

ESF Exploratory Workshop on
**PERSONAL NAMES IN THE WESTERN
ROMAN EMPIRE**

Cambridge (UK), 16-18 September 2011

Convened by:
Torsten Meißner, José Luis García Ramón and Paolo Poccetti

SCIENTIFIC REPORT

1. Executive summary

The ESF exploratory workshop on Personal Names in the Western Roman Empire was held, as envisaged, at Pembroke College, Cambridge over three working days. There were 18 participants from six countries (including the ESF representative). Regrettably, three participants had to withdraw. However, this was fortunately mitigated by the fact that one of these could be exchanged for another member of the same research group, and another participant originally envisaged sent a full version of her paper. The author and the convenor agreed on another participant of the workshop, familiar both with the author and the paper, to read it in her place. The general atmosphere was generous and conducive to academic and social interaction at all levels. The advantages of organising the meeting in one place, with meeting room, accommodation and (most) meals to be taken in one place, i.e. Pembroke College, were manifest. It allowed for relatively uncomplicated and straightforward bookings and general administration, ensured good co-ordination and meant a very efficient meeting: distances to be travelled by participants were minimal. This resulted in a good level of comfort and furthermore ensured that the meeting itself and all sessions could begin in time: it was possible to adhere to the envisaged timetable almost exactly.

The main convenor had also asked a representative of Cambridge University Press to attend the informal gathering before the official start of the meeting. Unfortunately this proved not possible but the Press kindly agreed to offer a 20% discount to all participants.

The meeting itself began with a very clear and detailed presentation of the ESF and its instruments by the ESF representative Prof. Bernhard Palme. It was quite clear that much of this was new to many participants. Much of what was presented resurfaced in the final discussion although participants were united in regretting the fact that key research support instruments that the ESF offers have now been suspended, and the hope was expressed that this might be of a temporary nature.

The workshop was conceived as a true exploratory workshop, and its objectives were defined in broad terms on purpose in order to evaluate where synergies between individual fields and research areas may be found. To this end, the key objectives were:

- To arrive at a better understanding of origin, meaning and function of individual names and naming patterns and name structures in the individual languages: formation of names, etymology, lexical choices and restrictions, continuation of inherited structures (e.g. nominal composition), in cases of doubt, attribution to a particular language;
- Conversely, through the names, to arrive at a better understanding of the base languages themselves (given that often the names are the only source for the language concerned).
- The evaluation of the role of linguistic interference in the adaptation and adoption of names (e.g. translations of names into Latin, creation of like sounding names, "assonance names" etc.).
- The establishment of similarities and differences between the individual regions as far as their onomastics in the Roman empire is concerned.
- To arrive at a better understanding of the processes of onomastic integration into the Roman empire.

This was reflected in the agenda of the workshop. A key aspect of the workshop was to be the presentation of various approaches to onomastics in the Classical world. The interdisciplinary nature of the workshop was deliberately set up so as to help engender a

better dialogue between experts in the various Classical disciplines. In addition to the presentation of their specialist research, much emphasis was put on discussion and the presentation of current and potential future international and interdisciplinary research projects.

The overall conclusion was that the meeting had been very useful and that much further research, including the preparation of reliable and up-to-date research tools must be one of the key areas to concentrate on in the foreseeable future.

2. Scientific content of the event

The substantive part of the meeting began with Professor Heikki Solin's paper "Do we need a new Latin Onomasticon?" The paper was deliberately put first as it asked the most far-reaching question, and one that is fundamental to all onomastic research in Latin and its neighbouring languages. The papers presented an overview of the available research instruments and their partly considerable shortcomings, both from a conceptual point of view and with regard to the selection and analysis of the data. The feasibility and desirability of producing alternatives was assessed and it was concluded that an editio minor should be the first goal.

Much discussion, especially from a point of view of a possible conception followed. The general agreed tenor was that, while it would be desirable to have an editio minor in a hardcopy format, the editio maior (and even a possible editio media) would need to be solely electronically based in order to limit production costs as well as to facilitate regular updating. As to the methodology, it was also stressed that the etymology of a name and its use and attestation may differ, but that an etymological interpretation is not invalidated if applied to a name attested in an area where the language in question was not used originally (e.g. a Greek name attested in Rome).

