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# Epigraphy and Nomenclature

Epigraphy is the discipline that investigates written documents inscribed on materials differing from those typically used in writing, materials that are generally speaking durable and permanent, such as pottery, metal, stone and the like. The main issues are often the origin and spread of alphabets and writing systems, the inscriptions with their supports and features, and the social, historical, institutional and linguistic data recorded in written documents (Panciera 1998). Among the last, nomenclature has a prominent position, since most ancient inscriptions feature onomastic formulas along with information about their social status.

Apart from the number of writing systems and languages, there are issues of identity and historical reasons for the rise and fall of different epigraphic cultures, uses for writing in the public and private spheres, as well as in the sacred and profane, and in funerary contexts as well as in everyday life. Furthermore each subject of these has its own historical development, intertwined with the transformations of society and of material culture – which includes the inscriptions and supporting material.

As regards ancient Italy, epigraphy investigates the whole corpus of written material, comprehending also items that are traditionally studied by paleographers and papyrologists, such as, for instance, the Etruscan linen book of Zagreb (Roncalli 1985, 13–15; see also Calabi Limentani 1991, 16–18). Of course, it is impossible in these few pages to give a complete account of the complex epigraphic record of ancient Italy, including on the large number of languages with as many ethnic groups, with changing cross-relationships over the course of time, continuing to and passed the initial period of Romanization. In this chapter we will therefore introduce some general arguments about writing – its spread and its links with social issues and identity – and inscriptions – typology, supporting material and the function of written record – dedicating some more place to the historical development of the peculiar forms of nomenclature of the peoples of ancient Italy, with special regard to its relation with the Roman onomastic system.

## I Reception of writing and society

The earliest use of writing in central Italy was a result of the contact between local aristocracies and Greek traders in the eighth century BCE (Cornell 1991, 8; Bonfante and Bonfante 2002, 7–13; all dates are BCE unless otherwise noted). The earliest known epigraphic document is the famous graffito from Gabii, dating from the

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mid-eighth century, and it is sometimes considered by scholars either Greek (Guzzo 2011, 63–65, with bibliography) or Latin (Colonna 2004, 481–483). In any case the findspot of this inscription makes a striking coincidence with the news of Romulus and Remus studying *grammata* – “(Greek) letters” – at Gabii, as stated by Plutarch (*Rom.* 6.2).

Further evidence of writing in the eighth century comes from the metropolis of Veii, Caere and Tarquinia in southern Etruria (Colonna 1976, 7–10), whence the use of the alphabet quickly spread to northern Etruria (Vetulonia, mid-seventh century; Chiusi, late seventh century) and to Felsina (Bologna, in the Po valley, beginning of the seventh century) (Maras 2013, 333–339). In these early attestations the inscriptions belong to two different categories: either they record social relationships among the elites (in the case of gifts, symposia and grave goods), or they are incorporated into the activity of craftsmen (in the case of signatures, marks and ornamental uses of writing). At times the categories overlap, when signatures are added to gift inscriptions, or symposiastic texts have an ornamental value (Maras, 2015b, 203–206).

As a matter of fact, writing was an important technical skill belonging to the Orientalizing heritage handed down to the Etruscan elites, along with technological advancements in crafts such as sculpture, architecture, pottery, goldsmithing, and so on. Scribes and craftsmen worked side by side within aristocratic courts, as specialized masters of their arts (Cornell 1991, 9; Maras, 2015b, 206–209; Medori and Belfiore, forthcoming), and most probably writing-skills were required as part of the training of craftsmen, whether they were goldsmiths, potters or weavers.

As for the last, evidence comes from the frequent association of letters and marks with weaving-tools, such as spindle whorls, spools and loom-weights, especially in the eighth and seventh centuries (Riva 2006, 123; Wallace and Tuck 2011, 196–197). We can therefore argue that letters and perhaps texts were part of the decorative patterns of clothes and textiles; and since weaving is usually considered as an activity of women both in literary and iconographic sources, we are allowed to infer that the early spread of writing crossed gender barriers (Bagnasco Gianni 2008, 48–49). Incidentally, this is also suggested by the legend of Tanaquil, the learned wife of Tarquinius Priscus, who was trained as an expert of prodigies, as was supposedly common in Etruria (Livy 1.34.9).

## II The local scripts of ancient Italy

The Etruscan alphabet was borrowed from a Greek Euboean model, presumably handed down through the Euboean colonies of Pythecussai and Cumae in Campania: at first the letters maintained their original form, except for the *gamma* that took the form of a moon-shaped C, probably because of a Corinthian influence (Colonna 1976, 9–10). The letters corresponding to the sounds /b g d o/, although preserved in the alphabetic model – as proved by later abecedaria – were not used in

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Etruscan alphabet     | A > ʒ ʒ I ʒ B O I ʒ V W M ʒ M ʒ O ʒ T V ʒ ʒ Y ʒ      |
| Latin alphabet        | B B < D F F I B I K L M N O P ʒ P S ʒ T V X          |
| South-Picene alphabet | A B < D m E I O I k r ~ ~ · r ʒ ʒ P ʒ T A A : :      |
| Lepontian alphabet    | A ʒ ʒ I O I ʒ V W M O ʒ M P O ʒ T V (I) ↓<br>ʒ ʒ X A |

**Fig. 1.** Comparison of some archaic sample alphabets of ancient Italy: Etruscan, Latin, South-Picene, Lepontian.

writing, for they were not necessary in transliterating Etruscan language (Bonfante and Bonfante 2002, 63–65; Wallace 2008, 29–32). The earliest innovations in the alphabet were of course the abandonment of the useless letters, which took place in different moments between the mid-seventh and the mid-sixth centuries, and the introduction of the graphic group *HV* or *VH* in order to express the sound /f/, missing in the Greek model, but necessary for the Etruscan language (Maras 2013, 333).

Through the channel of aristocratic relationships – including “diplomatic” gifts and symposiastic meetings – writing was rapidly handed over not only to other Etruscan communities, but also to the neighbouring peoples still within the seventh and the early sixth centuries (Fig. 1):

- in central Italy Faliscans and Latins received the full alphabetic set, preserving letters for /*b g d o*/, but abandoned the aspirated stops /*χ θ φ*/ (Cornell 1991, 14).
- across the Tiber paleo-Sabellian and south-Picene communities transformed the Etruscan alphabet and adapted it to their own Italic languages, by adding further vowels /*i ú*/ and introducing an 8-shaped letter for /*f*/ (Rocca 2000, 184).
- in northern Italy the Celtic communities of the Golasecca culture and the Veneti received a reformed set that still preserved /*o*/ but had no more /*b g d*/ (Maras 2014, 75–78).

Apart from the number and shape of the letters, the adaptation of the Etruscan alphabet to other languages required a selection of graphic rules that soon determined the differentiation of local scripts. Further phenomena of cooptation caused the transmission of writing from literate peoples to other neighbouring communities, not without the influence of Greek scripts in southern Italy and often with a reciprocal interference among writing systems (Rocca 2000, 184–196).

