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**TRANSFER OF PROPERTY
IN AN OSTIAN PROFESSIONAL *CORPUS***
**Sexti Sextilii and Lucii Iulii among the *lenuncularii* in *CIL* XIV
251, and a Possible Effect of the ‘Antonine Plague’***

CHRISTER BRUUN

The membership registers (*alba*) of the *lenuncularii tabularii auxiliarii Ostienses*

Rome’s harbour town Ostia is famous among Roman social and economic historians because of its rich evidence for professional associations. The many inscriptions which originated in the context of these *collegia* and *corpora* allow modern scholars to investigate certain questions pertaining to Roman trade and commerce that other sources are silent about.

Practically unique to Ostia are the many *alba*, or membership registers inscribed on marble plaques, which seem to reflect the success or failure of individuals and families in various trades and professions. The present study looks at *CIL* XIV 250 and 251, two *alba* of the *corporati lenuncularii tabularii auxiliarii Ostienses*, an association of ship owners, shippers, and perhaps captains who operated *lenunculi* in the harbours of Ostia and Portus and on the lowest course of the Tiber.¹ Table 1 below charts the presence of the most common family names among the members of the association. Not all members joined or held their membership at the same time, since it appears that the two tables

* I am grateful to the two anonymous referees for helpful comments, and I also wish to thank Nicolas Tran for kindly supplying me with texts published and still in proofs, and Olli Salomies for wise counsel.

¹ It is often thought that the *lenunculi* were tugboats or ferries; see Casson 1965, 34; Le Gall 2005, 262–83. Tran 2014, 136–37 preferred to consider *lenunculi* as lighters assisting in loading and unloading.

received additions over time, while the names of members who died or left were not removed.² The second of these *album* was begun in 192 CE, forty years after the first one, which obviously will have registered new members only up to a certain point. To judge from three preserved inscribed fragments, it appears that in the four decades between *CIL* XIV 250 and 251 the *corporati lenuncularii tabularii auxiliarii Ostienses* may have commissioned three other membership *alba*.³

It is similarly clear that in *CIL* XIV 251, names continued to be added after the initial year 192, possibly until 213 CE, which is the date of a third clearly identifiable *album* of the same association.⁴ After the general picture has thus been outlined, this study will focus on what arguably are traces of the transfer of property between some members of the association.

² Royden 1988, 38–41; Herz 1994, 295–96. For a general overview of the *corpus* of *lenuncularii tabularii auxiliarii Ostienses* and its leadership, see Royden 1988, 38–50.

³ The inscriptions which may be evidence of other *alba* are *CIL* XIV 4567, 4568, and 4589. They both contain a section from the fourth and last column of *CIL* XIV 250 from 152 CE with only very few changes: *CIL* XIV 4567 lists nine of the ten names in col. IV.1–10, while *CIL* XIV 4568 lists fourteen of the eighteen names in col. IV.2–20. It is not possible to determine which of these fragmentary lists is earlier. The existence of additional intermediate *alba* between those of 152 and 192 CE was stressed by Tran 2012, 335 n. 44; while Tran 2020, 95 n. 49 inadvertently wrote that *CIL* XIV 4567, 4668, and 4589 belonged to a single *album*. *CIL* XIV 4589 contains short and very fragmentary remains of two columns, and to judge from the endings of the *cognomina*, the names in col. I.2–10 seem to agree completely with the nine names in col. IV.1–9 of *CIL* XIV 250.

⁴ The third *album* was published by Bloch 1953, 279–82 no. 42 in the *Notizie degli Scavi*.

CIL XIV 250 (begun in 152 CE) ⁵ Most common combinations of <i>praenomen</i> + <i>gentilicium</i> among 131 men, both members and the leadership (including non-senatorial <i>patroni</i>)	CIL XIV 251 (begun in 192 CE) Most common combinations of <i>praenomen</i> + <i>gentilicium</i> among 260 men (<i>plebs</i> and <i>quinquennales</i>)
M. Cornelius 11 T. Cornelius 11 L. Iulius 8 M. Antistius 6 M. Cippius 6 M. Lollius 5 M. Publicius 5 C. Vatronius 5	M. Publicius 31 M. Cornelius 22 M. Cippius 14 L. Furius 13 T. Flavius 7 A. Herenuleius 6 Sex. Sextilius 6 P. Aelius 5 D. Otacilius 5

Table 1: Conspicuous presence of individuals with the same *praenomen* + *gentilicium* among the *corporati lenuncularii tabularii auxiliarii Ostienses* – change over time.⁶

Table 1 permits us to study how the membership of the association developed over a period of several decades. Remarkable changes occurred. Some family alliances (“*Familienverbände*” is the term introduced for this phenomenon by Peter Herz)⁷ have a much stronger presence in the later *album*,

⁵ For a photo of the inscription, see Tran 2012, 336 Fig. 4.

⁶ Somewhat annoyingly, there is no agreement among recent scholars about the frequencies attributed to the various *gentilicia*, probably because men who were registered both as members and as *quinquennales* are sometimes counted twice, and sometimes not; cf. Royden 1988, 96 “the M. Publicii (twenty-eight in all)” on CIL XIV 251; Herz 1994; Tran 2006, 438. Cf. Tran 2020, 95: “There are 127 *corporati* on the first list and 261 on the second”. In theory, no discrepancies should occur since the count can be verified by carefully studying the pages of CIL XIV.

⁷ Herz 1994. There is no proof that ties of any kind existed between the men who shared *praenomen* + *gentilicium*, like the eleven Marci Cornelii did, but what we know about Roman economic life in general makes it very likely (unless we are dealing with the most common name combinations that ultimately could be traced back to the various emperors, such as *Gaius Iulius*, *Tiberius Iulius*, *Titus Flavius*, and so on). A successful Roman businessman operated in close contact with his freed slaves (who bore his *praenomen* + *gentilicium*), and it stands to reason that he might also involve his descendants, who bore the same *gentilicium* and often shared his *praenomen*, like some of his close kinsmen might have done as well.

while in contrast some names are much rarer or disappear completely in the later register. This disappearance would seem to mean that within some family alliances the business did not continue into the next generation. There is no obvious reason for why some families should have disappeared or been seriously weakened, but some conjectures present themselves naturally: there may have been no surviving son and no interested freedman to continue the business at the death of the family head, or the business may no longer have been viable.

