Onomasticon of Roman Anthroponyms: Explication and Application (Part I)

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INTRODUCTION:

The Interest in Roman Names

THE ADVENTUROUS OR SCHOLARLY reader will have encountered scattered instances of fascinating fact connected with

Rome and its far-flung empire of classical times. For example, this tantalizingly brief reference to the Roman naming system in a popular history:

> A clan (*gens*) was a group of freeborn families tracing themselves to a common ancestor, bearing his name, united in a common worship, and bound to mutual aid in peace and war. The male child was designated by an individual first name (*praenomen*), such as Publius, Marcus, Caius; by his clan name (*nomen*), such as Cornelius, Tullius, Julius; and by his family name (*cognomen*), such as Scipio, Cicero, Caesar. Women were most often designated simply by the clan name — Cornelia, Tullia, Claudia, Julia. Since in classical days there were only some fifteen first names for males, and these tended to be repeated confusingly in many generations of the same family, they were usually reduced to an initial, and a fourth—or even a fifth—name was added for distinctiveness. So P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus Maior, the conqueror of Hannibal, was differentiated from P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus Africanus Minor, the destroyer of Carthage. . . .
>
> Some artistocratic families derived their names in part from the vegetables traditionally favored in their plantings: Lentuli, Caepiones, Fabii, from lentils, onions, beans.[1]

Or, to cite the popular literature of the last century, we quote this from Isaac D'Israeli (father of the British prime minister), a snapper-up of considerable literary trifles and a scholar whose prodigious reading in his youth, and retentive memory into his eighties, enabled him (like the American historian Prescott) to continue his writing even after he was stricken with blindness. His notes on "Influence of Names" include:

> Virgil, when young, formed a design of a national poem, but was soon discouraged from proceeding, merely by the roughness and asperity of the old Roman names, such as *Decius Mus; Lucumo; Vibius Caudex.*
>
> . . . .
>
> . . . the influence of *long names* is of very ancient standing. Lucian notices one *Simon*, who coming to a great fortune aggrandised his name to *Simonides. Dioclesian* [*sic*] had once been plain *Diocles* before he was emperor.

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1. Will Durant, *Caesar and Christ: A History of Roman Civilization and of Christianity from their beginnings to A.D. 325* Part III, *The Story of Civilization* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1944), pp. 56-57, 76. M. Bacheler in "Die Namengebung bei den lateinischen Prosaiken von Velleius bis Sueton," *EKPh* (1915) says patricians used *praenomina* and *cognomina*, later *praenomina* and *gentilica* (*nomina*), while freedmen employed *nomina* and *cognomina*, the trinominal system being reserved regularly for official reference to important personages. No laws on the books controlled these traditions.

. . . .

Superstition has interfered even in the *choice of names*, and this solemn folly has received the name of a science, called *Onomantia*; of which the superstitious ancients discovered a hundred foolish mysteries. They cast up the numeral letters of *names*, and Achilles was therefore fated to vanquish Hector, from the numeral letters in his name amounting to a higher number than his rivals. They made many whimsical divisions and subdivisions of names, to prove them lucky or unlucky. . . . Some names have been considered as more auspicious than others. Cicero informs us that when the Romans raised troops, they were anxious that the *name* of the first soldier who enlisted should be one of good augury. When the censors numbered the citizens, they always began by a fortunate name, such as *Salveus Valerius*. A person of the name of *Regillianus* was chosen emperor, merely from the royal sound of his name, and *Jovian* [who ruled for only a year, A.D. 363-364, just before the empire was divided East and West between Valentian I and his brother Valens] was elected because his name approached nearest to the beloved one of the philosophic *Julian* [the Apostate]. This fanciful superstition was even carried so far that some were considered as auspicious, and others as unfortunate. The superstitious belief in *auspicious names* was so strong, that Caesar, in his African expedition, gave a command to an obscure and distant relative of the Scipios, to please the popular prejudice that the Scipios were invincible in Africa. Suetonius observes that all those of the family of Caesar who bore the surname of Caius perished by the sword. The Emperor Septimius Severus consoled himself for the licentious life of his Empress Julia, from the fatality attending those of her name.

. . . .

The ancient Romans decreed that the surnames of infamous patricians should not be borne by any other patrician of that family, that their very names might be degraded and expire with them. Eutropius gives a pleasing proof of national friendships being cemented by a *name*; by a treaty of peace between the Romans and the Sabines, they agreed to melt the two nations into one mass, that they should bear their *names* conjointly; the Roman should add his to the Sabine, and the Sabine take a Roman name.[2]

As to references to names in Latin, they are to be found scattered in both predictable and unlikely places. In this essay we have by no means attempted to cite all names or even all references to onomastic comments in Latin literature, though we have attempted to take into consideration all useful information available in order to build up our

2. D'Israeli, *Curiosities of Literature* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1866), pp. 201, 202, 203.

mosaic of fact. We have not hesitated to cite examples throughout our text, weighing the possibility of losing the forest among the trees but even more aware of the wisdom of Addison's remark in *The Spectator* of 1712: "There is nothing in nature more irksome than general discourses, especially when they turn chiefly upon words."

Our general discourse, therefore, is studded—we hope not overwhelmed—with examples. We have tried to select these from the most reliable sources, but even Livy can err; Livy (I,3) tries to make *Silvius* into a kind of second name and cites its use among the rulers of Alba Longa after the son of Ascanius was given the name. Actually, *Silvius* originates with Ascanius' half-brother Aeneas Silvius (presumably because he was born in a wood). Livy regards it as a *cognomen*. It is really a *nomen gentilicum*, the sort of thing that became the basic Roman name (*nomen*).

One has to be constantly on the lookout for errors in one's sources. And as time passes the Roman naming system changes. History and inscriptions have to be searched for milestones: by 79 B.C. the trinominal system was widespread; an inscription of the Dictator T. Quinctus [omitting *Cincinnatus Capitolinus*] in 380 B.C. is the last without a *cognomen*; in 304 B.C. priests are first listed with *cognomina*, etc.

Numismatic evidence is also valuable. For example, the coins of the Second Punic War (*Punicum bellum*) are the earliest we can find which present us with *cognomina*. Early *nomina* appear on coins which can be reliably dated: *Naevius* (son of Gnaeus) and *Furius* (son of Fusus). These patronymics in *-ius* were also preserved in Faliscian, a Latin dialect that underwent a considerable Osco-Umbrian influence. Other *nomina* are derived from other systems: the man we call Pompey had a surname perhaps derived from the Osco-Umbrian for *five* (the Romans also got *Quintius* from *Quintus*). Priscian (which is what we in English call Priscianus the grammarian, whom the Romans dubbed Caesariensis because he was born in Mauritania at Caesarea) tells us the practice of using two names (*multiplicanda*) came from the moment in history when the Romans sealed a truce with the Sabines: a Sabine put his name last with a Roman one in front of it and a Roman took a Sabine forename before his *nomen*. Thus both Romans and Sabines kept their native *nomina* and yet the mixture of the two groups was commemorated onomastically. Later all parts of the Roman empire were united. Prudentius in the late Fourth Century A.D. wrote: "A shared law made them peers, intertwined them under a single name,

brought the vanquished into the bonds of brotherhood," and a system of Roman names, even more than the Latin language, which was not universal, made them in a sense all part of one extended family.

For information on Roman onomastics (itself a word containing the Greek for name) we have also had to search Greek sources. For Greek was the learned language of many Romans. An example of what may be found in Greek is this passage (in Horace White's translation for the Loeb Classics of the *Ῥωμαϊκά*, that is *Appian's Roman History* in four volumes) from the history of the Roman empire written by a Greek from Alexandria. Its author was Appianus, whom we call Appian. Writing about A.D. 123, Appian knew much about military affairs and wars (such as the Punic, Syrian, Mithridatic, Spanish, Illyric, and Celtic) and from time to time he dropped useful remarks like this:

> As to names, Roman citizens, like other people, formerly only had one each; afterwards they took a second, and not much later, for easier recognition, there was given to some of them a third derived from some personal incident or as a distinction for bravery, just as certain of the Greeks had surnames in addition to their ordinary names. For purposes of distinction I shall sometimes mention all the names, especially of illustrious men, but for the most part I shall call these and others by the names that are deemed most characteristic.

This sample may serve to show the care with which even passing comments in ancient authorities have to be read. Point one, Appian is an historical authority but hardly the last word in linguistics. Point two, Appian says (or seems to say) that all Roman citizens had first one name, then a second, then three—but many Roman citizens did not have three names, only two. He also says—is this point three or a subdivision of point two?—that Roman citizens *took* a name and then *took* a second name but that they were *given* the third one, which suggests that *cognomina* could not be added without some kind of permission, whereas other authorities suggest a *cognomen* can be a name one can choose for oneself and not exclusively the gift of persons who bestow nicknames or the state which grants distinctions. Another point (but about Greek names, not Roman ones): Appian distinguishes between Greek surnames and the "ordinary names" of the Greeks (presumably their given names). In what sense was a surname not ordinary? Was it extraordinary for a man to have a surname? (If so, how did he get one?) Or was it unusual for a Greek to use both his names (if he had two)? On what occasions would Dionysius of Halicarnassus be called *Dionysius of Halicarnassus* and not *Dionysius*? Was the fuller name only for those

who were not intimate with him, only for formal occasions, or what? (It would not be of much use in Halicarnassus to have a great many people running around with *of Halicarnassus* attached to their "ordinary" names. . . .)

We have attempted to winnow the information available and to give the reader here a sort of consensus and (sometimes) our speculations. We should be less than candid if we did not admit that there are still many vexed questions and less than cautious if we did not invite others to add to both the store of knowledge and the scholarly debate. However, the present study is neither premature nor without special importance.

There is no need to go as far back as the Romans D'Israeli mentions to study ugly names, and it is easier to see valid objections to such modern American practices as the mixture of ethnic sources (producing *Tondelayo Schwartz*, etc.) or the creation of semi-literate forenames (*Diahanne, D'Vaughan*, etc.) than to evaluate *Lucumo*. The "aggrandising" of names can be well documented from recent sources. For *onomantia* we have better sources in the *Kabbala* tradition, in the modern gematriac fascination with numerology (which vies with astrology for the attention of the gullible), and in superstititions still very much alive: among the Jews, for instance, it is still considered unwise to name a child after a living relative (lest his life be diminished) and clever to change a name when someone is seriously ill (to confuse the Angel of Death who may be coming for the person).[3] Richard Cavendish's *The Black Arts* (1967) can start the curious student on a long trail of numerology back to Ginsberg's classic on *The Kabbalah* and the works of E. T. Bell (1946), L. Bosman (1932), C. W. Cheasley (1926), Cheiro of our time, and so on back to Pythagoras.

But the study of Roman names can involve us in more solid, less curious, more practical and less occult matters; the names and naming systems of a civilization that is one of the true pillars of Western culture surely must be of interest to us all. Moreover, Roman names are of great importance to onomasticians.

The Roman naming system is rather complex and has never been reliably treated at length before. It is time for it to be extensively examined and discussed in relation to examples drawn from history and literature.

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3. *Cf.* Leslie Dunkling, *First Names First* (New York: Universe Books, 1976). For name divination and other arcane matters, see Paul Christian, *The History and Practice of Magic*, trans. J. Kirkup and J. Shaw (New York: The Citadel Press, 1963), and books on "Numerology."

The magic and folklore aspects are worth an article in themselves but can be left for another time and place, though it would be remiss not to mention that Robert Graves' "historical grammar of poetic myth," *The White Goddess*, raises riveting questions as to the possibility that in myth (and in its names) we have the original, pre-rational magic language, displaced in historical times by science. Somewhere the science of onomastics must be used to recover that lurking legacy. Here let us take up the *nomen* of the *gens* or family, the *praenomen* or forename, and the *cognomen* or *supernomen*—the Roman names that Durant mentions in the lines we quoted. We shall see the whole anthroponymic system of naming of individuals and the influence this had on the naming of places and things. Then we may append some remarks on the Roman naming systems as understood (or misunderstood) by the greatest writer in English, Shakespeare, and (for comparison) his contemporary Jonson.

To begin with, the *nomen* (name) itself.

NOMINA
The Basic Name

In the Eleventh Edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1910-1911), John Henry Freese of St. John's College (Cantab.) started with social names, for personal names "of savage persons are not permanent" and throughout a lifetime, as various ceremonial names, nicknames, and names of honor are bestowed, a person changes his name. But patronymics, family names, connected with such different concepts as the Teutonic totem and the Greek *deme*, remain, although they may not develop until the civilization is itself "permanent."

Freese wrote in *Britannica*'s article on "Names" (XIX, 157):

> The oldest personal names which we need examine here are those which indicate, not an individual, but a group, held together by the conscious sentiment of kindred, or banded together for reasons of convenience.

For the Romans, this commences with *nomina* ("names"), and by this term they meant clan or tribe or gentile or family names. These names sometimes, however, may originate in personal names, *e.g.*: *Marcius* derives from *Marcus, Tullius* from archaic *Tullus.* These personal names have been designated *praenomina* but it must be noted that insofar as this terminology suggests that the *praenomen* is in some way additional to or subordinate to the *nomen* the word *praenomen* is a

misnomer, for the so-called *praenomen* was originally independent, the only name.

Herodotus (IV, 184) claimed that he had heard of a people that had no names whatsoever, but from the earliest times Indo-European people, at least, had individual names (often several through life) and names they used for their own tribes and for other tribes.

One simple system for naming children was to number them. Today the Japanese still use names such as *Ichi* (one) and *Taro* (big boy, the first male—as the fictional Chinese detective Charlie Chan might say "Number One Son") and they make such combinations as *Masataro* (good first-born male). The Turks call a boy *Abi* (elder brother) when they hope for more boys to follow.[4] *Essien* (sixth-born son) is a name among the Ochi and Ga tribes of the African republic which used to be called the *Côte d'Ivoire* and from which blacks as well as ivory were exported. Perhaps—though not usually recognized as such in the West—*Omar* (first son) is the most frequently heard number name: no longer is it used, even among Moslems, exclusively for the first-born son. Early among the Romans boys were numbered by way of *praenomina* and we shall see *infra* how some Roman *nomina* ultimately derive from this system i.e., *praenomen, Septimus; nomen, Septimius.*[5]

Other naming systems still surviving today were also used by early Romans. Today Swahili parents might call a child *Nuru* (light) if it were born at dawn; from the same system came the Roman name *Lucius.* Today the Elfik tribe in Africa might call a child *Okon* if it were born during the hours of darkness and the Hausa would give the name *Daren.* Romans do not seem to have had a similar way of naming a child born at night, perhaps because the words for "night" and "harmful" sounded too much alike. Likewise many peoples name children from events accompanying their birth, e.g., Roman Agrippa (born feet first), though there have been societies in which the child is named before its birth, of course. From birth events we get such well-known Amerindian names as *Morning Cloud* and *Sitting Bull* and *Rain-in-the-Face.* The Roman equivalent might be something like *Manius* (born in morning). Here *Manius* is the *praenomen, Manlius* is the *nomen* that

4. Less optimistic is the Turkish *Ahir* (end). One American named his daughter *Finale* and the system is international sometimes: *Matope* ("this is the last") is a name in use among the Mashona (Southern Rhodesia).

5. The Roman numbering never got as complex as that among some African tribes. In Ghana the Ahkans call the twelfth-born son *Adeben* and the second male born in succession is called *Manu.* Other African languages give us *Moshi* ("first-born" in Swahili). The name *Quintin* or *Quentin* used in Europe and America, derives from the Spanish name for the fifth son, but its origin has been more or less forgotten and it is used for any male, regardless of his brothers.

develops out of it. Or the important event commemorated in a name might occur later in life and a famous nickname be created: the Army gave the *signum* or *vocabulum* of *Caligula* (little boot) to an emperor while he was still a child and that of *manus ad ferrum* (hand on the sword) to Aurelian when he was tribune. But these matters will have to be dealt with after we handle the *nomina.*

All the given names we have so far mentioned are, in a way, not so much personal names as names dictated by outside circumstances; and among the Romans the most significant name was also dictated by circumstance: the circumstance of the *gens* (we might say clan) into which the child was born. This gave him his basic *nomen* (name). This was in essence his family name. To cite Freese again:

> Thus a Roman is called Caius; Julius is his gentile name (of the Julian clan); Caesar is a kind of hereditary nickname. A Greek is Thucydides (the name usually derived from the grandfather), the son of Olorus, of the deme of Halimusia. (p. 158)[6]

The Romans may thus be said to have invented "family names." The Greeks had made do with single names, some of which were first patronymics (*Phocion* = son of Phocus), analogous compounds (*Euripides* = child of Euripus, a hydronym), or names of similar usage (*Philumenus* = the beloved one). Athenaeus distinguished theophoric names, *θεοφόρα* (derived from the names of the gods: *Apollonius, Heraclitus, Diogenes*) and compound names, *ἄθεα* (especially those hoping for good omens: *Aristides* "son of the best," *Pericles* "far-flung fame," *Alexander* "defender of men"). There were sometimes name changes (Aristocles to Plato, because of his broad shoulders or, as some scholars assert, his broad brow). There were nicknames (based like the Roman *Calvus* and *Longus* on physical peculiarities) and names reflecting parentage, place of origin, or *deme*: Δημοσθένης Δημοσθένους (Demosthenes son of Demosthenes), Ἡρόδοτος Ἁλικαρνασσεύς (Herodotus from Halicarnassus), Δημοσθένης Παιανεύς (Demosthenes of the Paean *deme*). But there were no Greek family names. A given name was the fundamental one.

To a Roman, his *nomen* (Borghesi's *nomen gentilicium*) was his fundamental name, though Juvenal's *Satires* (V, 12, 7) make it clear

6. The Romans did not adopt the African system of naming a child for the day of the week on which it was born. (The child could always acquire a more distinctive name later.) In the Ochi tribe of Africa, children born on Monday are *Kudju*; Tuesday, *Kwabinu*; Wednesday, *Kwaku*; Thursday, *Awaku*; Friday, *Kwofi* (so Robinson Crusoe's "Friday" was not a silly name for an African); Saturday, *Kwamina*; and Sunday, *Kwashi*. The same obtains in other tribes: Ochi's *Kwashi* is the Ahkan *Kwasi*. Sunday's child among the Hausa is *Danladi*. Moslems call the child born on the holy day (Friday) *Jumah*.

that by about A.D. 100 a trinominal system had long been in use and (as Durant has said) *praenomina, nomina, cognomina* were variously used. The *nomen* was basic: the *praenomen* was placed before it, the *cognomen* was added to it, as the terms make clear, but the *nomen* was the Roman's "name," a name shared by all the members of his *gens* and all the slaves and women related to them. *Praenomina* and *cognomina* were taken up as people named (e.g.) *Julius* proliferated and helped to distinguish individuals, as in a latter time in England it was convenient to distinguish Black Will and William the Smith and William of Malmsbury. Legendary tradition (*Romulus*) and epigraphic material (*Manios med vhevhaked Numasioi,* "Manius made me for Numasios" on the Praenestine *fibula*) prove that the *nomina* were the heart of the naming system.

The Roman certainly held his name in great esteem. One was left part of a lady's estate on the condition that he change his name. He was to share a third of the money with two others. Cicero commented: "It's a nice point if it is the correct thing to do for a noble to alter his name under a woman's will, but we can decide that more intelligently," he added with typical Roman practicality, "when we find out how much a third of a third amounts to."

Nomina: Names and Tribes

The *Romani* (Roman people) were basically derived from three groups or tribes—*tribes* suggests "three"—and these were the *genera maiora* (older families) of the *Ramnes,* the *Tities,* and the *Luceres.* What these people called themselves earlier we do not know, but the Ramnes were so called when they arrived in what was to be Rome from Latium; the Tities were so called when they came from the Sabine hills; and the Luceres is what the immigrants from Alba Longa came to be called. Because, some say, the earliest arrivals were from Latium (including Romulus and Remus, the founders of the city) their language came to be Latin. The mixture was Roman, and where that name came from has been a matter for much discussion.

Within the three major tribes were smaller clans (*gentes*). For instance, within the tribe from Alba Longa were Julians and Servillians, Livy reports. His history of Rome from the foundation of the city (*ab urbe condita*—A.U.C. in the dating) to the death of Drusus (9 B.C.) ran to 142 books[7] of which many have been lost and, of course,

7. This reference is from I, 30.

of which many had to be based upon what would hardly be taken today as sound historical evidence. Nonetheless, there seems no reason not to accept the traditions he recorded. These families were further divided in branches (*stirpes*): thus *Caesar* was a branch of the Julian *gens* of the Luceres tribe. Names underlined these origins and relationships generation after generation. They gave a sense of brotherhood and tradition.

To the original founding tribes (Ramnes, Tities, Luceres) were added, after the semi-legendary Romulus and Remus founded Rome (753 B.C.), 30 plebeian tribes, people without the franchise in the government. These others were all named, undoubtedly, both by themselves and (perhaps differently) by the Romans, but many of those names have been lost. Peoples have various names until one sticks; who cares about the original name(s) of the American Indian tribe we now call the Seminoles? Some of their neighbors, noticing their distant campfires, called them Seminoles and *that* name given by others became the name they even used for themselves. Names for all Roman tribes were dictated by Servius Tullius, sixth King of Rome, a man who fostered organization. For example, in his 44-year reign he gave the city extended boundaries, a new constitution, a broader political voice. To the inhabitants of Rome who were not patricians (a word that underlines the idea of founding *fathers*, that is the *genera maiora*) Servius Tullius gave names derived from the four quarters of Rome in which they had come to reside. What they had been called previously was of no significance. They now took their importance, their identity, and their names, from where they lived in the city of Rome. To the quarters of Rome the king added 26 rural areas, outside the expanding walls of the city, and these suburbanites were also named from their places of residence.

So we see that at least some early Romans had more than one name. To their individual given names was added the name of a quarter or a suburb of Rome. Elsewhere similar systems produced such names as *Apollonius of Tyre, Giraldus Cambrensis, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Siri von Essen*, etc. But whereas place-names at first, in other cultures, usually were tacked onto the names of foreigners and indicated the different places from which they had come, in this Roman system they were more like *Giraldus Cambrensis*—the Gerald who lives in Cambridge rather than the Gerald who has come to us from Cambridge.

Rome's sixth king, then, saw three major families and 30 tribal names connected with the other peoples living in and around

Rome. but soon these tribal names were reduced to 20. What happened was this:

Along came Lars Porsena ("elder son of Porsen") of Clusium, King of the Etruscans, attacking Rome (by then a republic) to restore the king (Lucius) Tarquinius (whom Livy surnamed *Superbus*, "The Proud") who, on the collapse of the kingdom (510 B.C.), had fled to the Vetii and the Tarquinii and enlisted Clusium against the Romans. Lars Porsena (or Porsenna) occupied the Janiculum Hill but was prevented from entering Rome by Horatius Cocles ("One-Eyed"), who defended the Pons Sublicius (with Sp. Lartius and T. Herminius) and "held the bridge." (All this is legend: "The story was invented probably to explain a primitive statue of Vulcan opposite the Pons Sublicius.")[8] Porsena laid seige to Rome and, when famine had reduced the city, one Gaius Mucius slipped into Porsena's camp to kill him but killed Porsena's secretary by mistake. Seized and threatened with torture, Gaius Mucius thrust his right hand into the flames and held it there to show that he was not afraid of pain. The king admired his courage and offered to let him go. Gaius Mucius (thereafter called *Scaevola*, "Left-Hand") told Porsena that "since 300 noble youths have sworn to take your life, and I was the first on whom the lot fell," negotiating for peace would be the best move. Porsena did that, according to this self-serving Roman legend.

This story of Lars Porsena and Horatius at the bridge and the brave Scaevola does more for us than introduce a few more ancient names, for it is historically true that as a result of Porsena's deprivations it was necessary to reduce the 30 plebeian tribes to 20. The four urban tribes remained, and history records their names as *Suburana, Esquilina, Collina,* and *Pallatina*, the first being related to a valley and the other three to hills of Rome. Eventually Rome was said to be "built on seven hills." The 26 suburban districts became 16, as follows: Aemilia, Camilia, Cornelia, Fabia, Galeria, Horatia, Lemonia, Menemia,

8. John Warrington, *Everyman's Classical Dictionary* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Second Revised Edn. 1969), p. 153f. It is interesting to see how legend expects characters to have significant names and invents them, whether in Aztec or African, Biblical or Vedantic, saga or epic literature. Sometimes the names are so apt that the poetic rather than the historic hand is more or less obvious. What are we to make of Biblical names that so effectively make their literary points, names like *Peter* (rock)? We assume, if these characters were historical persons, that in the case of Adam (whose name presumably we did not know) men invented one that fitted the story of his creation out of clay. Isaac, born when his mother was well-advanced in years, was a kind of joke on her: God made her "laugh," so she called the child *Isaac*. Similarly, in the literary rather than historical account in *Ruth*, Naomi says "call me Mara" (bitter). Simon was "called Peter" and the naming system may well have been comparable to that which created Gaius Mucius Scaevola: Christ made Simon His "rock" foundation for His church and Simon acquired an added name.

Papiria, Pollia, Popillia, Pupinia, Romilia, Sergia, Veturia, and Voltinia.

Nomina Derived from Tribal Names

Tribal names survive in the *nomina* of historical personages such as these:

M. Aemilius Lepidus is remembered as a *triumvir* ("one of three men" who ruled) with Marcus Antonius and Octavian;

L. Furius Camillus [*Camilla* is the one tribal name not surviving in *nomen-*, but rather in *cognomen*-form] was hailed as "a second Romulus" and was five times dictator, first in 396 B.C. and last in 367 B.C., when he was 80;

P. Cornelius Africanus Maior (236- c. 184 B.C.) was, as we shall see, one of the many famous men of the Cornelia *gens*;

Q. Fabius Maximus Cunctator (five times consul, 233-209 B.C.) was nicknamed *Cunctator* from his caution in war;

Galeria was the name of the wife of the Emperor Vitellius (who ruled for a few months in A.D. 69) and a Galerius ruled as the Emperor Maximianus (Marcus Aurelius Galerius Maximianus was a Pannonian soldier who rose to be colleague of Diocletian and ruled A.D. 286-305, being compelled to abdicated when Diocletian himself chose to do so);

Q. Horatius Flaccus was the poet Horace and Horatius Cocles we have already mentioned (see Lord Macaulay's "Horatius at the Bridge" in his *Lays of Ancient Rome*);

Lemonia family seems to have contributed no heroes to history but there used to be a little town of Lemontium (or Lemonium) on the Via Latina outside Rome's Porta Capenia;

Menemius Agrippa (Fifth Century B.C.) is the "humorous politician" in Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* (of which more later);

G. Papirius Carbo as consul (120 B.C.) successfully defended Opimius (who had murdered Gaius Gracchus); his son (same name) was a sponsor of the *Lex Plautia Papiria* (the other sponsor was M. Plautius Sylvanus) which extended the Roman franchise to every Italian ally domiciled in Italy (*c.*89 B.C.); and his nephew (Gnaeus Papirius Carbo) was one of the leaders of the Marian (popular) party, captured by Pompey at Cossyra and killed;

Gaius Asinius Pollio (*d.* A.D. 4, aged 80) was the dedicatee of the Fourth Eclogue of Virgil; himself a poet, patron of poets, founder of the first public library in Rome, Pollio wrote and spoke much, but his work is all lost; the Pollio who survives as a writer, one of the six

Scriptores Historiae Augustae, was the historian Trebellius Pollio (*fl.c.* A.D. 300);

M. Popilius Laenas (censor 159 B.C.) or P. Popilius (consul 132 B.C.), no one knows which, built the Via Popilia, running 321 miles from Capua to Rhegium; P. Popilius, certainly, it was who remade another Via Popilia (first built 181 B.C.) running 178 miles from Ariminum to Aquilea;[9]

Pupinius was a minor Roman dramatist of the Augustan Age referred to by Horace (*Epistles*, I, 1, 67);

Marcellus Romilius was a centurion (leader of one hundred) who gets a mention in Tacitus' *Historia* (written in a curt style from which we derive *taciturn*); this Romilius lived in the reign of the Emperor (Servius Sulpicius) Galba, who lasted on the imperial throne, despite the support of the Praetorian Guard only from June of A.D. 68 to January of 69 (*Capax imperii nisi imperasset*, wrote Tacitus: "worthy of empire if he had never been emperor," since he did well as governor of Hispania Tarraconensis but was mean and austere as emperor);

L. Sergius Catilina is almost too well-known (as Catiline, in English) to need explanation[10] and was born (*c.* 109 B.C.) into a then-impoverished branch of the famous Sergii family which produced many famous men; other branches of the family were the Fidenantes, Sili, Nattae, Ocellae, Planci;

The Veturia tribe also branched (into the Senii and the Junii) and was originally the Vetusia, so Coriolanus' mother was actually (according to Livy, 36) Vetusia (actually Veturia), though Shakespeare's sources gave her the name Volumnia, which the dramatist made famous with one of the most powerful women's roles in all of his plays;

The Voltinia tribe came from Volsinium, a town in Etruria which Pliny says was destroyed by fire from heaven.[11]

Further Tribal Names

Some time after, date uncertain, the Claudian *gens* was added to the 16 tribal names, though it was derived from a family rather than a place-

9. For a literary reference there is Gaius Popilius Laenas, famous for his confrontation with Antiochus IV, King of Syria (Livy 45, 12; Valerius Maximus 6, 4; Paterculus I, 10). The Seleucid dynasty of Antiochus kings is of interest onomastically for such soubriquets as *Soter, Theos, The Great, Eusebes, Eupator,* etc. This one called himself *Epiphanes* ("Glorious") only to have this parodied by his people as *Epimanes* ("Madman").

10. See Ben Jonson's play and E. H. Hardy's *The Catilinarian Conspiracy* (1924). Classical sources include Sallust's *Bellum Catilinarium* and Cicero.

11. The Volsinians numbered the years by driving nails into the temple of Nortia (a Tuscan goddess of Fortune). *Cf.* Livy 5, 31; Juvenal 15, verse 191; Tacitus, *Annals* 4.

name. The Claudians got their name from their descent from Clausus, King of the Sabines (*Sabini*). The Sabines were not conquered by Rome until 290 B.C., when Manius Curius Dentatus (a Roman general but probably a Sabine by birth) subdued them during his first consulship. The Claudians produced 28 consuls, five dictators, seven censors, and many triumphant politicians too numerous to detail. They were a truly great family.

Then more tribal names were added in the Fourth Century before Christ. In 387 B.C. were added the *Stellatina, Tromentina, Sabatina,* and *Arniensis*. Livy (22, 13) writes of the Stellatina (suggesting "star") as coming from the northern edge of the Campania. The other names are probably from toponyms. In 358 B.C. two tribal names of Volscian families appeared: *Pomptina* and *Publilia*. The first of these was a place-name: the Pomptina (or Pontina) *lacus* was a lake travelers on the Appian Road had to cross. A Publilia was the teenaged second wife of Cicero. (He married her in 46 B.C., when he was 60, and was divorced the next year.) The *Publilii Syri Sententiae* (ed. R.A. Bickford-Smith, 1895) are said to contain many of the lines of the slave who in about 45 B.C. was brought to Rome and came to be called Publilius Syrus, the mimeographer.[12] There was also Publilius Philo (308 B.C.), a dictator who gave his name to various *Publiliae leges*, one of which laws permitted the *plebes* to elect one of the censors (Livy 8, 12). In 332 B.C. there were added the tribal names of *Maecia* and *Scaptia*. History records Spurius Maecius Tarpa (whom Pompey engaged to select the plays acted at his Games in 55 B.C.) and Scaptia (an ancient town in Latium) from which, one can assume, came the ancestors of Publius Scaptius (denounced in the letters of Cicero as a usurer).[13] He was through Cicero's power deprived of his position as prefect of Alamis in Cyprus. In 318 B.C. the river Ufens near Terracina (or Tarracina, near which the man who was to reign as Galba was born in 5 B.C.) and the Falernian region (famous for its wine, *Falnernus Ager*) appeared in the names *Ufentina* and *Falerina*. The latter is not to

12. Translations in J. W. and A. M. Duff, *Minor Latin Poets* (Loeb Library, 1934).

13. *Atticus* 5, 21; 6, 1-3; 15, 13. Titus Pomponius (109-32 B.C.) was a patron of art and literature. Adopted by his maternal uncle (who left him ten million sesterces—said to be worth eight British pence as of 1951 each), he became Q. Caecilius Pomponianus. *Atticus* was a nickname: he had spent about a decade in Athens after *c.* 88 B.C. His daughter (Pomponia) married M. Vipsanius Agrippa. Agrippa's second wife was Marcella (the Emperor Augustus' niece) and his third Julia (the emperor's daughter): he was a soldier who had started as lowly but was always bettering himself. "Atticus" took on new meaning after its use in Pope's *Dunciad, q.v.* Cicero corresponded with his rich friend Atticus from 68 to 43 B.C. See the edition of the letters by R. Y. Tyrrell and L. C. Purser (1904-1918).

be confused with the *Falerii*, inhabitants of one of the 12 Etruscan cities, also known as the *Falisci* and (since they were considered the same people as the *Aequi*, who lived in the upper valleys of the Anio, Tolenus, and Himella) the *Aequi Falisci*.