The paper by Raepsaet-Charlier (read by Dan Dana) provided a robust defence of method of identifying the modes of onomastic integration of indigenous names into a new cultural and linguistic context by means of name translations and creation of assonance. These principles, widely accepted and adopted, had recently been challenged. The author provides both methodological and practical considerations in defence of the hitherto very successful way of proceeding. As the author was not present, there was no discussion after this paper.

In a far-reaching paper, Dondin-Payre compares onomastic integration throughout the Empire. Indigenous populations faced a change of identity, literally speaking. Indeed the evolution from the legal status of the peregrine condition towards Roman citizenship, intended and organized by the Roman power, led to an obligatory transformation of the individual nomenclature, since it implied the conversion from a mainly uninominal system to a formula with three or two elements, depending on the bearer's sex. The local onomastic substrate, the chronology, the legal evolution of the civic status of cities, variants may generate variants, often overrated by specialists of local onomastics. Dondin-Payre argues convincingly that the Roman empire in its whole must be taken into account, and corpora must be compared in order to assess the differences from the permanencies of onomastical transformations, and the weight of requirements from the central power, evaluate the room for manoeuvre granted to populations, the means of expression allowed by this free will. By drawing on examples from the entirety of the Western provinces she showed the reasons for variation.

It was clear from the discussion that the principles governing names, name choices and name structures were often not sufficiently taken into account by scholars solely concentrating on an etymological approach to names and that, on the other hand, the historical approach by itself does not allow to reach linguistic conclusions.

In the following session, García Ramon, Poccetti, Kölligan and Logozzo presented a research project conceived in collaboration dealing with Sabellian Personal Names. Poccetti illustrated the scientific base of this project, consisting in the fact that neither any exhaustive collection nor any systematic analysis of Sabellian names exist. Aims of this project are 1) to provide a largest knowledge of a very important source for Latin onomastics; 2) to contribute to a deeper knowledge of the Sabellian languages, which are fragmentarily attested; 3) to focus paths of onomastic integration as aspects of language contacts and social mobility also in methodological perspective. The concrete outcome will be : a) a Sabellian 'Onomasticon'; b) a supplement to Untermann's *Wörterbuch des Oskisch-Umbrischen*; c) a complex data-base organised with various stages of information (e.g. chronological and geographical distribution integrated with linguistic aspects). This foreword was followed by the presentation of a specimen of this data-base by Felicia Logozzo, by exemplifying procedures of data entry as well as their concrete processing.

As an exemplification of how the entries corresponding to the different names and groups of names should look like in the final version of the work, six selected names were presented in the form of regular lemmata of the Wörterbuch: Kölligan presented and discussed the names Oscan *viinikiís* and Osco-Umbrian *Vinuχs*; García Ramón presented and discussed the Oscan names *staiís*, *σταλλιες*, *statis* and *vesulliaís*. García Ramón referred different aspects of the material presentation, which deserve consideration. In the discussion it was agreed that for fragmentarily attested languages in particular personal names can play a pivotal rôle in the development of the understanding of the language concerned. It was agreed, given that the lack of funding seriously puts the project at risk, to put this forward as a possible research and discussion topic in a wider framework (see below).

The following morning began with three papers dealing with the Celtic-Latin interface. In the initial paper of this session, Stifter concentrated on the personal names found in the remote Slovenian village of Ig and showed that, while a number of the names seem to be Celtic, there are problems in particular with the phonology as attested on the inscriptions. These render a conclusion that a form of Celtic was spoken there at the time rather uncertain. The ensuing discussion concentrated on the methods by which phonological divergence should be evaluated. In a similar vein, Sims-Williams presented an overview of scholarship into Celtic names and put forward some of the difficulties when it comes to attribute linguistic affiliation. Examples from a considerable time span and various parts of the empire were furnished, with particular emphasis on primary documentation. Finally, Junges read the paper "Gallo-Roman Aristocracy and the Gaulish language, where it was argued that on the basis of the choice of names, it seems likely that even in the 4th century AD some considerable knowledge of Gaulish still existed. In the discussion, individual names were scrutinised. A propos the very prominent name Sollius it was remarked that a connection with the Old Irish dual *súil* was preferable to another suggestion according to which the name should be understood as **su-wil-i-* (**su-* 'well', **wel-* 'see').

