

CONTENTS

	P.
FOREWARD	9
CHAPT. 1. INTRODUCTION	11
1. <i>Purpose of the work</i>	11
2. <i>The material</i>	12
3. <i>Criticism of the material</i>	13
inscriptions	13
foreign substrata	16
4. <i>Nature of the Latin cognomen</i>	19
history of the name	19
adjectival, substantival (metonymical), compound cognomina	20
the gender	23
5. <i>A general survey of Latin cognomina</i>	26
CHAPT. 2. ANALYSIS OF THE NAME CATEGORIES	31
1. <i>Cognomina derived from gentilicia</i>	31
-anus/na	32
-inus/na	36
-io	37
rarer suffixes	37
diminutive forms	37
-ullus/la	38
other diminutive formatives	39
2. <i>Cognomina obtained from praeenomina</i>	39
common praeenomina	40
rare and obsolete praeenomina	41
legendary names	43
3. <i>Geographical cognomina</i>	43
survey of the material	43
ethnics not recorded	46
generic names	47
cognomina from the ethnics of unknown places	47
origin of geographical cognomina	48
cognomina from conquered towns and peoples	52
tribus	52

4. <i>Theophoric cognomina</i>	53
dedicatory names	55
epithets	56
divine names used as cognomina	57
pagan theophoric cognomina in Christian documents	58
Christian theophoric names	59
5. <i>Calendaric cognomina</i>	60
6. <i>Cognomina relating to the human body and mind</i>	62
human beings in general	62
cognomina recording physical peculiarities	63
body and mind	65
cognomina recording mental qualities	66
slave names	69
Christian nomenclature	69
7. <i>Cognomina relating to circumstances</i>	71
8. <i>Cognomina relating to birth</i>	73
9. <i>Cognomina relating to age</i>	78
10. <i>Cognomina obtained from relationship and sex</i>	79
11. <i>Cognomina relating to origin</i>	80
12. <i>Cognomina obtained from occupations</i>	82
13. <i>Cognomina obtained from Fauna and Flora</i>	84
Fauna	84
Flora	88
14. <i>Cognomina from inanimate nature and from objects</i>	90
15. <i>Formal groups</i>	92
cognomina obtained from participles	92
cognomina obtained from nomina agentis	96
cognomina obtained from abstracts	97
other cases	98
CHAPT. 3. THE SUFFIXES	100
1. <i>A general discussion</i>	100
2. <i>Analysis of the suffixes</i>	105
the suffix -a	105
-alis	107
-anus/na and -ianus/na	107
-anus/na	107
-ianus/na	109
-arius	110
-eus	111
-icus/ca	111
-idus	112
-ilis	113
-inus/na	113
-itas	114
-ius/ia	115
-iva	118

-o/-io	118
-o/nis	118
-io/nis	120
-osus/sa	122
diminutive forms	123
-ulus/la	124
-culus/la	125
-illus/la	126
-ellus/la	127
-ullus/la	128
-it(t)a, -itto	129
Celtic suffixes	129
Greek suffixes	130
obscure cases	130
CHAPT. 4. CONCLUSION: CHRONOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL DIFFERENCES IN NOMENCLATURE	131
republican period	132
senatorial class	132
slaves/freedmen	133
Christian nomenclature	134
PART TWO NAME LISTS	137
(Titles of sub-groups are not recorded)	
CHAPT. 1. COGNOMINA DERIVED FROM GENTILICIA	139
1. <i>Common suffixes</i>	139
2. <i>Rarer suffixes</i>	165
3. <i>Diminutive forms</i>	166
CHAPT. 2. COGNOMINA OBTAINED FROM PRAENOMINA	172
1. <i>Common praenomina</i>	172
2. <i>Rare and obsolete praenomina</i>	175
CHAPT. 3. GEOGRAPHICAL COGNOMINA	180
A. ITALIA	180
I. In general	180
II. Rome and Latium	180
1. <i>Ethnics</i>	180
2. <i>Independent derivations</i>	184
3. <i>Cognomina through metonymy</i>	185
III. Picenum, Sabinum, Samnium	185
1. <i>Ethnics</i>	185
2. <i>Independent derivations</i>	187
3. <i>Cognomina through metonymy</i>	188
IV. Etruria, Umbria	188
1. <i>Ethnics</i>	188