In the following (Third) century B.C., more tribal names were added. In 299 a tributary of the Tiber yielded the name *Aniensis*, and *Terentina* was first used—the latter probably reflected in the name of the dramatist we call Terence. His name was Publius Terentius Afer, which indicates that he was a Publipuer (Publius' slave boy) from Africa and given this name when he was adopted, after manumission (being set free with a wave of the hand, "sent by the hand"), by a *pater* of the Terentian family. (Whether *Afer* means he is to be included in the newly-stressed lists of black writers—among whom we can count Pushkin and Dumas, etc.—we cannot say, for perhaps he came from North Africa and ought to be counted among the many Moorish contributors to European culture.) Finally, in 241 B.C., came the last of these varied and fascinating tribal names: *Quirina* and *Velina*. Quirinus was the original name of the war god Mars as worshipped on the Quirinal Hill in Rome by the Latins and the Sabines, according to Varro's *Lingua Latina* (v. 51).[14] Velina was that part of the city which Romulus and Remus founded, adjoining the same Palatine Hill so significant in its different ways to both of the twins: it is mentioned by Cicero in *ad Atticum* (4, epistle 15) and in Horace's first *Epistles* (6, v. 52).

Patricians, The First Families of Rome

We have already noted the *nomina* of the five leading families of classical Rome (*Claudia, Cornelia, Aemilia, Fabia,* and *Valeria*). Later we shall have occasion to mention in various contexts such famous bearers of these distinguished names as Appius Claudius Caecus ("The Blind"). The reader will undoubtedly think of how some

14. When the founder Romulus was deified he was worshipped under the name Quirinus and as children, in a sense, of Romulus all the Romans were known as *quirites*. Quirinus was a Sabine deity antedating the founding of Rome. He too was a war god. The legendary Romulus was the son of Mars and Rhea Sylvia (also known as Ilia), the latter drowned in the Tiber. Her father King Numitor of Alba Longa having been deposed, she was forced by his brother and successor Amulius to become a vestal virgin. She bore twin sons, Romulus and Remus. Remus was killed by his twin Romulus for laughing at the walls Romulus built on the Palatine Hill. Everyone knows the story of Romulus and Remus, saved from Amulius' wrath and suckled by a she-wolf, because of the famous statue. Reaching manhood (with the help of a herdsman, Faustulus, and Lupa, his wife) Romulus and Remus restored their grandfather Numitor to his throne.

of these names have come into English in connection with Fabian socialism, cornelian gems (incorrectly carnelian, confused with *caro, carnis* = flesh, because of the color) and valerian plants (and the antispasmodic drug derived from these herbaceous *Valeriana*), etc. There was a Roman Emperor Valerian (Publius Licinius Valerianus) and a Roman author Valerius Maximus who died around A.D. 30, approximately the date of his very popular miscellany of anecdotes, *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium libri IX*—nine books on the deeds and sayings of memorable persons.

These were the *nomina* of what might be called the "First Families" of Rome but also notable among the patricians were those who bore the following names: from the *Julia*, Gaius Julius Caesar; from the *Junia*, Marcus Junius Brutus (and "Junius" was a famous pseudonym in English literature, successfully hiding the identity of a remarkable political letter-writer); from the *Porcia*, Marcus Porcius (or Portius, *-cion* and *-tion* sounding alike in English) Cato; from the *Sempronia*, the famous social-reforming brothers, the *Gracchi*, Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus and Gaius Sempronius Gracchus; from the *Cassia*, Gaius Cassius Longinus, the Cassius of *Julius Caesar*; from the *Licinia*, Marcus Licinius Crassus ("The Fat"), the richest man in Rome and one whose name has become synonymous with wealth (and greed); from the *Tullia*, Marcus Tullius Cicero ("Chickpea," from warts on the face);[15] from the *Horatia*, Horace the poet; from the *Domitia*, Domitius Ahenobarbus ("Brazen Beard"), whose name did not fit dactylic metre and so is addressed by Lucan as *tu Domiti*, nor iambic pentameter without alteration: Shakespeare's *Enobarbus;* from the *Manlia*, Manlius Torquatus ("One who Wears a Torque," a necklace taken from some Teutonic enemy in battle—the famous "Dying Gaul" wears a twisted metal necklace as did many of the Celts, etc.).

We may interrupt this list, now that we have reached *Manlia*, to tell a story that suggests some of the Roman interest in these family names and in the power of inherited names in general. Marcus Manlius—

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15 We must not assume that these nicknames described physical traits of the persons we know about for they became hereditary, and Cicero need not have been disfigured with warts any more than a person called *Read* or *Reed* today need have red hair nor one called *White* be pale or blond. Similarly, those with surnames derived from place-names (*Ashley* or *Winthrop*) no longer live in those places and many an *Atwater* resides far from any river or pond. There is no way of determining when nicknames, apt in the first place, came to be borne by descendants of the original, even when the nicknames did not fit any longer. Thus, many a Mr. *Black* is fair and many a Mr. *Courtney* has a long nose but the lexical meaning of the names ("just names") no longer matters and may be—not in these particular instances but in others that could be cited—totally obscure.

perhaps you once read of his defending the Capitoline Hill against the Gauls in 390 B.C. and being roused in the night to save the city by the cackling of the sacred geese—was a hero who later was accused of trying to make himself a king. (He was leading the plebeians against the very patricians who were so proud of their ancient and famous families.) He was condemned to death and thrown off the Tarpeian rock, but (of greater interest to onomasticians) not only was his house on the Capitoline Hill razed but there was an attempt to deprive his *house* (family) of something: the *Manila* family never again was to use the *praenomen* Marcus. The *Manlia* name was not banned (as Ruthven and Macgregor and some others throughout British history have been made illegal) but there would never again be a Marcus Manlius!

To return to our list. From the *Calpurnia* came all the renowned Piso men, inveterate conspirators against despotism (it was also the name of Caesar's last wife, the daughter of L. Calpurnius Piso); from the *Flavia* came three emperors (Vespasian and his sons Titus and Domitian); from the *Livia,* two men named Marcus Livius Drusus, the elder (invested with the title of *patronus senatus*) the first Roman commander to reach the Danube and the younger (his son, who had far more trouble with the Senate and got assassinated, triggering the Social War). From the *Caecilia* were derived the Quintus Caecilius we alluded to as adopting Atticus and the slave who became a noted Roman comic poet (40 plays—all but a few hundred lines are lost) and was known as a freeman as Statius Caecilius. From the *Caecilia* also came all the Metelli, one of whom was Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius (called *Pius* because he was so devoted to his father Quintus Caecilius Metellus Numidicus, who though he enjoyed a triumph in 107 B.C.—whence the *Numidicus*—had to go into exile when he would not swear an oath demanded by the Senate, during which exile the son was faithful to his father). From the *Roscia*, came that Sextus Roscius whom Cicero defended in his first criminal case and the greatest of all Roman actors (his name now synonymous with "great actor," whence British names like "The Young Roscius," etc.), Quintus Roscius Gallus. From the *Marcia*, derived from *Mars*, perhaps came the legendary seer Marcius (whose oracular verses were deposited with the Sibylline books in the Capitol, 213 B.C.) and certainly Caius Martius, Shakespeare's Coriolanus. From the *Antonia* came Marcus Antonius and the Antonine emperors (Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius "The Golden," Antoninus, "The Philosopher"), the *Antoninus* signifying that they were adopted out of the *Antonia* family: Antoninus Pius was adopted by Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius was adopted in turn by him.

Non-Patrician *Nomina*

These were all eventually equivalent to patrician *nomina.* To them can be added three others that were equestrian or upper middle-class until late: the *Octavia* ("eight," as in the family of the Emperor Augustus), *Pompeia* (as in the case of Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, in English "Pompey the Great," son of Gnaeus Pompeius Strabo and father of a son of his own name and one called Sextus Pompeius Magnus), and *Vipsania* (a name that often crops up in connection with *Agrippa*). These names have as their origins respectively the numbering system for sons, for *Octavius*, and perhaps (for *Pompeius* if one does not accept the "five" explanation) the Greek πομπή, Latin *pompa* ("a solemn procession"), and a circumstance of birth. Not one of the three seems to derive from a place-name.

The *proles* ("progeny," common people—George Orwell was fond of "proles," a word he took from Marxist *proletariat*) contributes at least one famous *nomen*: the *Maria* produced Gaius Marius. This hero started about as low as one could, for he was reputed to be the illegitimate son of a slave and a peasant girl. He rose by intelligence and force of arms to be seven times consul (a record) and became the uncle (by marriage) of Julius Caesar. He was well aware of the power of his famous name. In a prison near Minturnae, his cell door burst open and there was a fierce Cimbrian soldier sent to kill him. "Man," said our hero, "darest thou murder Gaius Marius?" The soldier fled in dismay and the Minturnae people took compassion on Gaius Marius and put him on a ship to Africa. When the Roman governor of Carthage sent a soldier to expel him, Gaius Marius silenced him with: "Tell the praetor [really he must have been a *propraetor*, a governor of a province after finishing his year as *praetor*, for though *praetors* governed provinces sometimes after 241 B.C., by this period they did not] that you have seen Gaius Marius a fugitive, sitting on the ruins of Carthage." The conqueror of the Cimbri and the Teutones was allowed to remain. Later he got back to Rome and with Cinna seized power, but he died (86 B.C.) after only 18 days of his seventh and last consulship.

Women's *Nomina*

So far we have mentioned (as Roman history does) only a few women's names but the attentive reader will have noted that they all derive from *nomina*, and women in Rome derived their names and identities from their fathers as, in other cultures, they may get them

from their fathers[16] or their husbands (though Mrs. Jones keeps her forename and sometimes may use her "maiden name" as well as her "married name"). Every daughter of a male member of the Julian clan was called Julia. Every one. In fact, at first women married only within *gentes*. There was no way to distinguish by name between generations as aunts and nieces, great aunts, etc.; all would be called Julia. Among sisters there was the option of a qualifying addition; thus *Julia Maior* is the elder and *Julia Minor* the younger, while *Julia Tertia* (or simply *Tertia,* or *Tertulia*, its diminutive) serves for the third daughter. *Quartilla* is available for the fourth, *Quintilla* for the fifth, *Sextia* for the sixth, *Septima* for the seventh, *Octavia* for the eighth (which will lead to complications if the family name is *Octavia*), *Nonia* (or *Novia*) for the ninth, and *Decima* for the tenth. For a girl to be named (e.g.) *Julia Quintilla*, there must be four living sisters when she is born. If one or more Julias had already died (and infant mortality was, of course, very high) the fifth girl might well be *Julia Tertia* or even plain *Julia*, and there would be no way to distinguish her from sisters of the same name who had died. Plain *Julia* became *Julia Maior* only after a second daughter had been born and designated *Julia Minor*—and *Julia Maior* did not become (as would have been grammatically more correct) *Julia Maxima* when a *Julia Tertia* arrived on the scene. There might be a number of *Juliae Maiores* from different generations in a single large household, and meeting a Julia one might be struck not so much by Herrick's "liquefaction of her clothes" as by the confusion of her name.

Upon marriage women kept their name (derived from their father) and did not gain one from their husbands. Very rarely, if the girl's mother had a very famous family, a daughter might bear her mother's name (derived from the grandfather's *nomen*) as well as that derived from the father's *nomen*: example, *Valeria Aulia*. The *Caecilia* (mentioned above) had a unique or almost unique custom within the family: all feminine members were given the name *Caecilia Metella* after the most famous *cognomen* (see below) of the family.[17]

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16 In a novel by Sigrid Undset (1882–1949) an old Scandinavian system is illustrated. The novel, set in Norway in the Fourteenth Century, involves the eponymous heroine, Kristin Lavransdatter ("Lavrans daughter"), one of the three daughters of Lavrans Bjögulfsön ("Björgulf's son") and Ragnfrid Ivarsdatter ("Ivar's daughter"). *Kristin Lavransdatter* is a trilogy (*The Bridal Wreath*, *The Mistress of Husaby*, and *The Cross*) for which Undset won the Nobel Prize for Literature.

17 *Metellus* suggests a "small pyramid," perhaps deriving from some Egyptian campaign but more likely related to the conical column found at the end of a Roman *circus*, where it marked a turning point, suggesting therefore a "goal."

Fictive Names

Though the *corpus* of Roman literature is rich and extensive today, it can only hint at some of the grandeur that was Rome, for over and over we come across the names of respected literary men whose productions, in whole or in large part, have perished and are known perhaps only by titles. *Amateurs*, doing it for the "love" of it, as well as the professionals, had what the Romans used to call "the itch to write." Let Horace speak:

> *Populus calet uno*
> *scribendi studio; pueri patresque severi*
> *fronde comas vincti cenant et carmina dictant.*[18]

Now, much of this stuff was love poetry, *Amores*, and women's names were featured in it, but proper Roman matrons could no more appear in such verses than an Elizabethan lady could show up at a play in Shakespeare's Globe, so they did not appear *in propria persona* but as *dramatis personae*, in masks: literary names were invented by the poets for their ladies fair. As the Greek poets used *Chloë* ("blade of grass"), *Amaryllis* (a flower), and *Phyllis* ("leaf")—literary names that were worn threadbare in the service of later poets and are familiar to all readers of English verse—so the Romans copied the old or new-minted names, just as English poets were to think up *Stella*, and *Vanessa*, and even *Saccharrissa*. Thus Catullus addressed Clodia (not Claudia) as *Lesbia*, a reference to Sappho (the most famous woman poet of all time, born *c.* 612 and probably at Mytilene, founder of the Lesbian school). In Propertius, Hostilia becomes *Cynthia* (related to the moon, which is better for heterosexual love poetry than lesbians). In Ovid, *Corinna* is borrowed from a Greek poetess. In Horace, Gratitia is called *Canidia* ("frosty"). Aulus Albius Tibullus (*c.* 54-18 B.C., an Augustan poet of the circle of Marcus Valerius Mesalla) gave us *Delia* and *Plania*. Cornelius Gallus (*d.* A.D. 26), a military man who also wrote poetry, addressed the actress Cytheris as *Lycoris*, a name which then hold no connotations of candy (or black). There are a great many

18 "The whole nation burns with the same urge to write; boys as well as serious-minded patricians wind leaves into their hair and dictate verses at dinner." The titles of Roman literary works, by the way, a study in themselves, are not always those which the authors put upon them and it seems that in many cases both creative writing and the sometimes no less fictional writing that passes in Roman literature at times for *historia* or fact was given no title (in the modern sense) by the writer. It was just "a book," and that term's equivalent varied from a sort of chapter to a complete volume. Many multi-book histories are today only (to use a phrase from Peter's anthology of 1883) *Historicorum Romanorum Fragmenta.*

other female literary names, many of which were repeated in the course of other European literatures, but these will be enough to suggest the range in style and in point of time.[19]

Many details must be omitted, but one is worth including: there are two Roman poetesses named Sulpicia, both from the Sulpicia *gens* which produced the politician Publius Sulpicius Rufus ("The Red," as in *William Rufus*) and Servius Sulpicius Rufus, whom Cicero knew as a contemporary and called the greatest orator of his time. The Sulpicia of the Augustan era wrote half a dozen fine love poems to *Cerinthus*: his real name was Cornutus, and that had unfortunate resonances of "cuckold," so she changed it.[20] The later Sulpicia wrote in the reign of Domitian (Domitianus, A.D. 81-96) to her husband, Calonus, but none of this wifely devotion has survived. (Too bad, for married love is a trifle scanted in Roman love poetry.)

Concubines must have been called something but there was no Roman system for naming them. Probably they bore the foreign names they brought to Rome. It would have lent them an exotic quality, the sort of thing sought in the modern names of strippers such as *Ecstasy L'Amour* ("I'm so glad she didn't change her name," cries her mother in the old *New Faces* skit), and it is not unlikely that many concubines had names related to various love goddesses in various obscure heathen religions. *Hebe* would have been a good name choice for a concubine: she was cupbearer to the Greek gods before Ganymedes caught Zeus' eye. (Ganymedes' father, Tros, King of Troy, got a nice present of a stud of immortal horses from Zeus in exchange for the pretty boy. Legend does not record how appropriate or how pleasing he thought the exchange.) Later, in a miscellany of smaller points, we shall mention some more names of concubines, male and female.

The *Nomina* of Slaves

Slaves formed a large part of Roman society or rather underpinned it. Horace remarks that a man ought not to appear in public with fewer than

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[19] The late Donald C. Swanson in *The Names in Roman Verse* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1967) and in *A Characterization of the Roman Poetic Onomasticon* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1970) is the expert to consult. Someone should make a complete *census* of Roman literary names (and Greek too, for that matter) in British and American literature. Their use seems to be on the wane since our own "Augustan Age" in the Eighteenth Century but still is not entirely unheard of. Study remains to be done *outside* Roman verse of such names as *Neoterici* (late Latin), the group Cicero called *poetae novi*, and similar terms.

[20] Her work is usually preserved with poems of Tibullus (IV, 7–12).

five retainers generally, though he adds that those with 200 are overdoing it. Slaves took their official names from their master's *praenomina*: for example, *Marcipuer* (Marcus' boy) and *Marcipuella* (Marcus' girl) from *Marcus*. *Marcipolla* would have been a logical female variant, but records contain only male slave names (*Marcipuer* with the variant *Marcipor,* etc.). With many men called Marcus, such slave names must have led to confusion, especially when men owned more than one slave. It may be that a name like *Marcipuer* was more of an official description than a real name and that the slave was, in the household, called something else—perhaps the barbarian name he or she was given at birth.

The retention of a name that indicated the foreign place of origin (or perhaps even the creation of a misleading foreign name to hint at a certain origin, which would not have been beyond the moral capabilities of a slave-trader) was significant, as this quotation from an essay on "The Old World's Peculiar Institution"—Americans will perhaps recall that *the peculiar institution* is what slavery was called in the Old South and elsewhere, at least until what the Southerners call *The War Between the States* and the Northerners call *The Civil War*—in *The Light of the Past* (1963, p. 57) will show:

> To a buyer this question of nationality was important. It was generally believed that some nationalities made better slaves than others, temperamentally and vocationally.

For example, Syrian slaves were notoriously lightfingered and Hadas (*Imperial Rome*, p. 27) reports *Syrian* was synonymous with *scoundrel.* But to return to Professor Finley:

> Prices varied accordingly, and Roman law (and probably Greek law, too) required the seller to state his chattel's origin specifically and accurately.

So slave names would, unlike most Roman names, necessarily be redolent of exotic places. However, foreigners acquiring Roman citizenship through enlistment in the army were compelled to give up exotic or even simply un-Roman *praenomina* officially, thus losing a personal name. No Roman *praenomen* could be taken in those cases.

Oddly, Roman names were later used in British culture (in Britain and in her colonies, America included) for slaves. In the churchyard of St. Mary's, Henbury, near Bristol (in the newish county of Avon) we have seen this:

> Here lieth the Body of SCIPIO AFRICANUS Negro Servant to ye Right Honourable Charles William Earl of Suffolk and Bradon who died ye 21st

December 1790 Aged 18 Years

I who was Born a PAGAN and a SLAVE
Now Sweetlty Sleep a CHRISTIAN in my Grave. . . .

Clearly *Africanus* seemed just right for an African, and *Scipio* sprang directly to mind in those classically-educated times. Despite what most Americans imagine, however, *Scipio* and such are rare among slave names in the pre-Civil War South. Most slaves had simple names, not *Remus* or *Jemima* but John and Mary, and upon Emancipation took common "white" names such as *Williams, Smith, Jones,* and (of course) *Brown,* even *White.* A *Caesar* or a *Pompey* was rarer in America than fiction suggests.

When slaves were manumitted their names were changed to reflect their new status. They dropped the slave name derived from their master's *praenomen* (a name which suggested they were the personal property of the individual, not the property of the family; if the latter had been the case, a name derived from the *nomen* would have been appropriate) and took both *praenomen* and *nomen* of their former master (which suggests that a freed slave was in some sense regarded as being made a full member of the family whose *nomen* he was now to share). By taking the former master's *nomen*, however, ex-slaves did not really become members of the family any more than did those American blacks who shared the surname of the family they had served (or borrowed one from a white family, such as *Washington* and *Jefferson*). Borrowed white names was such a strong tradition for American blacks that the name *Jefferson* can now function in a television sit-com to "telegraph" the idea "black family." Borrowed Roman names became the custom for ex-slaves in Rome. The thought was that on attaining Roman status a person ought to take on a Roman name. A similar feeling caused many who did not by law have to do so to "Americanize" their names when arriving in the United States as immigrants. Patriotism and pragmatism combined as an unpronounceable (in the US) Polish name became simply *Kaye* or *Elsky* or someone with a "foreign" name became a *Schneider* or a *Taylor*. In Rome there must have been a sense that the slave attaining freedom should mark the occasion with a new name and, in addition, that the new name seem regular and Roman, easy to say and (an interesting point) easy to recognize. For the ex-slave would bear a name that would effectively mark him as a former foreigner, in a sense an adopted child of Rome.

This Romanizing was accomplished by demanding that the former slave add to his master's *praenomen* and *nomen* a Latinized version of his origi-

nal name (which might have been Greek or whatever). This third name or *cognomen* summed it up: he was now a Latinized foreigner, or Roman ex-foreigner. The Latin playwright we mentioned *supra* as Publius Terentius Afer must have come to Rome as "the African boy," *Afer*, his given name already forgotten. His ex-master's name, however, is preserved for us in the *praenomen* and *nomen*, as those of Cicero are noted in the name of his freed slave Marcus Tullius Tiro. *Tiro* indicates he came from Tyre. It must have served as all the name he had, like Jack Benny's *Rochester*. Tiro was no ordinary slave—he invented shorthand—but he never really had a given name of his own, so far as we know. If the given name of a slave was known (or in use), it would be found in his new name: the Emperor Claudius had a slave (*d.* A.D. 61) called Pallas whose Greek name appears in *Tiberius Claudius Pallas*. Another of Claudius' slaves became Tiberius Claudius Narcissus.

Many learned slaves were Greek. *Narcissus* seems to have been thought apt because it suggested "handsome" (rather than "inverted") or perhaps the lads were named Narcissus by the slave traders, as a sort of "packaging" or advertising device. Some boys called Narcissus were obviously effeminate (one thinks of the Narcissus who was a favorite of the Emperor Nero) but not necessarily: a slave named Narcissus was a famous athlete but earned his place in history books because when poison was slow to work he strangled Lucius Aelius Aurelius Commodus (who reigned as emperor A.D. 180–192). *Eros* (Hesiod says he was the son of Chaos) or even *Anteros* (Eros' opposite) were Greek names at hand for use by minions.

There must have been other slave names and nicknames in the *plebeia sermo* or actual speech of the commonality, but the Latin we read is more of a formal, written language than a conversational one. Only in a few instances, as in the fragments that remain from a novelist of the reign of Nero (Petronius Arbiter, that *elegantiae arbiter* and accomplished roué), do we have what may closely approach or adequately record spoken Latin. We must lack a great many names of the less than illustrious, a concept that may be hard to understand in our age when anyone can get "into the book" if only by subscribing to telephone service and when Americans of all classes are the subject of numerous official records. (A few generations back almost half of American births went unrecorded in many areas.)

We lack a great many Roman names, especially those of the lower classes. This is especially unfortunate because the names of freedmen, if recorded, would have, in this system, given us useful information

about significant foreign influences on Roman culture at the height of the *imperium* when all roads led to Rome. We should like to know the origins of slaves, gladiators, pedagogues, and so on.[21]

Nomina Applied to Public Works

One of the major applications of *nomina* was to the naming of various public works of Rome: aqueducts, roads, bridges, gates, public buildings and monuments.

The Greek aqueducts such as that which drained Lake Copais (Boeotia) or that which Eupalinus built at Samos for Polycrates were copied

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21 We find that in time the legal *servus* replaces the homely *puer* and it carried less of the stigma of "boy," though slaves were (as were wives, indeed) considered to be more or less adopted minor persons to whom the lord and master was a kind of father. Becoming a freedman, one person was called Aulus Caecilius Olipor, that is "Aulus, formerly the boy of Aulus Caecilius." A slave who was transferred brought along the name of his former master if it seemed useful (to the new owner). Thus we find such a name as *Anna Liviae Maecentiana* = "Anna, slave of Livia, formerly owned by Maecenas." Apparently, at least in some cases, the freed slave was not free to choose his new name. Cicero's slave Dionysius (obviously Greek), the tutor of Cicero's son, was freed not as Marcus Tullius Dionysius (with the *praenomen* and *nomen* of Cicero) as might have been expected but as Marcus Pomponius Dionysius—Cicero wanted to give the freed slave the name of one of his best friends, a man we elsewhere encounter as *Atticus*. A slave freed by a woman owner took the *praenomen* and *nomen* of the woman's father: *e.g.*, Marcus Livius [Augustae Libertus] Ismarus. By the end of the Republic all these conventions were growing lax and many anomalies are found, variations quite unnecessary to detail in our search for basic rules rather than unique exceptions. In that time even brothers did not always have names which, to the modern man at least, appear to connect them. Look at the case of the sons of T. Flavius Sabinus (who Suetonius tells us was first a farmer of taxes in Asia and later a money-lender in Helvetia, now Switzerland—a very early "Gnome of Zurich"). Flavius Sabinus married a woman whose name resembled that of Lucan's wife (Argentaria Polla): she was Vespasia Polla. The elder son took his father's *cognomen* and was known as Flavius Sabinus (as was also *his* eldest son). The younger son was given his mother's gentile name with the suffix *-ianus* for his *cognomen*: you know him as Flavius Vespasianus, the Emperor Vespasian. His name, to the unwary, might suggest adoption out of the family. The point here is simply that if such exceptional name manipulation occurs in famous families, one can imagine the variations possible with such greatly lesser mortals such as slaves. They might, in a late period, even have Christian names such as *Paulus* and *Petrus* (totally unrelated to Aegineta Paulus the Greek physician from the Aegean or Paulus Silentiarius, so-called because he was one of the ushers, *silentiarii,* in the palace of the Emperor Justinian, or to the cities built on rocks called Petra or the soldier Marcus Petreius), *Laurentius* (unrelated to Laurentum or Lydus Laurentius), *Cyprianus* (not from Cyprus—also called by poetic names such as Acamantis, Amathusia, Cerastis, Macaria, Paphos, Sphecia, and to the Syrians known as Kittim), *Paschasius* (from Easter), or theophoric names (as earlier slaves had names of some Greek divinities) like *Adeodatus, Deogratias, Deusdat, Deusdedit, Deusdona, Deushabet, Habetdeus, Vincedeus,* even *Quidvultdeus.* I. Kajanto's *Onomastic Studies in Early Christian Inscriptions of Rome and Carthage* (Helsinki, 1963) presents in full the peculiarities of Christian Latin nomenclature. *Cf.* D. Georgacas's review, *Names* 17:1 (March 1969), 91-95. But Christian names in general are too late for our present study.

and improved upon by Roman engineers, some of whose massive water works are still standing in Rome (the Marcia and the Virgo) and elsewhere. Of the many aqueducts that supplied Rome, some derived their official names from the *nomina* of their builders or (less justly) from someone who just happened to be prominent when the things were dedicated.[22] In some cases, of course, the ruling magistrates who lent their names may have had a good deal to say in the project. One aqueduct named for a magistrate of the Republican period was the Aqua Marcia we have mentioned: it was named for Quintus Marcius Rex[23] who was *praetor* when it was built 144 B.C. One named in the Imperial period in honor of an imperial *nomen* was the Aqua Julia. It was built by Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa and yet named for the *nomen* acquired by Gnaeus Octavius when he was adopted by Julius Caesar: then he became Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus. We remember him as the Emperor Augustus (though it was only in the Provinces that he was ever styled *imperator* and he called himself *princeps senatus,* "President of the Senate," in an attempt to avoid angering republican sentiment, rife in Rome). But whatever title he choose, it was the *nomen* that counted in matters of this sort and the aqueduct would have been the *Aqua Julia* anyway.

A problem arises with the Aqua Claudia Caligula: one might imagine it to be named for two emperors. Actually, it was begun in A.D. 38 when Caligula (whose contemporaries always called him Gaius Caesar, never this "little boots" business, a childhood nickname from the tiny *caligae* or army boots he wore; the army thought that was cute) was emperor (he reigned over an increasingly exasperated people from A.D. 37–41) but he could never complete anything: his conquest of Britain ended on the seashore on the wrong side of the channel with the soldiers commanded not to embark but to collect sea shells. It was completed in the reign of his successor, Claudius (A.D. 41–54), and in the regular course of affairs would have been called the Aqua Claudia. Some scholars wish to stress an homage to the person who began it (Caligula) but this seems unlikely, for Caligula was certainly not beloved and when he died his name already was in ill repute. More likely it was finished in the reign of Caligula and basically called the Aqua Claudia (from his *nomen*), *Caligula* being added to that to stress

[22] This system explains how a nobody like Major Deegan (who was head of the American Legion in the state after a totally uneventful World War I service) got a major New York parkway (highway) named after him in the 1920's.

[23] *Rex* indicated (or claimed) descent from Ancus Marcius, fourth King of Rome, who reigned 640-616 B.C. For articles on *Rex* and Ancus Marcius, see *infra.*

the fact that it was modern, for there were already in Rome many public works from the time when Appius Claudius Caecus (of the Aqua Appia and the Appian Way) which bore the name *Claudia* and dated from earlier than 300 B.C.

The famous Appian Way (*Via Appia*) brings us to Roman roads, many of which were known by names derived from *nomina.* Among those of the Republican period were the Via Valeria (from the *Valeria* "Strong" *gens*), which was a continuation of the Via Tibertina (from *Tiber*) as it went into the Sabine country; and the Via Flaminia (named for the *censor* Gaius Flaminius who built it in 220 B.C.), which was the great north road out of Rome. The Via Aemilia (from the *Aemilia* "Equal or Competitor" *gens*) ran from Arminium (Rimini) through Cis-Alpine Gaul, probably to Mediolanum (Milano, in English "Milan"). A later Republican road was the Via Cassia (named for that Cassius family which produced the man with the "lean and hungry look" in *Julius Caesar*); it left Rome near the Pons Mulvius and ran to Tuscany. Finally, in Republican times there was constructed the Via Clodia (from the family of Publius Clodius Pulcher "The Handsome") which ended at Faesulae (modern Fiesole, near Firenze or "Florence"). Why not *Via Claudia*? (That would be the standard form of the *nomen.*) Answer: the man for whom it was named preferred the more plebeian spelling of the name and even got himself adopted as a plebeian in order to advance his career as a demagogue—an example of playing politics with simple orthography.[24] The Via Posthumia (the *nomen* was *Posthumius* and originated with some son born after the death of his father) may well date from the Republic. It was an extension of the Via Flaminia and went to Genua (now Genoa). One imperial road was the west-coast highway called the Via Aurelia (from the Emperor Marcus Aurelius). It left Rome at the Porta Janiculensis ("Gate of the Janiculum" Hill), later called the Aurelian Gate, and ran to Genoa and eventually into what we now call France.

