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Livia Medullina and CIL X 6561

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On the basis of the available evidence there is no doubt that “Livia Medullina” of Suet. Claud. 26, 1 and “Medullina, Camilli f(ilia)” recorded by CIL X 6561 (Velitrae) are one and the same person, viz. the second fiancée of the future Emperor Claudius.¹ There are, however, some clear problems relating to her nomenclature and consequently even to her identity. The most conspicuous difficulties emerge from Suetonius’ account (Claud. 26, 1), which records the unhappy fate of the young lady. She died on the day scheduled for the wedding: *Sponsas admodum adulescens duas habuit: Aemiliam Lepidam Augusti proneptem, item Liviam Medullinam, cui et cognomen Camillae erat, e genere antiquo dictatoris Camilli. Priorem, quod parentes eius Augustum offenderant, virginem adhuc repudiavit, posteriorem ipso die, qui erat nuptiis destinatus, ex valetudine amisit.* Why is she here called “Livia”, *Medullina* being a very ancient hereditary cognomen of the *gens Furia*, and did she really use *Camilla* as a kind of supplementary cognomen?

In addition to the Suetonian passage the only source testifying to her betrothal with Claudius is the above-mentioned Velitrean inscription CIL X 6561 (= ILS 199). The text runs as follows: *Medullinae, Camilli f(iliae), / Ti. Claudi Neronis / Germanici sponsae / Acratus l(ibertus) paed-*

¹ For the evidence concerning Medullina and her life, cf. M. Fluß, RE XIII 927—928, No. 40 and L. Petersen, PIR² L 304, with references to earlier research. In the prosopographical studies she appears to have always been a somewhat marginal figure, though E. J. Weinrib’s article in Harv. Stud. Class. Phil. 72 (1967) 274ff. goes into some detail, see in particular pp. 264—265, 272—273. Cf. also R. Syme in his recent work “The Augustan Aristocracy”, Oxford 1986, 255—269 (for Medullina see p. 259).

gogus.² The stone is reported to have been found in the territory of Velitrae towards the end of the 18th century, and it was once preserved in the local epigraphical collection of the Museo Borgiano (according to Clemente Cardinali and Gaetano Marini), but after the dissolution of the museum it soon disappeared and was never later refound by either Mommsen or anyone else.³ The readings given by Cardinali, Fea and Marini are nearly uniform, the only noteworthy divergence being the letter F at the end of the first line. It is only given by Carlo Fea (1753—1836), who also seems to have seen and examined the stone personally, and his text form is accepted by Mommsen in CIL (ed. 1883). Fourteen years earlier Mommsen had wondered⁴ why the inscription called her “Camilli” and not “Camilli f.”, obviously because at that time he was not aware of Fea’s manuscript. As is known, a genitive attached to a woman’s name usually indicates her husband, but sometimes it could also record the cognomen of the father, a habit corresponding to the Greek use of the genitive as a patronymic.⁵ And because our Medullina must in any case have been the daughter of a Camillus, as will be seen later, it is ultimately irrelevant to our argument whether there was the letter F after CAMILLI or not.

The use of a bare cognomen in an epigraphical document from the early Imperial period should by no means be regarded as exceptional. What matters is the way one can be identified. Sometimes the use of a brief nomenclature is dictated by external facts, like the type of inscription (e.g. texts of slaves and freedmen mentioning the names of their masters and ex-masters in an abbreviated form),⁶ lack of space etc., but a woman’s identity was also quite often expressed by recording the name of her father, husband or both. In the present case there was no need to write Medullina’s gentilicium, because the whole context was informative enough, all the more so because *Medullina* and *Camillus* are highly

² The same dedicator is found in a fragmentary inscription from Rome, CIL VI 9741.

³ Cf. Mommsen, ad CIL X 6561, and especially H. Solin, *Suppl. It.*, NS 2 (Velitrae), Roma 1983, 24—25. For the literary transmission of the text, cf. the evidence collected by Mommsen, ad loc.

⁴ *Hermes* 3 (1869) 134, n. 7.

⁵ In connection with the present case this was already divined by Borghesi, *Oeuvr.* III 245.

⁶ Cf. e.g. the examples provided by L. Vidman, *Arctos*, *Suppl. II* (*Studia in honorem I. Kajanto*), Helsinki 1985, 329ff.

distinctive personal names. That she was related to the *gens Furia* must have been clear to the majority of people who could read and see the inscription.