In general, on the grounds of their origin we can distinguish the subsequent main groups (in parentheses the date of the earliest attestations):

- Greek based scripts: Etruscan (late eighth century), Enotrian and Ausonian (the so-called alphabet of Nuceria, sixth century), Messapian, Sicilian and Elymian (late sixth century), Lucanian (fourth century);

- Etruscan based scripts: Capenatian (mid-seventh century), Faliscan and Latin (seventh century), Lepontian (late seventh century), paleo-Sabellian and south-Picene (end of the seventh century), Camunian, Raetian and Venetic (mid-sixth century), Umbrian, Campanian (pre-Samnitic, fifth century), Samnite (fourth century);
- Latin based scripts: Hernican (seventh century), north-Sabellian (Paelignian, Vestinian, Marrucinian, third century), late Volscian (third century), late Umbrian and Lucanian (second century).

Of course this is only a simplified list and each one of the writing systems of ancient Italy had its historical development in relation to the neighbouring ones, with steady interferences and phenomena of acculturation as well as of conservatism, which determined a complex interdependence of the epigraphic cultures until Romanization.

An interesting case-study is provided by the different solutions adopted to solve the problem of the sound /f/, missing in the original alphabetic model, but necessary for most part of the languages of pre-Roman Italy. Moreover, as we mentioned above, the Etruscan writing system at first introduced a graphic group *HV-VH*, probably borrowing it from a Greek script (Corinthian?; Prosdocimi 1990, 218–221; Maras, 2015b, 203), and then transmitted it to the Venetic writing system, where it survived until Romanization. In central Italy, already before the end of the seventh century (as shown by the abecedarium from Leprignano), the Capenatian-Faliscan scripts introduced an arrow-shaped letter in order to express the /f/, which remained a peculiarity of these alphabets. Almost in the same period the paleo-Sabellian script of the inscription of Poggio Sommavilla (in Sabine language) has an 8-shaped letter for the same purpose. This sign was soon introduced into the Etruscan alphabet, too, at least from the second half of the sixth century (excluding the stele from Vetulonia, according to Agostiniani 2011, 183–184), and was also adopted by Etruscan-based scripts that came later, such as Samnite and Umbrian. Latin writing used at first the *VH* group, which was reduced to the simple *digamma* at least from the beginning of the sixth century, thus originating the letter *F* that still figures in our alphabet.

Greek based scripts of southern Italy adopted a number of different solutions throughout the centuries: in the mid-sixth century, the Enotrian and Ausonian alphabets introduced a “hooked” *digamma* in order to express the sound /f/ (Pocchetti 2010, 70–73), which was soon transmitted to the south-Picene script, where it was used as a variant of the normal *digamma* expressing the sound /w/. Much later, Lucanian and south-Campanian Samnite scripts expressed the sound /f/ alternatively by means of *beta*, *theta*, *phi*, and even special forms of *omicron* and *sigma*, with different solutions in the course of time from the fourth century onwards (Colonna 1984, 234–237). Eventually, the 8-shaped letter reached this area too, but was never able to replace completely the previous local choices. Finally, in the late Republican period, the use of the Latin alphabet for local languages provided the final solution to the problem. Just before that, the adoption of Latin as the official language caused native languages and local epigraphic cultures to disappear.

The linguistic and epigraphic Romanization of Italy was a long lasting process that at times encountered the opposition of local communities, which found in their own scripts and languages a marker of their cultural independence and identity (Lomas 2004, 204–205). This is apparent in the use of the Samnite national alphabet (Oscan), especially during the Social War, when the anti-Roman propaganda made use of Italic language and writing (Dench 1997, 44–49). At the same time, the need to preserve and display their own ethnic identity encouraged the Celtic peoples of northern Italy and the Veneti of northeastern Italy to use their respective languages and national scripts throughout the end of the Republican period. This was despite their different relationships with the Romans: the former were ancient enemies, the latter faithful allies (Benelli 2001, 14–15; Häussler 2002, 61–76; Solinas 2002, 275–298). On the other hand, the increasing prestige of the Latin language and the cooperation of local elites in the Roman ruling class and cultural system eventually created a natural desire to write in Latin in institutional matters. This desire was at times even officially expressed, as in the case of Cumae in 180 BCE, where the local government made a request to use Latin in public affairs (Livy 40.42.13; Cooley 2002a, 9).

### III The epigraphic record: typology and function

A rapid survey of the main epigraphic collections for the peoples of ancient Italy gives an idea of the kind of documents that have been preserved from antiquity and discovered by archaeologists. The following list includes the relevant issues with reference bibliography: Celtic (Solinas 1995; Maras 2014); Camunian (Mancini 1980); Raetian (Schumacher 2004); Venetic (Pellegrini and Prosdocimi 1967; Lejeune 1974; Marinetti 2002); Etruscan (Rix 2011); Faliscan (Bakkum 2009); Archaic Latin (Colonna 1980; Maras 2009a); Sabellian languages (south-Picene, Umbrian, Oscan and minor dialects: Rix 2002; Crawford 2011); Ausonian (Russo 2005); Messapian (de Simone and Marchesini 2002); and the languages of ancient Sicily (Agostiniani 1977; Agostiniani 2012; Tribulato 2012).

At first glance, the lion's share of the epigraphic corpora of ancient Italy belongs to funerary inscriptions: in fact, it is easy to see that the need to perpetuate the memory of the deceased – at times with honorary purposes or in order to celebrate his/her family – is one of the main reasons for creating a durable, written monument. In the course of time, however, different peoples developed different epigraphic cultures, not always having the same goals in recording information by means of writing. As a matter of fact, even though almost all south-Picene texts are funerary/honorary steles, and the most part of the huge corpus of Etruscan epigraphy belongs to funerary contexts, this category is by percentage less represented in the Umbrian and Oscan epigraphic heritage, where sacred and official inscriptions are more frequent. Thus, from the point of view of epigraphy, some cultures are more informative and communicative than others for the sake of historians and archaeologists; some oth-

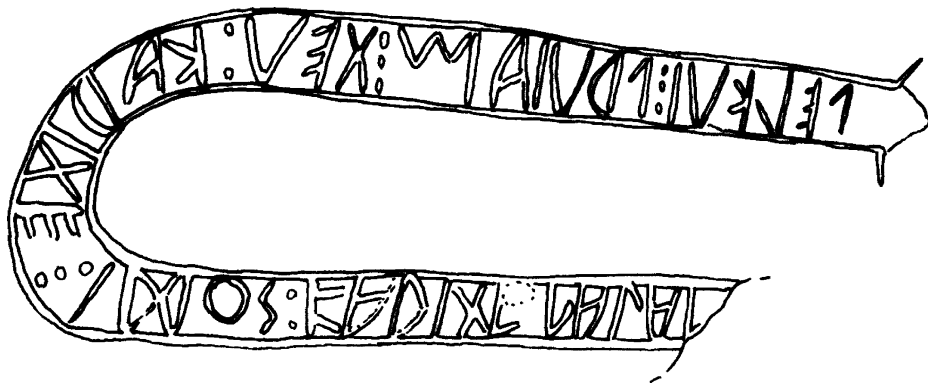


Fig. 2. Vergiate (northern Italy), Celtic inscription on a stone funerary stele, late sixth-early fifth centuries BCE.

ers are, so-to-speak, reticent and reserve writing only for specific purposes; others are entirely mute.

