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Faliscan

Personal names

The Indo-European system

There are two types of names:

a) names consisting of two stems, often praising the qualities of the person concerned: Πατρο-κλέης; these can be shortened (in either stem), but a suffix has to be added: Πάτρο-κλ-ος;

b) names consisting of one stem, often nicknames, sometimes praising good qualities, but more often mocking bad characteristics.

In the original system, a single name is enough: Greek Αἰσχύλος, Vedic *Bhīmasena* (name of a hero), Celtic *Dumnorix*.

But in order to distinguish between people of the same name, the father's name can be added; this is optional; cf:

a) genitive: Greek Δημοσθένης Δημοσθένου, Old High German *Hadubrant Hiltibrantes sunu*;

b) adjective: Greek Αἶας Τελαμώνιος, Old English *Wulf Wonréding*.

Occasionally what began as a patronymic continues in a family; cf. the kings of Pylos: Νηλεΰς, son Νέστωρ Νηλήϊος, grandson Ἄντιλοχος Νηλήϊος. This then becomes a clan name, cf. the mythical Τανταλίδαι or the Vedic singers *Kāṇvās*.

The Latin system

The Latin system is very different from the Indo-European system. Systems similar to the Latin one can be found in Faliscan, Oscan and Umbrian, but also in Etruscan. We are presumably dealing with a regional phenomenon.

The full form of a Roman name can be seen in CIL *I*² 827: *M(arcus) Herennius M(arci) f(ilius) Mae(cia tribu) Rufus*.

This consists of: praenomen, nomen (=nomen gentile / nomen gentilicium), genitive of father's name + 'son', name of the tribe (ablative), cognomen.

Usage: Cicero uses the combination praenomen + nomen + cognomen only in highly official contexts; praenomen + nomen or praenomen + cognomen is used in formal contexts; a single name is informal.

How did this system arise?

Latin originally had the single-name system of Indo-European. Cf. *Manios* and *Numasios* in CIL *I*² 3, *Duenos* in CIL *I*² 4, *Loucilios* in CIL *I*² 2437.

To this was first added a nomen gentile for distinguishing between people of the same name; when this became insufficient, the filiation was added, then the tribe name, and at last the cognomen. Cognomina do not appear in administrative documents until the Sullan period, but are attested from the beginning of the 3rd c., cf. *Scipio* in CIL *I*² 6; cognomina began among the nobility.

Praenomina: native names are ordinals like *Quintus* or *Sextus*; a number of names come from Etruscan, e.g. *Aulus* = Etruscan *Avile*, later *Avle*.

Nomina gentilia: these are mostly formed with *-ius* < **-yo-s*. Nomina gentilia are mostly patronymic adjectives in origin, and the underlying father's name is a praenomen (*Tullius*, *Postumius*) or a cognomen (*Flavius*, *Claudius*).

Since many praenomina also end in *-ius*, an alternative suffix for gentilicia, *-ilius*, is frequent. The scansion is *-īlius* if the base form is a stem in *-io-* (*Lucius*, *Lucīlius*), but elsewhere the scansion is *-īlius* (*Marcus*, *Marcīlius*).

The fact that nomina gentilia started as adjectives is still obvious from their adjectival usages with common nouns (*gens Cornelia*, *via Appia*). When these patronymic adjectives were not only used for sons, but also for grandsons, they were reinterpreted as adjectives denoting the gens, and from there it is only a small step towards the reanalysis as nouns; this then shows in new ways of expressing concepts (*forum Corneli*, *theatrum Pompeianum*).

After nomina gentilia became standard, they were the best means of identifying a person; as a consequence, the praenomina became fewer and fewer. At the end of the Republic, only the following names were in regular use: *Aulus*, *Decimus*, *Gaius*, *Gnaeus*, *Lucius*, *Marcus*, *Publius*, *Quintus*, *Sextus*, *Tiberius*, *Titus*.

In addition, there were a handful of praenomina used almost exclusively in certain Patrician families: *Appius*, *Kaeso*, *Mamercus*, *Manius*, *Numerius*, *Servius*, *Spurius*.

When nomina gentilia became insufficient to identify people, cognomina became more widespread. Cognomina can denote physical defects (*Calvus*, *Crassus*, *Flaccus*, *Flavus*, *Rufus*), age (*Maximus*, *Paullus*), a wish (*Felix*, *Carus*), a profession (*Figulus*, *Pictor*), ridicule (*Lupus*, *Catilina* 'dogmeat'), origin (*Sabinus*, *Afer*), victories (*Africanus*, *Germanicus*).

A few remarks about the morphology of cognomina: sometimes oldfashioned praenomina, which have gone out of use, are revived as cognomina (*Agrippa*); the suffix *-ōn-* is individualizing (*catus* 'clever', *Cato* 'clever man'; cf. *στραβός*, *Στραβών*); cognomina based on other cognomina are formed with *-īnus* (*Rufus*, *Rufīnus*); *-ānus* is added to the original father's nomen gentile in the case of an adoption (*Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus Aemilianus* was the son of *Lucius Aemilius Paullus*, but was adopted by one *Cornelius Scipio*).