This is as good a place as any, having mentioned roads, to put in some passing reference to the names of streets in ancient Rome. What we now call The Corso was the Via Lata (a "Broadway") and part of the Via Cavour was the Via Argiletum. The names of many heroes, before

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[24] It will be recalled that Abraham (or "Old Abe") Lincoln commented adversely on the fancy spelling of his wife's surname, Todd: "One *d* was good enough for God." Modern politicians cannot so easily change an image by altering their names. (A single example of prominence was Gerald Ford, *né* King.) But modern politicians do play around with initials (FDR and JFK) and James Earl Carter is steadfastly Jimmy Carter and Harry S. Truman refused to choose something for the *S* to stand for and Britons abandon titles, etc.

and after Cavour (who more or less created the modern kingdom of Italy, proclaimed just a few months before his death in 1861), have erased Roman names in the city and other factors have also contributed to forgetting ancient Roman street names. The pattern was much as in many Eastern Cities: The Street of the Sandal-Makers (Vicus Sandalarius), The Street of the Money-Changers (Vicus Argentarius), etc. As Parisian subway trains take their names from their destinations, so some Roman street followed the pattern: Vicus Portae Collinae led to that city gate. A famous landmark would give one street its name: Vicus Apollinis, for it led to the temple of Apollo. There were also streets with names like Vicus Patricius (Patrician Street) and Vicus Tuscus (Etruscan Street), while some streets had no names at all, so that one authority says letters bore simply the recipient's name—only the famous would be likely to receive a missive anyway—and a dog collar that has been unearthed reads: "Return me to the house of Elpidius on the Caelian Hill," which was instruction enough. Roads might bear a personal name but streets do not appear to have followed this as a general rule.

Of the eight bridges over the river Tiber, five were named for *nomina.* We date to the Republican period the Pons Aemilius (also called the Pons Lapideus, for it was the first built of stone), constructed 179–146 B.C., near the Teatro Marcello and now called the Ponte Rotto; the Pons Fabricius (also called the Pons Judaeus, for it linked the left-bank Jewish quarter—*ghetto* (the metal "lead") was a word not invented by the Venetians for many years to come—to the only island in the Tiber, the Insula Tiberina. It was constructed by Lucius Fabricius in 62 B.C.; and the Pons Cestius (built 46 B.C.) to link the same little island with the right-bank Transtiberina district, in modern Italian *Transtevere.* The Imperial era saw five more bridges constructed and named. These were the Pons Aelius, constructed in A.D. 135, named for the *nomen* of the Emperor Hadrian (Publius Aelius Hadrianus; a great ruler and a great builder—he even ordered the rebuilding of Jerusalem) and intended to connect his mausoleum (now the Castle of St. Angelo) with the Campus Martius (originally a war-training ground, for parades, etc., and later where elections were held—in Paris and in Montreal, for instance, there is a *Champs de Mars*); the Pons Aurelius (now the Ponte Sisto), constructed in the reign of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius; and some not named for *nomina.* It is possible that the Pons Mulvius (now the Ponte Molle), built in 109 B.C. by Marcus Aemilius Scarus to take the Via Flaminia across "Father" Tiber bears a name derived from a *nomen.* One cannot be sure.

We have tried to include only rather reliable information and have omitted to mention many guesses on onomastic matters that seem to us to be far-fetched. We have also omitted some fairly unreliable traditions regarding place-names though we are well aware of the importance of folk etymologies and the force of traditions, however ill-founded. One that we like and which does not sound to us nearly so far-fetched as many others we have had to scant—others which we hope some future scholars may undertake to collect, examine, and present—concerns the Capitol. It is said that when the foundations of the first temple were being laid in that naturally prominent place, a human head (*caput*) was found in the earth. To the superstitious Romans of that period—and indeed Romans always remained more or less superstitious, though by the time of Caesar, for instance, there was some embarrassment about it among the sophisticated—this was an omen. Helpful soothsayers were quick to state that this head signified that Rome would be the head of Italy and Rome's capital importance was guaranteed.

It is not to be forgotten that the Romans believed *nomen est omen* and may have in some way thought that by calling the place the Capitol it would thereby be given some power. Even today people are not unmindful of the old adage that "wishing will make it so" and in calling their children, or homes, or boats, or companies, or housing developments or shopping centres by some "good," auspicious names they are recalling very ancient and deep-rooted beliefs in the magic of words.

In any case, the Capitol was founded and the city it dominated prospered and expanded, creating the necessity for many more names.

As Rome expanded over the centuries it erected ever-spreading walls, and of the more than 20 gates which pierced the series of walls that developed we can cite one Republican and one Imperial example of gates named for *nomina.* The Republican was the Porta Flaminia and the Imperial the Porta Aurelia, based on *nomina* now familiar to our readers. For details of the "Servian" and the "Aurelian" walls, see *Everyman's Classical Atlas* (ed. J.O. Thompson, 1961) and consult the *Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (T. Ashby and S. Platner, 1949).

Nomina also entered into the naming of many ancient public buildings and monuments, such as arches, columns, and so on.[25] Public

[25] Useful reference books include H. Stuart-Jones, *Classical Rome* (1911); G. Lugli, *I Monumenti Antichi di Roma e Suburbio* (1930-1940) and *Roma Antica, il Centro Monumentale* (1946), etc.

buildings included basilicas, temples, theatres and circuses, ampitheatres, porticos, forums, libraries—even gardens were named.

A Roman basilica was not a church (which is what we generally think of when we hear of a basilica—St. Peter's Basilica, etc.). *Basilica* came from the Greek word for a king (from which we get *basil*) and meant a royal place—what we would call a *palace*. But it was a palace in the sense in which the word occurs in the French *Palais de Justice*: it was not so much a royal residence as it was a public building for administration of government, public meetings, and so on. There were four basilicas in Republican times named from *nomina*. The Portia was named for Cato the Censor (Cato the Elder, or Marcus Portius Cato) in 184 B.C. The Sempronia was named for the father of the Gracchi already mentioned (that is Tiberius Sempronius) in 171 B.C. The Opimia was probably named for Lucius Opimius in 121 B.C., a man involved in the murder of Caius Gracchus and the owner of one of the finest vineyards, the Vinum Opimianum. The Opimia dates from the year of his consulship. The Regia Pompeii one might have assumed would have been called the Basilica Pompeia, but it is exceptional. Perhaps in the period around 50 B.C. Roman terms were preferred to those derived from the Greek, and *Regia* translates *βασιλική*. After the death of Julius Caesar (which Shakespeare places, as will be recalled, at the foot of Pompey's statue, "which all the while ran blood") all the *Regiae* became *Basilicae* again. *Basilicae* in Imperial times named from *nomina* are the Julia (from Augustus or from Julius Caesar), the Flavia (from the Flavian dynasty which produced Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian, as we have said), and the Ulpia (also called the Basilica Triani, for the Emperor Trajan, Marcus Ulpius Traianus, A.D. 98–117.).

The temples of Rome got their names from the gods in the Republican period and from deified emperors or their consorts in the Imperial period. The Republicans erected such temples as those of Vesta (south of the Forum, where the vestal virgins tended the sacred flame of the goddess of the hearth lest the city itself be extinguished) and Castor (in the Forum Romanum itself).[26] The Romans used both *nomen* and *agnomen* (to be explained later) to designate the temples of Jupiter Capitolinus (the temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill) and Venus Felix ("Fortunate Venus"). The latter was built during the reigns of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius beside the Via Sacra ("Sacred Way")

26 Castor and his twin Pollux were called the *Dioscuri* and were regarded as the *Gemini* of the Zodiac, though Pollux's father was not Zeus but Tyndarius, which made Castor an immortal and Pollux mortal. Thus Pollux did not qualify for a temple in his honor.

which connected various holy places in the vicinity of the Forum. There were also the temple of Mars Ultor ("Mars the Avenger") built in the Forum in 2 B.C. to which was added the term *Augustum* ("by Augustus"),[27] the temple of Juno Moneta ("Advisor" but the source of our word *money*, for it was near the mint), and the temple of Venus Genetrix ("Progenitrix"). Of these, the temples of Vesta, Castor, and Jupiter Capitolinus are of Republican date; those of Mars Ultor and Venus Felix from Imperial times, though more characteristic of the period was the temple of Divus Julius ("Divine Julius"), dedicated to the deified Julius Caesar by his successor, heir, and great-nephew, Octavianus Augustus.

This is the place to note also the temples labeled with *nomina* of abstractions rather than personages: the Concordia ("Harmony," near the Capitol) and Roma Aeterna ("Eternal Rome"). The Pantheon (27 B.C.) was obviously for "all the gods" and a tribute to ecumenism in religion, as the Greek-derived genitive plural shows, although it was originally the elaborate entrance to a bath that was never built. The Pantheon still stands, but not as a monument to its builder (Octavianus Augustus' son-in-law, that Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa who keeps cropping up in these pages). The present building is, in fact, a restoration by the Emperor Hadrian, but his name is not attached to it. As we shall see later, Hadrian preferred when restoring edifices to stress their builders' names, not his own.

Extensive remains prove that the Roman *thermae* (baths) were among the most magnificent of the city's public buildings, but none of them was named for *nomina*, so we pass on to other places of public entertainment, the theatres, circuses, and ampitheatres, only pausing to recall Nathaniel Hawthorne's speculation "whether the ancient Romans were as unclean a people as we everywhere find those who have succeeded them."

The first semi-permanent Roman theatres were constructed (just of wood) in the first century before Christ. From Republican times dates the first permanent theatre (55 B.C.); it was near the Campus Martius and could hold 40,000 spectators. This was the Theatre of Pompey and it was here—not in the *Curia* or Senate House, as Shakespeare has it— that Julius Caesar was stabbed by the conspirators. It followed earlier but quite temporary wooden structures such as the theatre of Marcus Aemilius Scaurus (58 B.C., holding 80,000 people). In 13 B.C. Lucius

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[27] The idea was that Mars should assist (or had assisted) the revenge for the assassination of Julius Caesar, a task in which the god was helped by the suicides of both Cassius and Brutus.

Cornelius Balbus constructed a theatre to hold 11,000 people but it did not bear a name derived from his *nomen*. By this time *cognomina* were being used. The "circus" part of the famous "bread and circuses" which pacified the Roman populace was held in a Republican structure called the Circus Flaminius (217 B.C.), named from the same family commemorated in the Via Flaminia. Built by C. Flaminius, it soon became too small to be practical. However the famous Circus Maximus ("Biggest Circus") grew ever larger; attributed by tradition to an idea of Tarquinius Priscus—his *nomen* was Tarquinius and Livy added *Priscus*—it was enlarged by Caesar, Augustus, Domitian, and Trajan until it became a "superbowl" seating 200,000 people. Later came the Circus Maxentius (A.D. 311). It was built by order of the Emperor Maxentius (A.D. 306–312) in memory of a beloved son who died in boyhood. The son was named Romulus. But it looks as if it were named for the father himself, for it was named from the *nomen* father and son shared, *Maxentius,* and Romulus' name is not commemorated.[28]

Somewhat similar to circuses were ampitheatres. What the Romans (and Lord Macaulay in his history of the Roman Catholic Church) called the Flavian Ampitheatre we today see much reduced by the depredations of popes and others who stole its marbles to build other structures. We call it the Colosseum, but even the colossal statue (of Nero) that suggested that name has long since disappeared. It was originally named for the *Flavia* family and when completed in A.D. 80 held about 45,000 people and had taken parts of the reigns of Vespasian and his elder son Titus to finish. Too bad Vespasian did not get his name attached to it more firmly, for that would be a better memorial than the word *vespasien* meaning a *pissoir* in French.[29] Vespasian's *nomen* was Flavius, hence "Flavian".

Two porticos (arcades) were named from *nomina.* One was that of Pompey the Great, Porticus Pompeius, and another was the Porticus Octavius. The second was not named for Octavianus (Augustus) but for one of his sisters. His full sister (the mother of Marcellus and later wife of Mark Antony—it was she the portico honored) and his half-sister

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28 Of special interest to Christians is the Circus Gaii et Neronis, for there the first Christian martyrs died (A.D. 63).

29 One of us recalls that as a boy in Montreal he heard a political speech by that early *Québecois* separatist, Camilien Houde (who in World War II ran for mayor of Montreal from jail, and won, so that he had to be released despite his encouragements to the French *Canadiens* not to fight in the "English war"). Mayor Houde, opening a renovated public convenience (possibly that below the statue of King Edward VII in Phillips' Square) played with the language and made much of *vespasien*.

were both called Octavia. From this portico, Gibbon said, "the Roman civilians learned to live, to reason, and to die."

A *forum* was simply an open space—our "open forum" is redundant—and Rome had many to serve outdoor assemblies, but none were named for *nomina*. One library did bear such a name, however; it was the Biblioteca Ulpia (built, like the Basilica Ulpia, in the reign of Trajan).

The sole garden named from a *nomen* was the Horti Sallustiani. It had once been the estate of the historian we call Sallust (Gaius Sallustius Crispus, 86–34 B.C.) on the Quirinal.

The Roman fascination with the number three (triumvir, tribe, etc.) is seen again in *triumphus* ("triumph") and the triumphal arch. The triumph was more than the Latin equivalent of the ticker-tape parade and marked the height of many careers. Granted to victorious generals on their return to Rome, the triumph often had profound political ramifications, and it was carefully controlled by the Senate. The victor might seek some honor more permanent than a laurel crown or having his face painted red. He might not pay full heed to the woman who graced his victorious chariot and was there to whisper constantly to him of humility. After all, even popes have contrived, when raised to the status of *pontifex maximus*, to ignore the message of the flax which flares up in their faces as they are elected with the admonition "*sic transit gloria mundi.*" Generals notoriously wanted to prolong a triumph much longer than it took to pass in procession along the Via Sacra to the Capitol, the crowds screaming accolades. Such honors meant much: Livy tells us that M'. Juventius Talna (or Thalna), informed that the Senate had voted him a thanksgiving, dropped dead of delight. To mark triumphs, triumphal arches were erected, some of them permanent, and of more than 20 that lasted long enough to gain real fame some were named from *nomina*. In 196 B.C., for instance, the Archus Triumphalis Stertini was erected—its hero has been forgotten. Better remembered is that of Fabius Maximus (121 B.C.), also called the Fornix ("Vault") Fabianus or Fabii, and the Arch of Septimius Severus (A.D. 207) The best-known will have to go below in our discussions of *praenomina* (the Arch of Titus) and *cognomina* (the Arch of Constantine).

Nomina and Names of Laws

To move along to one last application of *nomina* to naming, we take up the names of those Roman laws so many of which have influenced

the judicial system of Western Europe. Latin can no longer be said to be the *lingua franca*[30] of the West, although it lasted a long time after it had any native speakers and was much more effective than Esperanto or Interlingua, but Roman jurisprudence is still the basis for most laws. The original Roman laws may not have come down to us with our words *advocate*, *prosecutor*, etc., and our Latinate legal jargon (*habeas corpus*, etc.) but in America, at least, we follow the Roman tradition of using *nomina* to designate acts such as the *Mann Act*, the *Taft-Hartley Law*, the *Dred-Scott Decision*, the *Monroe Doctrine*, the *Marshall Plan*, and so on.

Roman laws were generally named for their sponsors and the *nomen* was put into a feminine form to modify *lex* ("law"). When an historical figure is better known by some name other than his *nomen* in English,[31] as Lucius Cornelius Sulla Felix ("The Fortunate") is *Sulla*, this can be confusing: each of the laws of Sulla is known as the *Lex Cornelia*. The *nomen* was *Cornelius*.

There are thousands of Roman laws, but we can examine the names of some representative ones and say a little about the men for whom they were named.

One early law was the *Lex Canuleia* (310 A.U.C. or 445 B.C.), named for Gaius Canuleius, a tribune of the people.[32] It permitted a plebeian to marry a patrician. The *Lex Canuleia* commemorates in its name Canuleius and not the woman named Canuleia (of the same *gens*) who was famous because she became pregnant by her brother and at her father's command killed herself, as Plutarch tells us. In her time she was the person anyone would think of on hearing the word *Canuleia*. Now it

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30 This Latin expression means, of course, "French language." A version of Provençal served as a common language for some Crusaders.

31 Our practice is inconsistent. We always have used the *nomen* of Publius Ovidius Naso (Ovid), perhaps because Naso ("The Nose") is undignified. We have called Virgil (or Vergil) the man Romans knew as Publius Vergilius Maro, though very occasionally, centuries ago, English also referred to him as Maro. Titus Livius (who grouped his histories in sections of ten books, whence *Decades*) is Livy; Marcus Tullius Cicero is Cicero, and used to be Tully. When we say *Caesar*, we mean Julius Caesar, and our language has created *Hadrian, Domitian, Sallust, Juvenal, Julian* (as with the calendar), etc.

32 From 493 B.C. there were tribunes of the people (*tribuni plebis*) with powers as magistrates over the tribes (*tribunitia potestas*) which were gradually extended. In the Republic, a tribune had to be plebeian, but emperors from Augustus ("The Majestic") to Constantine "The Great" held the rank at times. Under the Praefectus (prefect) of the Praetorian Guard there were officers called the *tribuni cohortium praetoriarum*. In a Roman legion of 60 "centuries" (each 100 men led by a *centurio;* two centuries formed a maniple, *manipulus*, commanded by the more senior of the "centurions") there were six military administrators called *tribuni militum*, nominally exercising joint command of the legion. Military funds were entrusted to the *tribuni aerarii*. Popular entertainments were in the control of *tribuni voluptatum*, from the word we know as *voluptuous*.

is the *Lex Canuleia* which is remembered, a little bit of ancient life preserved in the amber of legal history. This *Lex Canuleia* could not, under the Roman system, have affected people's names. It also provided that one of the two consuls (chief magistrates, elected by the *comitia centuriata*) might be chosen each year from among the *plebes*. This could affect names, for the year was named for the consuls who took office on January 1. Eventually consuls no longer served a whole year but only two to four months, being then replaced with *consules suffecti* (a term originally used to describe the replacement of a regular consul who died while in office).

For the next law (*Lex Oppia*) let us use only the B.C. dating system (which in Latin was A.C., *Ante Christum*) and not the A.U.C. It was a long time before the B.C. and A.D. (*Anno Domini* = "Year of Our Lord") system was invented, however; it was the work of the monk Diogenes Exiguus and was first used by the English (in Latin) as a result of the *Historia Ecclesiae* of St. Bede (almost always known by the lesser title of "The Venerable Bede"). The date of the *Lex Oppia,* then, was 215 B.C.

Lex Oppia was named for Gaius Oppius, tribune of the *plebes* that year, and was fundamentally a sumptuary law: it limited women's jewelry to half an ounce of gold at a time and forbade particolored dresses. It also stated that no women could be borne on litters within a mile of the city limits, a provision repealed 18 years later as a result of strong feminist demonstrations. (Only Cato the Censor voted against the repeal; *cf.* Livy: 24, 1-4.)

In 114 B.C. came the *Lex Peducaea*, for Sextus Peducaeus, protecting the chastity of the vestal virgins, forbidding incest among Roman citizens (who cared what slaves and barbarians were up to?), etc. The connection between vestals and incest was that they were only allowed to visit with males who were very close relatives. As is clear in this instance, with onomastics sometimes additional, non-linguistic, details have to be known if the phenomenon is to be correctly understood. A *caveat.*

In 81 B.C. came the *Lex Cornelia de Sicariis et de Veneficiis,* which is to say "Cornelius' [Sulla's] Law regarding Robbers and Poisoners." Its provisions included an end to castration for Roman citizens and to the killing of slaves. Slaves hitherto lived at the whim of their master, one master being known for feeding them to the lampreys in his pool. The onomastic implications are that the dignity of "citizen of Rome"—no mean honor—was increased, which increased the normalization of foreign names when immigrants attained this honor. This also points up

the lack of distinction in the names of slaves. Why take the trouble to give them fancy names? (Of course there must also have been some playing with slaves' names as in America before Emancipation: in the South it was sometimes considered cute or interesting to call slaves by such grand Roman names as *Pompey*.)

In 78 B.C. the *Lex Aemilia Sumptuaria* was a sumptuary law from Marcus Aemilius Lepidus, then trying as consul to rescind laws of the dictator Sulla, who had just died. (Catulus opposed this, helped by Pompey.) This one concerned itself with the variety and quantity of food at banquets.[33] It can illustrate the problems of repeated Roman names. Other men named Marcus Aemilius Lepidus range from the *aedile* (magistrate—there were *aediles minores, aediles maiores,* and *aediles cereales* to oversee public buildings, govern commerce, inspect weights and measures, etc.) of 192 B.C. to the great-grandson of Augustus who was one of the minions of the depraved Caligula. Even the Romans had problems with names, as is reflected in this passage from Robert Graves' novel presented as "The Autobiography of Tiberius Claudius Born B.C. X Murdered and Deified A.D. LIV":

> I shall be careful with dates. . . and proper names. In compiling my histories of Etruria and Carthage I have spent more angry hours than I care to recall, puzzling out in what year this or that event happened and whether a man named So-and-so was really So-and-so or whether he was a son or grandson or great-grandson or no relation at all. I intend to spare my successors this sort of irritation. Thus, for example, of the several characters in the present history who have the name of Drusus—my father; myself; a son of mine; my first cousin; my nephew—each will be plainly distinguished whenever mentioned. And, for example again, in speaking of my tutor, Marcus Porcius Cato, I must make it clear that he was neither Marcus Porcius Cato, the Censor, instigator of the Third Punic War; nor his son of the same name, the well-known jurist; nor his

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33 Roman luxury gave us the word *lucullan,* from Lucius Licinius Lucullus who, in the wars against Mithridates (an Eastern potentate whose name has become connected with immunity to poison: he took a little each day and built up an immunity), seized great riches. Plutarch (exaggerating wildly) says that in one battle Lucullus' army of 18,000 men slew 100,000 Armenian infantrymen and 55,000 of their cavalry, suffering five killed and 100 wounded themselves. Not to be exaggerated were the great spoils with which Lucullus returned to Rome. Coldly received (only 1,600 of his soldiers were permitted into the city), he retired to a life of extravagance which became proverbial. He had many dining rooms, named for gods. One day when Cicero and Pompey dropped in unexpectedly they were astonished by a fantastic banquet: Lucullus had expected no one and had only said "I shall dine in the Apollo Room." On another occasion when no guests were expected, he sat down alone to a less than sumptuous meal. "Do you not know," he berated his butler, "that tonight Lucullus is dining with Lucullus?" For gluttony, even Lucullus could not compete with Arpocras, a Roman who at one banquet also consumed four tablecloths and a broken glass.

> grandson, the Consul of the same name; nor his great-grandson of the same name, Julius Caesar's enemy; nor his great-great-grandson, of the same name, who fell at the Battle of Philippi; but an absolutely undistinguished great-great-great-grandson, still of the same name, who never bore any public dignity and who deserved none.[34]

Sometimes "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing" in onomastics. Witness the *Lex Roscia* (67 B.C.) which we might well think relates to the Roscius we have mentioned some pages back,[35] for it is also called the *Lex Roscia de Theatris.* But it is not named for the comic actor. There were other men named Roscius: not merely the actor who contended with Cicero whether oratory could convey more than gesture—Roscius could not rely on facial expression, for he had introduced into Rome the old Greek custom of acting in masks—but, for example, also the Sextus Roscius of Ameria whom Cicero defended on a charge of parricide against two of his relations, Titus Roscius Magnus and Titus Roscius Capito. Smith/Marindin list also L. Roscius Fabatus (mentioned by Cicero in *ad Fam.* x.33), a lieutenant in Julius Caesar's Gallic War and—here is the entry in full: "5. *Otho,*" which sends us off to the O's. And we find that it was L. Roscius Otho whose name, as tribune, is on the law, a law which proved very unpopular because it gave the middle-class *equites* or *equestrians* (a rank echoed in the French *chevalier* and the Spanish *caballero*) 14 rows of seats next to the senators at public spectacles (*in quattuor-decim gradibus sive ordinibus*). It was a law which it took all of Cicero's persuasive powers when he was consul (63 B.C.) to keep from inciting riots.[36] So even if we get as close as "a Roscius that Cicero was involved with" we might get the wrong man, especially since the actor's fame so much eclipses that of the legislator. It is only fair to add that the Romans, experiencing similar difficulty, often called this the *Lex Othonis.*

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34 Robert Graves, *I, Claudius* [first published 1934] (New York: Vintage Books, *n.d.* [1977?]), p. 9.

35 "Roscius was considered by the Romans to have reached such perfection in his own profession that it became the fashion to call everyone who became particularly distinguished in his own art [no matter which] by the name of Roscius (*de Or.* i., 28, 130, iii. 26, 101, *Brut.* 84, 289; cf. Hor. *Ep.* ii, 1, 82)."—Sir William Smith, *A Classical Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography, Mythology and Geography* [first published 1848], revised throughout and in part rewritten by G. E. Marindin (London: John Murray [first revised 1894], 1932), p. 820. *Vide* our reference to P. Thomas, "Noms typiques employés par métonymie dans la littérature latine," *infra.*

36 Vell. Pat. ii. 32; Cic. *pro Muren.* 19, *ad Att.* ii. 1; Tac. *Ann.* xv. 32; Hor. *Epod.* iv. 15, *Ep.* i.1, 62; Juv. iii. 159, xiv. 324. This standard way of quoting titles in citing sources may well baffle the non-classical scholar; Marindin, for instance, cites these sources just this way—and nowhere is the reader told what the abbreviations mean.

In 52 B.C. the *Lex Pompeia de Jure Magistratuum* enabled Pompey "The Great" to confine candidates for public office to those actually present in Rome. Caesar, desiring to stand for the consulship, was off in Gaul and had to make the big decision ("cross the Rubicon") to return and assert himself in Rome. The Rubicon was only a small river but it marked the boundary between Cis-Alpine Gaul and Italy. (It is now the Rugone and the Firmicino rivers.) Crossing it with his army Caesar in effect declared war on Pompey and the Senate and the expression "crossing the Rubicon" has become proverbial. (It was 49 B.C.)

In 48 B.C. the *Lex Pedia* was named for Caesar's great-nephew Quintus Pedius and punished all the assassins of Caesar *aquae et ignis interdicto*—meaning that Romans could have nothing whatever to do with them.

In 17 B.C. the *Lex Julia* (named for Octavian, by this time adopted into the Julian *gens*) was *de Adulteriis.* Its provisions regarding adultery had to be modified in A.D. 9 and it became the *Lex Julia et Papia Poppaea,* adding the names of two tribunes: Marcus Papius Mutilus and Quintus Poppaeus Secundus. (They were in power part of that year.) It also affected marriages with actresses or prostitutes. An "actress" in those days was often, in the phrase of the Victorians who also equated the word very often with *prostitute,* "no better than she ought to be"—which meant, of course, not nearly as good as she ought to be. Later than Victorian times the word *model* was substituted for *actress* in this usage.

Adding more names to cover amendments or additions was not uncommon. Descriptive phrases became increasingly common tags to names of laws, for there were, for example, numerous *leges Clodiae* named for Publius Clodius Pulcher: *de Auspiciis* referred to the taking of the auspices and stated that a poor forecast could not be used by the magistrates as an excuse for dissolving the Assembly or the Senate; *de Judiciis* involved due process of law for Roman citizens.

The *Lex Fabia* suppressed plagiarism. The *Lex Hortensia* enabled the dictator Quintus Hortensius to establish *plebiscita* (our *plebiscite,* the resolutions of the plebeian assembly in Rome) binding all Romans without the consent of the Senate. It also dictated market days (*nundinae*) or law court days (*fasti*). The *Lex Gabinia* was proposed by Aulus Gabinius, a soldier and politician, and had both military and political aspects: it gave Pompey command in the war against the pirates (67 B.C.) and checked many abuses in the Senate. This same Gabinius as governor of Syria (57-54 B.C.) restored Hyrcanus II to the high-

priesthood of the Jews and Ptolomy XI *Auletes* to the throne of Egypt.[37] The *Lex Publicia* came from Gaius Publicius Bibulus ("Little Book"), permitting betting at certain public events, but the name is from the *nomen* and not from the idea of "public." The *Lex Petronia* comes from a member of the same family as that *elegantiae arbiter* C. (or maybe T.) Petronius—critics still disagree about whether he really wrote the *Petronii Arbitri Satyricon*—and it prevented slaves from being condemned to fight beasts in the arena. The *Lex Fufia Caninia* (A.D. 4) preserves the names of one Fufius Calenus and one Caninius, probably the son of that consul Caninius who set a record filling out the unexpired term of a certain Fabius and was, as a result, consul for a single day.

One law was such that no one really wanted his name to be associated with it. It went on the books as the *Lex Scatinia de Pudicitia* because it was proposed by Gaius Scatinius Aricinius, a tribune. Luckily for him, something happened to take his name off the law for most purposes.

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37 Josephus tells us that the name Hyrcanus was "common to some of the high priests by Judea." The Ptolemies (*Ptolemaios* in Greek) bore interesting soubriqets. Ptolemy I was called *Soter* ("Savior") after he, as the son of Alexander the Great's general Lagus, was given Egypt to rule (305 B.C.). He was the "savior" of the Rhodians when they were beseiged by Demetrius in the next year. Ptolemy II was *Philadelphus* (but only posthumously). His son was Ptolemy III, or Euergetes I, and his grandson was Ptolemy IV, called *Philopater*, who married his sister, Arsinoë III. Ptolemy IV was called *Epiphanes* (and worse). Ptolemy VI was *Philometer* and Ptolemy VII was nicknamed *Physkon*. Ptolemy VIII was called *Soter II* and nicknamed *Lathyras* ("Chickpea," like Roman *Cicero*) and Ptolemy IX was *Alexander*. Ptolemy X was *Alexander II* and the last of the more or less legitimate line (many incests were involved). Ptolemy XI was, as we have said, *Auletes*, which means "Flute-player," an illegitimate son of Ptolemy VIII and he left Eygpt to his children: Cleopatra (one of many of that name in this family) and her younger brother, who became Ptolemy XII, and a still younger one who succeeded him as Ptolemy XIII. Ptolemy XIV was the reputed son of Cleopatra by Julius Caesar: he was called *Caesarion*. See *A History of Egypt under the Ptolemaic Dynasty* (1927), by E. Bevan.

Calvin Wells ("Ancient Aches and Pains," in *Horizon* X, No. 4, Autumn 1968) discusses acromegly in the later rulers of Egypt and states:

> Ptolemy I Soter, the first of the line, had prominent brow ridges, an enlarged nose. . . . The nicknames of later rulers hint at abnormalities.

So onomastics once again gives us far more than linguistic information or non-lexical words. But to continue:

> A grandson of Ptolemy VI Philometer became Antiochus VIII of Syria. Does his nickname, Grypus, "hooknose," mean that he, too, was a victim of acromegly? His brother was called Physcon, "the sausage," which was perhaps a reference to the obesity caused by endocrine malfunction [page 116].

As we can trace political events by titles such as *censor perpetuus* (assumed by Domitian to degrade the Senate); *Mater Patriae* given to Livia after the death of Octavian, whose coins read LIBERTATIS P[opuli] R[omani] VINDEX, "vindicator of the liberty of the Roman people"; emperors calling themselves simply *tribunus plebis* or *princeps*; even the reaction of later ages, as when Tertullian calls Hadrian *omnium curiositatum explorator*; so we may be able to find out personal details about ancient personages not through great titles or glowing descriptions but from plain nicknames.

One Gaius Sca*n*tinius Capitolinus was soon convicted under the law for corrupting the morals of a minor, Scantinius being accused by his fellow *aedile* Marcus Claudius Marcellus of having made indecent advances to Claudius' son (also called Marcus).[38] The similarity between *Scatinius* and *Scantinia* suggested the change and, in the event, Scantinius Capitolinus got more punishment than the large fine levied against him: his name was forever connected with the *Lex Scantinia*, as the law came to be known generally though officially it was *Lex Scatinia* still.

Varro on *Nomina*

There are many details of *nomina* (as well as more examples) which we need not go into here, and Varro (*de Lingua Latina,* Book VIII) goes into grammatical peculiarities and orthographic changes. He gives us many important bits of information. Here are just a few:

> *Habent plerique libertini a municipio manumissi, in quo, ut societatum et fanorum servi, non servarunt proportione rationem, et Romanorum liberti debuerunt dici ut Faventia Faventinus, ab Reate Reatinus sic a Roma Romanus, ut nominentur libertini orti [a] publicicis servis Romani, qui manumissi ante quam sub magistratu[u]m nomina, qui eos liberarunt succedere c[o]eperunt.* (VIII, 83)
>
> [Most freedmen set free by a free town get their names from the town; in this matter, those who were slaves of guilds and temples have not observed the rule in the same way; and the freedmen of the Romans ought to have got the name *Romanus,* like *Faventinus* from *Faventia* and *Reatinus* from *Reate.* In this way the freedmen whose parents were state slaves would be named *Romanus,* who had been set free before they began to take the names of the magistrates who set them free.]

