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WOMEN'S PRAENOMINA RECONSIDERED

I i r o K a j a n t o

No satisfactory explanation has so far been given for the curious fact that Roman women did not possess praenomina. By praenomina I mean that limited number of names which were the same for both sexes and which were almost always abbreviated, C., M., P., *Gaius/Gaia*, *Marcus/Marca*, *Publius/Publia*, etc.; cf. *Caeso/Caesulla*. Mere descriptive names, *Minor*, *Maior*, *Secunda*, *Tertia*, *Maxima*, *Polla*, etc., were not genuine praenomina.

Three explanations have been suggested. Th. Mommsen, in an important paper upon the history of the Latin name system,¹ makes no distinction between women's praenomina and their descriptive names. His arguments are thus somewhat lacking in clarity. At any rate, he argues that women certainly had individual names, i.e. praenomina, which were, however, seldom recorded since, unlike men's, they were not officially recognized. Mommsen drew this conclusion from a quotation of Q. Scaevola in *lib. praen.*, 3 *pueris non prius quam togam virilem sumerent, puellis non ante quam nubarent praenomina imponi moris fuisse Q. Scaevola auctor est*. According to Mommsen, the praenomina were conferred on the boys on the Roman day of name-giving, the *dies lustricus* (the eighth or ninth day after birth) but they acquired legal force only when the boys reached adulthood. Because the State did not take a similar interest in girls' praenomina, they did not have a similar legal sanction. Hence, they were not thought indispensable and could be easily disregarded.

Mommsen's theory was based upon legal concepts as was natural for a great jurist. But its sole foundation was the quotation from Q. Scaevola. Even if it were trustworthy, which is far from certain, we cannot interpret it in the sense suggested by Mommsen. Surely the registration of names, at the attainment of mature years, did not affect their use at home and among playmates and friends. Again, according to Mommsen, women did have individual names or praenomina, even though they were seldom recorded.

¹ Die römischen Eigennamen, *Römische Forschungen* I² Berlin (1864) 30—33.

But if this were so, we should have at least a few references to them in extant literary documents. In Cicero's letters, the praenomen, which was the real individual name of men of aristocratic birth, was seldom omitted.¹ Moreover, praenomina, especially when used alone, suggested affection and intimacy.² In Horace, *Sat.* 5,32, »Tiresia» advises »Ulixes» to address rich makers of wills by their praenomina, for *gaudent praenomine molles auriculae*. But for all that, we find no living woman referred to by a genuine praenomen in Cicero. He always addresses his first wife as *Terentia*, and the second one as *Publilia*. The wife of *Atticus* bore the name of *Pilia*, *Att.* 4, 16,4 etc., and his sister was called *Pomponia*, 1, 5,3 etc. It is the same in cases in which Cicero might have adopted an affectionate tone by using a praenomen. His beloved daughter *Tullia* was called by that name only. In more intimate moments, he created a diminutive, *Tulliola, deliciolae nostrae*, *Att.* 1, 8,3. Similarly, the daughter of *Atticus* was *Caecilia*, occasionally *Attica, Atticula* in Cicero's letters.³ Because men's praenomina sometimes had a pejorative connotation,⁴ Cicero might well have used a praenomen of *Clodia*, the sister of his arch-enemy *P. Clodius Pulcher*, had there been one. But *Clodia* she is in Cicero's numerous references to her.

There are certainly a few cases in which Cicero seems to refer to a woman by a praenomen. The daughter of *Sulla* and wife of *Milo*, is called *Fausta* in *Att.* 5, 8,2; the wife of *D. Brutus* appears as *Paula Valeria* in *Fam.* 8, 7,2, and as *Polla tua* in 11, 8,1; the sister of *M. Brutus* bears the name *Tertia* in *Fam.* 16, 22,1, and the diminutive *Tertulla* in *Att.* 14, 20,2 and 15, 11,1; there is, moreover, a *Tertia, mimia*, daughter of *Isidorus, mimus*, *Verr.* 3, 34,78 etc., but as she was probably not a Roman citizen, this would be her only name. None of the names listed was, however, a genuine praenomen. *Fausta Cornelia*, and her twin brother *Faustus Cornelius Sulla*, had been named so by their father to recall his agnomen, *Felix*, and were therefore artificial creations. *Tertia/Tertulla* and *Polla* were descriptive names, not praenomina given on the *dies lustricus*.

We may, then, conclude that in Cicero's time, genuine women's praenomina were not only officially unrecognized. They did not exist.

¹ H. Thylander, La dénomination chez Cicéron dans les lettres à Atticus, *Opuscula Romana* (*Acta Instituti Romani Regni Sueciae* XVIII, Lund 1954), I 154—57.

² H. L. Axtell, Men's names in the writings of Cicero, *Cl. Phil.* 10 (1915) 398—400.

³ Cf. Orelli—Baier, *Onomasticon Tullianum* II (1838) s.v.

⁴ Axtell, op. cit. 399.

An ingenious theory has been put forward by H. Thylander.¹ According to him, women's praenomina had become obsolete because, in times of hoary antiquity, they had been identical with those of their husbands. Thylander supplies two arguments in support of his theory. First, Scaevola's statement, quoted above, that women received their praenomina at their weddings. The second one is based on a well-known passage in Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 30. Plutarch tells us that the ancient Romans, when conducting a bride to her home, ordered her to say, ὄπου σὺ Γάιος, ἐγὼ Γαία. Thylander interprets the expression thus: »L'expression — — doit remonter à une époque où les Romains ne portaient qu'un seul nom, le nom individuel, et elle a dû être employée primitivement au sens littéral. — — La première de ces indications (scil., Scaevola's statement) nous fait donc savoir que les femmes ne recevaient le prénom qu'au mariage, la deuxième (scil., the bridal expression) nous dit que la femme, après le mariage, s'appelaient d'après le nom de son mari. — — — si les femmes portaient toujours le prénom du mari, sans que ce prénom fût mis dans les listes des censeurs, on a pris l'habitude de nommer les filles d'après leur gentilice — —». But it is not possible to conclude from the passage in Plutarch that women received their praenomina from their husbands. Plutarch unequivocally tells us that it was only the name *Gaia* that was used in this connection. Let us suppose that the man was called *Marcus* or *Quintus*, and the bride, if Thylander's theory were true, consequently *Marca* or *Quinta*. Surely it would have produced a comical effect to employ the names *Gaius* and *Gaia* in the wedding ceremony. Moreover, Thylander has not noticed a grave defect in his theory. According to him, the practice arose in a period when the Romans still bore only a single name. Does he mean to imply that women were nameless before marriage?