A look at Kajanto's repertorium⁷ reveals that *Medullinus/na* was almost exclusively restricted to the nomenclature of the early Republican Furii (nine persons from 488 B.C. to 381 B.C.). The name is obtained from the place name Medullia (in Latium, not far from Rome), and it certainly records the origin of its bearers, as is usually the case with similar geographical cognomina used by aristocratic Roman families of the Republican period.⁸ Among the generations to come there was no trace of this cognomen until the beginning of the Empire, but this might in part be due to the fact that there is also very little on record about the *gens Furia* itself during the last four centuries of the Republican era. Whatever the case may be, the first instance to be found is in fact our Medullina, the fiancée of the young prince Claudius.⁹

Why she is called "Medullina", although the cognomen seems to have gone out of use centuries before, is not immediately apparent. It is commonly and, I think, correctly assumed that she was the daughter of M. Furius Camillus, consul in 8 A.D.¹⁰ Of him we know that he met with great success in his career. Functioning in his forties as proconsul in Africa he gained particular prestige as one of the conductors of the African war (17—24 A.D.).¹¹ After an intermission of nearly four hundred years he

⁷ The Latin Cognomina, Helsinki 1965, 182.

⁸ Cf. W. Schulze, *Zur Geschichte lateinischer Eigennamen*, Berlin 1905, 361, and I. Kajanto, *op. cit.*, 48. The whole question will be dealt with more profoundly by H. Solin in his *Beiträge zur Namengebung des römischen Senatorenstandes* (in print).

⁹ There is still another attestation of *Medullina* in Iuv. 6, 322. The name is here recorded as being that of a woman of bad reputation. Her identity, however, remains quite uncertain. The passage was commented on by Giorgio Valla in his Venetian edition of 1486, but he (or his source) clearly confused Medullina with Messalina, wife of Claudius, cf. *Solia in Iuvenalem vetustiora*, ed. P. Wessner, Lipsiae 1931, 94.

¹⁰ For him, see the sources in E. Groag, RE VII 350, No. 45 and PIR² F 576. A useful survey of his activity is given by Weinrib, *art. cit.* in n. 1, 264—265, 272—273 (stemmata I—II, 274f.).

¹¹ The historical context of the War and the Numido-Roman relations involved have been well illuminated by R. Syme, in *Studies in Roman Economic and Social History in Honor of Allan Chester Johnson*, Princeton 1951, 113ff. = RP I 218ff.

was the first *Furius* to appear at the absolute top of Roman society. His membership in the *collegium fratrum Arvalium* under Tiberius together with some of the most prominent Roman citizens and the victory over Tacfarinas in Africa in 17 A.D. with the subsequent *triumphalia* must have renewed the fame of his family and raised its name to much like the same glory it enjoyed in the days of the dictator Camillus.¹² This was also in good accordance with the preferential treatment Augustus accorded to the old Roman *nobilitas*. The Emperor was prompt and willing to favour the ancient houses of aristocracy which had for various reasons fallen into obscurity, and by allowing them a share in power and station he also encouraged them to manifest their birth and pedigree. It was in this context that nomenclature became remarkably significant. Names that were old, expired and unheard of for centuries were now adopted in memory of the great ancestors.¹³ So it might not be impossible that the consul of 8 A.D. also wanted to underscore the early history of the *gens* by giving his daughter the cognomen *Medullina*. This naturally presupposes that *Medullinus* was really out of use for such a long period, perhaps owing to the weakening or dying away of the branch of the *Furii Medullini*. This kind of naming was not unparalleled among the women of nobility. A good example may be produced in the name and person of *Mummia Achaica* (PIR² M 712). She lived some decades earlier than *Medullina*, and she is the only woman of senatorial rank to have used the cognomen *Achaica*. For that name she is naturally indebted to her famous ancestor L.

¹² Cf. Tac. ann. 2, 52: *Fusi Numidae, multosque post annos Furio nomini partum decus militiae. Nam post illum recipitorem urbis filiumque eius Camillum penes alias familias imperatoria laus fuerat, atque hic, quem memoramus, bellorum experts habebatur*. It is, however, a matter of uncertainty whether a direct genealogical sequence from the dictator down to the consul of 8 A.D. really existed, cf. the testimony of Suetonius, Claud. 26, 1: *e genere antiquo dictatoris Camilli*, where genealogical fraud has been suspected by Weinrib, art. cit., 273, n. 99. The silence over a period of so many years is problematic in so far as a great deal that might have affected the nomenclature could have occurred in the sphere of the family, that is to say, adoptions, marriages, the extinction of branches of the family etc. Be this as it may, the consul of 8 A.D. must have somehow descended from the dictator. The literary sources should not be underestimated, and it was just in this period that ancient aristocratic houses were reinstated.