Those who thrived were the Marci Cornelii, who went from eleven to twenty-two presences in the later *album*, and more than any the Marci Publicii, who increased more than six-fold and registered thirty-one individuals in the *album* which was begun in 192 CE. The Titi Flavii, present with one man in *CIL* XIV 250, increased to seven. Among the newcomers there were six Sexti Sextilii, while the Publii Aelii and the Decimi Otacilii, who likewise were not present in the earlier *album*, both register five members. Strong changes in the other direction are registered for the eleven Titi Cornelii, the eight Lucii Iulii, the six Marci Antistii, and the five Gaii Vatronii. These “Familienverbände”, by all appearances involved in successful business enterprises during the earlier period, had disappeared by 192 but for one single T. Cornelius and one M. Antistius.

Part of the picture is, as the *CIL* XIV editor Dessau pointed out, that several men who were registered in the earlier *album* appear again when the register was drawn up anew in 192.⁸ It is noteworthy but also expected that the “survivors” all appear in the fourth and last column of *CIL* XIV 250, which contained the most recent entries. These men were presumably the youngest of those registered in the earlier *album* and most likely to be around when a later *album* was commissioned. There are, nevertheless, some odd features in this pattern. Of the forty-six names in col. IV (of which one was marked as deceased), it is nos. 3, 8 10, 12–14, 28, 34, and 44 which were recorded in the *album* from 192 CE. As can be seen, almost all belong to the first third of that column, while the vast majority of the last entries, presumably the youngest members, were no longer around in 192. Whether we should look for an especially dramatic cause

⁸ See H. Dessau, *ad CIL* XIV 251, where eleven men who appeared also in *CIL* XIV 250 are listed (their location in the earlier *album* are registered in parentheses): M. Publicius Ianuarius (col. IV.12), M Publicius Ostiensis (IV.13), P. Cornelius Phoebus (III.17), A. Mucius Malus (III.28), A. Herenuleius Philetianus (IV.3), A. Herenuleius Vettianus (IV.8), T. Manlius Manlianus (IV.10), M. Furius Primitivus (IV.14), Q. Marcius Rufinus (IV.28), M. Cippius Natalianus (IV.34), M. Cornelius Fortunatus (IV.44).

for this situation, a cause other than regular economic mechanisms, will be asked at the end of this article.

The “Familienverbände” of the Lucii Iulii and the Sexti Sextilii

It becomes meaningful to ask why these changes in the names recorded in the two *alba* took place only when we focus on “Familienverbände”. On the contrary, if a family name which is borne by only one or two individuals in *CIL* XIV 250 is no longer found in *CIL* XIV 251, this event is not worth much attention: it is a law of nature that individuals pass away, that some have no descendants, and that some enterprises will fail. Similarly, if a new family name appears in the later *album*, borne by one or two individuals, this is merely a sign of a naturally occurring enterprising spirit. But when the changes involve more individuals, so that we can talk about family alliances or “Familienverbände”, a closer study may tell us something about the economic or other mechanisms that influenced Ostian society.

All we currently have is the list of names in *CIL* XIV 250 and 251, but precisely this onomastic material may in one particular case deliver a hint of how the change came about.⁹ In *CIL* XIV 251, initiated in 192 CE, the name *Iulianus* is borne by six different members:

- the equestrian Sex. Sextilius Iulianus *f(i)lius* (mentioned among the *patroni* of equestrian rank in column I, line 9)¹⁰
- Sex. Sextilius Iulianus *pater* (one of the *patroni* at I.11; mentioned among the *plebs* at III.19)
- Sex. Sextilius Iulianus *iunior* (IV.8)
- Sex. Sextilius Verus Iulianus (VIII.16)

⁹ This matter has not been commented upon in previous scholarship; neither Herz 1994, 323–24 nor Tran 2006, 430–40, Tran 2012, nor Tran 2020 refer to the question which will be discussed here.

¹⁰ It is clear that in *CIL* XIV 251 there are three different men called Sex. Sextilius Iulianus. Third among the equestrian *patroni* is a man with the epithet *f(i)lius*. His name must have been entered at the inception, in 192 CE, and he cannot be Sex. Sextilius Iulianus *iunior* at IV.8, who likely was his son. This was also the conclusion of Hermann Dessau in his commentary in *CIL* XIV, *ad loc.* Dessau also pointed to a similar situation regarding the second of the equestrian *patroni*, L. Furius Publicius Marcellinus; a homonym appears at VIII.1, who clearly is not the same man.

- Sex. Sextilius Florus Iulianus (VIII.24),
- M. Faenius Iulianus (VIII.32).

A first onomastic observation to make concerns the name combination Sex. Sextilius, which is extremely rare. All the Ostian Sexti Sextilii known to us are mentioned in *CIL XIV 251*,¹¹ and in the Roman world as a whole this name combination appears in only ten other inscriptions, about half of which are from Italy.¹² The *gentilicium Sextilius* is more common, but it is usually accompanied by the *praenomina Publius* or *Gaius*. In light of this, it is clear that all seven Sexti Sextilii in *CIL XIV 251* have a mutual bond and constitute a true “Familienverband” which also includes Sex. Sextilius Victorinus (at VI.2) and Sex. Sextilius Alexander (at VII.1), even if these men do not bear the *cognomen Iulianus*.