In the following section dealing with the interface between Latin and Germanic names, 2 papers were presented.

Meißner concentrated on the naming traditions, rather than individual names, in the Celtic and Germanic speaking areas. In both traditions the patronym is routinely employed as a secondary identifier but Meißner was able to show that the traditions are still radically different. In Celtic, there does not seem to be continuity regarding individual name elements from one generation to the next while it is routinely the case in Germanic. They are thus best perceived as substantially and originally different. However, within a Celtic-language context such continuity is found to a limited extent in the British isles in the post-Roman period. In the discussion, the possibility was discussed that this might be a secondary phenomenon due to the recent arrival of Germanic speakers in Britain. This point clearly merits further investigation.

Kölligan presented some new interpretations of personal names from the area of the Germani cisrhenani and the Ubii, arguing in favour of the methodological principle that in the interpretation of personal names one should first attempt to give explanations in terms of languages known to have been in use in the area of attestation before assigning them to otherwise unknown substrate languages. In this sense, and following the work of, among others, Birkhan and Neumann, he argued for a Germanic interpretation of names such as *Fucissius*, *Sunicius*, *Drauso(nis)*, *Friasnius*, *Hurmio* and *Veransatus**, and a Celtic or Germanic interpretation of *Mainonius*.

In the ensuing discussion it was pointed out that the proposed interpretation of *Fucissius* as related to Germanic **fuh-iz-/fuhsa-* 'fox' finds a parallel in Celtic names based on **loferno-* 'fox' (: MWelsh *llewynn* 'foxes', etc.) such as *Louernac(us)* (CIIC 379). It was also remarked that gentilicia should not be termed "pseudo-gentilicia" even if they are based on non-Latin words, since in the Roman naming system they function as such. It was pointed out that names are to be classified according to their attestation, such that a Greek name attested in Rome should also be termed a "Roman" name. Finally, it was stressed that the etymology of a name and its use and attestation may differ, but that an etymological interpretation is not invalidated if applied to a name attested in an area where the language in question was not used originally (e.g. a Greek name attested in Rome).

Paolo Poccetti presented a critical survey of the personal names derived from both ethnic and place names of pre-Roman Italy. This investigation, limited to the earliest epigraphic documentation (7th-5th century B.C.) of the main languages of both Peninsula and Sicily (namely Etruscan, Latin, Greek, Sabellian languages), proved that 1) an amazingly striking mobility of individuals among linguistically different communities took place since archaic age; 2) names reflect processes of their social and professional integration in the new societies, as shown by their various adaptations to each naming system; 3) names referring to ethnic and political organizations, as depicted by (much later) literary sources, existed even before appearing the writing systems; 4) a significant part of the examined names may contribute to solve philologically an historically questioned aspects of classical authors.

The followed discussion substantially focused the last point, more exactly the most ancient mentions of the names of the Greeks, Latins and Celts evidenced by epigraphic materials in relationship with their earliest literary mentions.

In his paper, **García Ramón** presented and discussed the complete dossier of the Sabellian and Roman names having /Op-/ and /Ops-/ as their basic element, which includes at least seven items with different variants attested in epigraphic and literary sources: (i) /Opio-/ (O. ΟΠΙΕΘ *et al.* : Lat. *Oppius*), (ii) /Opsio-/ (O. úpsim *et al.* (: Lat. *Opsius*), (iii) /Opi(:)lo-/ (O. upils *et al.* : Lat. *Opillus*), (iv) /opfallo-/ (O. úpfals : Lat. *Ofalius*, *Ofel(l)ius*, *Offelius*), (v) /Op(s)tor-/:

O. *ofturies* (→ Lat. *Optorius*, and *Opstorius* (and *Ostorius*), (vi) Lat. *Opiter*, (vii) Lat. *Opitor** (: Ὀπίτωρ in Greek historians).