Another passage deals with feminine endings for masculine *cognomina.*

> *Ut actor stolam muliebrem sic Perpenna et Caecina et [S]purinna figure muliebria dicuntur habere nomina, non mulierum.* (X, 27)

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38 They *all* seem to have been called Marcus Claudius Marcellus. There were (to name a few): Marcus Claudius Marcellus, conqueror of Syracuse; his son, Marcus Claudius Marcellus, who fought the Insubrians and the Boii in Gaul; Marcus Claudius Marcellus who battled the Ligurians and was consul in 183 B.C.; Marcus Claudius Marcellus who was the grandson of the Syracusan conqueror we have mentioned; Marcus Claudius Marcellus, the friend of Cicero mentioned in *Epistolae ad Familiares* and elsewhere; his brother, also called Marcus Claudius Marcellus; their uncle, Marcus Claudius Marcellus (consul in 49 B.C., if that helps you to distinguish him from the Marcus Claudius Marcellus who was consul in 50 B.C. and who had a son called—you guessed it—Marcus Claudius Marcellus); etc.

[As an actor may wear a woman's dress, so *Perpenna* and *Caecina* and *Spurinna* are said to have names that are feminine in form; they are not said to have women's names.]

The examples of this last would include Marcus Perpenna (*praetor* 135 B.C.), his son of the same name (consul 130 B.C.), and his grandson Marcus Perperna (or Perpenna) Vento (defeated and killed by Pompey); A. Caecina Volaterranus, A. Caecina Severus, A. Caecina Alienus, Decius Albinus Caecina, etc.; and Vestritius Spurinna, the *haruspex* who warned Caesar to "beware the Ides of March." There was a general of the same name. Because Pliny the Younger mentioned him as a lyric poet, later four poems attributed to him were published by Barth (1613), all forgeries).

Mensium nomina fere sunt aperta, si a Martio, ut antiqui constituerunt, numeres: nam primus a Marte. Secundus, ut Fulvius scribit et Iunius, a Venere, quod ea sit Aphrodite; cuius nomen ego antiquis litteris quod nusquam inveni, magis puto dictum, quod ver omnia aperit, Aprilem. Tertius a maioribus Maius, quartus a iunioribus dictus Iunius. (VI, 33)

[The names of the months are in general obvious, if you count from March, as the ancients arranged them; for the first month, *Martius,* is from Mars. The second, *Aprilis,* as Fulvius (Flaccus, consul 135 B.C.) writes and Junius also, is from Venus, because she is Aphrodite; but I have nowhere found her name in the old writings about the month, and so think it was called April rather because spring *aperit* (opens) everything. The third was called *Maius* (May) from the *maiores* (elders), the fourth *Iunius* 'June' from the *iuniores* (younger men).]

No, not really so obvious, until pointed out, that in April things open, in May they grow larger, and in June they reach full bloom (an idea contained in the words *junior* and *Juno*). Varro goes on to discuss the fifth month (*Quintilis,* later named in honor of Julius Caesar, our *July*) and others (the sixth, Sextilis, later was named Augustus, our *August;* the seventh, eighth and ninth, which we call *September, October, November*) to the tenth (*December*). Later were added a month in honor of the two-faced god Janus, who looked forward and back—a good symbol for *January* once it became the first month—and one from the *dies februatus* in which purification sacrifices were made (says Varro), but he confuses purification, propitiation, and fertility rites held in this time of—an old, lost word—*feber* (sorrow).

One might think that the very gods themselves would bear *nomina*-derived appellations. But, probably because they largely came from non-Roman sources as far as their names were concerned, we shall find

the gods to have names more closely approximating *praenomina,* and it is to *praenomina* now, in any case, that we should turn our attention. There we shall find, perhaps, a little more of that *analogia* ("regularity") that the learned Varro is always looking for in the Latin language, so often without success.

PRAENOMINA
"What Do You Call This Child?"

Look at the word *praenomen.* Does it mean that it came before the *nomen,* as people have individual names before the concept of family or clan is established? Or is it simply the name placed before the *nomen*? The Romans stressed the *nomen* common to all members of a family but in the earliest times, surely, simple people when asked their names would certainly have replied as a child usually does, with the given name, with what (now that surnames are so established) we call a forename. But *surname* conveys "added name." The name to which it is added is the "first" name, the individual's most personal name. People had names like this from time immemorial, individual names used long before groups began to describe themselves as "Roda's people," "the Hill People," etc., long before societies developed and groups began to distinguish *us* from *them.* Before family names, group names, clan names, tribe names, national names came personal names. Later, when families or tribes were established, individual "first" names helped to sort people out. When all members of the group had the same *nomen,* the *praenomen* was very useful.

It would have been a great deal more useful as groups increased in size if the Romans had had more *praenomina* from which to choose. But in fact the Roman *praenomina* which must at first have been very numerous and very diverse—the city of Rome gathering together groups from distant parts and different cultures, probably with different naming systems—were gradually reduced to a mere 15 or 20. This assisted in the process of "Romanization" but it must have led to problems, especially when fathers got into the habit of naming at least one son (sometimes more) with the father's and grandfather's names—and all the daughters with a single name derived from the *nomen* of the clan. When one recalls that the Romans did not distinguish generations with numerals (so that we can sort out today John Smith Sr., John Smith Jr., John Smith III, etc.) generation after generation in which the eldest son was, for example, Marcus Acilius Glabrio could create difficulties. And all the daughters were Acilia, though a way was worked out to number them.

A man had no choice as to what he could call his daughter but a father was expected to name his son. On the eighth day after birth (for girls) and the ninth day (for boys) the *praenomen* was formally given, though according to the custom of Quintus Mucius Scaevola the official listing of the girl's name would not occur until the day of her marriage and the boy's name did not go down in the official lists until he assumed the *toga virilis* at the age of 16 of 17. In a sense, as far as the official lists were concerned, a young man's *praenomen* was more the equivalent of that taken by Christians at confirmation than that bestowed at baptism.

To put the name of a person in the lists was to give him a more legal status. Of course for years before that he would have to have a name to use and for his families and friends to call him by. He had quite early—not immediately, for infant mortality was high—to have a "given" name given to him. It would go *officially* unrecorded most of his life, since the average life-span of a Roman was only 22 years.

On the ninth day after birth, then, a boy would have his *dies lustricus,* resembling baptism also in the suggestion of "purification" in the words. The child was placed on the hearth and the legal spouse of the woman who had borne it had the option of picking it up (accepting) it or leaving it there (rejecting it). The Romans seem to have realized that maternity was a matter of fact, paternity often a matter of opinion. But whatever the fact, if the spouse picked up the child willingly he legally became the father of the infant and the baby was welcomed into the *gens* of which the man was *pater familias.* As "father of the family" the man was priest in his own house and before the household gods (*lares* and *penates*) he acknowledged the child and gave it his *nomen* and a *praenomen* dictated by his own choice or the traditions of his family.[39]

Regularly the eldest boy was named after his father. The warnings of modern psychiatrists (that being a "junior" places an uncomfortable

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39 The *dies lustricus* was essentially a family affair. The state (as we have suggested) would not be interested until the child was in its teens. This private naming ceremony must not be confused with public sacrifices (held every five years for the benefit of the state, or, as *SPQR* standards had it, *Senatus Populusque Romanus,* "The Senate and the People of Rome"). At that time the *census* ("estimate") was taken and from 443 B.C. on two *censores* were elected for the next *lustrum* period of five years. The *dies lustricus* was unrelated except that a sacrifice also accompanied it. This was the baby's equivalent of baptism or circumcision, his name-giving day. Throughout life he might acquire other names, but the names given on this day would be basic and (except by adoption into another group) immutable. No clergyman was needed. As with the Mormons, every man was the priest of his family. Whether he ought to be called *pater familias* or *pater familiae* is debated. A. Traina in *Latinitas* XII (1964) 225-229, tells us Caesar and Livy argued for *familiae* (by analogy) and Cicero for *familias* (by anomaly). The archaic genitive singular (*-as*) was analogous to the Greek genitive singular in -ς, as Professor Rothrauff reminds us.

burden on a child and can be a handicap in life) or ancient Jews (that naming a child after a living person is sure to diminish some life in some way) were ignored. In any case, no Roman boy became a "Marcus Junior" or "Junior." He was just another Marcus in the family.

Today Roman Catholics are supposed to give only saints' names. Frenchmen can give their children only government-approved French names. Other religions and other nationalities have different customs. The Roman father was likewise restricted in the choice of forenames. He might give the boy the most common of Roman *praenomina, Marcus.* True, many others would bear the same name but it was a good one, even a sort of magic one, for it dedicated the child more or less to Mars and might make him martial. It was certainly a very Roman name, for Mars was the most Roman of the gods.

Or the father might choose *Gaius,* derived either from the Greek goddess Gaea, the Earth Mother, or from *gaudeo* (expressing the "joy" of the parents or the joy wished to the child). *Gaius* could also be *Caius,* the Greek *gamma* becoming a *c* in Latin. These sound shifts can be confusing, but one can see that by calling the earth diety *Tellus* (the *l* and *r* being confused as in some Oriental mispronunciations of English) they are not far from *terra*, "earth," as in our *terrestrial.*

If the first son was named for the father the second and third sons could be named for paternal grandfather and paternal great-grandfather and by the fourth son (if not earlier) the mother's side of the family might possibly yield a name. Later sons tended to be less significant and numbered: *Quintus* (fifth), *Sextus* (sixth), *Septimus* (seventh), *Octavius* (eighth), *Nonus* (ninth), *Decimus* (tenth). As the equivalents of *One, Two, Three* and *Four* had early dropped out, so some of these other number *praenomina* fell into disuse but at the same time some of these forenames gave rise to *nomina.* Some Septimus became the head of a family that then had *Septimius* as a *nomen*: A certain Titus Septimius was a member of that *gens.*[40] Some eighth son made famous a name borne by the *gens* Octavia: an Octavius, poet and historian of the same period as Titus Septimius, was also, like him, a friend of Horace. Some ninth son's story lies behind the *nomen* of Quintus Novius, a writer of *atellanae* around 90 B.C.[41]

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[40] Titus Septimius is addressed by Horace in the sixth ode of Book II.

[41] Brief farces derived their name from Atella, originally an Oscan town in the Campania. Fragments of the *fabulae atellanae* survive. *Cf.* [Ambrosius Aurelius Theodosius] Macrobius (probably a Greek who died about A.D. 415), I, 10; and Aulus Gellius' *Noctes Atticae* XV, 13. (An interesting title, derived from the fact that the work was written in a house in Athens on long winter nights.) The *atellanae* gave us stock comic characters such as Maccus the glutton, Bucco the fool,

To such of the number *praenomina* as survived—oddly *Nonus* is rare, but *Decimus* is not and has even been used in modern times—nine more forenames were added in time. At first the equivalents of *One, Two, Three* and *Four* must have been common for men and *One, Two* and *Three* for women are noted by Varro, but by the time *praenomina* come to be recorded many number names had fallen out of general use. Non-number *praenomina,* roughly in order of frequency of use, were: *Marcus, Gaius, Lucius, Publius, Gnaeus, Manius, Tiberius, Titus,* and *Servius.*

By the time of Cicero (*d.* 43 B.C.) it was common to represent these forenames by initials or abbreviations. In this essay we shall generally spell out *praenomina* for convenience, but these are the respective abbreviations used elsewhere: *M., G.* (or *C.*), *L., P., Gn.* (or *Cn.*), *M'., Ti., T., Ser.*

Limitations on *Praenomina*

We have already suggested some limits on the use of *praenomina* besides the most obvious of all in comparison with our modern usage, which is to say that the Roman father could give his child only *one* forename in the general run of things. We must now mention some further limitations.

The *privilege* ("private law") of *praenomina* officially recognized seems to have been in early times confined to patricians. Later plebeians began to use *praenomina* as well (though, in the sense that *praenomina* were personal and given names the lowest peasants had always used them; indeed, they used nothing else). Gradually the number of forenames in common use expanded. But by custom rather than by law patrician families limited themselves to a handful of *praenomina* in much the same way, for example, that certain German princely families called all males Frederick or something like that or the Danish royal house (after such inventive names as *Gorm the Old, Harold Bluetooth,* and *Eric Hunger*) stayed with *Frederik* and *Christian.*

It is traditional in certain British families for only a few given names to be used. (The royal family seems compelled to give every son since Victoria's time the name *Albert,* along with the names of the patron saints of the English, *George,* the Welsh, *David,* the Scottish, *Andrew,* while *Edward* has turned up often lately.) Similarly, Roman families of

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Pagus (Pantaloon) and Dossenus (Punch). (Roman drama also gave us character names such as *Miles Gloriosus*, and the study of all these theatrical names and types needs to be examined from the onomastic point of view.) *Cf.* G. E. Duckworth, *The Nature of Roman Comedy* (1952), etc.

distinction voluntarily limited themselves to a few forenames: the Cornelian *gens* used only half a dozen *praenomina* (*Gnaeus, Lucius, Publius, Marcus, Servius,* and *Tiberius*) and the Scipio *stirps* of the Cornelian *gens* through many generations limited itself to three (*Gnaeus, Lucius, Publius*). The Domitian *gens* used only *Gnaeus* and *Lucius.* The *Bibulia* used only *Gaius, Lucius,* and *Marcus.* The *Fabia* and the *Quintilia* use *Caeso*; nobody else does. The *Claudia* has *Appius* and *Decimus*—note the absence of number names in the other patrician families we have been mentioning— and *Mamercus* is prominent among the *Aemilia.* With the late Republic these (and many other) traditions tended to break down and people of all classes were freer in choosing their names.

Varro is unable to explain the origins of all the names, let alone how these traditions of reserving a few to a family began, and he says simply "from the numerals came Secunda, Tertia, Quarta for women, Quintus, Sextus, Decimus for men, and similarly other names from other things."[42]

One *stirps* whose name can be translated is that of the Scipios. The *Scipio* name meant "staff" and the founder of this branch was said to have been the "staff" of his blind father, according to Macrobius (I, 6), and the family tomb (discovered in 1780) yielded interesting masks now in the Museo-Pio Clementino (Rome), while the family itself gave these men to history (along with some confusion for historians): P. Cornelius Scipio was *magister equitum* ("master of the horse," second in command, to the dictator, 396 B.C.); P. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus was dictator 306 B.C.; P. Cornelius Scipio Asina was consul 221 B.C.; plain P. Cornelius Scipio was consul 218 B.C.; and P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus Maior conquered Hannibal (one of the five famous generals of this name; this one the son of Hamilcar *Barca,* to distinguish him from the five other famous Hamilcars). Also there were L. Cornelius Scipio, consul in 350 B.C.; L. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus, consul in 298 B.C.; L.

42 Varro IX, 60. Actually, one is hard pressed to find *Secunda* as a woman's name except in late Latin records, but *Secundus* is found as a *cognomen.* See also footnote 46, *infra.* Somewhere it would perhaps be useful to have a complete list of the English translations of Roman names. We have undertaken to give the equivalent of many names here, but we cannot list them all. Kajanto and others provide the materials for a lexicon of Roman names but, as we shall be noting in various connections in the present study, a mere English equivalent will not in every case suffice. What we need is essentially what the name meant to the Romans—if indeed it functioned other than a name *per se*—and that brings in historical, psychological, and other considerations. As it is not enough to say how *Cameron* or *Graham* translates, nor sufficient to connect *cabal* with *C*astlereagh, *A*rlington, *B*uckingham, *A*shley and *L*auderdale or *Smectymnuus* with *S*tephen *M*arshal, *E*dward *C*alamy, *T*homas *Y*oung, *M*atthew *N*ewcomen, and *W*illiam *S*purstow, so *Cicero* = "chickpea" leaves much unsaid.

Cornelius Scipio, consul in 259 B.C.; and L. Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus, conqueror (thanks to the help of his brother Africanus) of Asia Minor, hence also called *Asagenes* or *Asiagenus.*[43]

Common people acquired more names as they rose in the world (almost exclusively through the ranks of the army). Thus Marius, a peasant, became Caius Marius some time before he was first elected to an office (tribune of the plebeians, 119 B.C.) He may have refused *agnomina* or *cognomina* as he continued to rise in rank as Englishmen sometimes prefer a name already famous to a new title which will be less familiar—*Anthony Eden* gains more immediate recognition than *Earl of Avon*—or remains a commoner for some political reason (as Churchill accepted nothing higher than a knighthood and so could remain in the House of Commons).

The advantage of identification with relatives is always counteracted by the desire for something individual and less common, so there are half a dozen other *praenomina* used with some frequency: *Aulus, Mamercus, Spurius, Appius, Numerius,* and *Kaeso.* These were abbreviated: A., Mam., S., Ap., N., and K.

Ultimately, according to Gates, the *praenomen* came to be used predominantly only in epitaphs because by imperial times the *cognomen* increasingly took the place of the *praenomen* in general use to distinguish an individual.

De Praenominibus

At this point we insert a valuable document with many points relevant to what we have been discussing and shall be discussing. We take the liberty of presenting it in full because of its importance and obscurity. In the scholarship on Roman names we have seen this document referred

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43 In addition there were Cn. Cornelius Scipio Asina ("The Ass"), Cn. Cornelius Scipio Africanus, P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica ("Nosey"), P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica Corculum (also known as "The Sagacious"), P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica Serapio (somehow connected with the Egyptian god Serapis), Cn. Cornelius Scipio Hispallus and his son of the same name (who gave all Chaldeans, that is astrologers, ten days to get out of Rome), L. Cornelius Scipio and his son Cn. Cornelius Scipio Calvus ("The Bald"), etc.

Infra we shall discuss the *agnomina* which help (a little) to distinguish these Scipios and the *cognomina* derived from them which distinguished further branches of the family. Here we may just note that when historians got bogged down in too many persons of the same name(s) they would write something like this: P.L[*ucii,* "of Lucius"]f[*ilius,* "son"] L[*ucii,* "of Lucius"] n[*epos,* "grandson"]Cornelius Scipio. This system was a trifle confused once *Nepos* became an *agnomen* as in the historian of the Cornelian *gens,* Cornelius Nepos, and in the name of Julius Nepos. Emperor of the West (A.D. 474-475), who died in Dalmatia in A.D. 480.

to but it has (so far as we know) been seen by few and translated by none, hidden away at the back of Karl Kempf's edition of the works of Valerius Maximus (who wrote an account in nine books of the most famous actions and sayings of the Romans, which he dedicated to Tiberius as *De Factis Dictisque Memorabilibus Libri IX*). The title page (1888, facsimile reprint 1966 at Stuttgart) does not even mention that as a sort of appendix we find the *De Praenominibus* ascribed to Varro (presumably because he is often quoted in it). Scholars such as the celebrated Bonfante say that what we have is an epitome (with interpolations) by Gaius Tutius Probus (not the grammarian [Valerius] Probus of Berytus in Phoenicia). That would date it about the Fifth Century. It would then be all that remains from a work of the time of Augustus ascribed to the grammarian Verrius Flaccus (tutor to Augustus' grandsons, Caius and Lucius Caesar, a man Pliny the Elder frequently quotes. But, *pace* Bonfante, the heading of the text mentions a Julius Paris as the epitomizer.

In any case, here in full is the useful text, whoever its author was:

INCERTI AVCTORIS LIBER
DE PRAENOMINIBVS DE NOMINIBVS
DE COGNOMINIBVS DE AGNOMINIBVS
DE APPELLATIONIBVS DE VERBIS
IN EPITOMEN REDACTVS
A IVLIO PARIDE.

DE PRAENOMINIBVS.

Varro simplicia in Italia nomina fuisse ait existimationisque suae argumentum refert, quod Romulus et Remus et Faustulus neque praenomen ullum neque cognomen habuerint. qui ab eo dissentiunt aiunt matrem eorum Ream Siluiam uocatam, auum Siluium Numitorem, fratrem eius Amulium Siluium, ac superiores Albanorum reges Capetum Siluium, Agrippam Siluium, posterioresque duces Mettium Fufetium et Tutorem Cloelium uocatos. nec contenti his ad Sabinos transgrediuntur: Titum Tatium, Numam Pompilium et patrem eius Pompium Pompilium, eiusdemque regionis principes enumerant Pustulanum Lauranum, Volesum Valensium, Mettum Curtium, Alium Fumusilleaticum. e Tuscis [re]citant Lartem Porsennam, ab Aequiculis Septimum Modium, primum regem eorum, et Fertorem Resium, qui ius fetiale constituit. in hunc modum Varronis sententia subruitur.

Romanos autem arbitrandum est maxime ab Albanis et Sabinis multiplicandorum nominum consuetudinem traxisse, quoniam ab illis orti sunt. omnia autem, quae ad unum quemque nostrum definiendum excogitata sunt, eandem uim significandi hominis obtinent. quod [propri]

etate[m] dicitur, hoc distat, quia eo gens cognoscitur, ideoque dicitur gentilicium. cetera ordine uariantur: nam quod praeponitur praenomen, quod post fertur cognomen, quod ad ultimum adicitur agnomen *est.* quorum series non ita, ut exposui, semper seruata est: animaduerto enim in consulum fastis perplexum usum praenominum et cognominum fuisse. dictum Postumum Cominium Auruncum et Postumum Aebutium Heluam et Vopiscum Iulium et Opitrem Verginium Tricostum et Paulum Fabium Maximum. quin etiam quaedam cognomina in nomen uersa sunt, ut Caepio: namque hoc in Bruto nominis locum obtinuit.

Gentilicia nomina Varro putat fuisse numero ∞, praenomina circa XXX. pueris non prius quam togam uirilem sumerent, puellis non ante quam nuberent praenomina imponi moris fuisse Q. Scaeuola auctor est. quae olim praenomina fuerunt, nunc cognomina sunt, ut Postumus, Agrippa, Proculus, Caesar.

Opiter *uocabatur* qui patre mortuo, auo uiuo gignebatur, Vopiscus qui in utero matris geminus conceptus altero abortu eiecto incolumis editus erat. Hostus praenomen fuit in eo, qui peregre apud hospitem natus erat, idque habuit Lucretius Tricipitinus, collega L. Sergii. Volero in praenomen abiit, quod uolentibus nasci liberi parentibus uidebantur, quo usus est Publi*l*ius Philo. Lartis praenomen sumptum est a laribus, Tuscum autem esse creditum, fuitque consul Lar Herminius cum T. Verginio *Tri*costo. Statius a stabilitate, Faustus a fauore praenomina ceperunt. Tullus praenominatus est ominis gratia quasi tollendus, o littera in u conuersa. Sertor qui per sationem natus erat adpellatus est. Ancum praenomen Varro e Sabinis translatum putat. Valerius Antias *ita uocatum regem Ancum* scribit, quod cubitum uitiosum habuerit, qui Graece uocatur ἀγκών.

Lucii coeperunt adpellari qui ipso initio lucis orti erant, aut, ut quidam arbitrantur, a Lucumonibus Etruscis, Manii qui mane editi erant, uel ominis causa quasi boni: manum enim antiqui bonum dicebant. Cnaeus ob insigne naeui adpellatus est. quod unum praenomen uaria scriptura notatur: alii enim Naeum, alii Gnaeum, alii Cnaeum scribunt. qui G littera in hoc praenomine utuntur, antiquitatem sequi uidentur, quae multum ea usa littera est. olim enim dicebatur frugmentum, nunc frumentum effertur, et forgtis, non fortis, et gnatura, non natura. ergo etiam qui in corporibus gigni solet gnaeuus adpellabatur. qui CN ponunt, correptione [*or* corruptione *or* asperatione] syllabae delectari uidentur, qui Naeus, lenitate. Gai iudicantur dicti a gaudio parentum, Auli, quod iis auentibus nascuntur, Marci Martio mense geniti, Publi, qui prius pupilli facti erant quam praenomina haberent, † alii ominis causa e pube.

Tiberii uocitari coeperunt qui ad Tiberim nascebantur. Titus e Sabino nomine Tito [*or* homine Tito *or* nomine titulo] fluxit, Appius ab Atto eiusdem regionis praenomine. Caesones adpellati sunt qui e mortuis matribus exsecti erant, Seruius, quod mortua matre in utero seruatus est,

Spurii patre incerto geniti quasi σποράδην. Numeriis sola tantum modo patricia familia usa est Fabia, idcirco quod trecentis sex apud Cremeram flumen caesis, qui unus ex ea stirpe extiterat, ducta in matrimonium uxore filia Numerii Otacilii Maleuentani sub eo pacto, ut quem primum filium sustulisset, ei materni aui praenomen inponeret, obtemperauit.

Antiquarum mulierum frequenti in usu praenomina fuerunt Rutila, Caesellia, Rodacilla, Murrula, Burra a colore ducta. illa praenomina a uirilibus tracta sunt, Gaia, Lucia, Publia, Numeria. ceterum Gaia usu super omnes celebrata est: ferunt enim Gaiam Caeciliam, Tarquinii Prisci regis uxorem, optimam lanificam fuisse et ideo institutum, ut nouae nuptae ante ianuam mariti interrogatae quaenam uocarentur Gaias esse se dicerent.

A BOOK BY AN AUTHOR OF UNCERTAIN NAME ABOUT PRAENOMENS, NOMENS, COGNOMENS, AGNOMENS, APPELLATIONS AND DESIGNATIONS IN GENERAL ARRANGED INTO AN EPITOME BY JULIUS PARIS.

CONCERNING PRAENOMENS

1. Varro says that in Italy originally people had single names and puts forward as evidence to back up his supposition the fact that Romulus and Remus and Faustulus had neither praenomen nor cognomen. Those who disagree with Varro, however, say that Romulus' and Remus' mother was called R(h)ea Silvia, their grandfather: Silvius Numitor, his brother Amulius Silvius, former kings of the Albans: Capetus Silvius and Agrippa Silvius, and that later leaders were called Mettius Fufetius and Tutor Cloelius. In fact, not content with these examples, Varro's opponents also cite instances of double names among the Sabines as well: Titus Tatius, Numa Pompilius, and the latter's father Pompius Pompilius; and they mention other leading men from the same region with the names Fustulanus Lauranus, Volesus Valensius, Mettus Curtius, Alius Fumusilleaticus. As examples from among the Tuscans, they cite Lars Porsenna; from among the Aequiculi, Septimus Modius, their first king, and Fertor Resius, who established the *ius fetiale*. In this way, the assertion of Varro (cited above) has been undermined.

2. It is, on the other hand, of the utmost importance to take into consideration the fact that the Romans very likely acquired their later custom of having several names from these same Albans and Sabines—since they took their origin from them. But all methods which are devised for the purpose of defining each one of us also have the power of assigning a man a name. And, in this case, what is to be noted with regard to the peculiarity of the Roman *nomen* and how it is somehow different is that by it the name of the man's gens or clan is indicated and it is therefore called the [*nomen*] *gentilicium*. The terminology of the other names is

then determined according to their position relative to the *gentilicium*; for, the name placed before the *gentilicium* is called the *praenomen* and the one placed after it is called the *cognomen*, whereas the one which is added at the end of the name-series is called the *agnomen*. This order of sequence is not invariably kept to, just as I expounded it, however: For, I notice in reading over the official lists of the consuls that the use of praenomens and cognomens has sometimes been confused. We find in the lists Postumus Cominius Aruncus and Postumus Aebutius Helva and Vopsicus Iulius and Opiter Verginius Tricostus and Paulus Fabius Maximus. In fact, certain cognomens are even turned into gentiliciums—such as Caepio, which in one instance takes the place of a gentilicium for Brutus.

3. Varro reckons that there were an infinite number of gentiliciums or nomina gentilicia, and approximately 30 praenomens. Quintus Mucius Scaevola is supposed to have been the originator of the custom by which praenomens were not officially bestowed upon males until they assumed the toga virilis, nor upon females until they were married. And, of these names which were originally praenomens, some are now cognomens, such as Postumus, Agrippa, Proculus, and Caesar.

4. He is called Opiter who is born when his father is dead but his grandfather is still living; Vopsicus who, after being conceived as a twin in his mother's womb and after the other twin is aborted, is himself safely brought forth. Hostus was the praenomen for a child who was born abroad away from home in the house of a host—this was true of (Hostus) Lucretius Tricipitinus, colleague of L(ucius) Sergius. Volero became a praenomen because children are imagined as being born to parents who want them (volo)—(Volero) Publilius Philo had this praenomen. The praenomen, Lars, is derived from the lares or household gods; however, it is also believed to be of Tuscan origin—a Lar(s) Herminius was consul with T(itus) Verginius Tricostus. Someone called Statius took his praenomen from the notion of stability; Faustus from the notion of favor or luck. Tullus became a praenomen from the custom of picking up (tollo) the infant from the hearth a few days after birth—the letter "o" in the spelling being changed to "u." He was called Sertor who was born during the sowing season; whereas, the praenomen, Ancus, is one Varro thinks has been taken over from the Sabines. Valerius Antias writes that the Roman king Ancus was so called because he had a defective "elbow," which in Greek is ἀγκών.

5. He was called Lucius who was born at dawn—though some think that the origin of the name is the Etruscan name Lucumo. He was called Manius who was brought forth during the morning or because he was considered "good"; for, the Ancients indicate that "manus" originally had the same meaning as "bonus." A Cnaeus was so called from the

token of a birthmark. This one praenomen is marked by a variety of spellings; some write Naeus, others Gnaeus, still others Cnaeus. Those who use the letter "g" in the spelling of this praenomen seem to be following the ancient custom, for the Ancients used this letter quite frequently, i.e., frumentum was once spelled frugmentum; fortis, forgtis; and natura, gnatura.— At all events the mark that is present on bodies at birth used to be called a "gnaevus." Those who use "cn" in the spelling seem to enjoy the "snatching" of a syllable, while those who spell the name Naeus prefer a smooth syllable. A Gaius was thought to be so called from the joy (gaudeo) of his parents; an Aulus, because born to parents who were longing for him. A Marcus would have been born in the month of March; a Publius was so called if he became an orphan before he had received a praenomen—others say the name is derived from the word "pubes," according to etymology.

6. A Tiberius would be so called because he was born near the river Tiber. The praenomen Titus was borrowed from the Sabines; so too Appius from Attus, a praenomen from the same region. A Caeso was so called because he had been cut out of his dead mother's womb; a Servius because he had been preserved in his mother's womb even though she was dead; a Spurius would have been born of an unknown father, as of seed that had been "scattered" σπορά́δην. The only patrician gens or clan to use Numerius as a praenomen is the Fabian, for the reason that the sole male survivor of the gens—after 306 Fabians were slain at the Cremera river—complied, when he was married to the daughter of Numerius Otacilius Maleventanus, with an agreement that stipulated that the first son she bore him would receive for his praenomen that of his maternal grandfather.

Praenomens of women in ancient times, which were in frequent use, were often derived from the names of colors, Rutilia, Caesellia, Rodacilla, Murrula, Burra. Those praenomens for females taken from male praenomens were Gaia, Lucia, Publia, Numeria. Of these, Gaia is the most frequently used of all. For, they way that Gaia Caecilia, the wife of King Tarquinius Priscus, was the best spinster (female spinner) of all and that this fact established the custom that young brides at the front-door of their husbands' houses when asked what they are called answer that they are called Gaia.

Praenomina, Origins and Etymologies

Now, if Terentius Varro did in fact number among the 500 or more volumes he actually wrote—this polymath died at the age of 88 in 28 B.C.—the *de Praenominibus* attributed to him, then we can add on his

authority (itself not always reliable, it must be added) some other *praenomina* in use: *Agrippa, Ancus, Caesar, Faustus, Hostus, Lar, Opiter, Posthumus, Proculus, Sertor, Statius, Tullus, Volero,* and *Vopsicus.* Even if the *de Praenominibus* be a forgery, at least one of these forenames has historical vindication. Eight decades before Christ, in the time of Sulla and as part of that dictator's conservative policy, it became the fashion to revive (or manufacture) antique names such as *Faustus* and *Cossus.* The same desire to recall the past is seen today in naming practices for such modern things as the streets in housing developments and such persons as those, prompted by Alex Haley or others, seeking "roots" in an ethnic past.[44]

Thus, number names (as we have called them) were not the only category of *praenomina.* Children could be named for the time or circumstance of their birth, or be given names related to the rank of their parents, or bear names that dedicated them to (or associated them with) a particular deity, somewhat in the way that Christian children are dedicated to the saints whose names they bear. Thus in other times and places children might be named *Nuru, V.J. Day, Michael, Alladin, Francis Xavier,* etc. The Romans did not use some systems found elsewhere: for example, they did not make new names for children out of elements of their parents' names (as did the Anglo-Saxons) or invent names that were unique.