Second, it is remarkable to see the name *Iulianus*, which to be sure is a very common Latin *cognomen*, appearing with such a frequency among men named Sex. Sextilius. A search in the epigraphic database Claus Slaby shows that among the many thousands of persons found in Ostian inscriptions, the name *Iulianus* turns up a total of twenty-eight times (when government officials and soldiers, who were not of local origin, are excluded).¹³ That six of these instances occur in *CIL XIV 251* seems like more than a coincidence.

Here, one cannot help but thinking of the many Lucii Iulii who belonged to the same association in 152 CE and in subsequent years and were registered in *CIL XIV 250*. When this fact is combined with the frequency of the *cognomen Iulianus* in 192 and after, while the Lucii Iulii have disappeared, the suspicion

¹¹ There is also the fragmentary inscription *AE 2001, 622*, belonging to the *album* of an association, which lists the names of some ten men, *patroni* and *quinquennales*. The inscription is to be dated to the early third century (thus, e.g., Tran 2012, 340–43), and the man called Sex. Sextilius Iulianus in the inscription is undoubtedly one of the two men by that name who are cited in *CIL XVI 251*.

¹² The number is based on the Latin inscriptions in the EDCS, see *CIL III 11662, V 6121, V 6431 (= ILS 6743), VI 26506, XI 7400 = I²3356, XIII 5919; AE 1912, 8; AE 1993, 475*. I doubt that an inventory of Greek inscriptions would change the picture.

¹³ Besides the five in *CIL XIV 251*, men named Iulianus are found in *CIL XIV 246, 250, 256* (four, of which three notably enough are called Ulpus Iulianus), 518, 661, 763, 900, 934, 1329, 1456, 1540, 4563, 4855, 5357; *IPO A 179, 184; EpOst 446, 565; NSc 1953, 280*. There are also seven women called Iuliana. One of the anonymous referees reports that the Epigraphic Database Roma registers 48 instances of *Iulianus* from Ostia. I stand by what I wrote: outsiders (officials and soldiers) are not included, nor is any individual counted more than once.

arises that a transition in ownership had taken place. Could it be that, somehow, what had belonged to the Lucii Iulii had become property of a number of Sexti Sextilii (and perhaps of one Faenius), while the *cognomen Iulianus* stood as a testimony to this process?

If this is what happened, how should we imagine the situation to have evolved? In the case of the elder Sextilius in columns I.11 and III.19 (*CIL* XIV 251), there is, as mentioned, nothing particular in itself about his *cognomen Iulianus*. We can note that it was so significant a name that it was given to his son to bear as well, but again, it is not uncommon to find sons who inherit a *cognomen*, as was the case with Titus the son of the emperor Vespasian (his original *tria nomina* were T. Flavius Vespasianus), or with the emperor Trajan, whose father also was named M. Ulpius Traianus.

Could the *cognomen Iulianus* be the result of a testamentary adoption?

If one wanted to derive the *cognomen Iulianus* from the Lucii Iulii, two explanations are possible.

(1) *Cognomina* in *-anus* (or *-ianus*, as they are categorized by some scholars) are sometimes a sign of adoption, as when in the second century BCE the younger Scipio Africanus, born as the son of Aemilius Paullus, became P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus Aemilianus through adoption.¹⁴ More to the point, such cases can be found also during the Principate in the epigraphic evidence, as stated in Olli Salomies's authoritative study of adoptive nomenclature. Among the many variations that occur, there is one, by Salomies called model B, in which the man adopted by testament bears a name in which the two first elements belong to the adoptive father while his new *cognomen*, ending in *-anus*, is derived from the adoptee's own *gentilicium*. Thus, if a Sex. Sextilius had adopted someone named L. Iulius in his testament, the adoptee had the option of being called Sex. Sextilius Iulianus.¹⁵

¹⁴ On *cognomina* in *-anus* derived from *gentilicia*, see Kajanto 1965, 32–35, with p. 33 on such names originating through an adoption.

¹⁵ See Salomies 1992, 23.

To be sure, Salomies considered it quite rare that during the Principate such an onomastic formula would result from an adoption,¹⁶ but it is in any case worth considering what such a scenario would entail. First of all, we must assume that some kind of relationship existed between a boat owner, a *lenuncularius*, named L. Iulius, and a man of some financial means named Sex. Sextilius, who as far as we know was not a member of the *lenuncularii*. Nor would he ever be one, because he died, and out of friendship or for some other reason he left a bequest to L. Iulius. This is a testamentary adoption or a *condicio nominis ferendi*, and therefore the man who inherited from Sex. Sextilius as a consequence took over his *praenomen* + *gentilicium* and added Iulianus as an indication, possibly important for his own identity, that he was the “Iulian” Sex. Sextilius. This was a win–win situation: the adoptee grew richer while Sex. Sextilius on his death bed knew that his name would live on; he likely had no offspring.¹⁷

However, the *cognomen Iulianus* is found in three other instances (besides those of Sextilus Iulianus *pater, filius, and iunior*). Also the names of Sex. Sextilius Verus Iulianus, Sex. Sextilius Florus Iulianus, and M. Faenius Iulianus (at VIII.32 in the *album*) need to be explained. If the latter case is not an unrelated phenomenon but part of the same story, one has to imagine that one M. Faenius was in a similar situation as old Sex. Sextilius: he too had been charmed by someone among the *Lucii Iulii* who owned a *lenunculus* so that he decided to leave him a bequest on the condition that the survivor lived the rest of his life as “M. Faenius Iulianus”. This is not impossible, but the *cognomen Iulianus* could obviously have other explanations.¹⁸

In this scenario, the way in which the two other Sexti Sextilii, Verus Iulianus and Florus Iulianus, acquired their *cognomen Iulianus* must have been different. In Salomies’s study from 1992, the name formula labelled “A” consists of *praenomen* of the adoptee + *gentilicium* of the adoptee + *cognomen* of the

¹⁶ Salomies 1992, 23; Salomies 2014, 512, 526.

¹⁷ As noted above, there are no known Sexti Sextilii in Ostia besides those cited in *CIL* XIV 251 (since *AE* 2001 622 names a previously known individual), and only two in Rome (*CIL* VI 26506).