Plutarch has himself given us a good explanation of the bridal acclamation. According to him, the phrase signified: ὄπου σὺ κύριος καὶ οἰκοδεσπότης, καὶ ἐγὼ κυρία καὶ οἰκοδέσποινα. As Plutarch suggests, *Gaius* and *Gaia* were used as type-names for »husband» and »wife». They were so used probably because, at least in the archaic period, they were the commonest personal names. *Gaia*, abbreviated with an inverted C., was later on used for »mulier» in Latin epigraphy.

Plutarch supplies another explanation as well, but it is an obvious aetiological legend. According to this explanation, *Gaia* was used in the bridal

¹ *Étude sur l'épigraphie latine* Lund 1952, 73—77.

acclamation because of *Gaia Caecilia*, a fair and virtuous consort of one of Tarquinius' sons. *Lib. praen.* 7, quotes the same story, with the insignificant difference that *Gaia Caecilia* appears here as the wife of the king: *ferunt enim Gaiam Caeciliam, Tarquinii Prisci regis uxorem, optimam lanificam fuisse et ideo institutum, ut novae nuptiae ante ianuam mariti interrogatae quatenam vocarentur Gaias esse se dicerent.* The legend certainly leaves the particular identification *Gaius* : *Gaia* unexplained, but such matters were not given undue attention by the ancient story-tellers. It is not impossible that Scaevola's reference to women receiving their praenomina on getting married was ascribable to a misconception of the bridal acclamation. He may have made the same mistake as Thylander. In a similar way, his argument that boys received their praenomina on coming of age may be an echo of the official recognition of men's names at the census.

One further explanation has recently been put forward. E. Peruzzi, in a far-fetched book on the prehistory of the Roman family,¹ developed a theory according to which the Roman conception of marriage, as based upon *affectio maritalis*, and the suppression of women's praenomina were attributable to the Sabine element in the Roman population brought to the city by Titus Tatius and his followers. Women's praenomina were not recorded because of an ancient onomastic taboo. A woman's praenomen was a personal element comparable to a part of her body and consequently used only in the intimacy of family life. This conception was of Sabine origin, for the Sabines had forbidden the use of female praenomina in order to protect the dignity of their womenfolk.² Few words need be wasted in demolishing these shaky arguments. They were all based upon the unacceptable assumption that Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Plutarch, Livy, and the other ancient historians have handed down to us the literal truth about the origins of Rome.³

It is, then, as yet unexplained why Roman women were, before the era of cognomina, without genuine individual names, praenomina. The absence of women's praenomina in Latin nomenclature is all the more remarkable in view of the fact that the other peoples of Italy still used them. The development of the name system had been similar throughout the peninsula. The adoption of the gentilicium, which was very likely of Etruscan origin,⁴ reduced

¹ *Origini di Roma, I, La famiglia* Firenze 1970.

² *Ibid.* 49–74.

³ Cf. my review of the book in *Latomus*, 30 (1971) 1217–18.

⁴ G. Devoto, *Gli antichi italici*², Firenze 1951, 133–134; E. Pulgram, *The Origin of the Latin Nomen Gentilicium*, *Harvard Studies in Cl. Phil.* 58–59 (1948) 186–187.

the ancient individual names to praenomina. Because women cannot have been nameless before the era of the gentilicium, they also had individual names and later on praenomina. Now all the peoples of Italy, with the sole exception of the Romans, retained women's praenomina even after the triumph of the gentilicium system. They were very numerous in the Etruscan-language inscriptions,¹ but even in the late republican period, when Etruscan was being ousted by Latin in epigraphy, some 70 Etruscan women still bore praenomina in their Latin-language epitaphs,² *Tania Pescnia*; *Larthia Cnevia A.f.*, etc. At Falerii, where the people used a Latin dialect but retained cultural and onomastic ties with Etruria, most women recorded in inscriptions had praenomina, *poplia hirmia*, Vetter 269; *fasies c[ai]sia*, 276 a, with an inverted order of the names; *cauia : satelie[s]*, 276 b; *tanacuil aracia*, 278 a: notice the Etruscan praenomen; *cauia [u]eculia*, 281 a; *ca : u[eculi]a*, 281 b; *caui : tertinei*, 319; *uipia : zertenea : loferta*, 322 a; *cau[ia] uecin[e]a*, 322 b, etc. The reduced number of praenomina is apparent here, too, *cauia* and *poplia* being by far the most frequent names. In contrast to the Roman, but in accordance with the Etruscan practice, the praenomina, men's and women's alike, were almost always written in full.

The Oscan and especially the Umbrian epigraphy have given us few complete women's names. This was due to the fact that epitaphs were found only sporadically. Nevertheless, it is evident that in the inscriptions written in these languages, women still bore praenomina: *ep(?idiu) luvkiu*, Vetter 123 d (Teanum Sidicinum); *saluta musesa*, 204, *sa(luta) loucia*, 210 d, *saluta papia*, 210 e (all from Sulmo); *saluta scaifia*, 211, *saluta obel(lia)*, 215 c, *saluta acca(ua) l(oiferta)*, 215 f, *uib(ia) ania*, 215 e, *ter(tia) loucia l.l.*, 215 o, *uibia sullivania l.f.*, 215 p, *uib(ia) ptruna u.f.*, 215 q, *suntla sabdia nutr(ix)*, 215 t (all from Corfinium). With the exception of the enigmatical *ep*,³ all the examples come from the land of the Paeligni. But this need not be interpreted as demonstrating that women's praenomina were used only here. The true explanation lies in the fact that it was largely at Sulmo and Corfinium that we have found any considerable number of epitaphs. For natural reasons, women's names were rare in other than funerary inscriptions. In the dialect inscriptions there are only a few women's names which do not include a praenomen; *ahvdiu*, 70 (Pompeii), *tettia*, 205 (Sulmo), *tupleia*, 232 d (Tuder) have only

¹ E. Fiesel, *Das grammatische Geschlecht im Etruskischen*, Göttingen 1922, 38–65.