A number of different spheres in which epigraphic writing can be collected are summarized in the following, with some examples from different languages, with no claim of completeness:

A) We have already spoken about **funerary inscriptions**, which provide information on individuals and their families and – when found in primary context – can match up with archaeological and anthropological data. These are divided into different categories according to their original position: out of the tomb, in order to mark the burial for the living and celebrate the deceased and his/her family; among the grave goods, in order to mark them as belonging to the deceased, or to record gifts and offerings from his/her relations. At times inscriptions written on grave goods pertain to the life of the object rather than to its position in a tomb: in these cases they should not be considered funerary inscriptions. For example:

- Etruscan, Tarquinia (mid-third century): *larθ arnθal plecus clan ramθasc apatrual eslz zilaχnθas avils θunem muvalχls lupu*, “Larth Plecus son of Arnth and of Ramtha Apatrui, having been magistrate (*zilaθ*) twice, died at 49” (on a stone sarcophagus; Rix 2011, Ta 1.183).
- Celtic, Vergiate (late sixth-early fifth centuries): *pelkui pruiam teu karite isos karite palam*, “Teu built the monument for Belgu (and) he himself built the stele” (on a stone funerary stele; Solinas 1995, 371, n. 119; Maras 2014, 81, n. 7) (Fig. 2).

B) A second category also linked to ritual consists of **sacred inscriptions**, including inscribed votive offerings and dedications to the gods, as well as complex texts describing rituals (e.g. the *Tabulae Iguvinae*), calendars (e.g. the *Tabula Capuana*), sacred laws (e.g. the bronze of Agnone), acts of divination, curse spells, and so on (Maras 2009b, 17–45). This category is usually well represented in all ancient epi-



Fig. 3. Todi (central Italy), Umbrian inscription on a bronze statue (so-called “Marte di Todi”), late fifth century BCE.

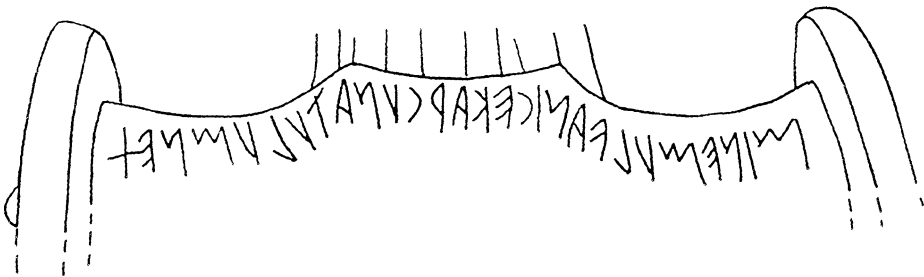


Fig. 4. Veii (central Italy), Etruscan inscription on a bucchero jug, first half of the sixth century BCE.

graphic corpora, since in ancient societies there was no clear separation between sacred and profane, and ritual behaviours were deeply intertwined with a number of other components of everyday life. For example:

- Venetic, Este (fourth-third centuries): *vdan fugia urkleina reitiei donasto*, “Fugia (wife of) Urkle gave the writing-tool (?) to Reitia” (on a votive bronze stylus; Pellegrini and Prosdocimi 1967, Es 47; Bonfante 1996, 305).
- Umbrian, Todi (late fifth century): *ahal trutitis řnum řeře*, “Ahal Trutitis gave (as a) gift” (on a bronze statue; Rix 2002, Um 16; Bonfante 1996, 310) (Fig. 3).

C) Not far from this is the category of inscriptions relating to **social ceremonies**, such as symposia and aristocratic gifts, especially important in the Orientalizing period and in Etruria, as we told before. For example:

- Etruscan, Veii (first half of the sixth century): *mini mulvanice karcuna tulumnes*, “Karcuna Tulumnes gave me” (on a bucchero jug; Rix 2011, Ve 3.6) (Fig. 4).

D) A large number of instrumental inscriptions record simply names – generally in the nominative or genitive case – and evidently record the **possession** of the object by an individual. But it cannot be taken as sure that this “possession” does not imply elliptically a more complex action, such as a gift or an offering. For example:

- Elymian, Montelepre (fifth century): *αταιτυκας εμ*, “I am of Ataituka” (on an Attic cup; Agostiniani 1977, n. 319).



Fig. 5. Nuceria (southern Italy), Ausonian inscription on a bucchero jug, mid-sixth century BCE.

- Ausonian, Nuceria (mid-sixth century): *bruties esum*, “I am (of) Bruties” (on a bucchero jug; Rix 2002, Ps 4) (Fig. 5).

E) Especially important for historians are **institutional inscriptions**, recording the intervention of magistrates and public figures in some event of the public life (such as, for instance, the construction of a monument or a road), or presenting the text of a law, or lists of citizens and of magistrates. Also boundary stones (e.g. the Cippo Abellano) and contracts (e.g. the Tabula Cortonensis) belong to this category, although they can also refer to the private sphere (e.g. the Cippus of Perugia). For example:

- Samnite, Pietrabbondante (mid-second century): *sten[is --] meddís tuvt[ik]s úp-sannam deded íním pufatted*, “Stenis [---] public magistrate gave (this monument) to be built and approved (it)” (on a public monument; Rix 2002, Sa 5).
- Umbrian, Mevania (end of the second century): [-] p( ) nurtins ia( ) t( ) ufeñie[r] cvestur farariur, “... Nurtins (son of) P(---) (and) Ia(---) Ufeñie (son of) T(---) quaestores of the spelt (gave this)” (on a stone sundial; Rix 2002, Um 8).

F) Relating to the activity of workshops and craftsmen are **signatures** and **stamps**, as well as a part of the great number of **marks**, numerals, sigla and single letters often present on pottery and other artefacts, whose actual function is often hard to determine. Some of them can be also classified as trademarks. For example:

- Capenatian, Tolfa (early sixth century): *setums míom face*, “Setums made me” (on an impasto crater; Rix 2002, Um 4).
- Samnite, Pietrabbondante (second century): (in Oscan script) *h(eíre)n(neís) sat-tieis detfri seganatted plavtad*, “Detfri (slave) of Herennis Sattis signed in planta pedis” (impressed on a tile; Rix 2002, Sa 35).

Of course this list cannot be complete, for the purposes of writing are practically infinite; but the mentioned categories compose the most part of the epigraphic record of ancient Italy, with a different rate of attestations in every single corpus. Each archaeological item carries a message from antiquity, which allows the archaeologists to come into contact with ancient people who realized it, used it, attributed it a symbolic value, and eventually abandoned it. In addition to this an inscribed object is



the only archeological item that has been conceived from the beginning as an actual message: this is the reason why epigraphy is the only discipline that can answer to social, individual and religious issues that would have otherwise been doomed to oblivion by the muteness of the finds.

## IV Nomenclature

Since the most part of the information contained in ancient inscriptions is actually made of personal names, the following pages will be devoted to the systems of nomenclature of the Italian peoples with special regard to the Etruscan and Roman world. Ancient Italy shows an unparalleled variety of linguistic, ethnic and social situations that gave origin to a complex interrelation of different naming systems, which also have implications for institutional and political issues. For reasons of space, in this chapter we shall try to provide just the general features of the historical development of nomenclature among the peoples of pre-Roman Italy, with no claim of completeness, referring to the existing literature on the subject in each single cultural context (see several contributions in Poccetti 2009). Dealing with different peoples and chronologies, the resulting narrative will be in some measure desultory; while apologizing for this, we hope to offer the reader a useful picture of the argument.