¹⁸ For what it is worth, Faenius Iulianus is the only one among the Iuliani who appears in the later and quite incompletely preserved *album* of the *lenuncularii* which is dated to 213 (see *NSc* 1953, 280 no. 42).

adoptee OR *cognomen* of the adopted + *cognomen* in -anus.¹⁹ This opens up another possibility: The same old Sex. Sextilius may have included more than one L. Iulius among the men to whom he left a bequest in his testament, namely two men called L. Iulius Florus and L. Iulius Verus. They both kept their *cognomen*, added *Iulianus* as a second *cognomen*, and continued the Iulian family tradition among the *lenuncularii* under a new *gentilicium*.

A glance at the *cognomina* which were used by the eight Lucii Iulii in *CIL* XIV 250, the earlier *album*, reveals that Latin *cognomina* indeed are common with six (Memor twice, Iulianus, Victor, Florentinus, Felicianus) against two Greek ones (Anatellon, Democritus). Therefore, two younger Lucii Iulii, heirs to any of these eight men, may well have been given the Latin *cognomina* *Florus* and *Verus*. Once adopted by testament by the same old Sex. Sextilius, each would have kept his distinct *cognomen* while adding Iulianus as a tribute to their original *gens*.

Another possibility is that Sex. Sextilius Florus Iulianus and Sex. Sextilius Verus Iulianus are sons either of Sex. Sextilius Iulianus *pater* or, more probably, of Sex. Sextilius Iulianus *filius*. Florus and Verus are registered so late in *CIL* XIV 251, half-way down in the eighth and last column, at numbers 16 and 24, that many years must have passed after in 192 CE, at the very outset of the *album*. Sex. Sextilius Iulianus *filius* was included among the *patroni* of equestrian rank. We can assume that at the time he was an adult man and sons of his could become *corporati* some fifteen years later.

Before discussing the plausibility of this scenario and whether any general conclusions can be drawn from it, there is another possible explanation for the *cognomen Iulianus* to consider.

***Iulianus* as a *cognomen* derived from the mother's family name**

(2) Alternatively, one might suggest that a female member of a family of Lucii Iulii, a family active as *lenuncularii*, a woman who evidently was called Iulia, married a Sex. Sextilius. Their son was given the *cognomen Iulianus*, which harked back to the mother's family, surely as a form of *homage*. One again the Flavian dynasty provides an example of how this played out in a senatorial family,

¹⁹ Salomies 1992, 20–22.

in that the mother of the first emperor was called Vespasia Polla; this gave origin to the *cognomen* Vespasianus.²⁰

This model can explain the names of Sex. Sextilius Iulianus, father, son, and probable grandson, but there are two other Sextilii who need to be accommodated in this scenario, Sex. Sextilius Verus Iulianus and Sex. Sextilius Florus Iulianus. If we believe that the naming pattern in *CIL* XIV 251 is best explained by assuming the existence of only one married couple consisting of a Sextilius and a Iulia, these two men ought to be younger brothers of Sex. Sextilius Iulianus *iunior*. Their place in the *album*, where they were added several columns after the youngest Sextilius Iulianus, indicates that they reached their positions at a later time. The interest in referring to the “House of the Iulii” persisted.

For the history of the “Familienverbände” among the *lenuncularii* this scenario would mean that of the eight Lucii Iulii registered as members in the *album* which covered the period from 152 CE to a moment in time when the next *album* of the *corporati* was incised, all died without offspring (or without sons interested in operating *lenunculi*) and with no freedmen capable of continuing the business. Instead, a considerable portion of the family’s wealth evolved unto one female member, who brought it with her into her marriage with a man named Sex. Sextilius. Her wealth probably in part consisted of *lenunculi*, and this opened up a path for a family of Sextilii to engage in this sector of Ostia’s economic life.

In this scenario, it is important to consider the evidence, presented and discussed above in note 3, for additional *alba* of this professional association which have to be inserted between *CIL* XIV 250 from 152 CE and *CIL* XIV 251 from 192. If there were indeed three further such membership registers and if we assume that they were drawn up with a certain regularity, there would be ten years between them (a pattern which obviously agrees well with the five-year periods to which the office of *quinquennalis* among the *lenuncularii* refers). This again would mean that all the Lucii Iulii among the *lenuncularii* belong to a period which ended in the early 160s. Later, they are not found in this particular context.

It may be noted that one L. Iulius Romulus, *eques Romanus*, was a *decurio* at Ostia, perhaps in the late second or early third century, as shown by the

²⁰ In general, for this way of acquiring a *cognomen* ending in -anus and derived from a *gentilicium*, see Kajanto 1965, 33.

epitaph he and a relative (his sister?) erected to his two parents, both bearing the family name Iulius. It is obviously possible that his branch of the Lucii Iulii thrived, while all the men bearing such names among the *lenuncularii* did not. In any case, the apparent existence of several *alba* of the *lenuncularii* within the forty-year period 152–192 means that the concentration of Lucii Iulii in a first phase, in *CIL* XIV 250, is even more noteworthy, as is their later disappearance. Whether it is plausible that all the wealth of the Lucii Iulii had evolved onto a single woman will be further discussed below, within a somewhat larger context.

Did testamentary adoption lead to identical name formulas among senators and sub-elite Romans?