On the assumption that Italic /op-/ may conceal the reflexes of four different lexems, namely the corresponding to (a) Lat. *ob(s)*, O. úp, (b) Lat. *opus* 'work', *ops* 'financial resources' (c) IE **h₃ek*- 'to see, get in sight', (d) Lat. *optāre* 'choose', the paper discussed the whole dossier from the linguistic and philological point of view and proposed new interpretations for the different names. Some of them defy explanation in terms of one single basic lexeme, as at least two of them may underlay the attested forms: this is the case of those under (ii) and (iv); those under (iii) may be related to Lat. *ops*, but a Greek (cf. Ὀψίος, short-form of Ὀψίγονος 'late born') origin cannot be excluded. Oscan *Ofturies* (Lat. *Op(s)torius*) goes back to a noun agent of **h₃ek*-(s)-, i.e. 'surveyer'; Lat. *Opiter* could only be explained with the help of comparison, namely as 'the one born later' (**opi-tero-*); *Opitor* is a short-form of de compound **opi-tulus* 'giving assistance'.

In **Rocca's** paper the first data on Celtic onomastics in the province of Alessandria (Aquae Statiellae, Dertona, Forum Fulvi, Libarna and Vardacate) attested in texts dating from the I to the III century AD was presented. Eighteen names were discussed in particular, some clearly Celtic, others that could be interpreted as such on the basis of new etymological proposals: Commelio, Comavi, Peicius and Caukon.

There also are a few uncertain forms. The cognomen Sura, which seems Latin, could be a 'name of double entry'. Lusia can be compared with some Celtic ethnonyms and place names; moreover it is attested in the same inscription as the cognomen Posilla that could be ascribed to Celtic on the basis of its root, which could be associated with other anthroponyms, and of the use of the suffix -illa. Finally, Aletes, cited in many studies, was expunged from the dossier of the Celtic names; a check of the entry in the CIL showed that it depends on a manuscript in which is reported not very clearly.

During the discussion the etymology proposed for Commelio was accepted, whereas perplexity was voiced on Sura, Lusia and Posilla.

Biville focused on one morphological category in onomastics showing interaction between Latin and Greek, namely the feminine personal names of Greek origin in -o (like *Dido*, *Philematio*) attested in Latin. It is clear that these provide a structural anomaly in Latin; it was illuminating to see the differences between literary corpus (and its analysis by the Latin grammarians), and the epigraphic corpus, particularly well represented in the inscriptions of Rome and it seems as though the debate as to whether these were still recognized as Greek (and thus having Greek inflection) or as Latin (with Latin endings) was widespread in antiquity. In the discussion, the size of the corpus was questioned, and individual names discussed.

Dana discussed the internal differentiation of Thracian personal names. The paper stressed the strong internal diversity of the Thracian onomastics (less observed previously), on the basis of the new epigraphic evidence, used during the constitution of a new repertory of Thracian names in the Greek and Latin sources (ca. 1,500 different names). Previous studies, with maximalistic approaches (and also nationalistic aims), presented the Thracian space as homogenous over the ages and culturally uniform, with an unvarying onomastics. However, it is urgent to study these names, like all others, with a special attention to chronological and regional features, despite the disproportion of our present evidence. A contextual approach highlights at least 4 onomastic territories: proper Thracian, Dacian, Western Thracian and Bithynian names. This internal differentiation is also observed, and

more deeply confirmed, in the external documentation (epitaphs, dedications, military diplomas), concerning mainly the soldiers and their families. In the discussion, it was pointed out that linguistic interpretations in terms of “Illyrian” should be left aside and that the assumption that the many names discussed in the paper are Indo-European can only be accepted if the etymologies of the names are safely established on the basis of specific phonetic laws and word formation devices of Thracian. It is strongly suggested to make this point clear before using the label “Indo-European”.