Let us consider the names derived from deities first, for *Marcus* (from *Mars*) was the most popular. It was the *echt* Roman name, as we have suggested, for it combined in a single forename the suggestion of martial virtue (and thus was considered a fortunate name) and a remembrance of the god who, as father of the miraculous twins

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[44] At the annual meeting of The American Name Society, December 29, 1977, in Chicago, John Algeo read a paper (v. *Names* 26:1) on "Classic *versus* Classy: Changing Fashions in Street Names" that emphasized the developers' tendency to stress "Early American" names. Other tendencies are illustrated in articles in *Labeled for Life* (Commerce, Texas, 1977) and other publications of Fred Tarpley's South Central Names Institutes and papers at the Names Institutes (Fairleigh Dickinson University) and The Connecticut Place-Names Symposia (Willimantic, Conn.). Antedating *Roots,* ethnic forenames were stressed by Sue Browder in *The New Age Baby Name Book* (Warner, 1974) and other publications. Changing fashions in forenames are documented and delightfully discussed in Leslie A. Dunkling's *First Names First* (1977).

An early study of Roman forenames, George Davis Chase's "The Origin of Roman Praenomina," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* VIII (1897), 182-183, makes interesting points about the father's choice of forenames for sons: "The absence of the first four numerals and the frequent use of Quintus and Sextus and occasional use of the higher ordinals show that up to five a Roman was never forced to resort to numbering to distinguish his sons,—that every *pater familias* had the free choice of at least four *praenomina*; but that in the case of more than four sons many were obliged to employ numerals.

Romulus and Remus, founders of the city, was in effect grandfather of Rome. The Oscan name of Mars provided *Mamercus. Gaius* may have come from the Earth Goddess (as we have seen) and *Tiberius* from a sort of deity, old Father Tiber.[45]

Augustus and Claudius were eventually deified, but Tiberius was too unpopular to be given this honor by the Senate, so *Tiberius* as a deity-connected name has nothing to do with the emperor who bore the name. *Titus* comes, however, indirectly from a (Sabine) deity, having passed through the name of a tribe, the Tities.

Earlier we touched upon *praenomina* derived from circumstances of birth (example = *Lucius*) and Varro has mentioned *Lucius, Manius,* and *Posthumus.*[46] So *Lucius* is the "light" (of day) and *Manius* is "morning" (though *matinee* means "afternoon" to us now) and *Posthumus* arrives after his father is dead. *Gnaeus* is the name most closely (if not most obviously) connected with the fact of birth: it just means "born," and, by extension, "birthmark." Changes in language slightly disguise its connection with words like *natal, nativity,* and *gynecology. Spurius* sounds as if the child might have been rejected, but actually it comes from the ceremony of his acceptance. It seems to derive from *spurcus* = "unclean," generating the connotations of *spurning* that which is *spurious.* (Our English word may come from eponomy: Heinrich Spuhr was an accomplished forger.) Some original *Spurius* children may have been bastards and not picked up from the hearth or accepted by the legal father only with this distinctive name. In time, however, what once may have been a stigma of illegitimacy was borne as a lexically opaque

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45 Varro, *de Lingua Latina,* V, 30: "*Sed de Tiberis nomine anceps historia. Nam et suum Etruria et Latium suum esse credit, quod fuerunt qui ab Thebri vincio regulo Veientum dixerint appellatum, primo Thebrim. Sunt qui Tiberim priscum nomen Latinum Albulam vocitatum litteris tradiderint, posterius propter Tiberinum regem Latinorum mutatum, quod ibi interierit: nam hoc eius ut tradunt sepulcrum.*" Whether there was a Thebris, chieftain of the Veians—Veii was destroyed by Camillus and the Romans, 396 B.C.—or a Tiberinus, King of the Latins, ninth in descent from Aeneas and great-grandfather of Numitor and Amulius, is uncertain. If the river was at first called *Albula* it may have been from *albus* ("white," probably foaming) or just as easily from a pre-Italic word (surviving in *Alps*) meaning "mountain." Was the Tiber at first a non-shining water or a mountain stream? Was its name changed to an Etrurian or a Roman (Latin) one? We favor the theory that the tiber was renamed for Tiberinus, who is supposed to have drowned in an attempt to cross it (Livy, I, 3). Was Father Tiber a deity? Macaulay seems to have thought so: "Father Tiber, to whom the Romans pray."

46 *Posthumus* is not to be confused with *post humus* ("after [burial in] the earth") but is derived from the nominalization of the adverb *post* ("after" = "the after thing") + *-us* (added to masculinize it): "the male thing that came after" the death of his father, not after the father was placed in the earth. *Posthumus* is listed as a *praenomen* by Varro but rarely occurs as such as far as we can find and so we deal with the name under *agnomina.*

name without trouble, as the *Fitzroy* and *FitzGerald* names have lost their original significance of the days when the Norman French *fils* ("son") was tacked onto the names of illegitimate children: *fils* [*du*] *roi*: "king's bastard." Moreover, there was a time when it was certainly better to be any kind of a son of a personage (such as an important Irish earl, Fitzgerald—one Osbern Fitz Richard figures in a royal genealogy) than the legitimate offspring of a nobody. Arms, even if differenced with a bar sinister, were better than none, and those of important bastards were borne with pride, even arrogance.

It is possible that *Spurius* did not mark the bastard at all. This matter is one of the "Roman Questions" from the ethical essays called Plutarch's *Moralia.* Plutarch was interested in all sorts of name customs: why do brides conducted to their homes use the expression "Where you are Gaius, there am I Gaia"? why does the name of *June* suggest it is a good time to marry? why was the house of Manlius "bound by an oath that none of them should ever bear the name of Marcus" (see Plutarch's *Life of Camillus* XXXVI, 148D)? Why are girls named on the eighth day but boys on the ninth (see Roman Question 102)? Why do they call Bacchus *Liber Pater*?

Plutarch on "Why do they call children of unknown fathers *spurii*?":

> Now the reason is not, as the Greeks believe and lawyers in court are wont to assert, that these children are begotten of some promiscuous and common seed; but Spurius is a name like Sextus and Decimus and Gaius. They do not write first names in full, but by one letter, as Titus (T.) and Lucius (L.) and Marcus (M.); or by two, as Tiberius (Ti.) and Gnaeus (Cn.); or by three, as Sextus (Sex.) and Servius (Ser.). Spurius, then, is one of those written by two letters: Sp. And by these two letters they also denote children of unknown fathers, *sine patre* [*sine patris* in the manuscripts, Plutarch or some copyist confusing the Latin ablative and genitive, which are one in Greek], that is "without a father"; by the *s* they indicate *sine* and by the *p patre.* This, then, caused the error, the writing of the same abbreviation for *sine patre* and for Spurius.
>
> I must state the other explanation also, but it is somewhat absurd: They assert that the Sabines used the word *spurius* for the *pudenda muliebria*, and it later came about that they called the child born of an unmarried, unespoused woman by this name, as if in mockery.

Throughout we have undertaken to spell out *praenomina* as much as possible and we also hope to simplify matters by giving full three-barreled Roman names, though Latin writers did not do so with any regularity except in the most formal instances, any more than full names are always given today.

But to return to *Spurius*: we venture to guess that Spurius Latinus (mentioned in connection with the *Horatii* at the bridge) did much to establish the popularity of the *praenomen*, for though he was certainly legendary he was regarded by the Romans as historical and they would have defended his authenticity as hotly as some Americans might the story of George Washington's cherry tree. *Spurius* was respectable and gave rise to *Spurinus* (Quintus Petillius Spurinus had King Numa's books burned, 181 B.C.) and *Spurinna* (Vestritius Spurinna warned Caesar of "the Ides of March"), two *cognomina.*

The name *Servius* (slave) became quite respectable as well. It had been the name of a Roman king, Servius Tullius. He received the name because his mother was a slave in the household of Tarquinius Priscus ("The Original"). The mother (Ocrisia) was captured at Corniculum and her baby was brought up in the royal household because Tarquinius' wife (Tanaquil) was a seeress and foresaw the child's greatness (or helped along her self-fulfilling prophecy). Servius Tullius was helped on his career by getting married to the daughter of Tanaquil and Tarquinius (whose name, of course, was Tarquinia). The same Latin word gave us Servile Wars, two in Sicily and one involving the popular hero Spartacus (best known to moderns from the popular novel, the epic film with Kirk Douglas, or the Russians' socially-significant ballet), but *Servius* as a name is not involved with them.

Statius and *Publius* likewise referred to status, unless *Statius* is somehow connected to the epithet of Jupiter Stator ("The Sustainer"). *Publius* may suggest growing up, coming of age (*pubes* = grown up), going public (coming out in society) at puberty, putting aside the *toga praetexta* for the *toga virilis.*

Numerius belongs among the number names, but meaning simply "numbered" it does not seem very useful. Could it convey "notable" in some way?[47] *Kaeso* is the source of the *cognomen* of Caesar and has

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47 *Numerius* also appears as a *gens* name. Varro (IX, 55) writes: "There are names *Marcus* and *Numerius* but no *Marca* and *Numeria.*" He is wrong: *Numeria* does occur, if only as a divine name. History records the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Numerianus—he lasted only eight months in A.D. 283-284—and his *agnomen* indicates he was adopted out of the *gens* Numeria. There was a Numericus whom Caesar's forces captured at Dyrrhachium (46 B.C.). As for the *Secunda* Varro brings up, that may be another error. We find no second daughters with the name at all. Publius Pomponius Secundus (the tragic poet who knew both Sejanus and Pliny) was not the second of that name. *Secundus* worked differently. One Julius Secundus published orations in the Age of Titus (A.D. 79-81). The Romans did not call second sons Secundus (or Minor) in historical times, if ever. Chase (*op. cit.*, p. 172) mentions that Secunda occurs in a dozen inscriptions found in Gallia Cisalpina, in some of which *Secunda* is abbreviated *Seq.* The importance of this is that it shows that the word for "second" is derived from the word for "following," a word we see in the common abbreviation *et seq.*

been the subject of more interest than most of these names. Mention it to one person and he may say it comes from "cut" while another will suggest "greenish-blue eyes." In any case, it gives us *kaiser* and *czar* and *Caesarian* operations. Another name that counsels caution in interpretation is *Appius.* Here we are willing to risk a guess: it is that *Appius* suggests *ab* (or *ad*) *Pius. Pius* is familiar to moderns as a papal title, dating from after the time of that man who, raised to the rank of *pontifex maximus,* Vicar of Christ, thought his given name (which translated as *Swine-snout*) lacked a certain dignity: that pope set the fashion of taking new names on assuming the throne of Peter and a dozen men have called themselves *Pius*, appropriately religious. We believe *Appius* may come from *ad pius deum* (sanctified by being dedicated to a god). Certainly *pius* is Aeneas' most characteristic epithet.

For *Aulus* we refer the reader to footnote 36, *supra*, where *Auletes* ("flute-player") was a soubriquet for Ptolemy XI. Of course no Roman would demean himself by playing the flute: the war-like Romans thought that was the province of Greeks and other foreigners along with such unmasculine professions as music and medicine. The Etruscans, however, were flute-players: Aristotle said, "they fight, knead dough, and beat their slaves to the sound of a flute." Roman flute-players may have performed in the *aula* (courtyard) of big houses and the word came to be associated with the big house, then with the palace or royal residence (the same word is used for the cell of the queen bee in Latin), and finally we get *auctoritas aulae* (princely power). Whether the name comes from the courtyard with its pillars or the side-by-side tubes of the *syrinx* or *suringx* (which we call "pipes of Pan")[48] or somewhere else, *Aulus* becomes a name not unlike the *Prince* we use now chiefly for dogs. It was a Roman name that called its

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[48] Greek legend has Pan ("all," Arcadian god of all nature, later thought of as a son of Hermes) chasing a nymph (Greek *νύμφη* became Roman *nympha*) into the river Ladon where (at her request) she was changed into a reed for protection. Pan then made his pipes out of reeds, different lengths giving him different notes. As for *Pan* = "all," the aboriginal Irish gods include Dagda (good god, "good for all needs"). One of the most important prehistoric grave mounds in Ireland is Brí Léith (Co. Longford), home of Midii, a god "who fostered the god Oengus mac Óc, son of the Dagda and Bound," the goddess of the Bóinne (Boyne). "One of the earliest Irish prose stories tells of the Dagda, his son the god Oengus (Angus) ma Óc, and. . . of their search for the maiden who visited Oengus at night so that he fell into a wasting sickness for love of her." A vampire, a *belle dame sans merci,* or what? Curious how these legends crop up in various cultures. Can onomastics assist in making connections? Many connections between Greek and Roman cultures can be demonstrated through an understanding of names. Now Roman names need to be studied as clues to connections between the Romans and many so-called barbarian peoples of Europe—and elsewhere.

bearer to live up to it as, in a recent television series, *The Awakening Land*, a pioneer American woman in Ohio called her son *Resolve*, saying that a boy ought to have a name that made a "demand" upon him. *Aulus* was expected to grow up to be no effete flute-player but a warring leader of men.

Agrippa ("born feet first") and Caesar ("cut" from the mother) have already been noted. The first Caesar may well have been born by Caesarian section but by the time Julius Caesar was born the name was hereditary. Julius Caesar cannot have been a Caesarian birth, our obstetricians advise us, for his mother survived his birth and a Caesarian operation in those days was almost certainly fatal to the mother. It would very likely never have been performed until after the death of a woman carrying a child. Still, Macduff was "not of woman born"—we are not told whether his mother perished to make this useful, lucky beginning possible for him—and some African tribes that were clever enough to tie off the uterus (and use mud-packs skilfully) managed Caesarian births without fatalities. Oddly, if *Caesar* is not from "cut," as some suggest, then it may be from *caesaries* ("head of hair," from which the Romans had a word for *sod* also) and one thing that is sure about "the" Caesar, Julius Caesar, was that he did not have a full head of hair: his comb-it-forward hair style is famous—one critic of the recent television series *I, Claudius* complained of the "idiot fringe" adopted to make all the English actors look Roman, as if that could suffice—and Caesar preferred to wear a crown of laurel leaves in public to hide his baldness.[49]

One "Aelius Spartianus" writing the life of Aelius Caesar in an *Augustan History* we shall call for a gallimaufry of odd onomastic facts *infra* says of Caesar that

> the most learned men and the most scholarly [we like the distinction] think that he who was first called was named Caesar either from killing in a battle an elephant (which in the language of the Moors is called *caesai*), or because he was born when his mother was dead and her stomach was cut open (*caeso*), or because he rushed forth from his mother's womb with a thick growth of hair (*caesaries*), or because he had grey eyes (*oculis caesiis*) and superhuman energy. However this may be, certainly it was a happy necessity which resulted in the growth of a name so distinguished and one that shall endure for as long as the eternal universe.

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49 Tradition, if not history, dictates that it was a golden simulacrum of laurel leaves. Of course the original Greek idea was the *impermanence* of the hero's crown, an idea that is often found in literature (as in A. E. Housman's "To an Athlete, Dying Young").

Still another linguistic detail arguably related to Caesar arises from the fact that in tossing a coin the Roman said *aut caput aut navis*, the "heads" being *caput* and our "tails" depicting the prow of a ship. The famous phrase *aut caesar aut nihil*, we remark, retains the initial consonants and one phrase may have given birth to the other in the consideration of alternatives.

Ancus ("servant") we still have in *ancillary*. Ancus Martius was the fourth (legendary) King of Rome, the grandsom of Numa. His father was a god who, in the guise of a handsome servant, appeared to Numa's daughter (so she said). A Roman bearing this name would have considered it a grand one, not a servant's name at all, because of its royal heritage, as *Stuart* (steward) functions in English.

Faustus is not the same as *Felix* or *Fortunatus*. *Faustus* means "lucky," from *favor*, *Felix* means "happy" (*cf. Arabia Felix*), and *Fortunatus* means "prosperous." The root is *fors* (chance). People get these meanings confused. Also confusing is *Hostos*, for the *host* was originally both the invitor and the guest (each being *hostile*, that is strange, to each other) and the *hostage* was held prisoner but at the same time bound by laws of *hospitality*. The third of the seven kings of Rome was Tullus Hostilius. The author of the *Bellum Historicum*—the war being that of C. Sempronius Tuditanus against Iapydes the Illyrian, 129 B.C.—was Hostius, epic poet of the Second Century B.C. *Lar* we have encountered in the story of Lars Porsena and is related to household gods. Among the Etruscans, the first son was called *Lar* (or *Lars*: it is a popular Norwegian name, "crowned with laurel," and occurs as *Loren*, etc.) and the second son was called *Aruns*. Whether these were "One" and "Two" or "Elder" and "Younger" or more conventional names is unclear. The most famous *Aruns* was the younger brother of Lucius Tarquinius Superbus—not Lars Tarquinius?—who was murdered by Superbus' wife (Tullia) so that she could marry Superbus (Tullia also killed his wife, who was her sister) and become Queen of Rome. (Servius Tullius, her father, raised a fuss about this; she ran him down in the street and killed him.)

Opiter (if *Statius* comes from a title of Jupiter) is the second name derived from that source and is given to children whose *patres* are dead but whose *avi* (grandfathers) are still alive. It stresses that the god brings (supplies) succor. It must not be confused with *Opimius*.[50] *Proculus* suggests "from a distance," the father being far absent at the

50 This is a *nomen* = "plump." The *vinum opimianum* was the best because of the exra-warm autumn of the year 121 B.C., the year in which Opimius was consul (Cicero, *Brut.* 83, 287).

time of the son's birth. Or it could mean "above," as in rank. Perhaps proculus = "little prince" from *procer* (nobleman).[51] *Sertor* may be a "sower," a progenitor. *Tullus* (as in Tullus Hostilius) may be related to *turris* (tower), a symbol of strength from time immemorial. The *Vol-* of *Volero* looks Tuscan but the name seems to come from *volo* (I wish), a wished-for child (or one wished happiness). Plutarch says *Vopsicus* is the appropriate name for a male survivor if one of a pair of twins dies at birth, agreeing with Varro.

Twins remind us that the Romans tended to think of twins as more closely related than ordinary siblings, rather like Roderick and Madeline in *The Fall of the House of Usher*, two parts of the same life, in a way. So a girl who had a twin brother might share his *praenomen:* she might be named *Julia Gemella* (Julia the Twin) or, say, *Gnaea Gemella* (Gnaeus' Twin). This was more than the modern idea of being cute or underlining the unusual fact of a twin birth by giving twins names that begin with the same letter or rhyme (or perpetrating something like *Heather* and *Jan*). An historical example is that of Sulla's twins by his fourth wife (of five): they were *Faustus Cornelius* and *Fausta Gemella.* Twin names marked in this case the good fortune of the father (it was the year of his first consulship) and of the mother, Caecilia Metella (who bore the twins).[52]

According to our rule, slaves, twins or triplets or whatever, would all be (e.g.) *Marcipuer, Titipor,* etc. The occasional difficulties must have been solved in some practical way by Romans who, though they prided themselves on being lawgivers, were quintessentially men of the world and sought practical answers to problems. Why not call slave twins *Castor* and *Pollux*? In any case, practically speaking, the names of slaves were for the convenience of their owners, not for the benefit of the slaves, and no one in authority cared very much about slave names *per se.*

The most famous *praenomina*, names people cared about a great deal, were the names of the gods. One might think these would have been *nomina*, but (in fact) they really should be considered as *cognomina*. The *nomina*, or basic names, came largely from foreign sources and did not need any Roman rules.[53]

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51 You will not find *procer* in Latin literature. Many words the Romans knew did not get into texts that have survived. But the phrase *agnosco procerem* (I recognize the nobleman) we find in Juvenal, so we venture to construct the nominative.

52 See Plutarch's *Life of Sulla* XXII, 34, 37.

53 In Swanson's *A Characterization of the Roman Poetic Onomasticon* (already mentioned) we find "particular attention devoted to oddities, curios, and exceptions. In covering phonological

Divine Names

"Exsurgent mortui et ad me veniunt" says the necromancer, and the power to raise the dead and call them to the service of the living resides importantly in the power of names. In many religions the names of the gods are full of power. Some names are even unknown, lest they be manipulated.

The names of the deities of the Romans were, like those deities themselves, in many instances an inheritance from the culture of Greece, though of course the Romans admitted to their culture a great many supernatural beings and religious concepts from other cultures with which they had contact. Building a *Pantheon* was typically Roman. So perhaps was the caution and comprehensiveness of praying also to an unknown deity *sive deo sive deae* "whether god or goddess," nameless but to be considered.

Look at the names of the Greek deities and you will see the nature of the supernatural beings the Romans came to worship, for their names might change but their nature does not and in the Greek their "identities" are clearer. Thus we learn about the Romans by studying Greek names.

Zeus (*Ζεύς*) is "brightness of the upper air." His wife *Hera* (*Ἥρα*) suggests "lower air." These names mark them as joint rulers of the heavens. *Hestia* (*Ἑστία*) suggests "dying fire," the sun setting in the west, the Hesperides. *Dis* (*Δίς*) or *Hades* (*Ἅιδης*) was Latinized as *Pluto*, not daring to name the god but rather stressing the wealth of the underworld. *Demeter* (*Δημήτηρ*) was the Earth Mother and the water god was *Poisedon* (*Ποσειδῶν*), a name related to *pontos* (the main, the open sea) and connected also with *πότος*, *πόντος*, and *ποταμός*, which makes Poisedon the "god of flowing waters, nourisher of plants."[54] Other epithets connected him with holding the earth (*γαιήοχος*) or shaking it like the galloping horses (*ἱππιάναξ*) or cleaving Tempe to drain the land (*πετραῖος*) or making the bull sacred to him (*ταύπεος*).

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variations, morphology, word formation, syntax, semantics, and provenience of names," the publisher's advertisement briefly states, "the author shows that the irregularities and unpredictable variants are too numerous and complex to be explained away by specious 'rules.'" The student of onomastics must always balance the search for rules with the human element which dictates variations. In this essay we have attempted to draw as many general conclusions as are warranted and to cite interesting contradictions or complexities, but before the exceptions are noted the general statement must be made. We hope to stimulate more research and generate more knowledge.

54 Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 780.

As son of Cronus[55] he was *Cronius* (and *Saturnius* to the Romans). Where *Dis* was an "unutterable name," *Poseidon* (*Neptune*) was a fortunate one and he was often spoken of as the son of Cronos ("rock") and Rhea ("thingness"), "lord of the land" but chosen (by lot) to be god of the sea.

These were the six elder *Olympians* (they lived on Mount Olympus—not in Olympia, which was at the other end of Greece).

The six younger Olympians were children of Zeus: Hera bore him *Ares* (Ἄρης, "curse") and *Hephaistos* (Ἥφαιστος, "fiery"); by Leto (the Roman Latona) Zeus had the twins *Apollo* (Ἀπόλλων, "Destroyer," as by the fierce rays of the sun) and *Artemis* (Ἄρτεμις, connected with the moon, virginity, the wild wood, by extension, hunting) and united with several savage religions (whence *Artemis Brauronia, Artemis Orthia, Artemis Taurica, Artemis Tauropolos,* etc.)—she is everything from a female Pan and a bear-goddess (*Arktos* = "bear") to *Artemis Eileithyia*, the goddess presiding over childbirth and young animals (κουροτρόφος): by *Dione* (Διώνη, "bright") a daughter, *Aphrodite* (Ἀφροδίτη, "risen from the foam," for she was born when her father's severed genitals struck the foam of the Mediterranean; by *Metis* (Μῆτις, "prudence"), supposedly swallowed by Zeus, a daughter *Athena* (Ἀθήνη, "from nowhere," springing from the head of Zeus). Other children of Zeus were *Hermes* (Ἑρμῆς, "a boundary stone," phallic) by the nymph of *Cyllene* (Μαῖα, "mother" or "midwife") the daughter of *Atlas* (Ἄτλας, "one who endures"), and *Dionysus. Dionysus* (Διόννσος) was also known by his Lydian name *Bakkhos*, which the Romans rendered as *Bacchus.* He started out as a Thracian (or Theban, son of Semele) fertility god as a contrast to Apollo and in opposition to his cousin *Pentheus* (Πενθεύς, "sorrow," as in *Nepenthe* = "lack of sorrow"). Latinized names were developed for two other offspring: *Prometheus* and *Epimetheus*, whose names mean "foresight" and "hindsight" (Προμηθεύς and Ἐπιμηθεύς). *Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit* ("captive Greece made captive her rude conquerer") said Horace [*Ep.* II. i, 156], and certainly her divinities came to rule over the Romans, although their names and functions were somtimes altered.

55 Cronus (*Κρόνος*) was the youngest of the Titans (12 or 13 children of Uranus, *Οὐρανός*) the husband—and perhaps son—of Gaea, the Earth) and is not *Chronos,* "Time." So it was not Time who swallowed his children. But Cronus swallowed five of six children (Hera, Hestia, Dis, Demeter, Poseidon) and not Zeus (for whom a rock in swaddling clothes was substituted). The rock caused Cronus to regurgitate the children in reverse order, and thus Zeus became at once the eldest and the youngest of the gods. The Romans identified their *Saturnus* with Cronus. Edwin Panofsky, the iconographer, discusses the confusion of *Cronus* and *Chronos.*

It will have been noted that these Greek divinities were known by various names as their nature changed and they were associated with more or less comparable deities from other religions. Thus Dionysus was originally a nature god, like the Arcadian *Pan* (Πάν) whom the Greeks limited to flocks and shepherds. *Βάκχος* suggests he was worshipped with loud cries.[56] The *Bacchanalia* ranged from the worship of trees to human sacrifice and from sober mysteries to wild orgies. So when these deities were taken over by the Romans they were associated with various local cults and legends and the Roman names for the gods were affected by numerous non-Greek traditions and languages. We shall suggest some of these in the mention of selected "epithets or surnames" of Roman gods but the subject is too extensive to be completely covered here. It deserves, as do Greek epithets, from those of the gods to those of kings (such as Demetrius *Poliorcetes* (Πολιορκητής, "The Beseiger") and lesser mortals, a more extensive examination elsewhere: each epithet requires recounting a legend, and for that of *ignigenos* ("fire-born") for Dionysus, or an explanation of just what it was that Demetrius besieged (or why he was called ὁ Σωτήρ, "The Preserver"), there is a whole story: "thereby hangs a tale." It is, however, an interesting tangle of linguistics and literature, of myth and history, and may tempt some industrious scholar of onomastics and classics.

Briefly, Zeus became *Jupiter* (for the nominative) and *Jov-* (for the oblique cases), for us *Jove*, a name that grew quite familiar for a number of odd reasons, perhaps the strangest of which was the censorship of English plays of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries under the office of the Master of the Revels when actors, regarded as servants of the royal household under the Lord Chamberlain, were closely controlled: the words *God* and *Jesus* were forbidden, and so *Jove* was substituted, either by the censor or the poet himself, anticipating

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56 This was "originally a mere epithet or surname of Dionysus, and does not occur until after the time of Herodotus." Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 293. (It may also suggest a fox god or mask.) The cry was *εὐοῖ σαβοί* (Dem. *de* Cor., p. 313, 260). This produced the names *Evius* and *Sabazius.* The long dress (*bassara*) of his votaries created the name *Bassareus* and the *Bacchantes* were *Maenades, Thyiades,* and *Clodones* and as the god of revelry—he became god of wine some time after Homer's period—he is *Bromius (Βρόμιος*). He is related to the Getac god *Zalmaxis* (they communicated with him by tossing one of their number upon spears: he left then to carry the message) also worshipped in Thrace and Phrygia and the earth god of Thebes and from Boeotia came the worship of him as god of wine and revelry which led to Thespis on a cart in Icaria, "enthusiastic" (or inspired by the god) to create the "goat song" of tragedy. In Crete he was *Dionysus Zagreus,* related to the crushing of the grape but also the tearing to pieces of human sacrifices: at Lesbos, Chios, etc., he was ὠμηστής ("eater of raw flesh"), a cannibal god like the Aztec Chacmol.

censorship. Oddly, the Etruscans called him *Tinea* and the Oscans called him *Lucetius* (for he was their god of light).

As a god of the heavens he became *Jupiter Pluvius, Jupiter Fulgurator, Jupiter Tonitrualis, Jupiter Tonans, Jupiter Fulminator.* He was the *Jupiter Capitolinus* of the Capitoline Hill and the *Jupiter Latiaris* of the Alban Mount, the *Jupiter Indiges* (sometimes *Aeneas Indiges*) of the river Numicus, the *Jupiter Elicius* of the *aqualicium* (procession evoking help of the rain god in time of drought), the *Jupiter Ruminus* as corn god and *Jupiter Silvanus* (or *Arborator*) as chief of the rural deities. Because his victims were struck down (*ferire* = "to strike") in sacrifice, he was *Jupiter Feretrius* and in exchange for worship would grant victory (*Jupiter Victor, Jupiter Invictus*) and stability (*Jupiter Stator*) and grandeur (*Jupiter Optimus Maximus*) to the state. As *Jupiter Liber* he ruled over wine festivals, as *Jupiter Farreus* over marriage rites and Cato in the *Scriptores Rei Rusticae* (132) says he was *Jupiter Dapalis* to the countryman. He replaced local deities where Roman legions triumphed: the temple of *Jupiter Penninus* replaced that of a Celtic deity on the Great St. Bernard in the Alps, and oriental sun gods at Doliche (between Zeugman and Germanicia) and "The City of the Sun" Heliopolis (site of the Syrian god Baal) were superseded by *Jupiter Dolichenus* and *Jupiter Heliopolitanus.*

Hera becomes *Juno* (suggesting "full bloom"), Hestia becomes *Vesta* of the Vestal Virgins (suggesting "evening," as in *vespers*). This was a mere transliteration, but *Dis'* very name was dangerous to utter and so he was *Aides* ("The Unseen") and most often *Pluto*, as in *plutocrat* and *plutocracy,* rather hopefully a "giver of wealth." Demeter becomes *Ceres* (reminding us of *cereal*) and Poseidon gets the *agnomen Neptunus* when the Roman god of water is connected with the Greek god of the sea, probably via the Etruscan *Nethuns* but possibly from the Greek νέφος = "cloud." It was reasonable for the Etruscans (who were called *Etrusci* or *Tusci* by the Romans, but called their own country *Rasena* and were called *Tyrrenhii,* Θυρρηνοί, or *Tyrsenia,* Θυρσηνία, by the Greeks)[57] to feature a sea god; they had come thither, supposedly, by sea from Asia Minor. The Romans were not essentially a maritime people. The celebrations of Neptune do somewhat suggest a Semitic festival, for he was feted in bowers built of tree branches and in

[57] An ancient tradition derived the name from Tyrsenus, son of the King of Lydia, who is supposed to have led his people to Etruria (or Tuscia): Lydian *Torrhebi.* (Herodotus i, 94; Strabo, p. 221; Plutarch, *Roman Questions,* 2; Tacitus, *Annales,* iv., 55.)

these huts (*umbrae*) the people drank and feasted. In Roman mythology his wife was *Salacia*, goddess of the salt sea.

The war god Ares is *Mars* (*mas* = "virility"), a name which at first was rendered *Maurs, Mavors,* etc., and later was reduplicated: *Marmar, Mamers, Mamurius.* As Jupiter was first *Diovis-pater,* so we find also *Marspiter* and *Maspiter* (*Mars-pater*).[58] As *Quirinus* he was (as we have noted) the Sabine god. The Sabine goddess equivalent was *Nerio* or *Neriene.* The Hirpini (from the Sabine *herpus* = "wolf") connected him with the wolf, making parallels with Apollo easier also. His titles were many. One will serve as an example: *Mars Gradivus*, "he who strides forward" (to fight), an interesting contrast to Mars the leaper, the rapist. *Mars Ultor* has been mentioned, *supra.*

Hephaistos is *Vulcan*, god of fire, or even *Mulciber*, (softener of metals), god of the *vulcanale* (altars of Vulcan) and *fornicalia* (which suggests *fornication* but involves quite a different sort of striking: that of the hammer on the anvil, for the word means *furnaces*). His aunt Vesta's fire was feminine and kindly; Vulcan's was male and fierce. She was goddess of the hearth; he was god of the forge. He was celebrated with *Vulcanalia* (August 23). His name was originally *Volcanus* (our fiery *volcano*) and he was related to the goddess who averted disaster by fire, the *Stata Mater.* Volcanus' son was *Caeculus*, who founded Praeneste. Caeculus' story was much like that of Servius Tullius.