When discussing further whether either of these two scenarios is convincing (or possibly both), and whether any wider conclusions can be drawn from the above arguments, there is first an onomastic observation by Olli Salomies to consider. As mentioned above, Salomies has emphasized that during the Principate it became very rare indeed that testamentary adoptions were characterized by the creation of *cognomina* in -ianus (note 16 above). This habit was replaced by a name formula in which one finds “*praenomen* of adopter + *nomen* of adopter + *nomen* of adopted + *cognomen* of adopted” (PNNC), or by the slightly longer “*praenomen* of adopter + *nomen* of adopter + *cognomen* of adopter + *nomen* of adopted + *cognomen* of adopted” (PNCNC). This practice gave origin to polyonymous nomenclature.²¹

However, Salomies noted that his study primarily concerned the “upper social classes”,²² and indeed the examples that he cited overwhelmingly belong to the senatorial order. The reason is simple: the additional personal information which is required for any biographical-onomastic conclusions is usually only available for senators and *equites Romani*. The question now becomes if testamentary adoption was also practiced among other layers of the Roman population. Obviously, the issue can only have been of real interest to that part of the population which had property to bequeath, but this group surely included precisely the professionally active *corporati* and *collegiati* of Ostia.

²¹ For the change to names of the type PNNC or PNCNC, see Salomies 2014, 512.

²² Salomies 2014, 511.

Salomies cited a few cases of testamentary adoption resulting in names in -ianus from outside the senatorial and equestrian orders,²³ and another example is found in *CIL* XI 4815 = *ILS* 6638 (from Spolegium), in which the *quattuorvir* C. Torasius C. f. Hor(atia tribu) Severus has a son called P. Meclanius Proculus Torasianus. Clearly, the son had been adopted by a man called P. Meclanius, without becoming estranged from his real father. Whether the *cognomen* Proculus was the son's original name or the *cognomen* of the adopter is unclear.

It is well-known that the development of the Roman naming system throughout its history was tightly intertwined with social status.²⁴ In my view it is worth asking if we must assume that the onomastic practice among the "professional middle class" during the Principate necessarily in every way mirrored the development among the elite. Salomies has unquestionably shown that as we move into the imperial period, the old way of marking testamentary adoption is replaced by polyonymy, a much more extensive and also impressive way of flaunting the social connections of a senator or *equus Romanus*. But is this development not intended precisely to create a new onomastic and social distinction, in a situation when the sub-elite Romans are beginning to imitate the old practice? Professionally active Romans were growing wealthier during the Principate and there were legacies to distribute to friends and relatives. This demographic group was arguably keen to copy an onomastic habit which by then was well-established in the senatorial order, and so the creation of *cognomina* ending in -ianus to mark testamentary adoption in the "professional middle class" gained momentum. All this while the senatorial order was already moving on to an extensive polyonymous nomenclature.

The scenario presented in the previous paragraph is obviously nothing more than a tentative hypothesis. In the following, an analysis of the onomastic practice in several Ostian professional associations and, for comparative purposes, in one large contemporary group of men from Rome, will show whether any support for the proposal can be found.

²³ Salomies 1992, 20–23.

²⁴ For a recent authoritative account, see Solin 2013, 744–72.

***Cognomina* in -anus among Ostian professional associations**

The first hypothesis presented above assumed that a certain Sex. Sextilius in his testament included three or four Lucii Iulii, men who (we must assume) either were active as *lenuncularii* or were about to enter the business. In itself such a series of events would, however, only be one episode among many business transactions and transfers of property that surely every year took place among the *lenuncularii* of Ostia. An important question is if we are dealing with a more frequently encountered pattern, one that would warrant a more general explanation.

As seen below in Table 2, it turns out that *cognomina* like *Iulianus*, ending in -anus and formed from *gentilicia*, are conspicuously common in *CIL* XIV 251, the *album* of the *lenuncularii* begun in 192 CE. In total, twenty-seven *cognomina* of this type appear in the inscription, for a total of over ten per cent.²⁵ Names in -anus which were derived from *cognomina* (like *Euprepetianus* in *CIL* XIV 251 or *Zosimianus* in *CIL* XIV 246) are naturally not relevant here, since they cannot reveal a testamentary adoption.

A comparison with other fairly large groups of men from the same historical period shows that this proportion of -anus names in *CIL* XIV 251 is unusually high. Table 2 presents the results for the five other Ostian inscriptions in which large numbers of men are listed with their *cognomina* intact. As a control group, a well-known and contemporary inscription from Rome is included, a so-called *laterculus* registering *vigiles* (firefighters) from 205 CE. These men were not involved in business enterprises like the Ostian *corporati* and *collegiati*, and they are unlikely to belong to wealthy sub-elite families. *A priori*, Roman *vigiles* cannot be expected to have been parties to a testamentary adoption particularly often. If the above hypothesis holds some truth, the *cognomina* of the *vigiles* should be different in form.

²⁵ The names among the *plebs* are, in the order in which they appear: Vettianus, Manlianus, Decianus, Veturianus, Titianus, Marcianus, Valerianus, Iulianus, Iulianus (2), Aelianus, Statilianus, Musidianus, Lucilianus, Cornelianus, Hedianus, Marcianus (2), Marcianus (3), Herennianus, Annianus, Arrianus, Iulianus (3), Arrianus (2), Iulianus (4), Valerianus (2), Iulianus (5), Quintilianus. Among the *quinquennales* there is the *cognomen* Valerianus borne by a man who is not otherwise listed; this brings the total to twenty-seven.

1. Text	2. Nature of group; size	3. Date	4. Number of relevant <i>cognomina</i> ending in <i>-anus</i>	5. Percentage of all <i>cognomina</i>	6. Percentage of Latin <i>cognomina</i>
CIL XIV 251	the <i>corpus lenunculariorum tabulariorum auxiliarensium Ostiensium</i> ; 260 <i>cognomina</i> (including the <i>quinquennales</i>)	192 CE and later	27 (see n. 25)	10.4 %	16 % (of 169 names)
CIL XIV 246	a group of men who <i>pecuniam ad ampliandum templum contulerunt</i> ; ²⁶ 179 <i>cognomina</i>	between 140 and c. 172 CE	7 ²⁷	3.8 %	5.8 % (of 121 names)
CIL XIV 250	the <i>corpus lenunculariorum tabulariorum auxiliarensium Ostiensium</i> ; 125 <i>cognomina</i> (including the <i>patroni</i> from within the <i>corpus</i>)	152 until c. 190 CE	12 ²⁸	9.6 %	13.8 % (of 87 names)

²⁶ The group was closely linked to the *corpus (scaphariorum et) lenunculariorum* traiectus Luculli; for a survey of opinions see Bruun 2016A, 362 n. 6; that the two groups were identical is stressed by Tran 2012, 327–32; Tran 2020, 100 n. 65.

