

Matronymic *cognomina* in the epigraphy of Hispania

Cognomina matronímicos en la epigrafía de Hispania

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Abstract: This article examines children's *cognomina* in the inscriptions of Roman Hispania that are derived from the name of the mother. Seven naming patterns are identified and documented with epigraphic examples. These include names that are formed from the mother's *cognomen*, with or without a suffix, names formed from the mother's *nomen gentilicium*, and *cognomina* that are cognate with the mother's name.

Keywords: Latin nomenclature, matronyms, onomastics, personal names

Resumen: En este artículo se examinan *cognomina* de niños en las inscripciones de la Hispania romana que derivan del nombre de su madre. Identificamos siete modelos de nomenclatura personal, documentados por ejemplos epigráficos. Se incluyen nombres formados del *cognomen* de la madre, con o sin sufijo, nombres formados del *nomen gentilicium* de la madre, y *cognomina* que son cognados del nombre maternal.

Palabras clave: matronimos, nombres personales, nomenclatura latina, onomástica

Summary: Introduction; 1. Daughter's *cognomen* is identical to the mother's *cognomen*; 2. Son's *cognomen* is a masculine form of the mother's *cognomen*; 3. Child's *cognomen* is a suffixed form of the mother's *cognomen*; 4. Child's *cognomen* is a de-suffixed form of the mother's *cognomen*; 5. Child's *cognomen* is a suffixed form of the mother's *nomen gentilicium*; 6. Child's *cognomen* and mother's *nomen gentilicium* are cognate forms; 7. Child's *cognomen* and mother's *cognomen* are cognate forms; Conclusions.

Sumario: Introducción; 1. El *cognomen* de la hija es idéntico al *cognomen* de la madre; 2. El *cognomen* del hijo es idéntico al *cognomen* de la madre; 3. El *cognomen* del niño es una forma sufija del *cognomen* de la madre; 4. El *cognomen* del niño es una forma sin sufijo del *cognomen* de la madre; 5. El *cognomen* del niño es una forma sufija del *nomen gentilicium* de la madre; 6. El *cognomen* del niño y el *nomen gentilicium* de la madre son formas cognadas; 7. El *cognomen* del niño y el *cognomen* de la madre son formas cognadas; Conclusiones.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important aspects of Roman epigraphy is its usefulness for the study of personal names.¹ In Hispania, much attention in the past few years has been devoted to non-Latin names;² but important work remains to be done with Latin nomenclature. Recent articles have explored *cognomina* that express order of birth, month names and personal age, as well as pejorative or insulting names.³ The present article tackles a hitherto unexplored topic, children's *cognomina* that are derived from their mother's name.

Roman children normally obtained their *nomen gentilicium*, and sometimes also their *cognomen*, from their father. For instance, as Salway points out, the orator M. Tullius Cicero bore the exact same names as his grandfather, his father and his son.⁴ The patronymic tradition was firmly entrenched, at least during the Republic; but under the Empire we find more flexible naming options. Even among the upper classes, children sometimes acquired their *nomen* or *cognomen* from the mother's family,⁵ or from the father's mother.⁶ Already there have been studies of children in Hispania bearing, for various reasons, their mother's *nomen gentilicium*.⁷ More recently, in a study of Roman feminine *cognomina*, T. Nuorluoto has examined children's *cognomina* derived from the mother's *cognomen* or from her *nomen gentilicium*.⁸

¹ See recently Bruun and Edmondson, 2014: 199-806.

² E.g. Ramírez Sádaba, 2000; Vallejo Ruiz, 2005; Navarro Caballero, Gorrochategui and Vallejo Ruiz, 2011.

³ Crespo Ortiz de Zárate, 2006; 2012; 2013-14; 2016. An older work (Abascal Palazón, 1984) examined *cognomina* expressing kinship.

⁴ "Neither his grandmother Gratidia, mother Helvia, nor wife Terentia had any detectable onomastic impact on their offspring." (Salway, 1994: 127).

⁵ E.g. Poppaea, wife of Nero, used the *nomen gentilicium* of her mother's consular family, rather than that of her less distinguished father, T. Ollius. M. Aufidius Fronto, *cos.* 199 (*PIR*² A 1385) bore the *nomen* of his father but the *cognomen* of his maternal grandfather, the famous writer M. Cornelius Fronto. See Dondin-Payre, 1994: 132, 158.