Among the major divinities, Apollo uniquely keeps his Greek name, spreading out from the limited Homeric conception (prophecy, plagues) to become one of the supreme gods and involving various areas of interest. To the Romans he is *Nominus* ("herdsman") and the early Greeks gave him names which the Romans later rendered as *Lycaeus* ("protector from wolves") and *Smintheus* ("guardian of farmers against mice").[59] To the Etruscans he was *Aplu.* In Rome he is *Cumaeus Apollo* as he was *Delius* (born at Delos), *Delphicus* (worshipped at Delphi—not to be confused with *Delphus*, one of Apollo's

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58 This last seems to reinforce a derivation from *mas,* but some writers like to see him as a sun god (Sol, Helios, etc.) and stress *mar* = "to shine," an ancient Latin root (*cf.* Greek *μαρμαίρω*). He was worshipped in March much as the return of Apollo was celebrated at Delphi in Spring. He seems to have no connection with the Phrygian *Marsyas,* though some scholars have tried to build on the slight resemblance of the names.

59 We may have place-names here: he was worshipped at Lycia and Sminthia. Scopas, the rival of Praxiteles, depicts Apollo with a mouse at his foot in a way that might suggest the mouse is not his victim (to preserve the grain stores) but sacred to him, like the dolphin, the cock, the grasshopper, the wolf, and the griffin (suggesting Hyperborean peoples "beyond the mountains," the "bringers of offerings to Apollo").

sons, who dedicated Delphi to Apollo) and *Lycius* (where he gave *Lycii sortes* at an oracle at Patara—not to be confused with *Lycius*, son of Hercules and Toxicate, daughter of Thespius) and *Cynthius* (from Mount Cynthus) and *Ismenius* (he had a temple on the borders of the Ismenus at Thebes)—not to be confused with *Ismenius*, Apollo's son by one of the Nereides, Melia, or the boy of the same name Apollo killed, son of Niobe and Amphion, or the son of Metope and Aesopus) and *Vulturnius.* The last of these was derived from the name of a shepherd (*Vulturnus*) who dedicated a temple to Apollo (in Ionia, on Mount Lissus, near Ephesus) after he had been let out of a subterranean cavern by vultures. This name *Vulturnus* was also given to the wind after it had much hurt the Romans at the Battle of Cannae, where Hannibal destroyed 40,000 of them (May 21, 216 B.C.) on "the field of blood" in Apulia. It had blown off the river Vulturnus. To complicate matters, the god of the Tiber was also *Vulturnus. Clarius* ("to clarify," delivering Oracles) and *Patareus* are from place-names—oracular temples dedicated to Apollo. He was also *Paean* when, like Asclepius, he was physician to the gods; *Catharsius* (from "purification"), *Apotropaeus* ("protector from harm"), and *Agyieus* ("guardian of the gates")' but chiefly *Phoebus Apollo* ("fiery"). Augustus adopted Apollo as his family god (in place of the more typically Roman, and belligerent, Mars) but there was a worship of this god in Rome from the time of Tarquinius Superbus and a temple to him there as early as 432 B.C., so there were many centuries during which he could accumulate names, many of which (as we think amply demonstrated) can be very confusing.

Artemis became *Diana*, originally a goddess worshipped solely by the plebeians.[60] She was connected with various ancient deities lost in the mists of antiquity and especially with *Virbius*, a woodland god. A suggestion of "brightness" helped to connect her with the moon and she reflected the light of her brother, the sun god Phoebus Apollo. From Hippolytus having been translated to the grove of Nemus in Aricia we got *Diana Nemorensis.*

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60 The name involves *dies, sub dio,* from which Preller gets Jana = Diana and Janus, respectively (originally) moon and sun divinities. He was much older among the Latins than Diana and was the god of the doorway (*janua*), which we connect with *January.* He is *Patulcius* ("The Opener") and *Clusius* ("The Closer"), looking forward and backward at the start of our year. (The Roman year originally began in March—as did ours, dated from Lady Day for a long time. It seemed better to date from The Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin than from the birth of Christ.) Presiding over the *calends* of each month he was *Junonius*, which confuses us with Juno.

Even more important to the Romans was *Venus*, their Aphrodite, associated with garden fertility and love and the temples of *Venus Erycina* (where she was regarded as the source of the Roman race, as mother of Aeneas—we have earlier mentioned *Venus Genetrix*) in Sicily and on the Capitoline Hill and *Venus Verticordia* ("Turner of the Heart") on the Via Salaria (a road so named because it covered in part the old way to the salt marshes). After the Samnite Wars, Fabius Gurges ("The Throat") instituted the worship of *Venus Obsequens* ("The Compliant," because she complied with his wishes) and *Venus Postvorta* ("Turned Backwards"). Both lovers and armies celebrated *Venus Victrix* ("Giver of Victories" in love and war), popularized by Julius Caesar. *Venus Calva* ("The Bald") has at least two guesses attached to it: either women during the time when the Gauls beseiged Rome gave their hair for bowstrings (Serv., *ad Aen.*, i, 720) or "she was prayed to by women to prevent their hair falling off."[61] She was worshipped at Cyprus (*Venus Cypria*), Paphos (*Venus Paphia*), Cythera (*Venus Cytherea*), Colias (*Venus Caliada* or *Colias* or *Colotis*), Eryx (*Erycina*), and as a goddess of the sea (*Aligena, Limnesia, Marina, Pontia, Pontogenia, Epipontia, Pelagia, Saligena, Thalassia,* etc.). The Botticelli ([Ales] Sandro di Mariano Filipepi) jokingly called "Venus on the Half-Shell" is *Venus Anadyomene*, rising from the sea. Venus was also *Epistrophia* as patroness of sex and even incest; *Urania* as goddess of sacred love; *Pandemos* as epitome of the vulgar and sensual. As *Exopolis*, her statue was outside the city of Athens; as *Euploea*, it was at Cnidos, the acme of the art of Praxiteles. She was queen of laughter (*Philommedis*) and attracted to the phallus (*Phallommeda*); *Area*, armed like Mars, and *duplex Amathusia* because depicted as male but in female dress; *Basilea*, queen of love, and *Hetaria*, patroness of courtesans; *Acidalia,* because of a fountain at Orchomenus (a Boeotian town also called the city of the *Minyans,* whence *Orchomenian Graces*), and *Acraea* and *Doris* (by the Cnidians); *Apaturia,* because she was deceitful, and *Mechanitis*, because of

61 Smith, *op. cit.*, 993. *Lemprière's Classical Dictionary of Proper Names Mentioned in Ancient Authors,* ed. F. A. Wright, New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, New Edition, 1949, p. 657, ventures: "*Calva,* because she was represented bald." Where? We cannot undertake to argue this matter further, but at this point, approximately half way through the present study, we confess that we must perforce raise many matters we cannot fully examine, omit many that readers may think of, and limit our use of examples. Our defense is to appeal to reason and to quote Johnson's Preface to his dictionary: 'In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed. . . .' If you miss the Blossius Aemilius Dracontius [author of *Romulae*] we need not say he comes too late but simply that "we could not mention everybody."

her machinations; *Murcia* (corrupted into *Myrtea*), because the myrtle was sacred to her, also related to *Mulcere*, because she was a "softener" and Vulcan's wife; *Cloacina*, because related to purification, or—more likely—because a Roman temple to her stood near the big sewer (*cloaca maxima*); *Libertina*, because she gratified libertines or because of some connection with the dead (*libertinarius* = "undertaker," or, to use a fake-Roman word euphemistically confected, *mortician*); the mother of Cupid (by Mars or Mercury), the Greek Eros, also Roman *Amor*. *Venus* itself could come from *vanus* ("empty") and be related to *vagina* or even from *gen-*, the root related to birth.

As patroness of Athens, Athena was extremely important to the Greeks. To the Romans she was *Minerva*; to the Etruscans, *Menerfa* or *Menfra*. She had many names and titles among the Romans, as she had had among the Greeks (who called her *Pallas Athena*, perhaps from the spear she used to "brandish"; *Parthenos* for she was virgin; *Tritonia*, because worshipped near lake Tritonis in Lybia (and Athens was also called *Tritonis*, from this); *Glaucopis*, for her blue eyes; *Agorea*, as goddess of markets in Sparta; *Hippia*, because she taught men how to manage the horse; *Stratea* and *Area* from her warlike qualities; *Coryphagenes*, because sprung from the brain of Zeus;[62] *Sais* from her temple there; the wingless victory, etc. Not to detain the reader too long with a list of Roman epithets for her, we might just mention that she has a name which (as with many others) occurs in the proverbial wisdom and slang of the Latin people: for example, a clumsy person acted *pingui Minerva*, like a fat-headed Minerva; a stupid person presuming to set an intelligent one straight caused a Roman to joke that *sus Minervam* [*docet*] = "a pig [teaches] Minerva." One authority states: "Her name is believed by some to contain the same root as *mens*; and she is accordingly the thinking power personified."[63]

Whereas Minerva was celebrated in the *quinquatrus* (five days), Mercury (Latin *Mercurius*) had only one day set aside for his festival (*mercuriales*, May 25). He is generally equated with the Greek Hermes but was the tutelary god of the guild (*collegium*) of merchants (*mercatores*), his name deriving from *merx* and *mercari*. He was

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62 Pindar (*Ol.*, vii, 35) says she sprang from Zeus' brow with a loud shout, fully-armed.

63 Sir William Smith, *Smaller Classical Dictionary*, ed. E.H. Blakeney and John Warrington (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Paperback edn., 1958), p. 192. On any such assertion classical scholars are certain to be divided and with many points we raise in our discussion of the onomasticon of the Greek and Roman gods and goddesses caution must be recommended. We do attempt to cite the most likely explanations or most popular guesses and hope that essaying a few of our own will be neither impertinent nor impractical.

probably the Etruscan god of commerce, *Turms.*[64] Cicero says there were at least five Roman gods called Mercurius: a son of Coelus and Lux (who would be a god of light); a son of Valens and Coronis (*Κορωνίς*); a son of Jupiter and Maia, one of the Pleiades; a son of the Nile; and another Egyptian god, *Thoth.* Or he could be the son of Bacchus and *Proserpina*, whom Homer calls *Persephonia* and Hesiod *Persephone.* Anyway, his festival was celebrated (with Maia's) in May and statues of him in various guises were set up in the streets: *Mercurius Malevolus* ("The Evil-Wisher"), *Mercurius Sobrius* ("The Sober"), etc. One authority attributes a street name (*Sobrius Vicus*) in Rome to one such statue but another says it was only that no wine (or milk, not wine) was sold there. He turns up as *Mercurius Trismegistus* ("Thrice-Powerful") like *Hermes Trismegistus*[65] and is involved with thieves, the dead, travelers, shepherds, orators, pickpockets, and many other groups but especially, *cum mercibus*, merchants. In Rome there was a Mercury's Well, as Ovid says in his *Fasti* (v, 673), and merchants sprinkled its water over their goods in order to make them more saleable and on themselves to wash themselves clean of the sin of lying about the merchandise in order to sell it. Statues of the messenger god with his winged cap (*petasus*) and wings on his heels (*talaria*) were very common. He was worshipped in Beotia at Tanagra as *Criophorus* (carrying a ram on his shoulders) because he revealed to the inhabitants that they could save the city from plague by carrying a ram that way around the walls. His *caduceus* caused him to be called *Caduceator.* He was also *Triplex, Cyllenius, Acacetos, Acacesius, Tricephalos, Chthonius, Camillus, Agoneus, Arcas, Delius* (like Apollo), etc. His children were numerous: by Chione, Autolycus, that snapper up of ill-considered trifles; by Cleobula, Myrtillus, whose murder by Pelops brought all the calamities upon that royal house (Myrtillus became a constellation in the sky); by

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64 Not related to *hermes*, phallic boundary stones, *terms*, etc.

65 There is some confusion about this name. Is it the god or is it the author of the Emerald Table of high magic, the god of magic or the magician? "Hermes Trismegistus—thrice-greatest—was supposedly a grandson of Adam, a sage of surpassing wisdom and the builder of the pyramids."—Richard Cavendish, *The Black Arts* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1967), p. 13. Incidentally, "classical names" often turn up in the history of magic: Paracelsus ("Beyond Celsus," Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim), Cornelius Agrippa (Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim), Caesar von Heisterbach (author of *Illustria Miracula*, 1220), to name a few Germans only. The adoption of Latinized names by medieval and Renaissance scholars has been dealt with elsewhere: the *locus classicus* is "Gerard Gerard" translated in both Latin and Greek to produce *Desiderius Erasmus.*

Antianara, Echion (not the same as he who sprang from the dragon's teeth sown by Cadmus) and Eurytus (among the Argonauts); by Creusa, of Cephalus (who Apollodorus says was the son of Mercury and Herse, the father of Tithonus—see Apollodorus 3, chapter 15—not to be confused with Diomede's son, or the king of Epirus in Livy, or the orator in Demosthenes, or Polemarchus' father in Plato's *Republic*); by Issa, of Prylis (the Lesbian town of Issa is named for the mother); by Lybia, of Lybis; by Venus, of Hermaphroditus; by Polimela, of Eudorus (whom Homer places at the Trojan War with Achilles); by Dryope (according to Homer's *Hymn to Pan*), of Pan—some writers say the chaste Penelope was carrying on in the absence of Ulysses and had a child she called *Pan* because he was the off-spring, she suggested, of all her suitors; and by Venus, of Priapus (unless Apollo was his father), whose name is *propter deformitatem et membri virilis magnitudinem* and whose epithets are *phallus, fascinus, Ithyphallus, ruber, rubicundus*. He gave the name Priapus to a town near Lampascus in Asia Minor where he fled from Lampascus and was chief deity; it is now called Caraboa.

In the literature there are many other epithets and "surnames" of the god: to cite but one more example, Bacchus is called *Lyaeus,* derived from λύειν, *solvere*, because wine frees the mind from care and melancholy, in both Horace's ninth *Epistle* and Lucan's *Pharsalia* I, verse 675. But we must move on to personal *cognomina* now, anthroponyms, the names not of gods but of real people. *Felix* (Kajanto found 3,716 instances) and *Fortunatus* (2,516) were the most common, but there were many others of interest.

COGNOMINA

Introduction

Varro may be a trifle disconcerting in that he cites *cognomina* not found anywhere else (such as *Prudens* and *Strenuus*), but we may commence our examination of *cognomina* with these passages from *de Lingua Latina*:

> *Propter ea verba quae erant proinde ac cognomina, ut prudens, candidus, strenuus, quod in his praeterea sunt discrimina propter incrementum, quod maius aut minus in his esse potest, accesit declinationum genus, ut a candido candidius candissimum sic a longo, divite, id genus aliis ut fieret.*
> (VIII, 17)

These words "like added family names," then—*prudent, frank, brisk, shining white, long, rich*—may be used in the comparative or the superlative, being adjectives, when we get names such as *Fulvius Nobilior, Fabius Maximus,* as well as *Helvius Pertinax, Urseus Ferox,* etc.

In IX, 71, Varro speaks of gladiators named *Faustini, Cascelliani, Caeciliani,* and *Aquiliani,* for it was the custom to name these groups from their owners' *nomina* (Faustius, Caescellius, Caecillius, Aquilius) and he calls it wrong to make *Scipionini* from *Scipio* (thinking it ought to be *Scipionarii*):

sic a Scipione quidam male dicunt Scipionionos: nam est Scipionarios.

He ascribes the difficulty to the fact that "appellations are rarely derived from surnames [*cognomina*] of this kind and they are not fully at home in use."

But "fully at home" in Roman usage was the *cognomen* added to the *praenomen* and the *nomen* and we must now examine its nature. The *cognomina* are the equivalent of surnames and were originally, at least, comparable to those nicknames or other names people acquired as they went through life. They began in ancient times with a single name (Plato suggested it be a happy one; others superstitiously sought a lucky one) and then might be known later as "of Syracuse," "of Halicarnassus," "the Blind," "the Stagyrite," etc. The Greek philosopher Heracleides Ponticus was born (*c.* 390 B.C.) at Heraclea in Pontus. Apollonius Rhodius lived in Rhodes. So a lover of his father was *Philopater*, of his mother *Philometer*, a conqueror *Nicator*, a benefactor *Euergetes*, and Aristeides was "The Just," Plato was "The Athenian Bee," Xenophon "The Attic Muse," Pythagoras "The Sage of Samos," Phocion "The Good," Menedaemus "The Eretrian Bull," Strato *Physicus* (from his study of natural philosophy). But were these names? Did anyone ever address Virgil as "The Mantuan Swan," or is it not merely a description, not a name?

From *Agnomina* to *Cognomina*

Most *cognomina* originally were *agnomina*, nicknames. Some arose from physical peculiarities: *Rufus* (or *Rufinus*) for a red-head, *Cin-*

cinnatus for a boy born with curly hair, *Flaccus* for someone flop-eared (or flabby). *Cicero* had wens, *Casca* looked old, *Celsus* was tall (but the later Paracelsus was not extremely tall, just "beyond Celsus" in skill), *Barbatus* bearded, *Chlorus* pale, *Curtius* short, *Longus* long (tall again—an English King Edward was "Longshanks"), *Lepidus* lovely. Some arose from mental qualities: *Maximus* was best, *Superbus* haughty, *Antipater* against (or the opposite of) his father, *Sophus* (from the Greek) wise, *Cato* clever, and *Brutus* brutish (or rather acting so to avoid extermination, a story we tell elsewhere). An occupation could give a name like *Curio* (priest of the *curia*, as priestly functions created in another culture the names *Levi* and *Cohen*), *Cursor* (runner), *Agricola* (farmer), and *Mallius* (softener—of metals, an ironworker, etc.). The implements or symbols of occupations also provided nicknames: not only was there a *Pictor* (painter) and a *Faber* (carpenter or workman) but others who dealt with the hoe, the shepherd's crook, the rooster, and so on (unless these were family totems). Foreign names came from distant places. The Greek Philippus—we note our modern word *philippic*, derived from Cicero's orations—and the French *Gallus* are but two examples of many. A man might be honored with *Rex* or *Victor* or stigmatized with *Blasius* (stammerer—it is striking how many kings suffered from this impediment). One might take a name from a totem: *Lupus* (wolf) or *Caepio* (onion—unless that is a private joke). Sometimes the names are tantalizingly obscure: what is behind *Tigellinus* (little beam of wood) or *Dolabella* (little war axe) or *Metellus* (pyramid, or goal-post)? The stories have vanished and the names remain, just as occurs with many place-names. Diminutives have always been popular nicknames, so we find *Marcellus* (little Marcus), *Lucullus* (little Lucius), *Catullus* (little Cato, little clever one—a fine name for the poet), even *Asellio* (little donkey).

A writer might get a name like *Calaber* after his death, just because his manuscript was discovered in Calabria. A name like that (like the name *El Greco*) would not be handed down. A military leader conquering at the outposts of empire would be driven on—in *Gulliver's Travels* Swift mocks the orders of knighthood by showing us puny men vying for colored pieces of thread—by the hope of attaining an honorific such as *Ismarus* (from a town in Thrace), *Sabinus* (from the Sabine territory), *Narboniensis* (from Gaul), or *Salonius* (from the capital of Dalmatia). This was more than the equivalent of the modern life peerage. It granted distinction to the whole family. The Emperor

Gallienus' wife was Cornelia Salonina, her son Salonius. The victory of an ancestor was commemorated. *Salonia* brings up an interesting point discussed in *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* LVIII-LIX (1948) where, in an article on the origin of the *nomen gentilicium*, it is suggested that the use of a matronymic of the Etruscans survives in the *cognomina* of two sons of Cato the Censor: that by Licinia was Marcus Porcius Cato Licianus and that by Salonia was Marcus Porcius Cato Salonianus.

Foreign names, used rather like the titles of Nelson of the Nile, Baron Byng of Vimy, Earl Alexander of Tunis, were handed down to descendants who need never to have seen these distant locales, just as we may know someone with a Hungarian or Sicilian barony who has never seen it, a Posner who never was in Poznan, a Warwick who has no English origins (singer Dionne Warwicke is black), a De Palma who does not know Italy.

Among the Franks (named, it is said, for Francion, son of Hector, the hero of Troy, though other explanations are nearer to hand) and later the French, for example, we see this nicknaming process at work. In no particular order, some names: Charlemagne (Charles the Great), Pepin *le Bref* (the short), Louis I *le Débonnaire*, Charles II *le Chauve*, Louis II *le Bègue*, Charles II *le Gros*, Charles III *le Simple*, Philipe *le Hardi*, Louis IV *d'Outremer* (taken across the water to England by his mother, not born there—English kings often had soubriquets derived from the places of their birth, such as Richard II "of Bordeaux" and Henry III "of Winchester," etc.). These were all similar to the Roman *agnomina*, as were the nicknames of John *Lackland*, Richard *Crookback*, *Farmer* George, Edward *the Peacemaker*, etc. They served one bearer only and were not inherited.

But some Roman nicknames became family traditions. *Rufus* and *Rutilus* might be handed down in several *gentes* and borne as *cognomina* by men who were not red-haired, just as some modern surnames do not fit their present owners. (In fact, a harmless onomastic game is to collect the names of people whose surnames match their occupations. That is considered remarkable now.)

It is odd that people were content to hold onto *Asellus, Asellio,* and *Asina*, however. (Perhaps the reference was to a totemic donkey or something else unrelated to the idea of stubbornness or stupidity.) But a King of Thomond (1446–1459) was Turlough Bog ("The Soft"), Sancho "The Cruel" was King of Navarre, Eric "Lamb" was King of Denmark (soon after Eric "The Very Good" in the Twelfth Century),

and the son of one of the sovereign princes of Wales was Idival Foel ("The Bald"). Even kings could not always control their soubriquets. One might prefer to be Valdemar "The Victorious" or Rhodri Mawr ("The Great") or Suleiman "The Magnificent" but be stuck with names like Ivan "The Terrible." But a father might leave his cognomen to only some, or even one, of his sons. His *cognomen ex virtute* he passed on by law only to his eldest son (with whom it died). Seneca the rhetorician (Marcus Annaeus Seneca Rhetor), the most famous professor of this subject in the reigns of Tiberius and Claudius, had an eldest son called Marcus Annaeus Novatus (or Noratus), a youngest son Lucius Annaeus Mella (or Mela, a Spanish name, as with the geographer Pomponius Mela—the Senecas came from Cordova), and—most famous—a middle son, the Stoic philosopher and closet dramatist, Lucius Annaeus Seneca (from whom the adjective *Senecan*, denoting blood-and-gore tragedy, has been derived in English since his works were first translated, by Jasper Heywood, relative of a famous Elizabethan dramatist). Novatus was adopted by the rhetorician Junius Gallio and changed his name to Lucius Junius Gallio Annaeanus. Marcus Annaeus Mella, the youngest brother, was the father of the famous Lucan (Marcus Annaeus Lucanus), who took not the *Seneca* of his grandfather nor the *Mella* of his father but the *cognomen* of his maternal grandfather (Acilius or Atilius Lucanus). His affection for his mother's side of the family did not prevent him from denouncing Acilia (or Atilia), his own mother, to escape punishment for himself in connection with the conspiracy of Piso. (He did not escape: Nero, who had once forbidden him to recite poetry in public—Nero did not like competition—ordered him to commit suicide, which he did, in 65 B.C., while reciting some of his own verses, written years earlier, on the subject of bleeding to death.)

The Senecas show that *agnomina* and *cognomina* were not always regularly handed down. The family, being Spanish (like the families of Trajan, Hadrian, Martial, etc.), may have been following some foreign naming system, however. (The Etruscan naming system gave the Romans these *cognomina*: *Caecina, Perperna, Sisenna, Spurinna, Aulinea, Largenna, Mastarna, Porsenna, Saserna, Velina, Vibenna.*)

In the *gens* Asina we find that the son of Gaius Asinius Pollio was Lucius Asinius Gallus, but the latter is (oddly) better known by the *agnomen* Solonius, an *agnomen* derived from the conquest of Salona by his father, not himself. In this case it probably should be called a *cognomen*, and it certainly was misleading. His son (half-brother of

Drusus, Tiberius' son) was also Lucius Asinius Gallus Salonius. We have at least one other case in which the son bore an *agnomen* the father earned but did not use: the son of the Emperor Claudius, born to him in 42 B.C., was named Britannicus because Claudius had conquered Britain.

Cognomina do not appear in public documents until the time of Sulla but obviously went back much farther, for we have already mentioned that Lucius Junius Brutus who more than 500 years before Christ pretended to be "brutish" in order to avoid the loss of his life to the Tarquins who were then systematically ridding themselves of any members of the Junius clan who seemed to offer a threat. Over so long a period variations in the "rules" for *cognomina* are only to be expected, even among logical, legalistic Romans.

Agnomina

Inevitably, we shall have to discuss under *cognomina* many details of *agnomina*, to which we now turn, for *cognomina*, standard parts of patrician Roman names, originally derived from the nicknames (eke-names, extra names) or honorifics that were *agnomina*.

Where even the most extensive encyclopaedias (such as that edited by Pauly and Wissowa in German) and classical dictionaries do not by any means list all the *cognomina* we have been discussing, and even the specific studies of *cognomina* (such as that of Kajanto, which we shall go into later) do not extensively attempt to attach *cognomina* (as we have done) to *nomina*, the work on *agnomina* is even less extensive and less well organized.

Many *agnomina* surely have been forgotten entirely, being passing nicknames or jokes or repressed by descendants who thought them unflattering or (probably most of all) having been used in those circles which had little interest in writing things down for posterity. Every legion of the army must have contained many men with *agnomina* of both low and high rank. Slaves must have had nicknames and even boasted that they were the sons of this or that slave, called (for example) Narcissus *Factotum* or Tyche *Seplasia* (from the street in Capua famous for perfumes) or perhaps *Saccas* (as was the Greek philosopher Ammonius who once carried sacks in Alexandria). Women must have been the butt of jokes such as comedians make today with names like *Slack Alice* and *Big Bertha* [Krupp] (originally a name for a long-range gun in World War I). Even if we had record of nicknames of

the lower class, we still might miss a lot of their meaning, for the Latin our modern scholars know helps them to read Cicero but might be of little use in reading, for example, classical graffiti. The written language and the spoken language differed widely and many weird dialects must have been spoken on the fringes of Rome's far-flung *imperium*. To understand the language of the folk, and the joke, one needs knowledge perhaps never put into books and today irretrievably lost. When Allen Walker Read began collecting American graffiti 50 years ago it was barely respectable—now it is popular and even scholarly. It takes a pretty learned scholar to catch the sexual significance of the name of *Jelly Roll* Morton—one needs to move from *jeli* (Mandingo for "minstrel," according to David Dalby in *Rappin' and Stylin' Out*, 1972) to Thomas Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel* (1929)

> ". . . I'se waitin' fo' a white gent'man now. He's gonna gib me a dollah. . . ."
> "What's—what's he going to give you a dollar for?"
> "Jelly Roll,"

to the the black jazz (a word also redolent of sex) of

> "Ain't been to hell but I been tol'
> Women in hell got sweet jelly roll."

If the name of a jazz great that living men still remember presents so much of a problem, consider what the nicknames of the old Romans would be to us were we able to excavate them now from the detritus of the past.

Names Altered by Adoption

Two kinds of *agnomina*, however, history has recorded for us: the one received by a man of sufficient "importance" in the course of legal adoption under Roman law—oddly in force, with some changes, in such states as Texas and Louisiana to this day—and that granted by the Senate (or, without legal force, by friends, or assumed). The first was not so much to distinguish the bearer as to establish his connection with his original *gens*, the family into which he was born, and the second was more or less an honorific title.

Though adoption was legal under the Code of Hammurabi and in some other ancient cultures, it was under the Greeks and Romans in classical times that it achieved what the *Britannica* calls "persistent

use." The Romans adopted males (often adults) to carry on the male line:

> Continuity of the male line in a particular family was the main goal of these ancient adoptions. The importance of the male heir stemmed from political, religious or economic considerations, depending on the nation . . . . the welfare of the adopter in this world and the next was the primary concern; little attention was paid to the welfare of the one adopted.[66]

Thus Africanus (or his son) adopted the second son of Aemilius Paullus. It is more likely that this was done by the elder son of Africanus, a weak individual, too ill to participate in public life, a man with no children of his own and one anxious to continue the Africanus line, though the elder Africanus had a distinguished brother (Asiaticus) and the younger Africanus had at least one brother, the one called Lucius (or Gnaeus—historians disagree) who accompanied his father into Africa and was captured by Antiochus. Perhaps nothing could be expected of the latter: Smith/Marindin describes him as "degenerate."

Paullus agreed to the adoption of his two elder sons, children of his first marriage (to Papiria, whom he had divorced). One was adopted by the great Quintus Fabius Maximus (becoming Quintus Fabius Maximus Aemilianus) and the other, as we have said, by Africanus (or his son). Quintus Fabius Maximus bore various *agnomina*: *Verrucossus* (from a wart on his upper lip), *Oricula* ("lamb," as with the Danish Eric, who reigned 1137–1146, from his mild temper), and much more famous, *Cunctator* (from his cautious delay in war). These were not passed on to the adopted son, although *Africanus* was earned again by the other brother adopted by the Scipios. Paullus was ready to have these sons adopted because of the distinction of the adopters and also because he had two more sons as a result of his second marriage. Unfortunately, after his two older sons had been adopted, his two younger ones died, one at age 12 only five days before his father's great triumph in Macedonia (through which the father became *Macedonicus*, which he may or may not have handed on to his children) and the other at age 15, just three days after the triumph. It was a great blow to a man deeply concerned with the Roman customs of ancestor worship and dedicated to preserving the male line.

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66 Prof. Margaret K. Rosenheim, "Adoption," *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1971), I, 165. Massachusetts put adoption under the law in 1851; England introduced adoption laws in 1926. Roman laws in Louisiana are traceable to the Napoleonic code and in Texas to Spanish precedents.

The adopted child kept the *nomen* of his true father (altered with *-ianus*, "related to) as an *agnomen,* changed his *praenomen* (which is not always done with modern adoptions, especially if the child is more or less grown up and attached to his given name) to that of his adopter, and took the adopter's *nomen* and *cognomen* as well. The Roman habit of naming the eldest child after his father was too strong to be ignored in adoptions and it is clear that the *praenomen*, so infrequently changed legally in modern times, was not as rigidly held as now. Ask a modern man what his *name* is and you will as frequently get "John" as "Smith," perhaps much more frequently when asking young children. To the Roman, the *praenomen* involved, as we might say today, "less of self-image." The Roman proverb said *nomen est omen*, and not that the *praenomen* was pre-eminent. So a *Titus* could become with ease a *Quintus* as an adult with no problem, as when Atticus (Titus Pomponius) was adopted (as we mentioned in a footnote earlier) by his uncle, Quintus Caecilius, and became Quintus Caecilius Pomponianus Atticus, adding his nickname more or less unofficially and probably thinking of himself essentially as *Atticus.* When Gnaeus Octavius was adopted by his maternal great-uncle (Gaius Julius Caesar, who bore *Dictator* as his *agnomen*) he became Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus (best-known to us, of course, by his later honorific *agnomen*, *Augustus*). When Publius Caecilius Secundus was adopted by his maternal uncle (Gaius Plinius Secundus) he became Gaius Plinius Caecilius (which is the *nomen* ending; it ought really to have been Caecilianus) Secundus (both his own and his adopter's *cognomen* being the same). Actually, he ought to have been called Gaius Plinius Secundus Caecilianus, but clearly a certain flexibility was allowed or at least possible. When Marcus Ulpius Trajanus—we mentioned Trajan earlier in another connection—was adopted, he gave up his Roman (actually Spanish—he was born at Italica, near Seville, in 52 or 53 B.C.) name and acquired elaborate titles, for he was adopted by the Emperor Nerva (Marcus Cocceius Nerva) and given the name Caesar (by now really a rank), the name Nerva, the name Germanicus (really an *agnomen*) and the title *Imperator*: Imperator Caesar Nerva Trajanus Augustus. But this brings us into honorifics, and that comes later.