In antiquity, the majority of Indo-European languages used a single personal name, often accompanied – in the case of freeborn people – by filiation (indication of the father's name) variously expressed. Originally, the Italic peoples were no exception to this (Motta 2009, 300; Salway 1994, 124–125). But between the late eighth and the mid-seventh centuries the need for a heritable onomastic component originated in central Italy (Colonna 1977, 176–180; see below).

In the ancient literary sources Varro is the first to speculate on the historical development of Roman nomenclature, stating that originally simple names had existed, since Romulus, Remus and Faustulus had neither a *praenomen* nor a *cognomen* (ap. Probus, *De praenominibus* 4.1). According to Probus and Priscianus, the Romans acquired binominal naming formulas when they blended with the Sabines, because of the juxtaposition of Latin and Sabine names in front of each other as a confirmation of their union (Salway 1994, 124–125). Actually in the sources Titus Tatius and Numa Pompilius are the earliest figures with two names, which cause some scholars to suppose that the binominal formula stemmed from the Sabine language and culture (Solin 2009, 275 n. 77). But the second element of these formulas was a patronymic in the form of an adjective, and – what is more important – it was not heritable, as shown by the names of Hersilia, daughter of Titus Tatius, and Pompo, Pinus, Calpus and Mamercus, who were sons of Numa Pompilius according to the tradition (Plut. *Num.* 21).

One generation later, according to this tradition, the names of Numa's sons gave origin to as many *gentes* of Rome: the Pomponii from Pompo, Pinarii from Pinus, Cal-

purnii from Calpus, Marcii from Mamercus (that is to say the clan of king Ancus Marcius, grandson of Numa) and also the Aemilii (Plut. *Num.* 8.18; Solin 2009, 286). In this regard, it is notable that the filiation from a Pompo, formerly expressed as Pompilius, becomes Pomponius two generations later.

Epigraphic evidence shows the persistence of individual names many times throughout the Archaic period in the Latin, Etruscan and Italic areas. But the unofficial nature of the majority of inscriptions, often on *instrumenta* (e. g. pottery or jewels), does not allow us to be sure whether a different official, possibly binominal formula existed or not (Colonna 1977, 176). Exemplary in this regard is the inscription of the Fibula Praenestina, dating from the mid-seventh century – and recently acquitted from the charge of being a modern forgery (Mangani 2015) – which records a gift from a *Manios* to a *Numasios*, both aristocrats having single names corresponding to later *praenomina* (Colonna 1977, 187; Maras 2015a). Still Praeneste has the coeval inscription *vetusia*, often considered an early occurrence of a feminine *gentilicium* (Kajava 1994, 19), but probably to be interpreted as an Etruscan genitive in *-ia* of the masculine name *Vetus* (Cornell 1991, 18 with bibliography). Similarly, in an Etruscan context of the highest rank, such as the Regolini Galassi Tomb at Caere (first half of the seventh century), the grave goods were marked with the simple name *Larθia* (genitive of *Larθ*), at times accompanied by a filiation (*larθia velθurus*; Buranelli and Sannibale 2001, 361). Even later, when the use of family names – or *gentilicia* – was widespread in southern Etruria (see below), the occurrence of single names provides evidence for the endurance of the earlier formula in lower classes as well as in domestic contexts, where the official binominal formula was felt as not necessary (Colonna 1977, 176–177).

Some cases of Greek names inserted into Etruscan formulas deserve a special mention, such as *Larθ Telicles*, perhaps from Caere, and *Rutile Hipocrates* from Tarquinia, both dating from the second half of the seventh century, who were respectively sons of a Telekles and of an Hippocrates. It is impossible to know, however, whether their patronymics had been transformed into heritable *gentilicia* or not (Heurgon 1977, 32; Colonna 1977, 184; Marchesini 2008, 47–48, 66, 151).

In other linguistic domains of central Italy, early occurrences of single names date from the end of the late Orientalizing period, such as:

- Faliscan, Civita Castellana (second half of the seventh century): *Lartos* and *Kaisiosio* (both in genitive case; Bakum 2009, 415, n. 6–7);
- Sabine, Poggio Sommavilla (beginning of the sixth century): *Alez* (Rocca 2001, 120–123).

On the other hand, binominal formulas with individual names and patronymics were attested still later in the nomenclature of:

- South-Picene, Casteldieri (sixth-fifth century): *[k]aúieh kaúieis puqlōh* (in dative case; Rix 2002, Sp AQ 1);
- Ausonian, Sorrento (beginning of the fifth century): *urufieís pafieís* (in genitive case; Russo 2005);

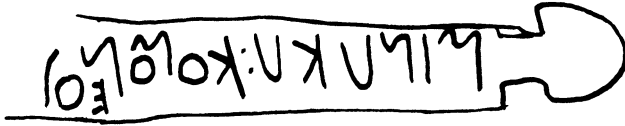


Fig. 6. S. Pietro in Stabio (northern Italy), Celtic inscription on a stone funerary stele, fourth – early second centuries BCE.

- Messapian, Lecce (second century): *θotor bostahi* (de Simone and Marchesini 2002, 12).

## V Patronymic adjectives and other appositives

Even though designation by individual name was originally the general rule for nomenclature of freeborn people, in some linguistic milieux of ancient Italy there is evidence for the early introduction of further onomastic elements in the formula, in the form of nicknames or further appositive nouns, presumably deriving from personal features and background. However, it is difficult to determine whether these onomastic components were heritable – and thus to be considered family names – or not.

In particular, in the Celtic languages of northern Italy we have epigraphic evidence for the existence of binominal formulas in inscriptions as early as the first half of the sixth century. In fact, Celtic nomenclature shows evidence for a second member of the onomastic formula, that has often either an ending *-i* (that has been compared to a genitive case), or the form of an adjective (with suffixes *-alo*, *-io*, *-ikno* and variants): in both cases it probably referred to a patronymic (Motta 2009, 301–302):

- Celtic, Sesto Calende (first half of the sixth century): *useθu viko[---]i* (Morandi 2004b, n. 78; Maras 2014, 76–79, fig. 2);
- Celtic, Vira Gambarogna (fifth-beginning of the fourth centuries): *teromui kualui* (in dative case; Solinas 1995, 331–332, n. 29; Maras 2014, 81, n. 17);
- Celtic, S. Pietro in Stabio (fourth-second centuries): *minuku komoneos* (Solinas 1995, 328–329, n. 22; Maras 2014, 88, n. 33) (Fig. 6);
- Celtic, Todi (second century): *kosisis trutiknos* (Solinas 1995, 382–383, n. 142).

This feature is also shared by the Veneti (Eska and Wallace 1999, 132, with a list of Venetic patronymic appositives):

- Venetic, Padova (fourth century): *fugioi uposedioi* (in dative case; Pellegrini and Prosdocimi 1967, Pa 20).