²⁷ The names are, in the order in which they are listed: Sossianus, Cincianus, Nasennianus, Iulianus, Geminianus, Volusianus, Terentianus.

²⁸ The names are, in the order in which they are listed: Marcianus, Iunianus, Caecilianus, Iulianus, Atinianus, Aurelianus, Pompeianus, Iunianus, Hedianus, Vettianus, Manlianus, Cornelianus.

CIL XIV 256	the <i>corpus fabrum navaliu</i> m of Portus; 345 <i>cognomina</i>	early III c. CE ²⁹	19 ³⁰	5.5 %	7.8 % (of 243 names)
CIL XIV 4569	the <i>numerus caligato-rum decuriarum XVI</i> (= the <i>fabri tignuarii</i>); 328 men	198 CE	19 ³¹	5.8 %	8.1 % (of 233 names)
NSc 1953, 283 no. 43	<i>fabri navales</i> of Ostia; ³² 81 <i>cognomina</i>	late II / early III c. CE	2 ³³	2.5 %	3.8 % (of 52 names)
CIL VI 1056	the <i>cohors I vigilum</i> in Rome; 490 men	205 CE	22 ³⁴	4.5 %	5.5 % (of 401 names)

Table 2: *Cognomina* ending in -anus which are derived from *gentilicia*.

Based on this evidence, which shows that the percentage of -anus *cognomina* derived from *gentilicia* usually is between *c.* four and six per cent among all the *cognomina*, it is clear that the frequency of such names among the *lenuncularii* in 192 CE with over ten per cent is almost twice as high as expected. The statistical table in Kajanto's classic study of Latin *cognomina* shows, for what

²⁹ For the date, see Bloch 1953, 285.

³⁰ The names are, in the order in which they are listed: Cornelianus, Marcianus, Arrianus, Iulianus, Maevianus, Arrianus (2), Antonianus, Iulianus (2), Iulianus (3), Venerianus, Marianus, Porcianus, Marcianus (2), Valerianus, Iulianus (4), Marcianus (3), Marcianus (4), Marcianus (5), Valerianus (2).

³¹ The names are, in the order in which they are listed: Marcianus, Annianus, Lorianus, Iunianus, Valerianus, Marcianus (2), Fulcinianus, Calpurnianus, Pompeianus, Mucianus, Licinianus, Autronianus, Aterianus, Licinianus, Cassianus, Gabinianus, Titianus, Cassianus (2), Cassianus (3).

³² This identification was suggested by Bloch 1953, 284–85 and was confirmed by C ebillac-Gervasoni and Zevi 2010, 163–66.

³³ The names are, in the order in which they are listed: Otacilianus, [---]tillianus.

³⁴ The names are, in the order in which they are listed: Quintilianus, Licinianus, Paccianus, Horatianus, Atelianus, Tatianus, Iulianus, Atilianus, Salvianus, Proculianus, Quintilianus (2), Pompeianus, Lollianus, Cornelianus, Venerianus, Tisinianus, Pollianus, Maecilianus, Firmidianus, Valerianus, Titianus, Hortensianus.

it is worth, that empire-wide during the Principate such names account for 7.6 % of all Latin *cognomina*.³⁵ However, Kajanto only studied the Latin *cognomina*, and in Table 2 column 5 also the Greek ones are included. As seen in column 6, if the Greek names are excluded in the Ostian material, all the frequencies increase. Among the Latin *cognomina*, the proportion of names in -anus in *CIL* XIV 251 reaches sixteen per cent, which means that more than one man in seven carried such a *cognomen*.

When attempting to explain this by all appearances exceptional feature, there are several aspects to consider, not only economic ones (as suggested above), but also questions of onomastics, chronology, and social status need to be taken into account.

Explaining the pattern in Table 2

(1) Initially, it ought to be said that neither a testamentary adoption nor the transmission of a mother's family name is always the reason behind a name in -anus derived from a *gentilicium*. There are, for instance, several instances among the cases listed in Table 2 and notes 25–34 which show an alternative pattern in which the *cognomen* is derived from a person's own *gentilicium*, as in Fulcinus Fulcinianus and Gabinius Gabinianus, both in *CIL* XIV 4569, or Atinius Atinianus and Manlius Manlianus (*CIL* XIV 250). Here, the *cognomen* merely seems to reinforce the belonging to a specific family.³⁶

(2) One explanation sets out from the fact that most of the inscriptions in Table 2 are later than *CIL* XIV 251. An almost similarly high percentage of *cognomina* in -anus occurs in *CIL* XIV 250, which is even earlier. Therefore, we may be dealing with something as simple as an onomastic trend: it could be that during the second century CE names in -anus were much more popular than they were after c. 200 CE.³⁷

³⁵ Kajanto 1965, 131.

³⁶ Could it be that in such cases we are dealing with a testamentary adoption of a somewhat distant relative (someone who was not in himself entitled to an inheritance) who carried the same *gentilicium* as the testator?

³⁷ However, one may note that in *CIL* XIV 246, which gathered names during the period 140 to 172 CE, the frequency of *cognomina* is much lower than in *CIL* XIV 250–251. If we are dealing with an

(3) There is also the question of social status to take into account. The two inscriptions which show exceptionally high frequencies of *cognomina* in -anus both register *lenuncularii*, while the other texts concern men active in the shipyards (*fabri navales*), in the building industry (*fabri tignuarii*), in the Roman semi-military units of the *vigiles*, and gathered around a temple-building project. Is it possible that the social status and wealth of the *lenuncularii* on average was higher than that of the membership of the other associations and among the *vigiles*? If this was the case, it could well be that a regular member of, say, the Ostian *fabri tignuarii* or the Roman *vigiles* was much less likely than a *lenuncularius* to become the beneficiary of a testamentary adoption.