² J. Kaimio. The Ousting of Etruscan by Latin in Etruria, *Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae* V. 3 1972, 73–74.

³ The resolving of the abbreviation *Ep.* as *Ep(idius)* is quite arbitrary, see Schulze, *ZGLE* 515 n. 1.

the gentilicium; *siviiú magiú*, 162 (Aeclanum) is a double gentilicium; *brata polesa* (= Grata Polledia), 207 (Sulmo) is an inverted cognomen.

The choice of praenomina is not very extensive here, either. *Saluta* and *uibia* were the most common ones. *Ter(tia)* was recorded in an epitaph which was really more Latin than Oscan.¹ *Suntla* may be Etruscan.

Genuine praenomina for women are few in extant Latin-language documents. Admittedly, we know even less of the early nomenclature of Roman women than we know of that of men. There is no female counterpart to the *Fasti consulares*. The names of legendary heroines, *Rhea Silvia*, *Acca Larentia*, *Hersilia*, *Lucretia*, cannot be accepted as authentic. It was only towards the end of the third century B.C. that Roman women began to emerge from their obscurity, but the number of women mentioned by the historians was small. Livy 21—45, which covers the years 218—167 B.C., refers to only 12 women. The earliest of them were two Vestal Virgins from the year 216 B.C. These Virgins, who were naturally of noble birth, bore only a gentilicium, *Floronia* and *Opimia*, 22, 57,2. *Aemilia*, wife of *Africanus Maior*, also had only a gentilicium in Livy, 38, 57,6.² But even in Livy, women of Italic origin were distinguished by praenomina. 26, 33,8, 210 B.C., records two women from Capua who had been well-disposed towards the Romans, *Vestia Oppia Atellana* and *Pacula Cluvia*. In the first name, *Atellana* was patently an ethnic, »native of Atellana«, a town between Capua and Neapolis. Though F. Münzer argues that *Vestia* was the proper name of the woman and *Oppia* derived from her husband's gentilicium, »Vestia wife of Oppius«,³ *Vestia* may equally well have been a praenomen. *Vestius* was a very rare gentilicium.⁴ Moreover, praenomina were common in the nomenclature of Oscan women. *Pacula Cluvia* was probably of low birth, for Livy claims that she was a prostitute. *Paculla* is recorded as the praenomen of a priestess of Bacchus from Campania in 39, 13,9, *Paculla Annia*, and is an obvious Oscan praenomen.⁵

Another significant batch of women's names in Livy is recorded in the chapters on the Bacchanal scandal, from 186 B.C. Besides *Paculla Annia*, quoted above, Livy names *Hisपालa Faecenia*, a courtesan and freedwoman,

¹ The inscription is included in *CIL* I² 1785.

² Val. Max. 6, 7, 1, records her as *Aemilia Tertia*, but this may be a mistake on his part. All the other authors, including Polybius, call her only *Aemilia*, see *RE* I col. 592 No. 179.

³ *RE* XVIII col. 747 No. 38.

⁴ The only certain case is VI 28 636 *M. Vestius M.l. Anteros*. The diminutive form *Vestilius* was found in Campania and in Latium. Schulze, *ZGLE* 254, considers these and some other similar names as Etruscan, but this is hardly justified.

⁵ *ZGLE* 476 f.

39, 9,5;¹ *Sulpicia*, mother-in-law of the consul *Sp. Postumius Albinus*, 11,4; *Duronia*, mother of *P. Aebutius*, whose father had been *equo publico*, 9,2; *Aebutia*, his aunt, 11,3. Thus all the ladies of good society, down to the equestrian order, bore gentilicia, whereas a woman from Campania and a freedwoman were distinguished by praenomina. *Hispala Faecenia* was probably from the Italian countryside. There is no satisfactory etymology for her name. It is unlikely that there was any connection with the cognomen *Hispallus*, which was first found as the agnomen of the consul of 176 B.C., *Cn. Cornelius Scipio Hispallus*. This name was probably a diminutive of *Hispanus*. Though we have no relevant information, we may assume that his father, who had fought and been killed in Hispania, had borne this name as a *cognomen e virtute*. Except for this special case, the name *Hispallus* was found three times in the Imperial period (*LC*, p. 199). The only other name apparently related to *Hispala* is *Hispo*, a cognomen which had probably originated as an individual name and as a praenomen, but the feminine for it was *Hispulla*. However, as our knowledge of the early Italian nomenclature derives from documents which have come down to us more or less by chance, it is possible that *Hispala* was an otherwise undocumented women's praenomen.

The above suggests that, if Livy can be trusted, freeborn Roman women bore only gentilicia as early as the late third century B.C. If praenomina were found, they all belonged to women from the Italian provinces. There is, however, one case which seemingly militates against this contention.

Livy records, 29, 14,12, *Claudia Quinta* as the most distinguished of the *matronae primores civitatis* who gathered to receive the *sacra* of *Cybele* at Ostia, 204 B.C. This cannot possibly be the correct form of her name. Women began to use individual cognomina only in the Augustan period. According to Münzer,² post-Livian writers called her only *Claudia*, thus Suet. *Tib.* 2; Plin. *nat.* 7, 120; Macrob. *sat.* 2, 5,4. Diodorus mistakenly had *Ὀυαλεγία*. But Münzer failed to notice that Cicero also recorded the woman. In *Har. Resp.* 13,27, he refers to her as *Q. Claudia*, and in *Cael.* 14,34, as *Q. illa Claudia*. It is difficult to interpret the name. It may be a genuine praenomen, the feminine equivalent of *Quintus*. The abbreviation in Cicero strongly supports this view. But it may equally well be a descriptive name, which denoted her order of birth, similar to *Quarta Hostilia*, Liv. 40, 37,5 (180 B.C.), the alleged murderess of her husband, the consul *C. Calpurnius*. It is Livy's treatment

¹ On one occasion Livy treats the name as a cognomen, *Faecenia Hispala*, 39, 19,5.