Eventually, cognomina are no longer given to individuals, but are passed on from father to son; in that case a second, semantically more appropriate cognomen can be added (*Cornelii Scipiones* = group among the large *gens Cornelia*, cognomen *Scipio*; among the *Cornelii Scipiones* was *Scipio Barbatus*).

Latin developed this system of *tria nomina* early, but traces of the one-name system can still be seen; other languages had three names even earlier, among them Etruscan. Are the *tria nomina* in fact an Etruscan invention that spread to Latin?

Etruscan names

Like Latin, Etruscan had three names, praenomen, nomen gentile, and cognomen. Corresponding to *Marcus Tullius Cicero* we find in Etruscan: *vel tutna tumu* ‘Vel, of the Tutna family, with the cognomen Tumu’. (The suffix *-na* is used for nomina gentilia.)

As in Latin, cognomina are not consistently used and are perhaps restricted to the nobility.

Frequently the father’s name is given as well (and also the mother’s name etc): *avle tarchnas larthal clan* ‘Aulus Tarchnas, son of Larth’.

Feminine Etruscan first names are often derived from male names: m. *vel*, f. *vela* or *velia*, m. *arnth*, f. *arnthi*, m. *larth*, f. *larthi*.

Since the *tria nomina* seem so non-Indo-European at first sight, we might be tempted to ascribe them to Etruscan influence. However, while Etruscan uses the suffix *-na* for its gentilicia, it has also borrowed *-io-* from the Italic languages for this function, which makes us wonder whether it is not Etruscan that needed some help to establish a system of *tria nomina*.

Oscan

The Oscan system is very similar to the Latin one. It is usual for a man to have a praenomen and a nomen gentile, and this is followed by the father’s name in the genitive, but without the word for ‘son’. Thus we get **Dekis Rahiis Maraheis** ‘Decius Rahius son of Maras’. Note that the first two names are syncopated and that the nomen gentile has the same *yo-*suffix as Latin. The genitive has the usual *i-*stem ending.

Umbrian

Umbrian uses, or can at least use, patronymic adjectives for the father’s praenomen (it is impossible to say if this is a consistent practice because abbreviations are the norm). Of particular interest is the fact that the order of names is praenomen – father’s name (as adjective or maybe genitive) – nomen gentile. Thus: **Vuvçis Titis Teteies**, where the first and second names clearly show syncope of earlier **-ios*; **Titis** goes back to **Titius*, the patronymic adjective belonging with *Titus*.

This curious position of the father’s name, in between the praenomen and the nomen gentile (which must have become fossilized prehistorically), shows that

the father's name is a later, foreign addition to the system; perhaps it comes from Latin or Oscan; perhaps it comes from Etruscan.

Faliscan at last

Like Latin and Etruscan, Faliscan has praenomina, nomina gentilia, and cognomina. The father's name is often given as well, interestingly in three different forms: as adjective, as simple genitive, or as genitive followed by **f**.

The more complex onomastic formulae are used in funerary and thus official inscriptions; elsewhere the naming system is not used in all its potential complexity.

The oldest inscriptions sometimes just show the praenomen, e.g. **zextos** or **mama**. It is tempting to see in this the original situation which we also find in early Latin, but Giacomelli (1963: 155) argues that there can at least sometimes be affective simplification.

The most frequent combination is that of a praenomen and a nomen gentile, e.g. **tiroi.colanioi** 'for Tirrus Colanius', **caui: turi** 'of Gaius Turius'.

Sometimes we find the *tria nomina*: **cauio:nomes/ina:maxomo/zeruatronia** 'Gaius Nomesina Maximus and Seruatronia', **larð:ceises/celusa** 'Lars Caesius Celusa'.

As was said above, where there is the father's name, it can occur in three forms: **tulo.p()/iuneo** 'Tullus P., son of Iuna' = patronymic adjective; **ca.uecineo[.] uolti** 'Gaius Vecineius Voltii' = patronymic genitive; **uolta/ne.roni/cafi** 'Volta Neronius Gauii filius' = patronymic genitive dependent on word for 'son'.

The origin of personal names is often difficult to assess. Sometimes there are clear Latin parallels, e.g. the praenomen **ancos** corresponds neatly to Latin *Ancus*. However, there is also an extraordinary overlap with Etruscan names, due to the fact that the Faliscans were neighbours of the Etruscans and were culturally strongly influenced by them. **cailio** is clearly a Latin-Faliscan name (Latin *Caelius*), but was borrowed into Etruscan (*caile*). **lart**, on the other hand, is an Etruscan name borrowed by Faliscan. The issue of where a name comes from can often not be resolved, and we find a number of mixed names like **marcna** (Latin-Faliscan base, Etruscan suffix); note also **amanos** from Etruscan *amana*, or **tertineo** < **Tertina-yos*, an Etruscan name with Etruscan suffix and another Latin-Faliscan suffix. A count of Giacomelli's list of personal names in Faliscan reveals that 80–90% of them have Etruscan parallels, either because names were borrowed by the Etruscans or from the Etruscans.