For quite some time scholars have debated how we should understand the membership of Ostia's professional associations. To give an example, today the majority of scholars consider the members of the *fabri tignuarii* to be "master builders" and not regular construction workers.³⁸ Similarly, one may imagine that the *fabri navales* were mainly independent contractors, the owners of small firms who carried out the necessary tasks in the shipyards by employing free labour and their own slaves. However, what if the situation varied from profession to profession, so that in the guild of the *lenuncularii* in fact only owners of boats and perhaps the wealthier captains were welcome, while certain other professional associations admitted also men of lesser means and lower social rank? Such associations would then have a membership which at least partly resembled the *vigiles* in Rome, a group which could hardly reach the same social and economic level as the professional sub-elite class of Ostia.

If such social differences existed within the *corpora* and *collegia* at Ostia, and the *lenuncularii* included a wealthier layer of members, this may explain why some members benefited from testamentary adoption: they moved in circles where money and possessions were available and where it made sense to carry out testamentary adoptions. This is why -anus *cognomina* derived from *gentilicia* are more common in both *CIL* XIV 250 and 251, one could argue.

onomastic trend, it was not universal.

³⁸ See DeLaine 2003, 727 on the *fabri tignuarii*; similarly Rougé 1966, 296–97 on the *fabri navales*; Meiggs 1973, 313 on the *lenuncularii*, *codicarii*, and fullers; Herz 1994, 296 on the *lenuncularii*; and Zevi 2008, 483–84 in general. Differently Wilson 1935, 66: "both employer and employee could become members of the same college"; and Rohde 2012, 139, who unconvincingly held that the *corpus fabrum navalium* included both entrepreneurs and "einfache Arbeiter".

Extraordinary events, the “Antonine plague”, and *cognomina* inherited from the mother

To return to explanation (2) presented in the previous section, simply referring to “onomastic trends” in order to explain the frequent -ianus *cognomina* in *CIL* XIV 251 may be too facile an explanation. But what if behind the pattern among the *lenuncularii* is instead some rather more clearly defined social phenomenon, a phenomenon which is not reflected in the other inscriptions in Table 2 because they are from a later date? One issue which unavoidably presents itself to many modern social and economic historians is the “Antonine plague”.³⁹ *CIL* XIV 251, which was begun in 192 CE, most likely registered some effects of this pandemic, which reached Rome in the fall of 166 CE and must have touched Ostia at the same time (although *a priori* we do not know if these effects were mild or severe). Less likely to show any effects of the pandemic is the earlier text *CIL* XIV 250, since due to the fact that fragments of other *alba* have been found (see above note 3), it now seems probable that no new members were registered in this particular inscription after the early 160s.⁴⁰

Is it possible that an exceptionally high mortality caused by the Antonine plague would have led to an increase in testamentary adoptions and to a measurable change in the type of *cognomina* used by the *lenuncularii*? We can be sure that the owners of Ostian *lenunculi*, like all Romans, were eager for their names to live on and wished to make sure that their gentilician *manes* would be venerated by posterity. Is it not plausible that if the *lenuncularii* found their close relatives and freedmen decimated by the pandemic, they would in particularly large numbers have decided to adopt non-agnatic survivors of the plague in their testaments?

³⁹ We know that this epidemic, after reaching Rome (presumably via Ostia) in the fall of 166 CE, continued to cause sickness and death for several decades in the Roman West. In my view it is too often used as a blanket explanation for anything that seems out of the ordinary during the half-century or more that followed after the arrival of the disease in Italy. We still need to identify the pathogen that caused the Antonine Plague; this would perhaps also allow us to better judge what its effects might have been. See, for a cautious approach to the issue, Bruun 2012; Bruun 2018, 60; for much more severe consequences, see recently Duncan-Jones 2018.

⁴⁰ It is obviously not a certainty that no new members were added after the early 160s. In any case, the frequency of *cognomina* ending in -ianus in the fourth and last column in *CIL* XIV 250 is only barely higher than in the previous columns.

If the problem is framed in these terms, there are certain similarities with the situation in another Ostian collective, one which I had occasion to discuss a few years ago. Among the Ostian *corporati* who were focused on financing the enlargement of a temple (*qui pecuniam ad ampliandum templum contulerunt*) some conspicuous changes occurred in the membership between an earlier list of members (*CIL XIV 246*) and a later one (*ScO XI, C 46*).⁴¹ In particular, men named Egrilius, a *gentilicium* also borne by many members of the socio-political elite of the town, who dominated in *CIL XIV 246*, were almost completely absent in the later *album*. From forty-six Egrilii in the earlier register, their number was reduced to only one in *ScO XI, C 46*. In between the Antonine plague arrived in Rome (and surely in Ostia too), and it seemed warranted to discuss whether the Egrilii had been wiped out by the plague. However, while not denying that the disease might have had some effect on the membership, I suggested religious and political reasons for why interest in the temple might have changed over time among the inhabitants of Ostia, in particular within the Egrilian “Familienverband”.⁴² It is too early to judge the extent to which the proposal has convinced other scholars.

When it comes to the considerable changes which occurred within the *lenuncularii* of Ostia, during a time period which saw the Antonine plague arrive in Italy, it would be foolish to deny that the disease could have had an effect on the business of Ostian harbour shipping. There may even be a method for detecting some of this effect, if the frequency of *cognomina* ending in -anus and derived from *gentilicia* reflect an increase in testamentary adoptions which was caused by the pandemic. But if this conjecture is correct, we must also pay attention to the proportions: to judge from the onomastic data, it looks as if the effect of the plague, if that is what we are dealing with, was rather mild, since after all only a clear minority of the *cognomina* have the “*gentilicium* + -anus” form which could point to testamentary adoption.