² *RE* III col. 2899.

of the name that suggests this interpretation. Livy may have found the form *Quinta Claudia* in his sources and altered it to a form more familiar to an age which was growing accustomed to women's cognomina. Cicero, on his part, may have abbreviated *Quinta*, not knowing its real significance and confusing it with the praenomen *Quintus*, which no longer suggested anything real about the order of birth.

The early disappearance of praenomina from the nomenclature of noble women is brought out by Polybius, too. Polybius is all the more dependable here since he was living in an age for which the praenomen was still a most important name. Polybius could omit the gentilicium and the cognomen, but only rarely the praenomen.¹ Now in all his extant work, Polybius cites by name only two Roman women, and both of them had only a gentilicium, *Αἰμιλία*, wife of the elder *Africanus*, 31, 26, 1, and *Παπειρία*, wife of *L. Aemilius Paullus*, *ibid.*

It is fruitless to review here the nomenclature of all the republican noble women. As a rule, they did not bear genuine praenomina. To cite only one example, Münzer records 12 republican *Corneliae*, all of them bearing only a gentilicium.²

The inscriptions are only a little more rewarding. Leaving aside descriptive names, *Maior*, *Minor*, *Gem(i)na*, *Gemella*, *Maxuma*, *Prima*, *Secunda*, *Tertia*, *Quarta*, *Septuma*, *Paulla*, *Posilla*, as well as obvious inverted cognomina, *Graeca Vatronia*, *CIL* I² 336 (Praeneste), *Iusta Crumelonia*, 2811 (Ateste), *Rufa Nonia*, 2753 (Caere), *Rutila Fulcinia*, 1882 (Amiternum), we shall find few women's praenomina even in the republican period.

The only locality where all the women had praenomina was Pisaurum. A number of votive inscriptions have been found there, two of which record women, *Cesula Atilia*, 376 = *ILLRP* 21; *matrona M. 'Curia, Pola Livia deda* (= *nutrix*), 379 = *ILLRP* 24. *Cesula* was Vulgar for *Caesulla*, the feminine form of the male praenomen *Caeso*.³ *M. 'naturally* stood for *Mania*. The last name, *Pola*, Vulgar for *Paulla*, was a descriptive name, not a genuine praenomen. I shall discuss its meaning later on. These votive inscriptions were probably from the period immediately following the founding of a Roman colony there, 184 B.C.⁴ Mommsen and Bormann certainly dated the inscrip-

¹ Schulze, *ZGLE* 507—509.

² *RE* IV col. 1591 Nos. 404—418.

³ This praenomen was found at Falerii, too, *cesula : tiperilia*, Vetter 322 f.

⁴ A. Degrassi, *ILLRP* I p. 47; Italo Zicàri, Pisaurum, *RE Suppl.* XI col. 1092, 19.

tions to the Hannibalic War or even earlier because of their archaic character.¹ But the archaisms were no doubt due to the fact that these features were retained in the provinces even after the *sermo urbanus* had shed them. We have two ways of explaining the use of women's praenomina here. It may have been an archaic feature retained by provincial women. But the use may equally well be ascribable to the influence of the Umbrian substratum or adstratum. It will be remembered that the Italic dialects, as far as our information goes, were conservative in this respect. But as the praenomina were pure Latin, and as the inscriptions were obviously set up by women new to the district, I prefer the former explanation. This suggests that women's praenomina were in use among the common people much longer than they were among the nobility.

Nearer Rome, and in more recent times, women's praenomina were the exception rather than the rule. The necropolis excavated at Praeneste records more than 300 epitaphs,² which date from the mid-third to the early first century B.C., but with 82 B.C. as a *terminus ante quem*.³ Disregarding the descriptive names *Maio(s)* and *Mino(s)*, which were a Praenestian peculiarity, and other names of a similar kind, only a few genuine female praenomina are left. ?*F. Grecia*, 350, which cannot be solved unambiguously. One could consider *F(austa)*, but this was a cognomen, and it was unusual for a cognomen to be abbreviated so violently. The only unequivocal cases are *Rudia Vergeilia Antulai l.*, 340 (this was the feminine for the rare praenomen *Anto*, cf. *LC* 175); *C. Comenai C.f. Or(cevi?)*, 123; *L. Otronia Epulei*, 233 a; *N. Atilia P.f.*, 89 (notice that the woman had a praenomen different from that of her father). This does not amount to much.⁴

Other republican examples are equally sparse. They have all been listed in the *index praenominum* of *CIL* I². But not every name recorded here was a praenomen or even a descriptive name. Apart from the inverted cognomina, listed on p. 20, there were obvious gentilicia, *Annia An(ni) f(ilia)*, 1829 (Aequicum); *Appia Gavia*, 2381 (amphora); *Maria Fabricia*, 162, and *Maria Selicia* 298 (Praeneste). Though *Appius* was a well-known praenomen in the *gens Claudia*, the name was also used as a gentilicium. Had it been a praenomen here, it should at least have been abbreviated. For the interpretation of these

¹ *CIL* I² p. 407.

² *CIL* I² 64–357 = Vetter 369–503.

³ Degrassi, *ILLRP* II p. 214.

⁴ *P. Vebidia Q.f. Numa*, 337 = Vetter 492, is probably a mistake for *Vebidio(s)*.

double gentilicia of republican women, see p. 18, Münzer on *Vestia Oppia*. Of the remaining names, many were non-Latin, recorded in native inscriptions written in Latin. Most of them have been incorporated into the collections of Italy's non-Latin inscriptions. *Hastia*, *Thannia*, and *Valisa* were Etruscan, *Nirca* and *Frema* Venetic,¹ *Saluta* Oscan, *Ceisia* (= *Caisia*) Faliscan. *Salvia Servia M.l.*, 1330 (Rome), is ambiguous. *Salvius/-ia* is both a praenomen, a gentilicium, and a cognomen.