¹³ Cf. the diligent remarks of R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, Oxford 1939, 377 (some examples in note 2) and the Todd Memorial Lecture No. 3, Sydney 1950, 9 = RP I 209.

Mummius, the destroyer of Corinth in 146 B.C. (cf. Suet. Galba 3, 4: *proneptis L. Mummi*). Her father is known to have functioned as legate to M. Crassus in 72 B.C.¹⁴ What is important is that there is no evidence whatsoever to show that *Achaicus* would have been in use during the three generations which separate Mummia Achaica from her great grandfather. Achaica's name appears in Suet. Galba 3, 4 both in the form "Mummia Achaica" and "Achaica", a fact plainly proving that *Achaica* was conceptualized as a personal name. There may have previously existed some kind of fearful respect for *Achaicus* resulting in a total avoidance of it in the nomenclature of the family, and who knows if there was something similar with *Medullinus*, too.¹⁵

We can now turn to the problems presented at the beginning of this paper. First, how is Suetonius' declaration "*cui et cognomen Camillae erat*" to be explained? That she would have been called "Livia Medullina Camilla", as she is often registered in various indices and lexica,¹⁶ seems to me excluded, because the name formula 'one gentilicium — two cognomina' was a phenomenon familiar rather to the second and third centuries A.D., the majority of the cases originating from the Greek-speaking East, where cognomina always had an important role as individual names.¹⁷

¹⁴ Plut. Crass. 10.

¹⁵ The case of Achaica will be studied in detail by H. Solin in his Beiträge (cf. n. 8). In addition we could mention the name of Fabia Numantina (PIR² F 78). Her cognomen recalls the capture of Numantia in 133 B.C., and among her ancestors can be listed the military commander P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus Africanus Numantinus, second son of L. Aemilius Paullus.

¹⁶ E.g. Suetonius II, ed. and transl. by J. C. Rolfe, London 1914, 534 (index) and Fluß, RE XIII 927—928, No. 40. Surprisingly enough, 'Livia Medullina Camilla' is also accepted by R. Syme, op. cit. n. 1, 259. The style 'Livia Camilla Medullina' is given by H. Ailloud (ed.) in Suétone. Vies de douze Césars III, Paris 1932, 127 (index nominum).

¹⁷ The earliest instances here listed date approximately from the end of the first century to the first half of the second century A.D.: Aemilia Paulina Asiatica (PIR² A 424, most probably of noble birth; her name was found in the Roman fistula aquaria CIL XV 7380), Claudia Ammiana Dryantilla (PIR² C 1069; Lycian), Flavia L.f. Polymnia Marciana (cf. G. Camodeca, Epigrafia e ordine senatorio I, Roma 1982, 541; Cretan), Lar(cia?) Isidora Nea (PIR² L 105, cf. J. Reynolds, Epigr. ord. sen. II, Roma 1982, 676; Cretan), Rutilia M. Clementis pr(aetoris) f. Prisca Sabiniana (W. Eck, RE Suppl. XV 466, No. 45; attested in Aquileia, AE 1934, 241), Vibullia Alcia Agrippina (R. Stiglitz, RE VIII A 2470—71, No. 12; Athenian, mother of the sophist Herodes Atticus).

The problem is, however, that the Suetonian passage would seem to suggest a contemporaneous use of both of the cognomina. In order to solve the difficulty we could suppose that Suetonius was in error,¹⁸ in other words, she was a *Medullina* by birth and never used the cognomen *Camilla*.¹⁹ On the other hand, his text might in theory also be interpreted as referring to a change of the cognomen *Camilla* to that of *Medullina*. In that case she would first have been called “Furia Camilla”, with the natural presumption that the gentilicium derived from her father, and then on some occasion adopted the cognomen *Medullina*. Although there is no obvious explanation for it, this kind of changing one’s cognomen was not totally unknown among the women of nobility.²⁰ In the present context it could hypothetically be regarded as an act of respect towards the glorious past of the family (cf. above) as well as a kind of self-advertisement. And going even further in speculation we might imagine that she took to herself (or was given) both *Livia* and *Medullina* at the same time. But by what detailed procedure, it would not be easy to say. We should immediately note that a complete and sudden change of one’s name, in particular that of the individual one, virtually brings about a new image of identity, which by itself would cause understandable difficulties in one’s relation to society. Accordingly, two alternative possibilities seem to present themselves. First, if one relies on Suetonius’ affirmation about *Camilla*, it would seem plausible that she was originally called “Furia Camilla”, subsequently “Furia Medullina”, and finally “Livia Medullina”. But if we hold that Suetonius’ “*cui et cognomen Camillae*