But in some occurrences the appositive cannot be referred to a filiation (Prosdocimi 1991, 162–163):

- Venetic, Padova (sixth-fifth centuries): *puponei rakoi* (in dative case; Pellegrini and Prosdocimi 1967, Pa 1);
- Celtic, Prestino (first half of the fifth century): *uvamokozis plialethu* (Solinas 1995, 343–345, n. 65; Maras 2014, 81, n. 10);
- Venetic, Oderzo (mid-fifth century): *padros pompeteguaios* (Eska and Wallace 1999);
- Celtic, Briona (late second-early first centuries): *kuitos lekatos* (Solinas 1995, 379–381, n. 140).

The two last cases present meaningful appositives in presence of a patronymic: *caialoiso* in the inscription from Oderzo (Eska and Wallace 1999, 132–133), and *tanotaliknoi* – a plural form shared by three brothers – in the inscription from Briona (Motta 2009, 303). On the other hand, in order to explain the unusual form of *plialethu* at Prestino, it has been supposed that it is formally identical to the father’s name (Motta 2009, 307–310, quoting Prosdocimi), or that the ending *-u* belongs to a genitive (De Hoz 1990); a further possibility could be that the appositive indicates the belonging to a clan, similar to the *gentilitas* of the later Celtiberian culture (Motta 2009, 300) or to the lineage of Ogamic inscriptions (the so-called MUCOI: Motta 2009, 309).

Despite the rarity of sure non-patronymic appositives, it is possible that Celtic nomenclature allowed the integration of either titles or nicknames into one’s own formula, as has been supposed for the “multilingual” interpreter *pompeteguaios* of Oderzo (literally “(man) with five languages;” Eska and Wallace 1999, 129–131), for the Latin acculturated “Quintus Legatus” of Briona (Häussler 2002, 65–66), and even for the institutional priestly figure named *akisios arkatokomaterekos* at Vercelli, whose official name shows no filiation (first half of the first century; Häussler 2002, 64–65; Motta 2009, 302–303; Häussler 2013, 120–122). It is important to highlight that the different formulas attested by inscriptions depend neither on social status nor gender: the presence of patronymics or appositives in the same inscription, at times referring to peer individuals, show that variability was inherent in Celtic nomenclature.

## VI The rise of the *gens*

The peculiar economic structure of central-Italian society, with special regard to the towns of southern Etruria, caused the necessity of providing each individual with a permanent, heritable element of his/her onomastic formula. The reason is linked to the possession of land by the aristocratic *paterfamilias*, which implied the legal right of handing down family estates to his own heirs, thus perpetuating his juridical personality (Capogrossi 1990; 1994), which was of central relevance also for relationships with *clientes*, fellows and servants (Colonna 1977, 185–188; Maggiani 2000, 249). Therefore, the creation of a heritable family name was a simple way to fix in the nomenclature a reference to the rights and properties of the family/clan, that

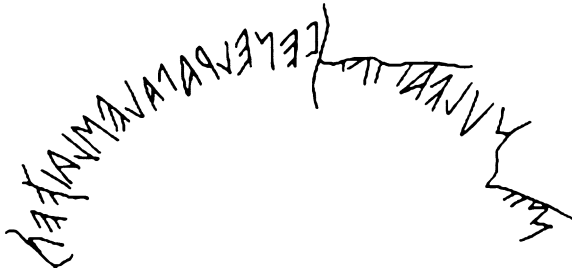


Fig. 7. Rusellae (central Italy), Etruscan inscription on an impasto dolium, end of the seventh century BCE.

is, the *gens* (Smith 2006, 158–159). Not dissimilarly in Greece the names of aristocratic and royal lineages, such as the Bacchiadai or the Pisistratidai, implied a reference to rights of succession (Salway 1994, 125 n. 6).

The heritable component of nomenclature is named *gentilicium* – from the *gens* – and takes the form of a patronymic adjective with apparent reference to a forefather, e. g. in Latin Valerii from Volesus, Pompilii from Pompo (see above), but also Romilii from Romulus, Hostilii from Hostus, and probably Iunii from the Faliscan name *Iuna* (Rix 2009, 499). Nomenclature with *gentilicia* certainly spread and operated in southern Etruria and in Latium in the late seventh and sixth centuries (e. g. Etruscan *spur-eisei teiθurnasi*, *mamarce velxanas*; Latin *tita uendias*, *popliosio ualesiosio*). Anyway, some doubts still exist about the origin of this onomastic system.

In this regard it is worth taking into consideration some early Etruscan occurrences that present as many rare archaic cases of *gentilicia* occurring together with patronymics:

- Etruscan, Narce (ca. 650–625 BCE): *laricesi p[---] [---]naiesi clinsi velθurusi* (in pertinentive case; Rix 2011, Fa 3.2);
- Etruscan, Vetulonia (second half of the seventh century): *[a]uvelēs θeluskeś tuś-nutni[eś?]* (or *tuśnutnai[eś?]*, in genitive case: the second *ny* has been corrected on or added to an *alpha*; Maggiani 2007, 71–72, pl. X c; Agostiniani 2011, 183–184);
- Etruscan, Rusellae (end of the seventh century): *venel rapaleś laivena[?]* (Rix 2011, Ru 3.1) (Fig. 7).

In cases like these, scholars usually consider the second member of the formula as a *gentilicium* and the third as a patronymic or – in the inscription from Rusellae – as a metronymic (Colonna 1977, 188–189; Maggiani 2005, 72). But in actuality it is easy to observe that the former has the ending of the genitive (not preserved in the inscription from Narce), while the third member has an ending *-na* or *-naie* that is typical of the *gentilicia* (see below). It is therefore probable that the second member is a patronymic interposed between *praenomen* and *gentilicium*, which is different from later inscriptions.

In origin, being added to the original binominal formula, *gentilicia* occupied presumably the last position, as still happens in later Sabellian formulas (e.g. Umbrian *vuvçis titis teteies*, Volscian *ec se cosuties*, Marsian *pa ui pacuies*, north-Lucanian, *αλαπονις πακρηις οπιες*; Rix 1996, 256–257. See also the archaic Faliscan formula of *ofetios kaios uelos amanos* from Civita Castellana, seventh century, belonging to two brothers, sons of a Vel; Bakkum 2009, 217–218). The filiation then lost its importance and was recorded only rarely in special inscriptions, such as the three listed above. Eventually, when the social developments relating to the formation of the Archaic and Classical polis required the reintroduction of patronymics – and metronymics in Etruria (see below) – they were added at the end of the formula, according to the recent general rule.

In other regions of Italy doubts arise whether the second member of a binominal formula is a patronymic adjective or an actual *gentilicium*:

- South-Picene, Caestrano (first half of the sixth century): either *aninis rakinelis* (Rix 2002, Sp AQ 2; Calderini, Neri and Ruggeri 2007) or *nevii pomp[---]i* (in dative case; La Regina 2010, 243; *Imagines* Aufinum 1);
- South-Picene, Falerone (sixth-fifth centuries): [---] *taluis petrūnis* (if no further onomastic member is to be integrated at the beginning; Rix 1996, 257–258, n. 21; Rix 2002, Sp AP 4; La Regina 2010, 250–251, n. 3);
- Sicilian, Mendolito (sixth-fifth centuries): *ρυκες χαζουιε[ς]* (Agostiniani 2009, 52–53);
- Pre-Samnitic, Nola (mid-fifth century): *lucies cnaviies* (in genitive case; Rix 2002, Ps 13).