It remains to be dealt with the second explanation for *cognomina* based on *gentilicia* and ending in -anus. As mentioned earlier, Olli Salomies considers it much more likely that during the Principate such a name was derived from

⁴¹ This group of *corporati* clearly shared some members with the *lenuncularii traiectus Luculli*, but I am not convinced that we are dealing with one association only, which used two widely different names; see n. 25 above.

⁴² Bruun 2016B, 62.

the family name of a person's mother. This notion places the appearance of Sexti Sextilii Iuliani among the *lenuncularii tabularii auxiliarii Ostienses*, and the disappearance of the Lucii Iulii, who were frequent in the same professional association about four decades earlier, in a different light. Following this line of argument, one may suggest that a female heir among the Lucii Iulii brought with her substantial wealth into a marriage to a Sex. Sextilius, while at the same time the many Lucii Iulii who were active as *lenuncularii* disappeared and none of their freedmen managed to continue in the same profession. The Lucii Iulii are no longer present among the *lenuncularii* in 192 or in the last known *album* from 213 CE. The name *Iulianus* was given at birth to one or more sons of Sex. Sextilius and Iulia, and it was also passed on to some members of later generations.

This important economic impact attributed to a woman ties in well with a recent argument which sees women at Ostia playing a particularly active role in the economy, certainly when compared to the situation in the city of Rome.⁴³ However, the fate of the Lucii Iulii and the Sex. Sextilii in *CIL XIV 250–251* might look like an individual case which does not allow any more wide-ranging conclusions. But such a stance would be premature. The scenario described in the previous paragraph involves a woman named Iulia who brings considerable wealth with her into a marriage with a Sex. Sextilius, thus allowing him to begin a successful professional career as a *lenuncularius*. It must have been a regular event in the Ostian economy that some enterprises failed and others took their place, but tracing the *cognomen Iulianus* back to the *mater familias* of the Sexti Sextilii assumes that the business of the Lucii Iulii was thriving. Why then was this (admittedly hypothetical) Iulia the sole heir to the wealth that the Lucii Iulii had invested in Ostian shipping? Here, once again, one cannot avoid considering the Antonine plague. The pandemic seems to be a specific and generally valid reason for why a successful family of professionals would be left with only one female survivor.

Conclusion

The *cognomen Iulianus* is uncommonly frequent in the membership register of the *lenuncularii tabularii auxiliarii Ostienses* in 192 CE (*CIL XIV 251*) and it is borne by many men called Sex. Sextilius who are new to the association, while

⁴³ See Bruun 2018.

members called L. Iulius, common in the same professional association forty years earlier (*CIL* XIV 250), have disappeared completely in 192. This article investigates whether an explanation can be found that connects these onomastic observations. Two scenarios are presented which both involve structures of Ostian economic life and also touch on the effect of the Antonine plague.

On two occasions, statistical probabilities play a role: first, when it is argued that the frequency of the *cognomen* Iulianus in *CIL* XIV 251 is noteworthy, and, second, when claiming that the proportion of *cognomina* derived from *gentilicia* and ending in -anus in the same membership *album* is unusually high.

Two alternative (but not mutually exclusive) scenarios are explored as explanations for the relationship between the memberships in *CIL* XIV 250 and in XIV 251. On the one hand, it is suggested that the *cognomen* Iulianus may be the result of testamentary adoption. In his testament a wealthy Sex. Sextilius adopted one or more Lucii Iulii, the result being that when the second surviving full membership *album* was drawn up, forty years after the first, this register shows six Sexti Sextilii but no more Lucii Iulii. It has been pointed out that during the Principate it was exceedingly rare that testamentary adoption led to the creation of names in -ianus, but the evidence is greatly skewed towards the senatorial elite. Here it is asked if it may not be that members of the wealthy sub-elite still employed an onomastic practice which was well-known from past times, even though the sophisticated elite aiming for exclusivity had already created something new for themselves.

On the other hand, *cognomina* in -ianus formed from *gentilicia* may derive from the mother's family name; by authoritative scholars this is considered the more probably scenario during the Principate.

It is impossible to establish to which extent either of these two scenarios apply in the issue at hand, but it should be clear that it is implausible that the numbers in Table 2 can be explained by referring purely to chance. For instance, the proportion of *cognomina* in -ianus in *CIL* XIV 251 is almost three times higher than in *CIL* XIV 246, which lists an earlier and large group of men who are usually considered as a type of *lenuncularii*, like those registered in *CIL* XIV 251 were. To give another example, the frequency of the relevant type of -anus *cognomina* among the *fabri navales* is only one quarter of that in *CIL* XIV 251. The only group which comes even close are the *lenuncularii* in *CIL* XIV 250, the earlier *album* of the association here of interest.

The percentages shown in Table 2 makes one wonder if one of the scenarios involving the Lucii Iulii and the Sexti Sextilii has more general validity. What if precisely in the forty years between 152 and 192 there were events in Ostia which led to an increased tendency to carry out testamentary adoptions?⁴⁴ Having arrived at this point, one cannot avoid giving some consideration to the Antonine plague, and in fact also the hypothesis of one Iulia inheriting the wealth of the *lenuncularii* named L. Iulius hinted at that possibility. But it is also a fact that already the earlier *album*, CIL XIV 250, shows a much larger frequency of -ianus names than do the other groups in Table 2. Perhaps being a member of the *lenuncularii tabularii auxiliarii Ostienses* required more wealth than membership in other professional associations, and with greater wealth came a stronger tendency to carry out testamentary adoptions? Arguably the only thing which is certain is that the fate of the Lucii Iulii and the Sexti Sextilii and the figures in Table 2 deserve a rational explanation; this article has made an attempt at providing one.

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⁴⁴ For the other scenario, in which a female heir brings wealth with her into a marriage, to be more widely applicable, one would need to show that no member of a previously well-represented *gens* appears in a later *album* of the same association while *-anus cognomina* referring to that *gens* are common, and I am not aware of any other such case.

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