¹⁸ On this point, cf. my remarks and the literature cited in *Arctos* 18 (1984) 26. An interpolation on the part of some commentator or scribe could also be considered.

¹⁹ For the name *Camillus/a*, see Kajanto, op. cit. 81, 313. Besides the Suetonian instance there is only one attestation of this cognomen in the nomenclature of the senatorial women, i.e. Arruntia Camilla (PIR² A 1152), who lived some decades later than Medullina, cf. for example P. Setälä, *Private Domini in Roman Brick Stamps of the Empire*, Helsinki 1977, 67–69. For the connection between the Furii and the Arruntii, cf. also the pages of this article.

²⁰ But it was extremely uncommon. Among the upper classes I can mention only one case, which is in no way to be compared with the present one. The future wife of the Emperor Theodosius II had to forsake her old individual name Athenais before the marriage could take place. After having been baptized she was called ‘Eudocia’, officially ‘Aelia Eudocia’, cf. PLRE II 408–409.

erat” is an erroneous and uncritical statement, then she must have been “Furia Medullina” by birth. For purely practical reasons the last alternative would seem by far the most trustworthy one. As has already been stated above, there would be nothing peculiar about the fact that a woman belonging to the Furii of the Augustan age would adopt an ancient hereditary cognomen of the family (cf. above). In this way we may also escape having to explain the very problematic change of her individual name. And, it should be noted, historians sometimes make mistakes (cf. n. 18).

In the above discussion we have taken for granted that our lady was a Furia and not a Livia by birth. Being the daughter of a Furius, she could practically have been born a Livia only in the case where the gentilicium is inherited from the maternal side. And, sure enough, there is evidence bearing witness to a link between the patrician Furii Camilli and the Livii Drusi under the early Principate, the intermediary between the two families being in fact the otherwise unattested wife of M. Furius Camillus, consul in 8 A.D. In a study of the family connections between the Livii Drusi and the Scribonii Libones E. J. Weinrib²¹ has investigated in depth the nexus of these and related families during the Julio-Claudian period. This is naturally no place to repeat the intricacies involved in detail, and so I will deal with the prosopography only as far as it can elucidate the name of Livia Medullina.

The decisive clues are provided by the children of the consul of 8 A.D., Livia Medullina herself and her two brothers. One of them, homonymous with his father, is attested as a member of the Arval Brethren in the late thirties.²² In that position he took the place of his father. The younger brother was the Claudian rebel L. Arruntius Camillus Scribonianus, consul in 32 A.D.²³ He was adopted by the mighty L. Arruntius, consul in 6 A.D., yet not by testament, because he already bore the new gentilicium during his consular year (32 A.D.), whereas his

²¹ See note 1.

²² Cf. the evidence in PIR² F 577.

²³ PIR² A 1140. The whole name formula is thus preserved in the Dalmatian inscription CIL III 9864a = ILS 5950.

adoptive father did not die until 37 A.D.²⁴ Weinrib has clearly shown²⁵ that *Scribonianus* must have belonged to his nomenclature preceding the adoption, and that it could only derive from the side of his natural mother. Therefore he appears to have been originally called L. (?) *Furius Camillus Scribonianus*,²⁶ and it is convenient to imagine that his mother was called “(Scribonia)”, perhaps “(Scribonia Drusilla)”, but hardly “(Livia)”.²⁷ From around the same period we could list some other cases, too, where an *anus*-ending cognomen is derived from the mother’s gentilicium. The purpose of this kind of naming was simply to express that the person in question was strictly connected with the *gens* of the mother as well.²⁸ It is also quite commonly assumed that this (Scribonia) was the daughter of M. Livius Drusus Libo, consul in 15 B.C., who in turn was the natural son of L. Scribonius Libo, cos. in 34 B.C. The most profitable way to explain the name of Drusus Libo is that he was adopted by M. Livius Drusus Claudianus, the father of Augustus’ wife, Livia.²⁹ Moreover, it should be

²⁴ For the many name variants as used by Scribonianus, cf. PIR² A 1140 and recently H. Solin, *Opusc. IRF* 3 (1986) 74—75. The date of Arruntius’ death is revealed by Tac. ann. 6, 47—48.