In these cases it is probably more prudent to maintain a neutral opinion, and not to talk of *gentilicia* without evidence of the heritability of this onomastic component (Meiser 1987). Therefore, in consideration of the available data and of their chronology, we are allowed to consider the Etruscans responsible for introducing the *gentilicium* in the nomenclature of pre-Roman Italy (*pace* Solin 2009, 275 n. 77; see also Rix 1995b, 728; Salway 1994, 126).

The new system was soon adopted by the Latins through the translation of the Etruscan suffix *-na* into the Latin (and Italic) suffix *-ius*. Hence, from the Archaic period onwards, binominal formulas with *praenomen* and *gentilicium* (usually with filiation) became the standard nomenclature of free citizens in central Italy. As a matter of fact, this type of nomenclature spread to the neighbouring peoples of pre-Roman Italy preceding and accompanying Romanization (Dupraz 2009, 337–338; see also Lejeune 1977, 36–38). For example:

- Etruscan, Caere (end of the seventh century): *mamarce velchanas* (Rix 2011, Cr 3.11);
- Latin, Satricum (end of the sixth-beginning of the fifth centuries): *popliosio ualesiosio* (in genitive case; *CIL* 1, 2832a; Colonna 1980);
- Umbrian, Todi (end of the fifth century): *ahal trutitis* (Rix 2002, Um 16) (Fig. 3);

- Samnite, Capua (fourth-third centuries): *pak(is) puinik(is) pak(ieis)* (Rix 2002, Cp 1);
- Lucanian, Rossano (third century): *ηηρενς πωμπονις ηηρ(ενηις)* (Rix 2002, Lu 5);
- Paelignian, Corfinium (second half of the second century): *t(itis) cristidis t(itieis) f(ilius)* (the filiation is actually expressed in Latin; Rix 2002, Pg 57; Dupraz 2009, 322–338).

In this system, the individuating function had shifted from the simple name to the couple formed by *praenomen* + *gentilicium*, giving more importance to the latter (Salway 1994, 126). As a consequence, the number of *praenomina* increasingly shrunk throughout the centuries, especially among aristocratic families, down to seventeen in Classical Roman, standard nomenclature (Salway 1994, 125 n. 9), and less than ten usual in later Etruscan nomenclature (Heurgon 1977, 28; see also Rix 2009, 499–494). Exceptions were of course possible, as peculiarities of some families (such as the *praenomen* Appius that was exclusive of the Claudii) and in the case of the inclusion of new people(s) into the system of *gentilicia*.

In consideration of the fact that Etruria introduced *gentilicia*, it is not surprising that Etruscan nomenclature shows traces of an early development from the simple form of the adjective in *-na* to marked forms in *-na-s*, *-na-ie* and the like (Maggiani 2000, 252–258; Marchesini 2008, 95–105), which probably were intended to distinguish the actual *gentilicia* from virtually identical patronymic adjectives. As a matter of fact, the use of patronymic adjectives was spread among the neighbouring peoples such as the Celts of northern Italy (see above), the Faliscans (e.g. *Voltilio* from the *praenomen* *Voltio*, and *Titio* from the *praenomen* *Tito*; Rix 1972, 706; Bakum 2009, 232–233) and the Messapians of southern Italy (e.g. *Sohinnes* formed with the suffix *-ias*; Rix 1972, 708).

In some cases, perhaps even some Etruscan formulas of the Archaic period show patronymic adjectives in *-na*, in a position that anticipates the function of the later *cognomina*:

- Etruscan, Orvieto (first half of the sixth century): *aveles vhulvenas rutelna* (in genitive case; Rix 2011, Vs 1.45; see also Solin 2009, 275, quoting Rix 1963, 379–383);
- Etruscan, Carthage (first half of the sixth century): *puinel karθazie vesqu[?]na* (Maggiani 2006, 319–321; Rix 2011, Af 3.1).

In cases like these it has been suggested that what looks like a second *gentilicium* refers to a family that granted either hospitality or citizenship to a foreigner with a sort of cooptation (Maggiani 2006, 334–337). But it is also possible to suppose that these are early attestations of “patronymic *cognomina*” that were meant to distinguish different branches of a *gens* through the reference to a common ancestor; some possible comparanda for this come from some Latin *cognomina* of the first two centuries of the Roman Republic, apparently identical to *praenomina* used by early aristocratic families (Solin 2009, 286–287; see also Kajanto 1965, 172–178).

Thus presumably *Avele Vhulvenas* in Orvieto descended from a *Rutele*, as Lucius Aemilius Mamercus descended – or pretended to descend – from Mamercus son of Numa (Pocchetti 2008, 138). This procedure might throw light also onto the origin of the *gentilicia* from individual names either in the regular form of adjective (with ending *-na* in Etruscan and *-ius* in Latin and Italic languages; Heurgon 1977, 29) or in a form identical to individual names and *praenomina* in the case of the so-called *Individualnamengentilicia* and *Vornamengentilicia* occurring in Etruria especially in the Hellenistic period, and presumably belonging to *gentes* of new creation (Colonna 1977, 184–188).

Actually, all *gentilicia* stemmed ultimately from personal names of forefathers, whether real or so believed (Salway 1994, 125–126). Therefore any etymological reference is placed one step backward, at the level of the original name whence the corresponding *gentilicium* derived (*pace* Salway 1994, 125 n. 13): as a matter of fact individual names at times referred to hair colour (like *Flavius* from *flavus*, “fair-haired”), or to animals (like Latin *Porcius* from *porcus*, “pig,” as well as its Etruscan parallel *Porsenna*, presumably deriving from an Umbrian name *\*Purze* having the same meaning; Colonna 2000, 281–282) or to other lexical spheres. (By the way, despite what literary sources tell, the name of the Tarquinian dynasty and the corresponding Etruscan *gentilicium Tarχna* probably derived from the name of Tarchon, Etruscan *Tarχun*, founder of Tarquinia and one of the forefathers of the Etruria; Colonna 1977, 184).

It is therefore striking to find some *gentilicia* deriving from gods’ names, such as Latin *Iulius* from *Iulus* (i.e. *\*Iovulus*, little Jupiter), Etruscan *Larania* from *Laran* (the Etruscan Ares) and *Tinnuna* from *Tina* (the Etruscan Jupiter; Colonna 1995, 332–339). In these cases, it may be that the family pretended or believed itself to have a divine origin, as is known in the late Republic for the Iulii, who worshipped the god Veiovis – represented as a young Jupiter (Gell. *NA* 5.1212.11–2; Fest. 519L) – even before the ancestor Iulus was identified with Aeneas’ son (Maras 2011, 23). Similarly, in the late Republican period, it was fashionable to ennoble one’s ancestry for political purposes by referring to pretended, famous namesake-forefathers, as suggested by Cicero (*Brut.* 62; see Salway 1994, 126).