Excluding these, only two names are left to be added to the praenomina from Pisaurum and Praeneste, *L. Cornelia L.f.*, 573 (on a *mustela ex auro*) and *V(ibia) Oppia*, 1407 (Rome). The latter was a well-known Oscan praenomen (see p. 18). CIL I² registers two Latin inscriptions from the Oscan territory in which this praenomen appears, *Vibia Sullia L.f.*, 1790 = Vetter 215 p (cited on p. 17) and *Vibia Tetidia L.f.*, 1791. The un-Roman character of the nomenclature is apparent from the fact that the praenomina were here written in full. *V. Oppia* was probably an immigrant from the Oscan territory.

These findings are, accordingly, very scanty, and none of them is from Rome. Strictly speaking, only eight genuine female praenomina were found. Women's praenomina had evidently gone out of use a considerable time before Latin inscriptions began to be produced in any sizable quantity.

It seems, however, to be contradictory to this that women's praenomina were much more numerous in Imperial and Christian epigraphy, 76 cases in the material I have used. But the relative frequency of these names did not arise. The republican inscriptions were naturally only fractional compared with the immense multitude of inscriptions from the later periods. Because these later female praenomina have not been dealt with in any systematic way, I shall give a complete list of them. Inverted cognomina have naturally been excluded.

ROME (CIL VI) 22 examples

D e c i m a: *D. Colia D.l. Theo*, 16002

G a i a: *C. Ennia*, husband *P. Rubrius Celer*, 25512; *G. Iulia Calliste*, 35584;
 ?*C. Iunia Primitiva*, husband *Iunius Victor*, 20846;¹ *C. Salvia Valentina*, father

¹PREMA IVANTINA C IVLI, 2806 is to be corrected to FREMA IVANTINA KTVLISTOI VESCES, J. Untermann, *Die venetischen Personennamen* Wiesbaden 1961, 47 and 50.

²Though the name was registered in the index, it is not quite certain. The inscription runs as follows: D M / IVNIO VICTORI / F C IVNIA PRI/MITIVA CON/IVGI BENE/MEERNTI. The letters F C may well stand for *f(aciundum) c(uravit)*, not for *f(ecit) C(aia)*.

- C. Gallius Valentinus*, mother *Salvia Primigenia*, brothers *C. Gallius Verus*, *C. Gallius Victor*, 25841; *C. Ulcia Zoe*, 39800 (only in the index).
- Gnaea**: *Cn. Liburnia Epictesis*, husband *T. Flavius Cyrillus*, 18036; *Gnaea Pompeia*, son *C. Pompeius Murmillo* (inversion? but *Gnaeus/a* has not been found as a cognomen), 10179.
- Lucia**: *L. Baebia Sallustia Crescentilla c(larissima) f(emina)*, husband *Crepereius rogatus c.v.*, 1398 = *PIR B*² 34 = *PLRE I* p. 231: late III/early IV cent. A.D.; *L. Sempronia Dalia*, 6844; *L. Sentinia Valeriana*, 34171; *L. Septimia Doxa*, husband and son *Elpidophorus*, 26268; *L. Septimia Patabiniana Balbilla Tyria Nepotilla Odaenathiana c(larissima) p(uella)*, 1516 = *PLRE I* p. 638: ?mid/late III cent. A.D.; *L. Tutilia Parilla*, husband *L. Tutil. Euander*, 27855.
- Marca**: *M. Antonia Thallusa*, son *M. Anton. Hilarus, eques Romanus*, 1591; *M. Domitia Quarta*, 23285.
- Quinta**: *Q. Carsidia Proculeiana*, 34697; *Q. Numisia Cyrene*, husband *M. Vagerius Eucarpus*, 27906; *Q. Q. Valerii Hermadion et Matriona*, 28026.
- Servia**: *Ser. Cornelia Ser. l. Sabina*: *Ser. Cornelius Dolabella Metillianus nutrici et mammul(ae)*, 16450.
- Tiberia**: *Tib. Claudia*, grandmother *Attia Alexandria*, mother *Valeria Paula*, 28241; *Tib. Claudia Camilia Alfidia Celonis c(larissima) f(emina)*, 31652 = *PIR C*² 1083: early III cent.

CHRISTIAN ROME 8 examples

- Gaia**: *C. Val. Laurenti[a]*, age 3 months, mother *C. Val. Tini[a]*, father *C. Val. Aprilian[us]*, *ICVR* 10249.
- Lucia**: *L. Remmia Servanda*, *ICVR* 3117.
- Marca**: *M. Aur. Val. Surule Antonin[a]*, *ICVR* 2324.
- Publia**: *P. Iulia Veneranda*, *ICVR* 1656.
- Quinta**: *Quinta Mamilia Titiana c(larissimae) m(emoriae) f(emina)*, *RAC* 1936 p. 23; *Quinta Mar[[i]]a [[T]]igris*, *ICVR* 10015; *Q. Ragonia Cyriace*, *ICVR* 3116.

ITALY (*CIL* V, IX, X, XI, XIV) 3 examples

- Lucia**: *L. Catellia Dionysia*, IX 2710 (Aesernia).
- Marca**: *M. Ulpia Elpidus*, alumna of *M. Ulpus Paulinus*, XIV 1793 (Ostia).
- Quinta**: *Q. Valeria Candidi* V 7959 (alpes maritimae).