²⁵ Art. cit. in n. 1, p. 264.

²⁶ The style ‘Furius Camillus Scribonianus’ is given by Suet. *Claud.* 13 and Dio 60, 15, 2. The praenomen is nowhere attested, but it might have been *Lucius*, because his father and brother were both ‘Marcii’ and *Lucius* was also used by the Republican Furii, cf. Weinrib, art. cit. 264.

²⁷ Weinrib, art. cit. 265, called her, “for simplicity’s sake”, ‘Livia Scriboniana’, but he also stressed that “Scribonia Drusilla and other possibilities also suggest themselves; the exact form does not matter” (p. 265, n. 75). The form ‘Livia Scriboniana’ is retained by R. Syme in his recent book “The Augustan Aristocracy”, Oxford 1986, 259. He also states that “the name Livia indicates her (i.e. Medullina’s) maternal grandfather”.

²⁸ Cf. e.g. *Petronia* (RE XIX 1232—33, No. 97 and RE Suppl. IX 1707) — (Vitellius?) *Petronianus* and Ser. Dolabella *Petronianus*. *Petronia* C.f. (CIL XI 5511; cf. PIR P 242) — Galeo Tettienus *Petronianus*. *Scribonia* (RE II A 892, No. 33; cf. stemma in PIR² L, p. 40) — Crassus *Scribonianus*. *Sulpicia* Telero (I. Cret. IV 292) — A. Larcus Lepidus *Sulpicianus*. *Vespasia* Polla (PIR V 300) — T. Flavius *Vespasianus*. From the latter part of the first century A.D. could be listed (*Marcia*?) (uncertain, cf. H. Temporini, *Die Frauen am Hofe Trajans*, Berlin-New York 1978, 184, n. 3) — (Ulpia) *Marciana*. *Plaria* Q.f. Vera (cf. PIR² A 1120) — A. Egrilius *Plarianus* and M. Acilius A.f. Vot. Priscus Egrilius *Plarianus*. *Vitellia* C.f. *Rufilla* (PIR V 515) — C. Salvius *Vitellianus*.

²⁹ This was one of the main conclusions of Weinrib’s article (cf. note 1). Cf. also the important contribution of J. Scheid, *Scribonia Caesaris et les Julio-Claudiens. Problèmes*

remembered that both brothers of Camillus' wife, consul in 16 A.D. and praetor in 16 A.D., respectively, were called "Scribonii", and her sister was called "Scribonia" (wife of Sex. Pompeius).³⁰ Their father, the consul in 15 B.C., must have been adopted at a considerably earlier date, because Drusus Claudianus died in 42 B.C.³¹ The children, who were born more or less around the year 20 B.C., thus retained their natural father's original gentilicium. This was quite in order, because Libo still belonged technically to the Scribonii, the testamentary adoption in no way affecting his legal position. Taking the gentilicium directly from the mother would not be impossible, yet it is a relatively rare procedure,³² and because Medullina's mother was most obviously a (Scribonia), it would be highly improbable that they both would have used the same gentilicium. Nor does it seem plausible at all that Medullina would have inherited by birth the name of her mother's adoptive father (cos. 15 B.C.). Her brothers were both born as Furi, and, as was stated above, she was probably also a Furia, the original nomenclature emerging as "Furia Medullina". So I am inclined to think that there must be some other explanation for *Livia*.

de vocabulaire de parenté, MEFRA 87 (1975) 349ff. Earlier the identification of Drusus Libo used to be a cause of desperation, cf. R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, Oxford 1939, 425 and table V, where neither Libo nor Camillus (cos. 8 A.D.) is placed in the stemma. Cf. Id., *JRS* 56 (1966) 58: "The mysterious M. Livius Drusus Libo (cos. 15 B.C.)". A survey of the earlier debate is provided by Weinrib, art. cit., passim.