## VII *Cognomina* and metronymics

The heritability of *gentilicia* and the habit of handing down a short number of *praenomina* in each family caused a relative lack of variability in nomenclature and the consequent risk of coincidence of names, especially among the Latin and Etruscan aristocracies. As a third member of the onomastic formula, the *cognomen* helped to distinguish different branches of a *gens* (we have already discussed the possibility of patronymic *cognomina*). Evidence of this comes from the etymology of the word from the verb *cognoscere*, “to know, discern” (Rix 2009, 499).



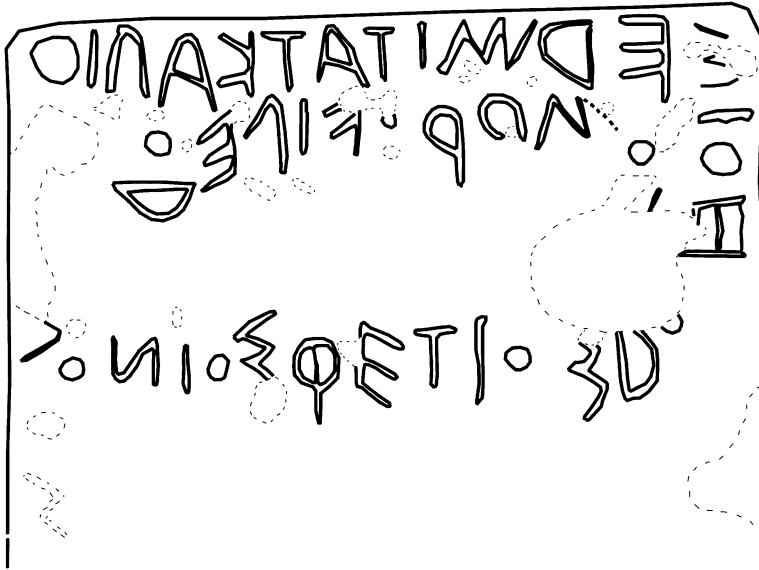


Fig. 8. Tivoli (central Italy), archaic Latin inscription on a stone base, second half of the sixth century BCE.

Recent studies have proved the reliability of evidence coming from the lists of magistrates of the early Roman Republic, which record formulas with three-names already in the fifth century (Solin 2009, 253–269; see also Kajanto 1977a, 64–65, and Solin 1977, 103–146). In addition to this, some late Archaic inscriptions seem to confirm this early chronology:

- Etruscan, Orvieto (first half of the fifth century): *larθ paiθunas prezu* (Rix 2011, Vs 3.4);
- Latin, Tivoli (second half of the sixth century): *cauio [---]nonios qetios* (CIL 1, 2658) (Fig. 8).

Even when the second member of the formula is a patronymic adjective rather than an actual *gentilicium*:

- South-Picene, Servigliano (sixth or, better, fifth century): *noúinis petieronis efi-dans* (Rix 1996, 257–258; Rix 2002, Sp AP 5; *Imagines* Falerio 3);
- Pre-Samnitic, Capua (mid-fifth century): *vinuxs veneliis peracis* (Rix 2002, Ps 3; Poccetti 2008, 136–137).

In actuality, only Latin literature and epigraphy provides sufficient evidence for reconstructing the history and function of the *cognomina*; but we can sketch some general features applicable to the other onomastic domains of pre-Roman Italy (Rix 2009, 500–501).

Since their original purpose referred to individual nomenclature, early *cognomina* show a high variability and can be gathered into groups according to their meaning (Kajanto 1977a, 65–67; Rix 2009, 499–504):

- a) ethnic: e.g. *Capitolinus*, *Collatinus*, *Soranus* (Solin 2009, 276–283; see also Poccetti 2008, 143 on the formula *caso cantovio aprufclano* on the tablet from Civita d’Antino, third century);
- b) patronymic: e.g. *Mamercinus*, *Paetinus* (Poccetti 2008, 137–138);
- c) identical to individual names or *praenomina*: e.g. *Paetus*, *Proculus*, *Volusus* (Solin 2009, 286–287);
- d) somatic: e.g. *Barbatus*, *Caecus*, *Cicero* (Solin 2009, 283–286);
- e) moral: e.g. *Cicurinus*, *Imperiossus* (Solin 2009, 286).

In addition, of course, a number of *cognomina* have no clear explanation (such as *Pulvillus* and *Ahala*; Rix 2009, 500), or derive from the personal history or social background of their bearer (such as *Scipio* and *Ambustus*, or the *cognomina ex virtute*, such as *Asiaticus* or *Africanus*; Solin 2009, 273–274, 280). Finally, Etruscan nomenclature adds to the series also job-*cognomina* (such as *acilu*, “craftsman,” or *suvlu*, “flute-player;” Rix 2009, 500–501).

Even though *cognomina* were originally attached to a single person, they soon became heritable for reasons of prestige. Furthermore, some important families used to improve their onomastic formulas by adding new *cognomina*, which at times substituted old ones (e.g. *L. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus*; Solin 2009, 252–258).

The use of *cognomina* spread among Roman aristocracies and – presumably later – in lower classes in the Republican period, reaching an almost universal diffusion in the first century CE. Nonetheless, standard nomenclature in Italy before the Roman Empire remained fundamentally based on the binominal formula with *praenomen* and *gentilicium*. In official formulas, however, filiation, and occasionally *cognomina*, were also included.

In addition to this, in Etruscan culture, in accordance with its peculiar consideration of women’s role in the society, there was a substantial diffusion of metronymics, which in the recent period were generally added to patronymics in official formulas. A formula mentioning the *gentilicium* of the mother had probably the purpose of preserving a memory of the link between the families. The earliest occurrences date from the late Orientalizing period:

- Etruscan, Vetulonia (second half of the seventh century): [a]uveles̄ θeluskes̄ tusnutni[eś?] or tusnutnai[eś?] [al]panalaś (in genitive case; see above);
- Etruscan, Cerveteri (beginning of the sixth century): larθ apunas veleθnalas (Colonna 1977, 188–189; Rix 2011, Cr 3.17).

But in actuality the use of metronymics spread widely only from the fourth century onwards in funerary inscriptions both of southern and northern Etruria:

- Etruscan, Tarquinia (mid-fourth century): velθur partunus larisaliśa clan ramθas cuclnial (Rix 2011, Ta. 9);

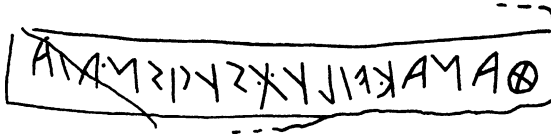


Fig. 9. Veii (central Italy), Etruscan inscription on a bucchero fragment, end of the seventh century BCE.

- Etruscan, Perugia (end of the third century): *vel axuni ve(lus clan) trazlual* (Rix 2011, Pe 1.637);
- Etruscan, Chiusi (mid-second century): *la(ris) pulfna la(risal clan) seiantial* (Rix 2011, Cl 1.6).