Marcus Junius Brutus was adopted by Quintus Servilius Caepio and beame legally Quintus Servilius Caepio Junianus, but *Brutus* was so famous a name he held onto it. A cousin, Decimus Junius Brutus, was adopted by A. Posthumius Albinus and called himself Brutus Albinus.

Women were not adopted though legally were once considered their husband's children, more or less. If one wanted some legal connection

with them, it was more or less easy to marry them, even if they were related. When Claudius married Agrippina, his advisers helpfully pointed out that Pluto had married Prosperpine, so the incest was not without precedent. (Of course, Pluto was a god. But so eventually was Claudius.) Incest in such exotic outposts of empire as Egypt was more common, especially in ruling families. Arsinoë, for instance, married as her second husband her brother Ptolemy II *Philadelphus.* Cleopatra, daughter of Ptolemy V *Epiphanes* married her brother Ptolemy VI *Philometer* and, later, her other brother, Ptolemy VI *Physcon.* When they divorced, Physcon married his niece (also called Cleopatra), and they had two daughters (both Cleopatra, though one is often called Selene) who married their brothers. None of these is *the* Cleopatra, who had a couple of brothers named Ptolemy, one of whom she was supposed to marry and one of whom she did marry when she was a child. (She did not marry Caesar, by whom she reputedly had Caesarion, nor Mark Antony, by whom she had twins, Cleopatra and Alexander.)

Adoption in Rome did, however, affect the names of women. A member of the Claudian *gens* was adopted by a Livius Drusus, becoming Livius Drusus Claudianus and effectively connecting the Drusi with the later imperial family. His daughter was, of course, Livia—and she was the mother of Tiberius. Her name would not have been Livia if she had been born before her father was adopted, before he acquired the Livius *nomen.* Julia, the daughter of Augustus, would have been called Octavia if she had been born prior to her father's adoption by Julius Caesar. The controversy among classicists over the name of the daughter of Atticus (Caecilia? Pomponia?) derives from the fact that it is uncertain whether she was born before or after her father's adoption.

Really connected to adoption is the case of a slave who changed masters. Suppose his first master was Marcus Livius Drusus and his second Titus Sempronius Gracchus. He would change his name from Marcipuer to Titipuer and add Livianus ("formerly of the Livia," that is belonging to that family). Likewise, logically, Marcipuella would become Titipuella Liviana, though such slave names were hardly thought worthy of historical record, and it is not impossible that briefer appellation, or nicknames, would have been preferred.

Cognomina ex Virtute

Honorific additions to the standard names included *Censor, Consul, Praetor, Aedile,* and so on, and tended to be used only during term of of-

fice and not retained afterwards as Americans (for instance) like to retain *Senator, Governor,* military titles, etc. Occasionally (as with Cato the Censor) an exception might be made, but of all the censors Cato is unique in this respect. Other titles such as *Dictator* or *Princeps,* limited by law to definite terms, might be seized by powerful men in a society in which Diocletian, for example, son of a freedman of Dalmatia with the Greek name of Diokles, could attain a position in which he demanded (historian Aurelius Victor tells us) the *adoratio* due a god. A mere governor of Gaul under Gallienus, named Postumus, set up a rival empire with a capital at Augusta Treverorum and he was not alone in appreciating the power of titles and pomp. Such names had public relations power: when Alaric attacked Rome it was not comforting that *Alaric* translated as "All Powerful." So Julius Caesar stretched the six-month title of *Dictator* to serve a lifetime and toward the end of January in 44 B.C. was not entirely displeased to be greeted by crowds in the Appain Way as *Rex*. Indeed, he may even have arranged it. He was compelled by political expediency to make them a nice speech in which he said he was not a king but Caesar, but when the ringleaders in the crowd were arrested by officials he was angry and soon removed the zealous officials who made the arrest. To be Lucius Mummius Achaicus was to be universally recognized as the great man who had made Greece itself a province, Achaia. To be *Dictator* was even better. Augustus, convinced that *Imperator* was politically unwise, still made himself permanent *Princeps*, though he lacked the seniority to be dean of the Senate. And people could be encouraged to call a man *Triumvir* if he had ever held this position, just as Americans refer to ex-presidents as *President* and allow officials on leaving office to retain titles of elected office such as *Judge* or *Governor.* Some men received highly flattering if unofficial titles: Marcus Aurelius was dubbed *restitutor orbis* (though "empire" rather than "world" was meant). Even a puppet emperor rejoiced in the name Romulus Augustulus.

Professor Massimo Pallottine complains of "the poverty of. . . primary documents" relating to the Etruscans and it is true that many of their names have been lost. Vulca, for example, is the only Etruscan sculptor whose name survives. But the Etruscan desire for pomp and circumstance was inherited by the Romans along with histrionics (from the Etruscan *hister,* a dancer) and such words as *magister, sacer,* and *caerimonia.* Diodorus Siculus testifies that the Etruscans gave Rome "that dignity which surrounds rulers" as well as a taste for luxury, the diadem, the red cloak of the general, the standards carried by the

armies in battle. The Etruscans taught the Romans to worship not only Turan (Venus) and Maris (Mars) and Trums (Mercury) and Aplu (Apollo) but pomp and circumstance. Roman slaves saved their money *(peculium)* to buy their freedom but also a name. Roman clients called their patrons *dominus* (lord). Roman patricians strove for distinctions. (A pope centuries later made the sons of Pepin *Patricians of the Romans.*) Emperors aspired to divinity, and its titles and privileges. Dying, Vespasian said half-jokingly, *Vae, puto, deus fio,* which translates roughly as "My goodness, I think I'm becoming a god."

It was a fluid society in which great men could rise to the heights through ability, or rich men aspire to buying the empire, literally. In Roman Egypt, babies were scavenged from the town dumps—they had commercial value if one wanted to bring them up—and legal documents often designated their origin as "from the dump," but even they could at least hope for fame and fortune and titles of distinction. If the slave Narcissus could rise to secretary of state under Claudius and Nero and amass a fortune of some 40 million dollars and live in a superb palace on the Quirinal, named for Quirinus (which means only "lance-bearer"), what avenues were closed? Caius Marius rose from the humblest origins. Tarquinius Priscus was the son of one Demaratus, a Corinthian immigrant to Etruscan Tarquinii who made himself very wealthy. Titles of distinction both marked and assisted a rise in the world.

As in any other society, who your father was was by no means unimportant. A great name is always a good start in life and is even better as a birth gift than a silver spoon. But Roman society also promised the studious artisan and the brave and the lucky vast opportunities for advancement and rewarded many with great titles and power. You could be a bastard and still found a dynasty. In some parts of the empire you could not be "fatherless" at all. Diodorus, the Sicilian historian of the First Century B.C., tells us that in Egypt, for instance, they considered no child a bastard, "even though he was born of a slave mother; for they have taken the general position that the father is the sole author of procreation and that the mother only supplies the fetus with nourishment and a place to live." (Cf. the same argument four centuries earlier in Aeschylus' *Eumenides.*) Diodorus adds that "they call the trees which bear fruit *male* and those which do not *female*, exactly the opposite to Greek usage," and of course to ours as well.

One could inherit a noble Roman name or make one for oneself. Some honors could be won in office and others obtained for life, a *cognomen ex virtute* marking signal service to the state. As Alexander became "of Tunis" and Montgomery "of Alamein" in World War II—

though British titles are generally of British places and not *in partibus infidelibus*: witness the Duke of Marlborough, Earl of Attlee of Lambeth, the Marquess of Milford Haven, the Duke of Buccleuch, etc.—so in Roman life military achievements were commemorated (like Kitchener of Khartoum) and indeed encouraged in others by the legal granting of such *agnomina* as we have already recorded as *Africanus* and *Asiaticus, Macedonicus* and *Numidicus, Achaicus* and *Germanicus*, not to mention Claudius' *Gothicus* and the strange case of his *Britannicus*.

Claudius' *Britannicus,* he was well aware, was not entirely his own achievement. In fact, he made an arrangement with the efficient Aulus Plautius that that experienced commander should get everything ready for a British victory and then the emperor would arrive, with trumpets and elephants, and claim the victory. Still, he did perform well in Britain, gained the honor, and promptly gave it to his son rather than adopting it himself. Britannicus, son of Claudius and Messalina, was born about A.D. 41, and is chiefly known to us through Racine's magnificent drama—and one of his father's titles. (Britannicus' full name was Tiberius Claudius Caesar Britannicus, quite a string of awe-inspiring names.)

Some other Romans also cheated to win grand titles. Caracalla (notoriously dishonest) even bought at least one by bribing the enemy to quit hostilities. Clearly every title counted and was valuable politically.

Some Romans bore *cognomina ex virtute,* reflecting upon successful peacetime activity, such as Antony's father, Marcus Antonius Orator, or Marcus Annaeus Seneca Rhetor (rhetorican) or Gaius Valerius Catullus Doctus (learned). But military prowess was the best way to chalk up a good score: Caracalla attained *Germanicus, Parthicus, Arabicus, Alamannicus,* etc., one way and another.

Other *Agnomina*

Romans could bear names that suggested their place of birth too. Publius Terentius Varro Atacinus, the poet, seems to have been named from Atax, a river in Gallia Narboniensis, where he was born in 32 B.C. Marcus Terentius Varro Reatinus (the "most learned of the Romans") was born at Reate (116 B.C.). Gaius Catius Silius Italicus, the poet, was thought by some to have been born (the date of his birth is also disputed, but it must have been around A.D. 25) at Italica, but others argue that, had he been born in Spain, the poet Martial (Marcus

Valerius Martialis, born at Bilbilis in Spain in A.D. 43) would surely have hailed him as a countryman. The significance of *Italicus* remains moot. Had we a better knowledge of ancient geography, we might more readily recognize nationality hints in Roman names. Certainly they were obvious to the Romans themselves, but we strangely tend to think of all citizens of that far-flung empire as residents of Rome. Who thinks of Seneca as the greatest Spanish philosopher (except maybe James Mitchener in his *Iberia)?*

A part-Spaniard with an odd name was Quintus Varius Hybrida. His mother was Spanish, but *Hybrida* usually designated a Roman/Asiatic mixture. Another outlander of sorts was Marcus Julius Philippus. He reigned A.D. 244-249 and is generally called Philip the Arab.

The father of the famous Hannibal was Hamilcar Barca. *Barca* was not derived from a place-name (though there was a Barca in Cyrenaica, settled as early as perhaps 560 B.C. by the Libyan tribe of the Barcaei) but is to be traced to the Hebrew word for lightning. As with Alaric and Genghis Khan, a strong name had positive morale value. Lucius Caecilius Metellus Diadematus' name tells us he used to wear a bandage (actually it was for an ulcer) on his forehead. It is a name like Harold Bluetooth or Charles the Bald, in a sense.

Diadematus' family, the Caecilia, claimed descent from Caecas, the companion of Aeneas, or Caeculus, the founder of Praeneste, and included such notables as Pompey's general (called Bassus) and the comic poet Caecilius Statius (or rather he was a slave of the Caecilii who was freed). One Caecilius Calactinus was from Calce Acte in Sicily.[67]

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[67] In "The Jews" in *A Piece of My Mind* (1956), Edmund Wilson quotes an unusual piece of information, or opinion, from James Russell Lowell, which he found in "Conversations with Mr. Lowell" by an anonymous author in the *Atlantic Monthly* or rather in the biography of Lowell by Horace Elisha Scudder:

> At the mention of some medieval Jew, [he says] Lowell at once began to talk of the Jews, a subject which turned out to be almost a monomania with him. He detected a Jew in every hiding place and under every disguise, even when the fugitive had no suspicion of himself. To begin with nomenclature: all persons named for countries or towns are Jews; all with fantastic, compound names, such as Lilienthal, Morgenroth; all with names derived from colors, trades, animals, vegetables, minerals; all with Biblical names, except Puritan first names; all patronymics ending in *son, sohn, sen,* or any other versions; all Russels [sic], originally so-called from red-haired Israelites; all Walters, by long-descended derivation from wolves and foxes in some ancient tongue; the Caecilii, therefore including Lord Burleigh and Lord Salisbury; he cited some old chronicle in which he had cornered one Robert de Caecilia and exposed him as an English Jew.

There is a difference between the "surname" of Decimus Junius Silanus [Manlianus] and the "surname" of the Byzantine writer Agathias Scholasticus (which in those days meant "lawyer," not "scholar"), between the first Agrippa (or Agricola, or Sura or Spinther or Crus or Niger or Gaetulicus—to mention some who carried *cognomina* common in the patrician family of Cornelius Lentulus) and those who later bore the names. The first Longus was tall and the first Crassus fat, but the name could be handed on to others whom the description did not fit (as today we might have a Whitehead who is brunette, a Walker or Tucker no longer in the textile-manufacturing business, or a basketball-playing Mr. Short); nicknames inherited changed their character and effect. It is questionable, for example, in the case of the old goddess Lua whether *Lua Saturni* and *Lua Mater* are to be regarded as names in the same sense as *Lua* is, or whether Mercury's name *Quadratus* (given, probably, because some of his early statues were square, the number four being sacred to him because—says more than one ancient source—he was born on the fourth day of the month) was an *agnomen* or a *cognomen*. He was also called Mercurius Mus, Caudex, and Lucume. Were these nicknames, second names, or what? One is Sabine, one is Etruscan. To what extent is "The Queen of Bithynia" (or "The Bard of Avon") a *name*? When we say (for instance) "Parysatis of Persia"—she was the daughter of King Artaxerxes I *Longimanus*—the *name* is simply *Parysatis*, but when we say "Geoffrey of Monmouth" (or "Giraldus Cambrensis") the place-name is a surname. Is the name of Isidore of Seville (in Latin Isidore Hispaniensis) *Isidore* or *Isidore of Seville*? Similar problems exist with the Latin names.

Cognomina for Women and Slaves

Though the system basically called for a single name for women, we have already noted the use of the *cognomen* of *Metella* among women of the Caecilia *gens*: many generations of women were called *Caecilia Metella*. Only two generations bore the double name *Clodia Pulchra* ("Beautiful") with the plebeian spelling *Clodia*, not the patrician *Claudia* (both of which imply "limping"). In the imperial period, to preserve the names of *stirpes*, women frequently bore double names: *Livia Drusilla, Vipsania Agrippina, Claudia Livilla, Julia Agrippina*.[68] The second name, a diminutive relating to the maternal branch of the family, allowed descent from both parental lines to be indicated (as in Spanish double surnames like *García Lorca* and *Ortega y Gasset*

or hyphenated British names such as *Ashley Cooper* and *Halliwell Phillips*, a system which in time produced such onomastic monstrosities as the surnames *Tollemache-Tollemache de Orellana Plantagenet Tollemache Tollemache* and *Temple-Nugent-Brydges-Chandos-Grenville*, the latter being the surname of the third Duke of Buckingham and Chandos and tenth Lord Kinloss, *d.* 1899).

The double name offered a convenient way to distinguish between sisters and cousins. Sometimes a woman with enough audacity could take a name to which the system did not exactly entitle her. An example is Ollia, daughter of Titus Ollius, known to history as Poppaea Sabina, second wife of the Emperor Nero. She took these names in memory of her maternal grandfather (C. Poppaeus Sabinus), who had been a consul in A.D. 9. She kept them through her marriages to Rufius Crispinus and M. Salvius Otho and Nero, though it was briefly altered during her listing in the ranks of goddesses. She certainly "made a name for herself" in history.

History does not record the *agnomina* of lesser people, though there obviously were many, and slaves were beneath the dignity of a recorded nickname or an inherited *cognomen* derived from one. On being freed, slaves took their name prior to enslavement (usually in Greek form) and made it their new *cognomen*, adding it to the *praenomen* and *nomen* of their former master. If they joined the Roman army or navy they might have to alter their foreign *cognomen*. Otherwise they kept it. Where American slaves could adopt a wholly new name on emancipation—the famous Frederick Douglass was the son of an anonymous white man and a black slave girl named Bailey (from the family which owned her) but he called himself *Douglass* as a runaway slave to avoid capture—Roman slaves were less free to choose. Marcus Tullius Tiro was once the slave of [Marcus Tullius] Cicero. Marcus Livius Ismarus was once the slave of Livia, wife of Augustus and daughter of Marcus Livius Drusus Claudianus.

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68 Other famous double names for women include Aurelia Orestilla, Lollia Paulina, Arria Paetina. In the imperial period we find Annia Faustina and much later Furia Sabina Tranquillina. Not by the Romans but by us a mother and her daughter are called Faustina Senior and Faustina Junior. The elder was Annia Galeria Faustina (d. A.D. 141), the wife of Antoninus Pius. (She founded a school for young women who "were called after her *puellae alimentariae Faustinianae*.") The younger was married to Marcus Aurelius, whom she followed to Syria where she died (A.D. 175). Another Annia Faustina was one of the many wives of Elagabalus (Varius Avitus). It appears that double names such as *Julia Tertia* were originally *Tertia Julia*, and indeed it would have been more convenient, if but one name was going to be used, to say *Tertia* than *Julia*.

Limitations on *Cognomina*

An interesting point about *cognomina* is that certain patrician families deliberately limited themselves to a select few of these names, as we noted. Not only was the first (*praenomen*) name rather limited, by modern standards, but the last (*cognomen*) name was often more or less traditional with certain *gentes*. Similarly, in Britain, the Hills may call themselves for example Goodger Hill until the surname becomes in effect (and sometimes in fact) Goodger-Hill. Thus *Ashley-Scarlet* may result from the marriage of a Scarlet woman to an Ashley man or it may be the final product of some generations giving *Ashley* as a "middle name" to the children. That *Granville Barker* or *Spencer Churchill* are not hyphenated is basically immaterial if the custom within the family is to pair them automatically. In the same way, among the Aemelia *gens*, for example, we find only the following *cognomina,* each creating in effect a hyphenated or compound Roman family name: *Barbula, Buca, Lepidus, Mamercus (Mamercinus), Papus, Paullus, Regilus,* and *Scaurus.* Thus Marcus Aemilius Regillus (also known as *Flamen Martialis*—see Livy, books 24 and 29) and his son the *praetor* Lucius Aemilius Regillus are bearers of a sort of hyphenated name which distinguishes them from the larger *Aemilia* family and points up their relationship to other *Aemilia* with the *cognomen* of *Regillus. Scaurus* was used by such other families as that of the Marcus Aurelius Scaurus who turns up in the *Germania* of Tacitus (and other histories of warfare) and the Quintus Terentius Scaurus who wrote the distinguished *Ars Grammatica* in the reign of Hadrian, but *Scaurus* mainly served a branch of the *Aemilia* to which belonged several men named Marcus Aemilius Scaurus. One (born 163 B.C.) to a patrician who had somewhat sunk in the world—he was then a fuel merchant—rose to high rank and got involved in several scandals (one involved accepting bribes from the King of Numidia for favorable peace terms). His autobiography is, unfortunately, lost. It would have told us a lot about Roman politics. His eldest son, Marcus Aemilius Scaurus, became the stepson of Sulla. His younger son, also Marcus Aemilius Scaurus, fled the field at the Battle of Athesis (Adige, Etsch) and was disowned by his father (whereupon he committed suicide). His daughter married Mamercus Glabrio and later (when Sulla insisted on their divorce) married Gnaeus Pompey. His grandson, also Marcus Aemilius Scaurus, was the son of Mucia, former wife of Pompey, and thus half brother to Sextus Pompey. There were numerous important members of the Aemilius Scaurus clan—and their names tend to get confused.

The wife of that Marcus Aemilius Scaurus who was born in 163 B.C. was a Caecilia. In the Caecilia family we find only these *cognomina: Bassus, Denter, Metellus, Niger, Pinna,* and *Rufus.* We have mentioned various Caecilius Metellus men already. Pinna was the chief town of the Vestini in the Apennines.

Julius Caesar's last wife was Calpurnia. The Calpurnia *gens* used only these *cognomina: Bestia* (one of these was involved in that shady deal with Scaurus and the Numidian King), *Bibulus, Flamma,* and *Pisa* (some of whom bore the *agnomen* or *Caesonius*, having been originally from that *gens*, and some of whom were called *Frugi*, roughly meaning "man of worth"). So distinguished was *Piso* that one Marcus Calpurnius Piso called himself Marcus Pupius Piso, even after being adopted by Marcus Pupius, just as a Scipio called himself Metellus Scipio after being adopted by a Metellus, Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius (who filially begged for the return of his banished father, Quintus Caecilius Metellus Numidicus, in 99 B.C.).

Caesar's name reminds us of Cassius. In the Cassia, the *cognomina* are these: *Hemina* (as with the historian Lucius Cassius Hemina), *Longinus* (as with the murderer of Caesar, C. Cassius Longinus), *Parmensis* (another assassin of Caesar, "from Parma"), *Ravilla* (as with L. Cassius Longinus Ravilla, proposer of voting by ballot, *tabellaria lex*), *Sabaco, Varus,* and *Viscelinus.* Cassius Avidius was a Syrian, Cassius Felix and Dionysius Cassius were Greeks, and Gaius Cassius Chaerea (who formed the plot to kill Caligula) was an exception. Cassius Severus was a plebeian, not of the noble Cassia *gens* at all. Actually, this whole patrician *gens* eventually became plebeian—but that is another story.

Even the originally plebeian branches of the great Claudia *gens* had *cognomina,* which was exceptional. The patricians of the line called themselves *Caudex, Centho, Crassus* (more often a *cognomen* of the *Licinia*), *Nero, Pulcher, Regillensis,* and *Sabinus.* The plebeians were: *Asellus, Canina, Centumalus, Cicero, Flamen* (really a title, "priest"), and *Marcellus* (eventually ennobled).

The Cornelia were so numerous that we shall list only the major *cognomina* of this *gens. Scipio* and *Lentulus* and *Sulla* and *Cinna* and *Dollabella* were the most famous, but there were in addition: *Arvina, Blasio, Cethegus, Cossus, Maluginensis, Mammula, Merenda, Merula, Rufinus, Scapula, Sisenna,* etc. The Scipios were subdivided by *agnomina: Africanus, Asiaticus, Asina, Barbatus, Calvus, Hispallus, Nasica,* and *Serapio.* The Lentulus branch used *agnomina* such as *Niger* and *Rufinus.* A *Sulla* might eventually also be *Felix.* The Cinna group has no subdivisions officially. The Dollabella group used

Caudinus, Clodianus, Crus, Gaetulicus, Lupus, Maluginensis (this branch dropping out of sight about the time of the Samnite Wars—two tribes of the Samnites, by the way, were Pentri and Caudini, which may explain *Caudinus), Marcellinus, Spinther* (not related to the name of the Greek comic poet Spintharus of Heraclea, which Aristophanes hints is a Phrygian name), and *Sura* (a name of the Catiline conspirator Publius Cornelius Lentulus Sura and of Trajan's dear friend Lucius Licinus Sura, but not related to the city of Sura on the Euphrates in Syria).

The Domitia used only *Ahenobarbus* and *Calvinus,* while the Fabia used all of the following and more: *Ambustus, Buteo, Dorso, Labeo, Licinus, Maximus,* and *Pictor. Pictor* was granted to Gaius Fabius for painting "The Temple of Salus," a mural probably depicting the victory of Gaius Junius Brutus Bubuclus over the Samnites, the first Roman painting we know of. There must have been a story behind each of the *cognomina* used by the Fabia, both those we have listed and other (such as *Vivulanus*). The *Maximus* group was subdivided into *Aemilianus, Allobrogicus, Eburnus, Gurges, Rullianus, Servilianus,* and *Verrocosus. Verrocosus* had its origin in a physical peculiarity, but *Allobrogicus* came from history: the Allobrox people were warlike Gauls living between the Rhone and the Isère who were conquered in 121 B.C. by Quintus Fabius Maximus, called *Allobrogicus.*

The Horatia *gens* used only three *cognomina: Barbatus* (bearded), *Cocles* (one-eyed), and *Pulvillius* (little cushion). Whether *Cocles* enshrined an accident or, like *Sullivan* the Gaelic name, supposed a connection with the Cyclops, is as uncertain as the meaning of "little pillow."

The Julia *gens* involved *Caesar, Libo* (frequently associated with a plebeian family which produced the father-in-law of Sextus Pompey), and *Mento.* The family was from Alba Longa and their name claimed descent from Iulus, grandson of Venus and Anchises, who was (of course) mythical.[69]

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[69] It is interesting how Romans utilized or invented connections with real or mythical heroes. Theirs was partly a religion of ancestor worship and their household gods were family gods. Names helped to bind families and to build or preserve traditions. Aristocrats regarded names as precious family heirlooms. Politicians saw their value in getting places of power. The ambitious sought titles and distinctions, the law allowing these to be handed down within certain limits permitting a man to give a son a good start in life. The plebeian chose a name to mark his rise to patrician ranks or perhaps chose to stress his humbler origins for personal reasons. The slave marked his freedom with a new name, a new lease on life. Foreigners marked the acquisition of Roman citizenship by the adoption of a Roman name. Names for the Romans truly were, as the epigraph to this present study says, the signs of things, not mere words but *indicia* to ways of thought: they show us how the Romans thought as well as tell us what they said. They are keys to the culture.

The Junia *gens* was patrician in the time of Marcus Junius Brutus (who got rid of the Tarquins) but later was plebeian. Their *cognomina* were *Brutus* (of ancient fame), *Bubulcus* (as with the creator of the Temple of Safety we have mentioned), *Gracchanus, Norbanus* (from Norba, or Norma, a fortified town of Latium), *Paciaecus, Pennus, Pera, Pullus,* and *Silanus.* One Decimus Junius Silanus was the step-father of the Brutus who organized the assassination of Caesar. Decimus Junius Torquatus Silenus was killed by Nero in 64 B.C. because he boasted of being descended from the Emperor Augustus (which Nero thought threatening). Lucius Junius Torquatus Silenus, great-great-great-grandson of Augustus, was banished by Nero (65 B.C.) and later killed at Barium in Apulia.

The Licinia regarded *cognomina* more or less as personal names rather than family names. They used *Calvus, Crassus, Geta, Lucullus, Macer, Murena, Nerva, Sacerdos* (priest), and *Varus. Varus* (legs turned inward) was not derived as some might think from the Varus river of Gallia Narbonensis but from the opposite of *valgius.* This name was borne by men such as Publius Alfenius Varus the jurist from Cremona, Publius Atius Varus (whose head was delivered to Julius Caesar after the Battle of Munda), and Publius Quintilius Varus (who disastrously lost more than three legions to the bellicose Germans under Arminius.

The Livia *gens* (originally plebeian) became one of the most noble of Roman families. They used the *cognomina* of *Denter, Drusus* (some connection with an oak tree? Suetonius says from having defeated Drausus, a Gallic chieftain), *Libo, Macatus,* and *Salinator.* This last was originally a derisive label: Marcus Livius was called *Salinator* when he put a tax, in his consulship of 219 B.C., on salt. Salt was very important. Soldiers were paid in it, whence our word *salary.* In time the label was borne without shame.

The Manlia *gens* used *cognomina* with unusually interesting stories behind them. *Acidinus* was borne by Lucius Manlius Acidinus and by Lucius Manlius Acidinus Fulvianus, the latter unique in that he held the consulship with his brother (Quintus Fulvius Flaccus). *Capitolinus* came from the Marcus Manlius who, warned by the cackling of geese, hastily rose from sleep to put down the Gaulish attack on the Capitol (392 B.C.). *Cincinnatus* was most eminently borne by Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus. In another moment of Rome's peril he left his plough to become dictator for a mere 16 days. Victory achieved, he retired to private life. So in America we had during our Revolution The Society of the Cincinnati, citizen soldiers, and the name is preserved in one of our

large cities. *Torquatus* came from the son of Lucius Manlius Capitolinus Imperiosus (dictator 363 B.C.) who in 361 B.C. slew a Gaul in combat and took from his neck the gold *torques* (a neck ornament seen on the famous statue of "The Dying Gaul") to wear in triumph. *Vulso* was a name used by the branch of Lucius Manlius Vulso; he invaded Africa in 256 B.C. with his fellow consul, Marcus Atilius Regulus. These *cognomina* were the source of much family pride.

The Marcia *gens* was likewise distinguished. They used *Censorinus* (after a member of the family was a censor), *Coriolanus* (after another triumphed over the Corioli), *Philippus* (from the Greek), *Ralla* (meaning uncertain), *Rex* (descended from Ancus Marcius, King of Rome), *Rufus* (red-haired, as with William the Conqueror's son, William Rufus), *Rutilus* ("red-gold," presumably hair again), *Septimus* (from some seventh son, perhaps with implications of occult powers: we still think the seventh son of a seventh son may have the ability to see into the future,"second sight"), *Sermo* (for "conversation"), and *Tremulus* (tremulous). Coriolanus was the sole member of this large family to achieve fame in the early history of the Roman republic, despite the allegedly royal origins of his line.

The Portia *gens* used *Cato, Laca, Licinus,* and (much later) *Festus, Latro,* and *Septimus* or *Septimius.*Those who encountered Shakespeare's Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* may have recalled the faith and fortitude of Portia (or Porcia), whose second husband was Brutus: she extracted the secret of the conspiracy from Brutus the night before the death of Caesar and is said to have deliberately wounded herself in the thigh to prove her courage and that she could be trusted.

The Sempronia *gens* included such branches as the *Asellio, Atratinus, Blaesus, Densus, Gracchus* (the Gracchi brothers, Tiberius and Gaius), *Longus, Musca, Pitio, Rufus, Rutilus, Sophus,* and *Tuditanus.* Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus was a brave general in the Punic War and another of the same name was the father of the *Gracchi.* A Tuditanus was an orator, praetor (132 B.C.), and consul (129 B.C.).

The Servilia *gens* gives us the *cognomina* of *Ahala* (Brutus claimed descent from the Ahala who held various high offices 478-342 B.C.), *Axilla, Caepio, Casca, Geminus, Glaucia,* and *Globulus, Rullus* (as with Publius Servilius Rullus, tribune of the plebeians 63 B.C.), and *Vatia* (as with Publius Servilius Vatia surnamed Iscaurius after his conquest of the Iscauri).

The Sulpicia *gens* used the *cognomina* of *Camerinus, Cornutus, Galba, Gallus, Longus, Paterculus, Peticus, Praetextatus, Quirinus, Rufus* (as with Publius Sulpicius Rufus, the orator), and *Saverrio* (as

with the consul Publius Sulpicius Saverrio, under whom two new Roman tribes appeared: the Aniensis and the Terentina).

Cicero made very famous the ennobled family of Tullius. (There was an early patricain Tullia *gens* which became extinct; Cicero and the rest were of plebeian origin, actually unrelated to the earlier and more aristocratic family of the same name). Besides *Cicero* and *Decla* (as with the first Tullius to be notable: Marcus Tullius Declas, consul in 81 B.C.), we find only one *cognomen: Longus.* Apart from Cicero, the family was not prominent.

Finally, there was the Valeria *gens* with a string of *cognomina: Barbatus, Catullus, Corvus, Falto, Flaccus, Laevinus, Maximus, Messala* (or *Messalla*), *Potitus, Publicola, Tappo, Triarius,* and *Volusus* (the family claiming descent from Volusus or Volesus, a Sabine who settled in Rome with Titus Tatius, King of the Sabines). The name was borne by half a dozen Roman emperors (Maximinus, Maximianus, Maxentius, Diocletian, Constantius, and Constantine the Great) and by many other men (such as that Gaius Valerius Triarius who died in the civil wars and left Cicero the guardian of his children or Publius Valerius Publicola or Poplicola, a man whose *cognomen* reveals his popularity with the people, before whom he ordered the *lictors* to lower the *fasces* which symbolized power—and which gave us the word *fascist*).

A thorough study would probably reveal that not only were *cognomina* traditionally repeated in families but that, as with some modern families aware of the usefulness of tradition, *praenomina* were repeated generation after generation, sometimes to an extent that makes tracing a particular Roman an exercise in patience (or even futility), akin to the problems of reducing chaos to order in the lists of *archons* in Fifth Century Athens, names being repeated until everything becomes a confusion. But repeating a *cognomen* meant more than naming a son after his father: it often drew attention to some far-off ancestor from which a whole branch of an important family derived its dignities and its distinction.