2. <i>Independent derivations</i>	190
3. <i>Cognomina through metonymy</i>	190
V. <i>Campania</i>	190
1. <i>Ethnics</i>	190
2. <i>Independent derivations</i>	192
3. <i>Cognomina through metonymy</i>	192
VI. <i>Apulia, Calabria, Lucania, Bruttium, Sicilia, Sardinia</i>	192
1. <i>Ethnics</i>	192
2. <i>Independent derivations</i>	194
3. <i>Metonymy</i>	194
VII. <i>Gallia Cis., Venetia, Liguria, Corsica</i>	195
1. <i>Ethnics</i>	195
2. <i>Independent derivations</i>	197
3. <i>Cognomina through metonymy</i>	197
B. THE PROVINCES	198
I. <i>In general</i>	198
II. <i>Hispania</i>	198
1. <i>Ethnics</i>	198
2. <i>Independent derivations</i>	200
3. <i>Cognomina through metonymy</i>	200
III. <i>Galliae, Germania, Britannia</i>	200
1. <i>Ethnics</i>	200
2. <i>Independent derivations</i>	203
3. <i>Cognomina through metonymy</i>	203
IV. <i>Rhaetia, Noricum, Pannonia, Dalmatia, Dacia, Moesia, the East</i>	203
1. <i>Ethnics</i>	203
2. <i>Independent derivations</i>	205
3. <i>Cognomina through metonymy</i>	205
V. <i>Africa</i>	205
1. <i>Ethnics</i>	205
2. <i>Independent derivations</i>	208
3. <i>Cognomina through metonymy</i>	208
C. SPECIAL CASES	208
1. <i>Generic names</i>	208
2. <i>Ethnics of unknown localities</i>	209
CHAPT. 4. THEOPHORIC COGNOMINA	211
1. <i>Dedicatory</i>	211
2. <i>Epithets</i>	215
3. <i>Divine names used as cognomina</i>	215
4. <i>Christian theophoric names</i>	216

CHAPT. 5. CALENDARIC COGNOMINA	218
CHAPT. 6. COGNOMINA RELATING TO HUMAN BODY AND MIND ..	222
I. Human beings in general	222
II. Physical peculiarities	222
1. <i>Head</i>	222
2. <i>The extremities</i>	225
3. <i>Genitals</i>	226
4. <i>Other parts of the body</i>	226
5. <i>Body as a whole</i>	226
III. Physical peculiarities, pejorative names..	235
1. <i>Head</i>	235
2. <i>Feet</i>	241
3. <i>Other parts of the body</i>	242
4. <i>Defects in the body as a whole</i>	243
IV. Body and mind,	247
V. Body and mind, pejorative names.....	249
VI. Mental qualities,	249
1. <i>Intellect</i>	249
2. <i>Moral and social qualities</i>	251
3. <i>Strength of character</i>	256
4. <i>Genileness of character</i>	260
VII. Mental qualities, pejorative names.....	264
1. <i>Intellect</i>	264
2. <i>Moral and social defects</i>	265
3. <i>Vehemence of temper</i>	267
4. <i>Weakness of character, sensuality</i>	269
CHAPT. 7. COGNOMINA RELATING TO CIRCUMSTANCES	272
I. Laudatory	272
1. <i>Wish-names</i>	272
2. <i>From other people's point of view</i>	281
II. Pejorative cognomina	286
1. <i>Cognomina evoking contempt</i>	286
2. <i>Cognomina evoking pity</i>	287
III. Diverse	287
CHAPT. 8. COGNOMINA RELATING TO BIRTH	290
1. <i>Birth in general</i>	290
2. <i>Order of children</i>	290
3. <i>Circumstances of birth</i>	294
4. <i>The birth of a child from the parents' point of view</i>	296
CHAPT. 9. COGNOMINA RELATING TO AGE	299