³⁰ In this particular point earlier scholars, including Weinrib, art. cit. 262ff., have maintained that the Scribonii Libones, who were in office in 16 A.D., were not sons of the consul of 15 B.C., but of his otherwise unattested brother. But this is not the only possibility. Without going into the details I refer to J. Scheid's interesting remarks, art. cit. in n. 29, 366ff. (stemmata, pp. 368, 370). The problems involved have also been recently studied by J. Hallett, *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society*, Princeton 1984, 159—161 (stemma, appendix V). She has suggested that the gentilicia of the brothers (cos. 16 A.D. and pr. 16 A.D.) would be inherited from the maternal side, either directly from L. Scribonius Libo (cos. 34 B.C.) or from their grandmother's (Scribonia) brother. But this is pure speculation. One cannot fail to suppose that in this way she tries to find support for her general idea that in the name giving in the Augustan period the role of maternal grandparents would have been particularly conspicuous.

³¹ Cf. the sources in *PIR*² L 294.

³² An extensive study on the inheritance of names from the maternal side is being prepared by the author.

A rather tempting hypothesis, not previously exploited, will be at hand if we have a closer look at the background and the historical framework of the betrothal. I am thinking of the possibility that Medullina would have taken the gentilicium *Livia* only at the moment of becoming the fiancée of Claudius, and that Claudius' grandmother Livia, wife of Augustus, would have served as a name model.³³ Among the imperial circles it was not unknown that the future wife was obliged to give up her previous gentilicium, especially if she was of clearly lowlier origins than the emperor. Many illuminating instances could be produced, but they preponderantly come from the third and fourth centuries A.D.³⁴ According to the dynastic requirements the nomenclature sometimes had to be changed in order to guarantee that the marriage could be socially acceptable. In the present case there is, however, no reason to allude to the humble origins. On the contrary, Medullina came from an ancient and prominent aristocratic house. Although this was rare in the case of females, we could argue that the whole procedure was related to a political adoption, somehow resembling a *datio in adoptionem*, like that of her brother Scribonianus. As was stated above, a testamentary adoption of the brother was excluded. One could well imagine that M. Furius Camillus wanted to strengthen his own political status by allowing one of his sons to pass into the family of the Arruntii. L. Arruntius, the *capax imperii*, was obviously married to an Aemilia Lepida,³⁵ and thereby advantageous links were created with the Roman ruling class, i.e. Aemilii, Cornelii Sullae and Pompeii. Through his own marriage Camillus engineered a useful connection with the Scribonii Libones, and by having his daughter betrothed to a member of the imperial house he could even number the Julio-Claudians among his friends. A link with the Livii Drusi already existed, because his father-in-law was adopted by the great Livia's father (cf. above). This might also have facilitated Medullina's entrance into the imperial family and, what is more important, perhaps also in part contributed to the choice of the new gentilicium *Livia*. Camillus was

³³ Her influence on the nomenclature of her Julio-Claudian descendants should also be remembered, cf. the stemma Iuliorum Claudiorum in PIR², IV.

³⁴ Cf. especially M. Kajava, *Arctos* 19 (1985) 41—42.

³⁵ Cf. Weinrib, art. cit. in n. 1, 265ff.

clearly an opportunist, and the betrothal of his daughter with the subsequent change of her name may have only represented a bold political act for him.

The date of the betrothal also appears as particularly interesting. Suetonius, *Claud.* 26, 1, tells that Claudius had to forfeit his betrothed Aemilia Lepida, because “*parentes eius Augustum offenderant*”. The scandal is usually dated to the year 8 A.D.,³⁶ when Claudius was seventeen years old (his birthday was on August 1), still “*admodum adulescens*” according to Suetonius. It was in the same year that Camillus was elected as consul, and it may be that he now exploited the perplexed and scandalous situation so as to enhance his own political prestige. The consular powers may have made his daughter a good candidate to become the wife of Claudius, and what perhaps counted even more, himself to be a fitting father-in-law for the prince. It was under such circumstances that Medullina, approximately coeval with Claudius, may have received the name *Livia*. Her father had obviously no reason to refuse, on the contrary he must have willingly accepted Augustus’ wife as a name model. In the year 8 A.D. that domineering and potent lady was 66 years old and certainly an indispensable person to have among one’s friends.