## VIII Nomenclature and gender

As regards women, it is certainly worth spending some time on the peculiarities of feminine nomenclature (Kajanto 1977b, 147–158). Among the peoples of ancient Italy women generally shared the same onomastic formulas as men, either featuring names and patronymics, or having heritable *gentilicia* too, as shown by the following examples:

- Etruscan, Veii (end of the seventh century): *thanakvilus sucisnaia* (with *gentilicium*, in genitive case; Rix 2011, Ve 2.10) (Fig. 9);
- Bruttian, Laos (fourth century): *vo(μ)ψ(i)α(v) φαριαν, φιβιαν σπεδ(i)αν* and *μεδεκαν αραδιαν* (with *gentilicia*, in accusative case; Rix 2002, Lu 46);
- Faliscan, Civita Castellana (third century): *cauia [u]eculia uoltilia* (with *gentilicium* and patronymic adjective; Bakkum 2009, 442, n. 80);
- Celtic, Carcegna (second-first centuries): *uenia metelikna* and *asmina krasanikna* (with patronymic adjectives; Solinas 1995, 372–373, n. 122);
- Paelignian, Sulmo (second century): *saluta caiedia c(aieis) filia* (with *gentilicium* and filiation expressed in Latin; Rix 2002, Pg 17);
- Umbrian, Todi (second-first centuries): *uarea folenia* (with *gentilicium*, in Latin script; Rix 2002, Um 38).

Inscriptions with names of women are more frequent in regions where a tradition for funerary epigraphy was more developed, such as in Etruscan and Faliscan regions and among the Paeligni. Whereas, just a few inscriptions record names of Sabellian women (Bakkum 2009, 227 n. 115). In northern Italy, a number of Celtic and Venetic instrumental inscriptions concern women, especially in case of votive gifts.

Peoples that used *gentilicia* seem to have provided women too with binominal formulas with *praenomina*: the Latins originally shared this feature, as shown by the archaic inscription of *Tita Uendia* (seventh century BCE) and by the Latin name of the legendary Etruscan queen Tanaquil, Gaia Caecilia (Plin., *HN* 8.194).

The disappearing of the feminine *praenomen* is therefore a later Roman peculiarity, presumably originating from the major importance attached to the *nomen gentis* in the case of marriages and relationships among families (Kajava 1994, 101). In this context it is clear why some original *praenomina* – namely concerning the order of birth, such as *prim(ill)a*, *secunda* and so on – were postponed and dealt with as *cognomina* in Roman feminine nomenclature (Kajava 1994, 122–125).

Official formulas, especially in funerary contexts, presented at times also complementary information such as gamonymics (names of husbands; Lejeune 1974, 60–63; Bakkum 2009, 230–231) and – only in Etruria – the rare metronymic:

- Etruscan, Arezzo (fourth century): *fasti kainei tulesa* (with gamonymic; Rix 2011, Ar 1.1);
- Venetic, Este (fourth century): *fukssiai voltiomnina* (with gamonymic adjective, in dative case; Pellegrini and Prosdocimi 1967, Es 2; Bonfante 1996, 305–306);
- Faliscan, Falerii Novi (third century): *cau[ia] uecin[e]a uotili[a] ma(r)ci acacelini uxo(r)* (with patronymic adjective and gamonymic; Bakkum 2009, 502, n. 222);
- Etruscan, Clusium (second half of the third century): *θανχvil šuplini larθialisa caeś sentinateś puia* (with patronymic and gamonymic; Rix 2011, Cl 1.86);
- Etruscan, Clusium (second century): *θana: pulfnei: patacsalisa remznal šex* (with gamonymic and metronymic: mother's *gentilicium* + *šex*, "daughter;" Rix 2011, Cl 1.2150);
- Etruscan, Volterra (first half of the second century): *vipinal ulχnisla* (in genitive case, with gamonymic, but without a *praenomen*, according to the Roman use; Rix 2011, Vt 4.5).

## IX The impact of Romanisation

The inclusion of the Italian peoples within the Roman orbit, with special regard to their admission into Roman citizenship, was a complex phenomenon that involved issues of acculturation and conflict (Vallat 2001, 106–108; Lomas 2004, 220–223), and eventually determined the abandonment of some features of the precedent ethnic identities (Cooley 2002a, 10; Häussler 2002, 72–73). Native language and – as a not obvious consequence – even nomenclature were primary casualties of becoming Roman (Farney 2011, 224): as a matter of fact, along with the progressive substitution of Latin to local languages in public issues and subsequently in the private sphere, personal names increasingly took a Roman form, with different behaviours in different regions.

The vitality of Etruscan nomenclature at first preserved native names from disappearing, and Latin formulas were added to the original ones in funerary inscriptions, thus creating a double, parallel nomenclature, as testified by a small number of bilingual inscriptions (Benelli 1994, 13–38; 2001, 10–11):

- Etruscan-Latin, Pesaro (first century): *l(a)r(is) cafates l(a)r(isal clan) ~ l(ucius) cafatius l(ucii) f(ilius) ste(llatina tribu)* (Rix 2011, Um 1.7);

- Etruscan-Latin, Clusium (first century): *vel zicu ~ q(uintus) scribonius c(aii) f(ilius)* (Rix 2011, Cl 1.320).

These two examples show how the Latinization of native *gentilicia* operated (Benelli 2001, 13–14), either changing the ending by means of the addition of a Roman suffix *-ius*, or “translating” the meaning of the original name (since *zicu* comes from *ziχ*, “to write”). On the contrary, sometimes local *praenomina* were replaced by Latin ones with no apparent correspondence. Eventually, Latin language and nomenclature overwhelmed the remains of Etruscan ethnic pride and no known Etruscan inscription dates beyond the Augustan period.

In other regions, where individual names still survived, Romanization brought the introduction of *gentilicia*, at times following either the foundation of colonies of Roman citizens, or the assignment of land to veterans (Harris 1989, 154–155; Lomas 2004, 207–213). This process took place as early as the third century in central Italy and continued throughout the Social War, for northern Sabellian peoples, such as the Paelignians, Vestinians and Marrucinians (Rix 1996, 244; Dupraz 2008, 127–131; Dupraz 2009, 322–338).

In accord with their later admission into Roman citizenship, in northern Italy Romanization of nomenclature took place only in the late second and first centuries, with different consequences in the Venetic region and among the Celtic peoples. As a matter of fact, in the former case, a desire to emulate Roman culture can be detected in loanwords and onomastic forms (Lejeune 1977, 38–40), whereas the Celts attempted to safeguard their identity through the preservation of native language and nomenclature (Solinas 2002, 275–298), but eventually adopted Latin in the “official” writing of epitaphs, although still preserving some native features and behaviours (Häussler 2002, 62–67; Häussler 2013, 118–125).

Finally, Umbrian and Oscan nomenclature were easily adapted to the Roman system simply transforming the endings of *gentilicia* into the regular *-ius*, and progressively abandoning native *praenomina* in favour of Roman traditional ones (Lejeune 1977, 36–38; see also Dupraz 2008, 127–129). The integration of Oscan and Latin languages and nomenclature is apparent, for instance, in Pompeii, where native writing and language seem to have been still lively at the time of the eruption in 79 CE (Cooley 2002b, 82–84).

This phenomenon was neither determined nor accompanied by an abandonment of the pride of families for their Italian origins: on the contrary they were often highlighted by adding ethnic *cognomina* to onomastic formulas (such as *Picens*, *Marsus* and *Umbri*). Incidentally, there is evidence that showing off an Italian (not-Roman) origin was even considered an “added value” in politics and success in political careers (Farney 2011, 227–228).

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