GALLIA (CIL XII, XIII) 8 examples

- G a i a: *C. Lucania Carata*, husband *Ianuconius Primanus veteranus*, XIII 5983 (Germ. superior).
- L u c i a: *L. Caecilia L.f. Donata*, husband *Val. Philoserapis*, XII 397 (ora maritima); *L. Popillia L.l. Hilara*, XII 865 (Arelate); *L. Rinnia P.l. Prima*, and her freedwoman *L. (Rinnia?) Aucta*, XII 5093 (Narbo); *L. Statia Firma*, XII 706 (Arelate); *L. Vindicia Luperca civis Agrippinensis*, XIII 1905.
- P u b l i a: *P. Vongidia Saturnina*, husband *Valerius Natalis*, XIII 3555 (Belgica).
- S p u r i a: *Sp. Cassia Quintulli fil.*, XII 4143.

THE BALKAN, etc. (CIL III) 3 examples

- A u l a: *A. Pomponia*, sister of *Q. Pompon[i]us Valerianus mil(es) leg(ionis) VII Cl(audiae)*, 13807 (Viminacium), *terminus post quem* A.D. 57, when the legion was transferred to Moesia superior.
- L u c i a: *L. Pletoria*, daughter of *L. Pletorius Vales*, 14602 (Dalmatia); *L. Paccia Valeria Saturnina*, 12149—50 (Comama, Asia Minor).
- P u b l i a: *P. Ael. Tertulla*, father *Ael. P[]* 13238 (Dalmatia).

AFRICA (CIL VIII, ILA, ILT) 31 examples.

- A u l a: *A. Cossinia Ianuaria*, 23728 (Byzac.).
- G a i a: *G. Ael. Macrina*, 3348 cf. 18185 (Numid.); *C. Antonia Silvana* and sister *C. Antonia Novella*, 21677 (Mauret. Caes.); *Gaia Iulia C. Iuli Celeris filia*, husband *C. Iulius Flaccus*, 3664 (Numid.), unless inversion?
- G n a e a: *[G]nea Seia Herennia Sallustia [B]arbia Orbiana*, wife of *Alexander Severus*, 9355 = ILS 486; cf. II 3734 and *PIR S* 252.
- L u c i a: *L. Antestia Saturnina*, 3869 (Numid.); *L. Iullia L.f. Mustela*, 19588 (Numid.); *L. Manlia Honorata*, 7578 (Numid.); *Lu. Ul(pia) Cacia Matrona*, 20812 (Mauret. Caes.).
- M a r c a: *M. Calidia Sorica*, *ILA* 169 (prov. proc.); *M. Sallustia Puella*, 18579 (Numid.).
- P u b l i a: *P. Aelia Garamantia*, 20453 (Mauret. Sitif.); *P. Aelia Namgidde*, *ILA* 588 (prov. proc.); *P. Clodia*, *ILA* 588 (prov. proc.); *P. Ulpia Iulia*, father *P. Ulpus Saturninus*, 21294 (Mauret. Caes.).

Q u i n t a: *Q. Aberrinia Procula*, *ILT* 499 (Byzac.); *Q. Annia Fausta*, Christian, 23914 (proc.); *Q. Annia Honorata*, 20717 a (Mauret. Caes.); *Q. Callucia Purina Luci f.*, 18963 (Numid.); *Q. Iulia Getulici filia*, 6227 (Numid.); *Q. Iulia Quiria*, *ILA* 162, *ibid.* *Q. Iulius Victor* (Byzac.); *Q. Iulia Ulbana* (= *Albana?*), 3755 (Numid.); *Qinta Malia Magna*, 24428 (prov. proc.), Vulgar for *Quinta*; *Q. Victoria* [] *nicia*, *ILA* 483 (prov. proc.), gentilicium and cognomen inverted?

?S e r v i a: *S. Fla*[] *L. fi. Rogata*, 7357 (Numid.).

S e x t a: ?*Sex. Clodea*, *ILA* 96 (Byzac.); *Sext. Apuleia Fortunata*, 16729 (prov. proc.).

T i b e r i a: *Ti. Hateria Laudicae*, *ILT* 487 (Byzac.).

T i t a: *T. Borocia T. f. Quir.* (notice the *tribus*) *Valentina*, 5535 (Numid.).

The consistent use of the conventional abbreviations argues for the authenticity of the praenomina listed. It may be profitable to tabulate the frequencies of different women's praenomina found in republican and Imperial epigraphy:

<i>Antulla</i> 1	<i>Numeria</i> 1
<i>Aula</i> 3	<i>Publia</i> 7
<i>Caesulla</i> 1	<i>Quinta</i> 17
<i>Decima</i> 1	<i>Servia</i> 1 or 2
<i>Gaia</i> 14	<i>Sexta</i> 2
<i>Gnaea</i> 2	<i>Spuria</i> 1
<i>Lucia</i> 22	<i>Tiberia</i> 3
<i>Mania</i> 1	<i>Tita</i> 1
<i>Marca</i> 6	<i>Vibia</i> 1 or 3

A comparison with men's praenomina reveals interesting differences. I have counted all praenomina in the gentilicia beginning with A, B, and C in the index of *ILS*, 2800 examples in all. Praenomina recorded in the filiations and libertinations were excluded. In this material, seven praenomina, *Gaius*, *Lucius*, *Marcus*, *Publius*, *Quintus*, *Tiberius*, *Titus*, account for 90 % of the total. But the distribution was unequal within this group, too. *Gaius*, *Lucius*, and *Marcus* were by far the most frequent names. The absolute frequencies were *Marcus* 540, *Lucius* 537, *Gaius* 505, *Publius* 331, *Quintus* and *Titus* 209. In the women's list, *Marca* was not very frequent, whereas *Lucia* was the commonest, with *Gaia* and *Quinta* competing for the second place. This implies that praenomina were not given to women without some attention to their meaning. *Marca* was rare with women probably because the ancients were still aware

of its etymological connection with *Mars*, the god of war. *Quinta*, on the other hand, was of the same type as the numerous descriptive praenomina of women. On the whole, the distribution was similar to the praenomina used as cognomina: in the whole of Imperial epigraphy, *Marcus* gave 184, *Marca* only 2 examples, *Quintus* 194, *Quinta* 258 examples (*LC*, 173—174).