On the final day, **Katherine McDonald**'s paper examined the possible Greek influence on the onomastic system of the Oscan inscriptions of Lucania, Bruttium and Messina, which are written using a Greek-based alphabet. While, in the past, scholars have suggested that Oscan-speakers in these areas were extremely Hellenized, it is not always made clear which areas of their language and culture were most or least influenced by their Greek-speaking neighbours. McDonald showed that the onomastic evidence, which displays only minimal influence from Greek, suggests that the speakers of the South Oscan area maintained strong cultural links to Oscan-speaking Italy as a whole.

In the discussion, individual names were questioned. Problems with the initial vowel of the Oscan name nompsis/numpsis/nopsis, found in Greek as numphios or numpsios, and in Latin as Numerius were mentioned and it was suggested that there may be a blending of elements which has obscured the development of the name in the different languages. It was pointed out/ reminded that the name Plator was identified as Messapic in origin.

In the last paper of the workshop, Logozzo provided a detailed analysis of the personal names of Greek origin now surviving in the southern regions of Italy. The data have been organized following, on the one hand, their geographical distribution, particularly by comparing names inside and outside the properly said ‘Greek speaking areas’ and focusing linguistic features and etymological aspects. Aims of this presentation were: 1) to provide a contribution to the debated question about the chronological stages of South-Italian Greek (particularly with respect to ancient or medieval origin; 2) to signal phenomena of language contacts between Greek-Latin or Greek-(local) Romance dialects as reflected by personal names.

The followed discussion focused some linguistic aspects, especially the structures of compounded names in comparison with those of modern Greece.

3. Assessment of the results, contribution to the future direction of the field, outcome

To begin with, the workshop confirmed the necessity to have specialists in the various domains of language, epigraphy, ancient history and archaeology in order to permanently confront methodologies and results. The importance of both a very focussed small-scale approach (dealing only with the interpretation of one name or group of names) and of the broad approach with a view to creating *Namenlandschaften* (“onomastic landscapes”) at the same time became very clear. Secondly, the workshop revealed several lines of convergence and possible future collaboration, and this was brought out during the final discussion as well.

The following lines were identified as important directions for the future:

- a) The preparation of a new, all-encompassing Latin onomastic dictionary. It was agreed that this must be done internet-based. This was also identified as by far the most ambitious and distant goal for which substantial amounts of funding would have to be sought.
- b) A harmonisation of the considerable number of existent onomastic databases for various regions, built, however, using widely diverging criteria. It was agreed that they should remain independent but better linked, and ideally with the same structure.
- c) Existing projects, above all the Sabellic project delineated above under 2, should be presented to a wider circle, and funding be sought.

To this end, the immediate plan of action should look as follows:

- publication of the proceedings of the workshop in hardcopy format with an academic publishing house;
- application for small-scale funding to create an umbrella website linking existing unconsolidated databases;
- a follow-up substantially larger research conference where topics would include (but would not be limited to) digitalisation of onomastic data collection; further examination of Latin vs indigenous languages especially in the areas not covered by this conference (Eastern Empire; Iberian Peninsula); work-in-progress presentations of existing projects.

4. Final programme

Friday 16 September 2011

- Morning/noon *Arrival of Participants*
- From 15.00 *Tea*
- 15.30-15.45 **Official Opening - Welcome by Convenor**
Torsten Meißner (Pembroke College, Cambridge, United Kingdom)
- 15.45-16.15 **Presentation of the European Science Foundation (ESF)**
Professor Bernhard Palme (Standing Committee for the Humanities - SCH)
- Session 1**
- 16.15-16.45 **Do we need a new Latin Onomasticon?**
Heikki Solin (Helsingin Yliopisto, Finland)
- 16.45-17.15 **Decknamen, homophonie, assonance: un bilan**
Marie-Thérèse Raepsaet-Charlier (Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium)
read by **Dan Dana**
- 17.15-17.45 **Comparaison entre les processus d'adaptation onomastique dans les provinces occidentales et en Afrique**
Monique Dondin-Payre (CNRS, Paris, France)
- 17.45-18.30 **Project presentation and discussion**
Sabellische Personennamen zur Ergänzung des Wörterbuches von J.Untermann
- 20.00 *Communal Dinner in local restaurant*