Earlier it was usual to explain Medullina’s gentilicium *Livia* by referring to an unspecified adoption, the motives of which would be found in the financial insecurity of her father. The Tacitean characterization of her father’s life, *modestia vitae* (ann. 2, 52) has been interpreted as a possible allusion to his bad financial state, but it has also been held that this would contradict the rather different picture provided by the inscription CIL VI 9469 (= ILS 7441), where a slave appears as *M. Furi Camilli ab horr(eis)*.³⁷ Yet all evidence of this kind is too vague and can by no means be regarded as proving anything for or against a possible adoption of Medullina. Weinrib supposed that Medullina would have inherited *Livia* directly from her mother or at least from the mother’s

³⁶ Cf. Tac. ann. 4,72,7 and R. Syme, Bayerische Akad. d. Wiss. Phil.-Hist. Klasse. Sitz.Ber., Jahrgang 1974, Heft 7, p. 33 = RP III 935, n. 99.

³⁷ For these opinions, cf. E. Groag, RE VII 350, No. 45 and Fluß, RE XIII 927, No. 40. Mommsen, Hermes 3 (1869) 134, n. 7, said that it is not clear „warum sie bei Sueton *Livia* heißt“.

family. I cannot agree with this point (cf. above). I maintain that she was originally a Furia and only later, at the moment of her betrothal, took the gentilicium *Livia* after the old Livia, wife of Augustus. At the same time she may have been given in adoption to the new family, and if so, it must have been a purely political manoeuvre.

There remains, of course, the possibility that Suetonius' *Livia* is a mistake. But as its existence is sufficiently plausible, there is no need to appeal to a possible blunder on the part of the historian.³⁸ One should, however, remember that there is also another case, in a sense analogous with the present one. One of the mistresses of the Emperor Caligula is usually known as "Cornelia Orestina/Orestilla", but Suetonius, Cal. 25, 1, gives the form "Livia Orestilla". In a previous article I have argued that there might be an error about the name *Livia*,³⁹ and I still think that this is highly probable, especially because all the other sources uniformly testify to the gentilicium *Cornelia*. Nor is it plausible that she would have changed *Cornelia* to *Livia*. The cases of Orestina/Orestilla and Medullina are not comparable with each other. Medullina was the *sponsa* of Claudius, whereas Orestina/Orestilla was in fact the *sponsa* of C. Calpurnius Piso, the future conspirator. She was abducted by Caligula on her wedding day, but a few days later he cast her off. It would be difficult to understand her changing her name under such circumstances.

The inscription CIL X 6561 must have been set up in the year 8 A.D. or shortly after that.⁴⁰ It is, however, not possible to determine the exact purpose of the monument, because the place where it was originally erected is totally unknown. The circumstances and the precise place of discovery are not known either, and the description of the monument and the architectural context are very insufficiently transmitted. According to the testimony of Carlo Fea (cf. above) it was a "basis quadrata lata palm.

³⁸ The Suetonian name form is also found in the false inscription CIL X 338*, now preserved in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale of Naples, but it only shows that the text of Suetonius was read and studied in past centuries.

³⁹ Arctos 18 (1984) 26.

⁴⁰ C. Cardinali, *Iscrizioni antiche Veliterne*, Roma 1823, 81, No. 30, dated the text between the years 3—13 A.D. Cf. Mommsen, ad CIL X 6561: "obiisse videtur Medullina sub finem imperii Augusti". All the relevant bibliographical references are provided by H. Solin, *op. cit.* in n. 3, p. 33.

1¹/₂". As is known, the term "basis" as used by antiquaries and scholars of the past centuries is far from exact. It could imply a base supporting a statue of the deceased or it could refer to a funerary altar as well. A substruction "lata palm. 1¹/₂" would, however, hardly be enough for a statue, unless it were of a considerably small size. That it would have been a honorific monument aimed at the general public seems impossible, as it was customary that such monuments were rather prompted by some community as well as by the Emperor or the Senate.⁴¹ Medullina's inscription seems to have been of a more intimate character. It was a private dedication on the part of her previous *paedagogus*, possibly placed inside a tomb or an enclosed funerary garden. In any case the altar ("basis" is thus interpreted here) must have belonged to a funerary sphere.

⁴¹ For the different types of senatorial monuments, honorific or funeral, and the situations in which they were erected, see the important contribution of W. Eck, 'Senatorial Self-Representation: Developments in the Augustan Period', in *Caesar Augustus. Seven Aspects* (ed. by F. Millar - E. Segal), Oxford 1984, 129ff.