We may draw some conclusions from the above exposition of the material. Whereas in the republican period, most women still had praenomina in Etruria and in the other non-Latin areas of Italy, they had vanished from the nomenclature of freeborn Roman women by the late third century B.C. Genuine praenomina were largely borne by women in the rural areas, where they were probably an archaic feature. The numerically, though not relatively, greatest number of women's praenomina derive from post-republican epigraphy. Several factors explain why they were still used. The majority of the women bearing them seem to have belonged to the social strata whose grasp of Roman nomenclature was still uncertain. This may be deduced from the fact that in Rome most women with praenomina were distinguished by Greek cognomina, which suggests servile origin. Again, women's praenomina were extremely uncommon in the other parts of Italy. This is possibly due to the fact that slaves of foreign origin were here much less numerous than in Rome. Female praenomina were commoner in the provinces, especially in Africa, with its vast native population. But all cases are not explicable in this way. Praenomina were used by high-born ladies also, especially in the later period. The increasing polyonymy of the Imperial aristocracy may suffice to account for these sporadic aberrations. Finally, women's praenomina were of striking frequency in Christian epigraphy in Rome, there being eight cases. Even men's praenomina numbered only ca. 85 in the same material. But by the Christian period, Roman nomenclature had long been in a state of dissolution, which may explain confusions of this type. Christian inscriptions in which women's praenomina were found were probably from the period before the Edict of Milan, but later than the beginning of the third century, when the first catacombs were being excavated.

We may now return to the problem stated at the beginning of the present paper, namely the causes of the disappearance of women's praenomina. Very possibly, there was more than one reason for this. The psychology of language may have contributed to the disuse. In Greek and Latin, woman was often referred to merely as a representative of the female sex, man, on the other hand, as an individual. This was first pointed out by J. Wackernagel. In

discussing the curious fact that *θεός* and *deus*, in contrast to *θεία* and *dea*, did not have a vocative outside Judaeo-Christian literature, he contended that it was the same in the human sphere as well. In Greek, *ἄνερ* was seldom used in addressing male persons, whereas *γόναι* occurred frequently in these connections: »Das Weib wird mehr als Gattungswesen, der Mann mehr als Individuum behandelt; vgl. *Tullia : Marcus*.»¹ Wackernagel's arguments were subsequently criticized by W. Schwering, whose objections were not very convincing,² as well as by P. Kretschmer³ and J. Svennung,⁴ who remarked that *θεέ*, *dee*, would have been linguistically awkward formations. But E. Löfstedt has come out in defence of Wackernagel.⁵ Though admitting that a form like *dee* may have met with some opposition, he argues that language could easily have substituted a synonym had there really been need for a vocative. As it is, even *dive* was extremely rare in Latin. In Leumann — Hofmann — Szantyr, the problem of the infrequency of the vocative of *deus* is left unresolved.⁶

At any rate, no one seems to have questioned Wackernagel's reference to the opposition between *ἄνερ : γόναι* and his contention that women were more often than men treated as »Gattungswesen». Does this not help explain the peculiarity of Latin nomenclature discussed in the present paper? Wackernagel refers to the contrast between *Tullia : Marcus*, but does not emphasize the point. Schulze, however, came very near realizing the truth. In dealing with the descriptive names of the type of *Tertia*, he remarked that the Roman woman was »seit Alters r e c h t l i c h namenlos», that even the Attic orators called a woman more »nach ihren verwandschaftlichen Beziehungen als mit ihrem Namen» (Schulze here anticipates Wackernagel) and that the Romans did this consequently, as they called their wives and daughters by the gentilicium only.⁷

But this does not suffice to explain why it was only in Rome, and not in Italy at large, that women's praenomina went out of use. There must be some other cause as well. Now I think the disappearance of women's praenomina

¹ *Über einige antike Anredeformen*, Progr. Schrift, Univ. Göttingen, 1912, reprinted in *Kleine Schriften*, II, Göttingen 1953, 23–26 = 990–993.

² *Deus und divus*, *Ind. Forsch.* 34 (1914/15) 31: words denoting female persons provoked »die begleitende Vorstellung eines konkreten Einzelwesens».

³ *Glotta* 6 (1914) 296–297.

⁴ *Anredeformen*, Lund, 1958, 280–284.

⁵ *Syntactica* I², Lund, 1942, 95–96.

⁶ *Lateinische Grammatik* II, München 1965, 24.

⁷ *ZGLE* 49, n. 5.

in Rome was, in the final analysis, ascribable to the rise of the gentile system. The *gens*, the family, came to be a more powerful factor in Rome than elsewhere in Italy. In nomenclature, it was essential to bring out the *gens* to which one belonged. The gentilicium became the *nomen* par excellence. But because mere gentilicia did not suffice to identify men engaged in public life, they continued to use the old praenomina, however diminished in status they might have been. Women, who stayed at home, did not have a similar need for these names. They were thought of merely as members of a clan, as a »*Claudia*« or as a »*Cornelia*«, for example, »belonging to the *gens Claudia, Cornelia*«.

I think this hypothesis best explains why it was precisely the individual name that was lost in women's nomenclature. The ancient habit of treating women more as a class, men more as individuals, combined with the expansion of the gentile system, which reduced the importance of the individual members of a clan, produced that peculiar type of nomenclature, which designated women only by their gentilicium. The habit probably began in the great aristocratic houses, where the impact of the gentile system was particularly strong, and then spread downwards. We have naturally no means of determining the time when praenomina became obsolete in women's nomenclature. It may have happened rather soon after the adoption of the gentilicia.