Saturday 17 September 2011

- Session 2**
- 09.30-10.00 **Ig**
David Stifter (National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Ireland)
- 10.00-10.30 **Gallo-Roman Aristocracy and the Gaulish Language**
Sarah Junges/Jürgen Zeidler (Universität Trier, Germany)
- 10.30-11.00 **Celtic Personal Names**
Patrick Sims-Williams (University of Aberystwyth, United Kingdom)
- 11.00-11.30 *Coffee*
- Session 3**
- 11.30-12.00 **Germanic names and naming traditions in indigenous and Latin sources**
Torsten Meißner (Pembroke College, Cambridge, United Kingdom)
- 12.00-12.30 **Remarks on Germanic personal names in Latin inscriptions**
Daniel Kölligan (Universität zu Köln, Germany)
- 12.30-14.00 *Lunch*
- Session 4**
- 14.00-14.30 **Personal names derived from ethnic names in archaic Italy**
Paolo Poccetti (Università di Roma 2 Tor Vergata, Italy)
- 14.30-15.00 **Antroponymica Italica: Onomastics, lexicon, and languages in contact in Ancient Italy**
José Luis García Ramón (Universität zu Köln, Germany)

- 15.00-15.30 **L'onomastica nelle iscrizioni latine del Piemonte orientale**
Giovanna Rocca (Università IULM, Milan, Italy)
- 15.30-16.00 *Tea*
- Session 5**
- 16.00-16.30 **Un défi pour l'anthroponymie latine:
les noms grecs féminins en -o:**
Frédérique Biville (Université de Lyon 2, France)
- 16.30-17.00 **La différenciation interne de l'onomastique thrace**
Dan Dana (CNRS, Paris, France)
- 19.00 *Drinks Reception, Old Library, Pembroke College*
- 19.30 *Conference Dinner, Old Library, Pembroke College*

Sunday 18 September 2011

- Session 6**
- 09.30-10.00 **Do personal names in South Oscan show influence from Greek?**
Katherine McDonald (Pembroke College, Cambridge, United Kingdom)
- 10.00-10.30 **Greek personal names in Southern Italy: aspects of continuity and differentiation**
Felicia Logozzo (Università di Roma 2 Tor Vergata, Rome, Italy)
- 10.30-10.45 *Coffee*
- 10.45-12.15 **General round table discussion:
The Study of Personal Names: possibilities for follow-up research
and joined-up activities**
- 12.15 *End of meeting*

5. Final list of participants

Frédérique BIVILLE, Université Lumière Lyon 2

James CLACKSON, Jesus College, Cambridge

Dan DANA, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Rambouillet

Monique DONDIN-PAYRE, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Rambouillet

José Luis GARCÍA RAMÓN, Universität zu Köln

Geoffrey Horrocks, St John's College, Cambridge

Sarah JUNGES, Universität Trier

Daniel KÖLLIGAN, Universität zu Köln

Felicia LOGOZZO, Università di Roma 2 "Tor Vergata"

Katherine McDONALD, Pembroke College, Cambridge

Torsten MEISSNER, Pembroke College, Cambridge

Paolo POCETTI, Università di Roma 2 "Tor Vergata"

***Marie-Thérèse RAEPSAET-CHARLIER**, Université Libre de Bruxelles

Giovanna ROCCA, IULM Milano

Heikki SOLIN, Helsingin Yliopisto

David STIFTER, NUI Maynooth

Patrick SIMS-WILLIAMS, University of Aberystwyth

Ana VEGAS SANSALVADOR, Universität zu Köln

***Jürgen ZEIDLER**, Universität Trier

Participants with an asterisk sent papers but did not attend the meeting. They are not included in the statistics under 6.

6. Statistical information on participants (age bracket, countries of origin, M/F repartition, etc.) The statistics to be provided under section 6 can also include repartition by scientific specialty if relevant.

Age brackets:

Up to 30 years: 4 participants

31-45 years: 4 participants

46-60 years: 3 participants

over 60 years: 6 participants

Countries of origin:

UK: 5

Ireland: 1

Finland: 1

France: 3

Germany: 4

Italy: 3