We have emphasized the fact that while plebeians carried nicknames (*agnomina*) it was the mark of aristocratic families to turn these nicknames into hereditary *cognomina* or to acquire titles passed down from one generation to another. But certain patrician families declined into plebeian status and certain plebeian families, especially after they became *nobiles* ("known men," compare the Scottish "kent men," a Roman term after 367 B.C.), did use *cognomina.* Some plebeian families rising to patrician rank, however, did not choose to take

cognomina. This may be partly explained by some phenomenon comparable to the case of those modern people who retain their lower-class accents with a vengeance when they rise in the world or otherwise pride themselves on "the common touch." One thinks of Mr. Bounderby in Dickens' *Hard Times*. Some people rejoice in the rank attained through wealth or advancement. Others wish to make much of the distance they have traveled: the self-made man may wish to remember his struggle. Three famous Roman examples of families that rose in the world but continued to stress their plebeian origins were the Octavii, the Pompeii, and the Antonii *gentes*. To them we may add the Duilia, Flaminia, Memmia, Mummia, Sertoria, Meania, Genucia, Didia, Gabinia, and Hortensia, but let us look more closely only at the most famous examples.

The founder of the Octavia was Gaius Octavius, surnamed *Rufus*, who came from Velitrae in Volscian country where a street and an altar both bore the name *Octavius* (derived from some eighth son). Several other famous men named Gnaeus Octavius were known to history but none other was called Rufus. Still others were called Marcus Octavius, with no *cognomen*.

The founder of the Pompeia *gens* is unknown, but the first prominent Pompeian was Quintus Pompeius, a consul who was said to have been the son of a flute-player. His father may well have been the founder of the line. Quintus Pompeius Rufus was also a consul (88 B.C.) and he had descendants of the same name. Other men were Sextus Pompeius and Gnaeus Pompeius the *triumvir* (called Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus by Sulla, an *agnomen* which was thereafter a *cognomen* in his line) whose father had been called Gnaeus Pompeius Strabo (*Strabo* because he squinted). Plebeians proud of their new patrician status might turn an *agnomen* into a *cognomen*. Patricians wishing to recall their plebeian origins might bear *agnomina* but not *cognomina*. There was frequently political advantage in seeming to be a man of the people. It was a question of image, as with a Texas governor happy to be known as "Pappy" or an American president insisting on being sworn in as "Jimmy," not James.

In the Antonia *gens* there was the orator Marcus Antonius (consul in 99 B.C.) whose head was cut off and placed on the *rostra* and his son Marcus Antonius Creticus. The latter probably did not want the *agnomen*, for it was given derisively, mocking his lack of success in the wars in Crete. Gaius Antonius (consul with Cicero in 63 B.C.) fared better and escaped any *agnomen*. Marcus Antonius the *triumvir* was the son of Creticus (and of Julia, cousin of Julius Caesar) but did not

bear the name *Creticus*. A son of Mark Antony was Iulus, but he was named for the son of Aeneas in Virgil's epic and not for any connection with the Julian clan. Rather, it was a claim to descent from Aeneas that was being advanced. Another Marcus Antonius was called Antyllus, a corrupt form of *Antonillus* (little Antonius), his *agnomen.*

An *agnomen*, being a nickname, might fit one man but not his descendants. A *Nero* (strong), a *Pulcher* (handsome), or a *Strabo* might be followed by others who did not at all fit the name. On the other hand, if a forefather distinguished himself, made a name for himself (one might say) even while bearing an unattractive nickname, a descendant might not mind at all going through life bearing an unflattering inherited nickname (*cognomen*) so long as it connected him with the famous forebear. In the same way, so strong is the patriarchial society, a man might go through life with a surname like *Smellie* (as did a famous Scottish antiquary, among others); or he might hold on to a given name that people thought odd with his surname (*Preserved Fish*) or even initials that are a source of great embarrassment (Sir Arthur Sullivan worried about his initials, A.S.S.). Many people who bear names that excite comment do not deign to change them and some brazen it out defiantly. Give a dog a bad name, the proverb says, and trouble ensues; give a man a bad name and it could make him apologetic or assertive. Moreover, the extent to which this or that *agnomen* or *cognomen* had become lexically opaque, or unremarkable, at any given period in Roman history is hard to determine. As at some point we see nothing noteworthy in *Barbara Welch* or *LaRue Walker* so at some point Romans would accept *Strabo* as "just a name." Only when we see Cicero punning on *Verro* who ought to have been not corrupt but a new *broom* sweeping clean do we see evidence that names still retained lexical qualities, and sometimes (as with *Drusilla* punned on as if it meant "little oak") lexical meanings may have been derived from the original Greek.

When inherited, an *agnomen*, flattering or not, became a living connection with an ancestor as a *cognomen. Caecus* (blind) was never inherited but people do not seem to have found it inconvenient to inherit *Crassus* (fat, or even fat-headed), *Lentulus* (slow), *Calvus* (bald), *Nasica* (pointy-nosed), *Niger* (black). These *cognomina* became lexically opaque, more or less, perhaps as much as *Paul* (little) and *Calvin* (bald) today. Some names were always lexically empty. A modern example: soccer superstar Pelé's name means nothing in English, Spanish, or any other possible language and is not even an abbreviation of some meaningful name (his full name is Edson Arantes

do Nascimento). *Cognomina* evidence the Roman desire to move from the individual to the hereditary, to stress tradition, to emphasize the family and its connections. This bespeaks deeply-entrenched Roman ideals, ideals quite different from those of some other cultures, quite foreign (for example) from Hindus, who in the fourth and most advanced stage of personal development renounce all identity and abandon their names, their property, their families. The Roman was first, foremost and permanently a member of a *gens* and even the personal distinction of a peculiar nickname or personal title, *agnomen* or *supernomen,* metamorphosed into a shared, inheritable *cognomen*, added to the family name, to the family distinctions, binding the future to the past.

Cognomina Applied to Public Works

In his *Duveen*, S.N. Behrman tells how the lordly art dealer conducted "a brisk market in immortality." People with money and power, through Lord Duveen, could buy collections that would give them fame. Down the centuries men have striven to make their names live by attaching them to art, not just artists but entrepreneurs. So men paint and compose and write but they also build and turn to philanthropy to put their names on universities (one named for God changed its name to that of a tobacco manufacturer) and other institutions. If not Shakespeare's "powerful rhyme," then marble, brass.

The Romans were no less ambitious, but it was more difficult in those times, if not impossible, for the designer or builder to contrive to have his name attached to public monuments and great edifices which would last. Most of those, in the Roman way, would be named for the person who gave the gift to the city or, much more likely, to the man under whose administration (as consul, or emperor, or whatever) it first appeared.

The Emperor Trajan was no more than most, far less than some, interested in putting his name on public works, yet Marcus Ulpius Trajanus (emperor A.D. 98-117) can serve as an example from the imperial period of the use of the *cognomen* in the names of places and things. There was the Aqua Traiana (A.D. 110), the Thermae Traianae, the Forum Traianum, as well as the famous arch of Trajan (as we call it) which once contained his ashes. Other public works derived their names from his *nomen*, the Biblioteca Ulpia, for example. Unlike so many moderns, he put nothing in his wife's name.

Trajanus was (like that of his adopted son, Hadrian) an *agnomen* which became a *cognomen*. Other *cognomina* were used to name the following: the Aqua Alexandrina (A.D. 226), named for Marcus Aurelius Alexander Severus (who reigned A.D. 222-235), built to supply the Aurelian baths with water; three minor roads: Via Collatina (412 B.C., from Lucius Tarquinius Collatina of Collatina,[70] a district near Rome), Via Domitiana (a loop of the Via Appia to make a complete road around the Bay of Naples, built in the reign of Titus Flavius Domitianus Augustus, (A.D. 81-96), and Via Hadriana (for Publius Aelius Adrianus, or Hadrian, who reigned A.D. 117-138); two bridges: the Pons Agrippae (which ought to be called the Pons Agrippinus, named for Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, son-in-law of Augustus, situated above the Pons Aelius of Hadrian) and the Pons Neronianus (from Nero Claudius Caesar, reigned A.D. 54-68, before whom *Nero* was a *cognomen*);[71] a basilica, the Basilica Constantina Faustina, in which the name of the emperor (Flavius Valerius Constantinus, though *Constantine* has sometimes been an unlucky royal name, from ancient Byzantium to modern Greece) is linked with that of his wife, Flavia Maximiana Fausta; the Thermae Diocletianae

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70 He was the nephew of Tarquinius Priscus ("The Ancient") and is remembered as the husband of Lucretia. In English we say Lucretia Borgia (for a later lady of history) but Shakespeare calls this Roman Lucrece and in Tudor times the name came out as Lucres. The famous Lucretia of Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* was raped by Sextus Tarquinius, the son of Tarquinius Superbus ("The Proud").

71 The Pons Neronianus is often called the Pons Vaticanus. (The foundations of its piers are still to be seen when the Tiber is low in the summer.) The *Vaticanus* (our Vatican) is an example of a word substitution for the "official" Roman name—many Roman names were changed in later times for a variety of reasons which cannot be taken up here, being the subject of an entirely different study—which has also changed: its associations have altered over the years. To a Roman *vates* meant a wandering bard and seer. Today the word *Vatican* derived from it means St. Peter's, the papal seat, the *curia* of the Roman Catholic Church, the administration of that church in general. Originally it would have connoted a poor wine from this Roman hill. Later it was synonymous with garbage dumping, filth, and stench. It was Marcus Aurelius Antoninus who had the area cleaned up and the filth carted away. We know this emperor as Heliogabalus because he was (before he became Roman emperor at the age of 14) priest of a god of that name in a Eastern mystery religion that worshipped Heliogabalus in the form of a black stone. He became the wife of a man named Hierocles—we have been unable to find what name he took in this marriage—and was (among other things) the first Roman to wear a silk dress. His reign was extraordinary. He made his charioteer a consul, his grandmother (Julia Maesa) and mother (Julia Soemias) co-rulers. He was married five times (the other four times to women) and reigned three years, nine months, four days. He was murdered at age 18, putting an inventively repulsive career to a timely end. His name was quite as unusual as the rest of him: it is most strange for a Roman emperor to bear the name of a foreign god (a sun god, as the name suggests). His name is rendered in English also as Elagabalus, which disguises its meaning further.

(Baths of Diocletian, who reigned A.D. 284-305, preceding Constantine the Great by just a year); and two forums (or *fora*): Forum Caesaris (designed by Julius Caesar in 45 B.C.)[72] and Forum Nervae (from Marcus Cocceius Nerva, whose *cognomen* indicates an origin in the tribe of the Nervii, in Belgic Gaul, whom Julius Caesar conquered, and who succeeded Domitian in the imperial purple); three gardens—there were only four famous ones in Rome—known as Horti Luculli (from the Lucius Licinius Lucullus who returned from conquering Mithridates to live a life of proverbial luxury; on the Quirinal), Horti Sallustiani (from Gaius Sallustius Crispus, called Sallust in English, the historian; also on the Quirinal), those given to Rome by Julius Caesar—the famous one, not Lucius Julius Caesar the consul in 90 B.C., nor Gaius Julius Caesar Strabo Vopsicus the curule aedile in the same year, or others of the name—and those of Agrippina "The Younger." She was so-called to distinguish her from the Agrippina ("The Elder") whose parents were Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa and Julia (daughter of Emperor Augustus); her mother. After this younger Agrippina was named what we now call Köln (Cologne). It was called Oppidum Ubiorum when she was born there and was renamed Colonia Agrippina. She was thrice married: to Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus (by whom she had the child who became the Emperor Nero), to the famous orator Crispus Passienus (mentioned by Quintilian, X, 1, 119), and finally to her uncle, the Emperor Claudius. In *Claudius the God*, Robert Graves has Claudius write:

> At the New Year [A.D. 49] I married Agrippinilla. . . . I adopted Lucius. He is now called Nero. Recently I married him to Octavia, whom I had first, however, to let Vitellius adopt as his daughter, to avoid the technical crime of incest. . . . Agrippinilla asked me to persuade the Senate to give her the title of Augusta. She did not expect me to give her what I had refused Messalina, but I did. . . .

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72 Perhaps we ought to think of this as "46 B.C.," for it happened late in an *annum magnum* of 16 months. The names (or numbers) of ancient years are often confused by different systems of marking the passage of time. In our British-influenced culture we have had Old Style and New Style years and until the Eighteenth Century (when we once lost nearly two weeks in an alteration of the calendar) the new year did not begin in January but in March so that "14 February 1587" is ambiguous. Caesar was introducing the Julian Calendar (365 days, six hours—off by a few minutes) to replace that of ten months (304 days) introduced by Romulus (738 B.C.), corrected by Numa Pompilius (713 B.C.) with 12 months. Pope Gregory XIII (Ugo Buoncompagni, 1502-1585) made the year 1582 exactly 365 days—they were ten days off by then, the vernal equinox falling on March 11 instead of March 21 that year—and for the future introduced a Gregorian Calendar which made 1700, 1800, and 1900 not bissextile, but 2000 will be a leap year. The British made September 3, 1752 into September 14, 1752 and caught up on the 11 days they had lost since A.D. 200, coming into line with Pope Gregory's ideas. Thus September 3, 1752 Old Style (O.S.) or September 14, 1752 New Style (N.S.) marks the change from one system of naming (numbering) years to another.

Some arches, two theatres, a portico, and a now-destroyed column (of Antoninus Pius), likewise bore names derived from *cognomina.* The arches are those of Nero Claudius Drusus, 38-9 B.C., now called Drusus Senior to distinguish him from Drusus, the son of Tiberius by his first wife, Vipsania, and of Constantine (actually decorated with statues stolen from the Arch of Trajan, mentioned above). The theatres both date from before the time of Christ. That of Marcellus, which held 20,500 spectators, was built by Augustus in honor of his favorite nephew.[73] That of Balbus (L. Cornelius Balbus, "the stutterer") was built in 13 B.C. to hold 11,000 spectators.[74] In fact, his uncle (same name) had been accused of illegally assuming Roman citizenship in 56 B.C.; however Cicero defended him and he was acquitted. Eventually the nephew was granted Roman citizenship (as was his uncle) and had this theatre named for him, while the uncle became the first person not born to Roman franchise to receive a triumph at Rome (for his victory over the African tribe of the Garamantes in 19 B.C.). Their connections with Julius Caesar—the elder Balbus wrote an account of his experiences in the field with Caesar, *Ephemeris,* which has unfortunately been lost—may account for the signal honors these men received. Also connected with Caesar was Lucius Marcius Philippus (consul in 56 B.C., second husband of Atia, neice of Julius Caesar, daughter of Attius Balbus and mother of Augustus by Octavius) for whom the Portico of Philippus was named.

These references to Drusus Senior and elder and younger men named Balbus remind us of our English habit of using such terms as *Cato the Elder, Pliny the Younger, Drusus Senior,* and so on, and we ought to mention that Romans never employed such terms. The elder Cato they called Cato the Censor and the younger one (who was not his son but his great-grandson) was called Cato Uticensis (but only after his death, since he committed suicide—after reading Plato's *Phaedo*—at

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73 Marcus Claudius Marcellus (42-23 B.C.) is commemorated by Virgil (*Aeneid* VI, 860-886) in a passage the poet himself recited to Augustus soon after the untimely death of Marcellus, son of the emperor's sister (Octavia) and of Gaius Claudius Marcellus (of a famous plebeian family), consul in 49 B.C. Young Marcellus was the first husband of Julia, Augustus' only child. It is thought he was a victim of Livia (Augustus' second wife) because she wanted to marry Julia to her elder son (Tiberius) in order to make him heir-apparent. This is but part of an immensely complicated story but one that fascinated even general audiences when *I, Claudius* appeared on BBC Television and on PBS educational stations in America.

74 He was born at Gades in Hispania Baetica, founded by the Phoenicians near the Pillars of Hercules and often equated in mythology with the island of Erythia. The elder Balbus refounded the town where he was born and in 49 B.C. Julius Caesar gave it the Roman franchise and it became a *municipium* called *Augusta urbs Julia Gaditana.* It gave its name to Fretum Gaditanum, the Straits of Gibraltar. What was Balbus' native, pre-Roman name?

Utica, where he was governor in 46 B.C.). The idea of *junior* and *senior* did not occur to the Romans to whom *juniores* were men up to middle age and *seniores* were more mature (what the modern euphemism calls "senior citizens"). Pliny the Younger's father was one Caecilius Clio, his mother Plinia, sister of Gaius Plinius Secundus (our Pliny the Elder). The younger Pliny, when still a child, was adopted by his uncle, hence his name, but the *Secundus* was a *cognomen* shared with the uncle and carried no suggestion of being second, junior, or younger. When Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus acquired a grandson (the son of Lucius Aemilius Paullus, victor of Pydna, where he defeated Perseus, last king of Macedonia)[75] the younger man became Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus. Later he won for himself the *agnomen Africanus Minor* to distinguish him from the earlier Africanus. For convenience, historians often refer to them as Africanus Major and Africanus Minor, but of course they were not so known in their own time. Presumably the lives of Africanus Major and Africanus Minor did not overlap much (if at all): the elder died at an unknown date not far from 183 B.C. and the later was born at an uncertain date but around 185 B.C.[76] If (as is most likely) it was the eldest son of the great Africanus who, with no children of his own, adopted the son of Aemilius Paullus, then there were two men with very similar names at the same time, but this would be no unusual thing for Romans, as we have seen. For instance, even so unusual a name as Gnaeus Cornelius Scipio Hispallus served, among others, the consul of 171 B.C. and his son (who, as praetor in 139 B.C. gave all astrologers—Chaldaeans, they were called, for that place was notorious for fortune-telling—ten days to get out of town).The Romans, great lawgivers, had clear-cut rules for naming and, with certain exceptions which we have been at pains to point out, adhered to them, though no Roman would have considered himself quite so boxed in so far as personal names were concerned as the priest of Jupiter was

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75 Strabo tells us the Romans also called Pydna, Citrum, and the examples of this practice of differing from the native name—with reasons, when they can be discovered, or guessed—deserve a separate study. Some say it was the son of Africanus (same name) who adopted the boy.

76 The elder is called Africanus Major in such works as R.M. Hayward's *Studies on Scipio Africanus Major* (1933) and the other is sometimes called Aemilianus, as in Karl Bilz' *Die Politik des Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus* (1935), though the younger man not only inherited *Africanus* but also earned the title on his own in later years by reducing Carthage (146 B.C.) and making Africa subject to Roman dominion. (Later he also earned the title *Numantinus* after taking Numantia in 133 B.C. after a prolonged seige.)

regarding the magic in names.[77] Though the *Britannica* (XV, p. 1159) says that "the Roman naming system was awkward and not highly efficient," it lasted as long as the Roman empire and disappeared only gradually, as Christianity (with its emphasis on the single name given at the baptismal font) triumphed and the *pontifex maximus* became the pope. Then the Bishop of Rome exercised power from "The Eternal City" as the Emperor at Rome had done. Gregory the Great declared himself *servus servorum dei* (servant of the servants of God) but since the Ninth Century the title of pope (*papa*, father) has, at least in the Western Church, been reserved for the Bishop of Rome (the pope still uses *episcopus* in formal documents) and he has come to be addressed as *Sanctitas vestra* (Your Holiness), *Sanctissimus pater* (Most Holy Father), *Beatissime pater,* etc. Centered in Rome, the popes have borne Roman number names (*Sixtus, Xystus*) and the common *praenomina* (*Lucius, Marcus, Gaius*) as well a Latin names such as *Felix, Silvester, Pius, Marcellus, Marcellinus, Virgilius, Honorius, Adrian, Urban,* etc. They have taken names of Greek origin too (*Alexander, Dionysius, Militiades, Eugenius, Agatho* and *Agapetus, Theodore* and *Telesphorus,* etc.) as well as such unusual ones as *Conon* and *Lado*, but most common are names such as *Innocent, Clement, Benedict, Boniface,* etc. There has been a *Donus* and a *Deusdedit* (Adeodatus I) and in the lists we find *Simplicius, Formosus, Calixtus, Romanus,* even *Hilarius. Pontianus, Virgilius,* and *Pelagius* are among names not repeated, as in *Petrus* (the latter, perhaps, since the prophecy of Malachy that said the papacy would end, as it began, with a Peter). An ancient Roman family produced the name *Cornelius* and the Roman belief in name magic such names as *Victor*, while the *agnomen Soter,* which has turned up in our mention of kings, was also a pope's name, though no more Roman than *Athanasius* or the common *John.*

Signa or *Vocabula*

Nicknames among the Romans fascinate us. Had we more of them we might be able to alter our impression that the stimulating ingenuity which marks Roman poetry was somewhat lacking in the matter of

77 "In ancient Rome, the *flamen dialis* (high priest of Jupiter) was hedged in with linguistic restrictions: he could not touch or name, under penalty of dire consequences to the entire people, such things as a goat, a dog, raw meat, beans, or ivy."—Mario Pei, *The Story of Language* (rev. 1965), p. 267. Name magic in Rome, not dissimilar to taboos that allowed the name of God to be spoken only in the Holy of Holies by the Jewish high priest, that prevent Africans (as it prevented

those little, one-word poems (with all their resonances) that we call names. Roman nicknames demand painstaking research which has still not been completed and one hopes that the results, after years of effort, might yield someone a distinguished and enlightening article. Here we shall tell just a very few of the stories that make Roman nicknames so interesting.

A number of nicknames arose from the scandals that attached themselves to Tiberius. Suetonius, in his life of that allegedly drunken emperor, says Tiberius Claudius Nero was jokingly called *Biberius Caldius Mero* (suggesting drinking, cold wine, unmixed wine). Tiberius' *spintriae*, infesting Capri, meant that the island "was now openly and generally called 'Caprineum,' because of his goatish antics."

A scandal gave Julius Ceasar a nickname. Sent (by Marcus Minucius Thermus, 81 B.C.) to the court on Nicomedes III *Philopater,* King of Bythinia, Caesar discovered that the monarch's love of men did not stop (as his name might suggest) with love of his father. Young Julius became involved with Nicomedes in such a way as to earn Caesar a nickname that translates as "The Queen of Bythinia." The reasons were similar to those that earned King James I the unofficial title of "Quean of England."

Cicero, who liked to play around with names, dubbed Pompey *Sampsiceramus* in *ad Atticum* (II, 14,16). There was a real Sampsiceramus, a minor Arabian potentate of Emessa (or Emissa), a city in Syria on the east bank of the Orontes. Pompey conquered Sampsiceramus (69 B.C.) and made him a client prince or satrap. Vassals of the dynasty ruled until the time of Domitian and then their territory was absorbed into the Roman province of Syria. One needs to know this much to realize that *Sampsiceramus* connotes pettiness and sycophancy, qualities Cicero was only too willing to attribute to Pompey. In fact, twice more in his letters Cicero uses *Sampsiceramus* as a sort of code name for Pompey. Jerome Carcopino's *Secrets in the Correspondence of Cicero* yields information for a full study of Ciceronian code names (and gossip). In employing this device, Cicero was writing in an established literary tradition, for Virgil in his *Bucolics* is but one of the authors of that time (41-39 B.C.) and later who veil their comments under code names. "The prince of Latin poets" is supposed to have

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Rumplestiltskin) from revealing their names lest one gain a power over them by having something peculiarly *part* of them, deserves a carefully-researched paper of its own. We do not take up the matter here, any more than we get involved in the Roman influence on later, non-Roman, names such as *Erastus, Mercator, Nostradamus.*

presented Julius Caesar under the guise of *Daphnis*, a name one hardly would expect to be a reference to the general and historian of the Gallic Wars—unless one knew the story of Nicomedes.

So much for the private lives of the great just now. Let us turn from nicknames of generals such as Caesar and Pompey (not to mention Constantius Chlorus, *Redditor Lucis Aeternae,* when he "restored" Roman culture to Britain) to nicknames in the armed forces in general, what come to be called *signa* or *vocabula.*

The Roman armed forces were rich in nicknames of the *Blood and Guts, Bull, Vinegar Joe, Stonewall, Balafroy, Bras Armé,* [Vlad] *Ţepeş* ("The Impaler"—Dracula) type with which we are familiar if we read military history. In battle a name to be feared is a weapon. A nickname (psychiatrists tell us) is a sign of popularity; acceptance of one shows a desire to cope with reality. In any case, a military man can build an image (or acquire one) whether he is called *The Little Corporal* or *Monty* and it is as useful for morale (his and that of his troops) as the theatrical props of a MacArthur (corncob pipe, sun glasses, the cap of a Field Marshal of The Philippines with non-regulation *scrambled eggs*). British generals oddly bear schoolboy nicknames throughout military careers. Anthony John Trythall's study of *The Intellectual Gereral 1878-1966* (1977) presents us with, among others, J. F. C. "Boney" Fuller. Elsewhere you will find "Boots," "Stinky," even "Boy." Caligula was "Boots"! Roman generals were out to make a name for themselves. They may have encouraged their troops to give them nicknames. Regardless, the troops did so. There must have been Roman equivalents for *The Old Man, Gooks, The Hun, Les Boches, Johnny Reb, The "Perishing" Rifles, The Old Contemptibles, The Thin Red Line,* and so on. And names for generals and individual men in the ranks. Romans were likely to choose a nickname—if they had any say in the matter—that indicated that a man was fierce: the equivalent of *Tiger, Wolf, Bear.* They were proud to be said to be quick to fight (or quick to anger, or to drink). An article of dress (*Caracella*), a significant event *(Scaevola)*, etc., could stamp a name on a man. There were then, as now, good uses for a nickname. It is hard to say if this or that *Lupus* acted like a wolf, or wolfed down his food or was associated with a totemic wolf, as one of the 17 *contrada* groups of Siena still is, but it is clear army nicknames were numerous.

A passage in *Claudius, The God*, where Claudius addresses his troops quite informally—he has forgotten his fine prepared speech "somewhat reminiscent of Livy"—finds author Robert Graves suggesting where armed forces' nicknames came from for regiments and (to some extent)

their value. Graves' source is Suetonius, and Graves makes Claudius say:

> The Twentieth Regiment will have the honour of leading the assault: Germanicus always said that though, in barracks, you Twentieth were the most insubordinate, most drunken and most quarrelsome troops in the entire regular army, you were absolute lions in the field. Second and Fourteenth, Germanicus called you the Backbone of the Army. It will be your duty tomorrow to stiffen the French allies, who will act as the Army's ribs. The ninth will come up last, because Germanicus always used to say that you Ninth were the slowest regiment in the Army but also the surest. . . . One effect of this speech. . . was that ever since I made it the Ninth have been familiarly known not as the "Ninth Spanish" (their full title) but as the "Ninth Snails." The Twentieth, too, whose full title is "The Conquering Valerian Twentieth," are known to other regiments as the "Drunken Lions"; and when a man of the Fourteenth meets a man of the Second they are expected to salute each other as "Comrade Backbone." The French auxiliaries are always known as "The Ribs" (pp. 339-340).

So Claudius (with his troop of elephants) took the victory in Britain which had been prepared for him and the legions he addressed (with supplements) spread out around Britain: The Twentieth and Fourteenth to Corinium (Cirencester), the Second to Glevum (Gloucester), the Ninth to Ratae (Leicester) and later to the municipality—its inhabitants became Roman citizens—of Lindum (Lincoln). Then Caradoc (Caractacus) rose with the Silures and Ordovices of Wales, so the Second moved to Isca (Caerleon on Usk), the Twentieth and the Fourteenth to Uriconium (A.E. Housman's "Uricon the city" in Shropshire). After eight years the British chief Caradoc was defeated (the hill camp between the Teme and Clun is still called Caer Caradoc), fled north to the Brigantes, and was treacherously given by their queen to the Romans. Led in triumph through Rome, he asked, "Why when you had all this did you covet our poor huts?"

But the huts were captured and the country subjugated (after fierce battles with the Iceni and Trinobantes and Brigantes—to keep them in line Vespasian established the garrison at Eboracum or York). At least the southern part, under Julius Agricola was pacified. Some parts of the north were never conquered. Cities which have more or less vanished (such as Calleva Atrebatum, Silchester) and others which still flourish (Londinium) were founded. Forts and garrisons were manned and what Sir Arthur Bryant calls "the *coloniae* where soldiers' families were

settled on retirement with land and houses to breed more soldiers" were established.

One scholar (Payne) conveniently lists some Roman legion names in the reign of Hadrian. In Britain were II Augusta, VI Victrix, and XX Valeria Victrix. In Spain, VII Gemina. In the German provinces, I Minervia, XXX Ulpia Victrix, XXII Primigenia, and VIII Augusta. In Eastern Europe were deployed X Gemina, XIV Gemina, I Adiutrix, II Adiutrix, IV Flavia, VII Claudia, I Italica, XI Claudia, V Macedonica, and XIII Gemina. In the Near East were found XV Apollinaris, XII Fulminata, XVI Flavia, IV Scythia, III Gallica, X Fretensia, VI Ferrata, and III Cyrenaica. In Africa were II Traiana and III Augusta. In imperial times an army's name included a number (often dating from Republican times) and a title. The latter could refer to a founding emperor (Claudia, Traiana), to a place where it won distinction (Scythia, Macedonica), to some military exploit (Valeria Victrix), or to the circumstances under which it was formed: *Gemina* groups were formed, for example by combining two "twin" legions to form one unit.

Veterans of II Augusta, VI Victrix, etc., retired in Britain, settled on the land, and brought their influence to bear in this way both during and after their military careers in Britain.

Thus the language of the soldiers, *nostra lingua*, made its mark on the land. The names of Britain began to reflect the occupation, one that was to last as long as, for example, the period between Elizabeth I and the father of our Elizabeth II. These Army *agnomina* which the Romans called *signa* or *vocabula* often revealed the vigor, vivacity, and vulgarity of the folk. Their role in building useful *esprit de corps* was obvious and they deserve study, as we have said.[78]

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78 This might be part of a more ambitious investigation of military nicknames. The names of British regiments (many of which perished in Army reorganizations lately), for example, are amusing and redolent of history. *The Blues* is a famous guards regiment, *The Redbreasts* were the Fifth Lancers (Royal Irish) and the *Red Lancers* the New South Wales Lancers. The Royal Highlanders were *The Ladies from Hell* (because of their kilts) and *The Black Watch* from their dark tartan. (Dark tartans were also common among the sheep-stealing clans.) *The Black Horse,* Seventh Dragoon Guards (also *The Virgin Mary's Guard* and *Strawboots*), rode black horses. *The Light Bobs* were the Thirteenth Regiment of Foot (First Battalion Somerset Light Infantry) and the Fiftieth Regiment of Foot (First Battalion Royal Welsh Kents) was *The Blind Half Hundred* from the eye diseases that plagued the Egyptian campaign. (They were also called *Dirty,* as in the US war film of *The Dirty Dozen,* etc.) Sometimes a commander's name will come down across the centuries: the Eighty-ninth Foot (Second Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers, *The Rollickers*) was long known as *Blayney's Bloodhounds.* The names are often tricky: we trace *The Too Damn Goods* to the badges of the Second Dragoon Guards: 2 D.G. Roman military names were no less entertaining or informative—and will be harder to research. See the study of the *cognomina* of soldiers in the Roman legions listed *infra*, Note 106. E.S. McCartney's 1912 dissertation at the University

[Part II, the conclusion of this article, will appear in the March, 1979 issue of *Names.*]

Brooklyn College
The City University of New York
and
New York University

of Pennsylvania—and we cannot undertake here to mention all doctoral dissertations and masters' essays that touch on Roman names, though these can easily be found through standard reference books and are not nearly so numerous as one might expect, many onomastic problems that lend themselves very well to such investigations having been sadly overlooked—was on "Figurative Use of Animal Names in Latin and their Application to Military Devices: A Study in Semantics," later printed (New Era Printers). Perhaps the frequency of animal references in Roman military nicknames owed something to the familiarity of soldiers with animal totemic devices, but it is more feasible that, as the ancients ate the heart of a lion (or a man) to gain courage, so taking the name of a fierce animal (such as a bear) was thought to lend the bearer the animal's qualities. Or a man might appear to his fellows to be sly as a fox, clumsy as a bear, lion-hearted, as Richard *Coeur-de-Lion* (or the first man to bear the name *Leonard*) was regarded. The old "how-to-name-the-baby" books that undertook to give parents the "meaning" of a name often translated forenames, especially Teutonic ones, to stress some connection with animals. Today *Ursula* cannot be said to carry for most people, if any, the idea of the totemic bear and people do not give children translateable names like *Beowulf.* L. R. Dean's Princeton dissertation (1916), which we shall have occasion to note later, also deals with Roman soldiers' names, concentrating on *cognomina.* Oddly, Caius Marius, a soldier who rose through all the ranks in the army, never gained a *cognomen.*