An onomastic system of that type had some noticeable defects. Above all, it made identification difficult, especially in families of several daughters. To differentiate between daughters, the practice arose of giving them descriptive names, which recalled the order in which they were born. These names could be attached to girls only after the family had become full-size, and they could be altered on the birth or death of a daughter. They were thus entirely different from the praenomina, given on the *dies lustricus*, which did not suggest anything real. I have above discussed a few relevant cases in Cicero and in Livy (p. 14; 19). In these examples, we had no means of verifying whether the woman having the name *Quinta* or *Quarta* really was the fifth or the fourth daughter. But in some cases, this has been possible. According to F. Münzer, the daughter of *L. Aemilius Paullus Macedonicus* (cos. I 182 B.C.) had four sons and three daughters, and the youngest of them was called *Tertia*. The consul of 79 B.C., *Ap. Claudius Pulcher*, had three sons and three daughters, one of whom, presumably the youngest, had the name *Tertia*.¹

¹ *Römische Adelsparteien und Adelsfamilien*², Stuttgart 1963, 351—352.

Several descriptive names have survived in republican epigraphy. If there were only two daughters, the elder could be called *Maior*, the younger *Minor*. It was possibly due to mere chance that these names were graphically recorded only on the gravestones from Praeneste, 8 cases of *Maior(s)*, and an equal number of *Mino(s)*. A single *Mai(os)* from Rome, *CIL* I² 1062, may be added. Simple numerical names were *Prima* 1 case, *Secunda* 4 cases, *Tertia* 8, *Quarta* 4, and *Septuma* 1. The rarity of *Prima* was probably due to the fact that the first-born, if more than one daughter were born after her, was given the descriptive name *Maxuma*, »the firstborn«, of which there are 6 examples in *CIL* I². Numerical names were used especially in cases where there were three daughters, as the frequency of *Tertia* in inscriptions as well as the literary examples discussed suggest. *Quinta* and *Sexta* were missing. If these numerical names were genuine praenomina, *Quinta* and *Sexta*, which corresponded to the male praenomina *Quintus* and *Sextus*, should have been particularly common. But they were not, for the very simple reason that families of 5—6 daughters were unusual. *Septuma* may be a chance example from a very large family. We may here even have an inverted cognomen, *Septuma Sex. f. T. Rutili uxor Aemiliae*, (Ateste) *CIL* I² 2788,¹ were it not for the fact that *Septimus/-ma* was a rare cognomen (*LC*, 293: only one uncertain example from the republican period). If there were twins, the relevant names were used, *Gemella Tettia P.f.*, *CIL* I² 1396 (Rome); *Gem(i)na Cordia*, 131 (Praeneste). But the former at least may be an inverted cognomen as well.

There are two female descriptive names which seem to fall outside the above system, *Paulla/Polla*, also *Paula/Pola*, 13 examples in *CIL* I², found even in the (early?) Imperial epigraphy,² and *Posilla*, 3 examples. Both *Paulla* and *Posilla* were equally distributed throughout Italy. It has been claimed that *Paullus* originally denoted »the younger brother«.³ Hence, we could assume a similar meaning for *Paulla*, »the younger sister«. But *paullus* does not suggest »young«, still less »youngest«. Seldom found except as an adverb, *paullum*, it denotes »little, small»: Ter. *Andr.* 266 *paullo momento huc vel illuc impellitur*; Ter. *Adel.* 876 *paullo sumptu*; Varro, *L.L.* 5, 92 *pauper* (derives) *a paulo lare*.

¹ The stonecutter probably omitted *Aemilia* in its proper place after the filiation and set it at the end with an incorrect grammatical ending (attraction because of the preceding genitive *Rutuli*?).

² In Rome: *Polla Flaminia*, *CIL* VI 38359; *Polla Licinia L.f.*, 37710; *Paulla Rutilia Q.f. M. Iuni maioris*, 31751; cf. *Paul.*, *Gavillia C.f.*, XI 1249 (Placentia); *Pola Tussan*[XI 6048 (Pitinum Pisaurum).

³ Schulze, *ZGLE* 503, n. 3; Leumann — Hofmann — Szantyr, *Lateinische Grammatik* I (München — the 1963 impression of the edition of 1928) 159—160; Walde — Hofmann, *Lateinisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*⁴ (Heidelberg, 1965) s.v. *paucus*.

The correct word would have been *minimus*/-*ma*, as is shown by the expressions *minimus natu*, Cic. *De Or.* 2, 14, 58; *Hiempsal* — *minumus ex illis*, Sall. *Jug.* 11, 3, etc. Hence, the contrast of *Maxima* should have been *Minima*, not *Paulla*. This name more readily suggested »the little one», a pet name for a little girl.¹ This interpretation is confirmed by *Posilla*, which is a diminutive of *pusa*, »a little girl».² Thus *Paulla* and *Posilla* were already forerunners of cognomina.

When women, at the beginning of the Empire, began to have individual cognomina, the need for further identification was satisfied, and descriptive names disappeared. They were too mechanical and unimaginative to compete with the mass of cognomina, which suggested now a physical peculiarity, now a mental quality, now a wish of the parents, etc. In the earlier period, however, the distinction between descriptive names and cognomina must have been vague. Cognomina also originated as unofficial names. *Paulla* is a good example of this fluctuation.

ABBREVIATIONS

CIL = *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*

ICVR = *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*, Nova Series I—IV

ILA = *Inscriptions latines d'Afrique*, edited by Cagnat & Merlin & Chatelain (Paris 1923)

ILLRP = *Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Reipublicae*, edited by A. Degraffi (Firenze 1957—1963)

ILS = *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, edited by H. Dessau (Berlin 1954—55, a reprint)

ILT = *Inscriptions latines de la Tunisie*, edited by A. Merlin (Paris 1944)

LC = *The Latin Cognomina* by I. Kajanto (Helsinki 1965)

PIR = *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*

PLRE = *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, I by A.H.M. Jones & J.R. Martindale & J. Morris (Cambridge 1971)

RAC = *Rivista di Archeologia cristiana*

RE = *Realencyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*

Vetter = E. Vetter, *Handbuch der italischen Dialekte* (Heidelberg 1953)

ZGLE = *Zur Geschichte der lateinischen Eigennamen* by W. Schulze (Berlin 1933, a reprint).

¹ As a male cognomen, *Paullus* may originally have had a pejorative connotation, »of small stature», considering that cognomina singling out physical defects were very common among the republican nobility. See my *LC* 243.

² Schulze, *ZGLE* 462, n. 4.