CHAPT. 10. COGNOMINA OBTAINED FROM RELATIONSHIP AND SEX	303
1. <i>Relatives</i>	303
2. <i>Other relationships</i>	305
3. <i>Relating to sex</i>	307
CHAPT. 11. COGNOMINA RELATING TO ORIGIN	308
1. <i>Geographical origin</i>	308
2. <i>Natives and neighbours</i>	312
3. <i>National and political origin</i>	312
4. <i>Social origin</i>	313
CHAPT. 12. COGNOMINA OBTAINED FROM OCCUPATIONS	316
CHAPT. 13. COGNOMINA OBTAINED FROM FAUNA AND FLORA ..	325
1. <i>Fauna</i>	325
2. <i>Flora</i>	334
CHAPT. 14. COGNOMINA OBTAINED FROM INANIMATE NATURE AND FROM OBJECTS	338
1. <i>Inanimate nature</i>	338
2. <i>Material words</i>	340
3. <i>Objects</i>	341
CHAPT. 15. FORMAL GROUPS	349
1. <i>Participles</i>	349
2. <i>Nomina agentis</i>	360
3. <i>New cognomina in -ius not recorded elsewhere</i>	363
4. <i>Abstracts</i>	364
5. <i>Collective words</i>	365
6. <i>Diverse</i>	366
BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ABBREVIATIONS	367
INDEX OF SCHOLARS	373
SUBJECT INDEX	374
INDEX OF PERSONAL NAMES DISCUSSED	379
ADDITAMENTA	418

FOREWARD

Roman nomenclature is a very complex phenomenon, for the political, social, and cultural history of the Roman Empire, as well as the development of the Latin language, are faithfully mirrored in the form and content of the Roman name. To point out a single aspect, the composition of the name material reflects the influence of the various nations with which Rome came into contact in the course of her history. The most ancient elements of Roman nomenclature, praenomina and gentilicia, include a multitude of Italic and Etruscan names, the testimony of times when the Italic dialects were not yet submerged and when the Etruscan hegemony over Central Italy was as yet unchallenged. The cognomina came into general use at a time when Roman might had extended over the Mediterranean and far into the areas of Northern and North-Eastern barbarians, and the cognomina met in Latin inscriptions and literary documents were consequently of a mixed origin. Greek names were the largest single, non-Latin contingent, attesting the influence primarily of Greek-speaking slaves, but names drawn from all the different languages of the Roman Empire were no less frequent. Celtic names were particularly important, especially in the Celtic areas, but Illyrian, Thracian, Iberian, Punic, Semitic, and other names were also found in plenty.

Now, while these foreign elements have in general been satisfactorily dealt with (Greek names by BECHTEL, Celtic by HOLDER, Illyrian by KRAHE, etc.), the cognomina of Latin origin, the most important contingent of Roman cognomina, have not so far been systematically discussed. There are a few monographs on some single groups of Latin cognomina, participial (BRUCE, OTTO, SCHWAB, see p. 92), calendaric (GOTTANKA, p. 61), occupational (GUMMERUS, p. 83) cognomina, slave names (BAUMGART), soldiers' names (DEAN, *A Study of the Cognomina of Soldiers in the Roman Legions*), but the only general discussion

was published in the past century incomplete, inaccurate, and outdated (HEFFTER, *Über die römischen Personen- und Geschlechts-Eigennamen*, *Zeits. f. das Gymnasialwesen* 1863).

The present study is an attempt to fill this gap in Latin onomastic studies. My models have been Bechtel's studies of Greek personal names, but in contrast to his system, I have also tried to give a brief history of every name, an idea of its social, geographical, and chronological distribution. This has necessitated the publishing of the whole material, thus naturally greatly increasing the labour.

* * *

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