimo mense, alius octavo et usque ad initium undecimi; ante septimum mensem haut umquam vitalis est.

IV. Transformation of females into males is not an idle story. We find in the Annals that in the consulship<sup>4</sup> of Publius Licinius Crassus and Gaius Cassius Longinus a girl at Casinum was changed into a boy, under the observation of the parents, and at the order oft he augurs was conveyed away into a desert island. Licinius Mucianus has recorded that he personally saw at Argos a man named Arescon who had been given the name of Arescusa and had actually married a husband, and then had grown a beard and developed masculine attributes and had taken a wife; and that he had also seen a boy with the same record at Smyrna. I myself saw in Africa a person who had turned into a male on the day of marriage to a husband; this was Lucius Constitius, a citizen of Thysdritum...<sup>5</sup> (It is said that) at the birth of twins neither the mother nor more than one of the two children usually lives, but that if twins are born that they are of different sex it is even more unusual for either to be saved; that females are born more quickly than males, just as they grow older more quickly; and that movement in the womb is more frequent in the case of males, and males are usually carried on the right side, females on the left.

V. All the other animals have a fixed season both for copulation and for bearing offspring, but human reproduction takes place all the year round and the period of gestation varies – in one case it may exceed six months, in another seven, and it may even exceed ten; a child born before the seventh month is usually still born.

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<sup>3</sup> Lacunam Urlichs

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<sup>4</sup> 171 B.C.

<sup>5</sup> Some words seem to have been lost in the Latin here.