⁶ E.g. C. Ummidius Quadratus, *cos. suff.* 118 (*PIR*² V 907) derived his names from his paternal grandmother, Ummidia Quadratilla, and her father C. Ummidius Durmius Quadratus. Acilia Gavinia Fristana (*PIR*² A 90) took her *cognomen* from her paternal grandmother, Acilia Fristana, rather than from her father, Claudius Acilius Cleobulus. See Dondin-Payre, 1994: 134-135.

⁷ Curchin, 1999: 122-128; Armani, 2003. On this practice in the Roman world generally, see Nuorluoto, 2017.

⁸ Nuorluoto, 2021: 188-195, 205-206.

Unfortunately he only considers daughters, not sons, named after their mothers. The names he lists come mostly from Rome and Italy, with a few examples from Gallia and Africa (none from Hispania).

The matronymic *cognomina* presented here are arranged according to seven patterns, including children's names formed from the mother's *cognomen*, with or without a suffix, as well as *cognomina* formed from the mother's *nomen gentilicium*, and *cognomina* that are cognate with the mother's name. While a *cognomen* is technically a name added to the *nomen* of a citizen, I have included similar names used without *nomen gentilicium* by non-citizens (peregrines and slaves). Such names are regularly included as *cognomina* in the indexes of epigraphic corpora. The evidence suffices to show, with a small margin of error,⁹ that children were sometimes given a *cognomen* derived from that of their mother rather than that of their father. For economy of space, only one epigraphic reference is provided for each inscription.¹⁰

The names are listed in the order: Father + Mother = Child.¹¹

1. DAUGHTER'S *COGNOMEN* IS IDENTICAL TO THE MOTHER'S *COGNOMEN*

This is the simplest pattern and involves no change to the mother's *cognomen*.

(ignotus) + Cornelia **Avita** = Assalica **Avita** (*CIL* II²/14, 1324, *Tarraco*)

(Memmius) + Aelia **Bassina** = Memmia Aeli[a **B**]as[sina?] (*CIL* II, 5409, *Lacilbula*)

(ignotus) + Fabia **Bonosa** = **Bososa** Procula (*CIL* II²/7, 945, *Iulipa*)

(ignotus) + Fabia **Caesarea** = Fabia **Caesar(e)a** (*CIL* II, 1031, *Ugultunia*)

⁹ If the father's name is not preserved, or if the man listed as the father (or as husband of the wife) is really a stepfather, there is a possibility that the child's *cognomen* was inherited not from the mother but from the biological father, assuming both parents had similar names. This cannot be tested, since the father's name is lost.

¹⁰ Fuller bibliography on each inscription can be found in Hispania Epigraphica Online (<http://www.eda-bea.es>) or the Epigraphik Datenbank Claus-Slaby (<http://www.manfredclaus.de>)

¹¹ Abbreviations: *AE* = *L'Année Épigraphique*; *CIL* = *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*; *Eph. Epig.* = *Ephemeris Epigraphica*; *HEp* = *Hispania Epigraphica*; *IRC* = Fabre, Mayer and Rodà, 1984-2002.

- (ignotus) + Iulia **Casiana** = Iulia **Casiana** (*CIL* II, 4994, *Olisipo*)
 (Otacilius) + Atilia **Celsilla** = Otacilia **Celsilla** (*CIL* II²/14, 200, *Edeta*)
 T. Octavius + **Hibera** = Octavia **Hibera** (*CIL* II, 3491, *Carthago Nova*)
 Varius Pollio + Varia **Iucunda** = Varia **Iucunda** (*CIL* II²/14, 1704, *Tarraco*)
 (Iulius) + **Maxima** = Iulia **Maxima** (*CIL* II, 219, *Olisipo*)
 (Valerius) + Manlia **Paetina** = Valeria **Paetina** (*CIL* II²/5, 98, *Tucci*)
 P. Marcius + Aemilia **Postuma** = Marcia **Postuma** (*CIL* II²/14, 71, *Valentia*)
 M. Basilius + Caecilia **Qua[rta]** = [Basilis? **Qua**]rta (*CIL* II²/14, 514, *Saguntum*)
 (ignotus) + **Rufina** = **Rufina** (*HEp* 1990, 32, *Metellinum*)
 Aelius Saturninus + Aelia **Severa** = Aelia **Severa** (*CIL* II, 524, *Emerita*)
 (ignotus) + Antonia **Suavola** = Antonia **Suavola** (*CIL* II, 534, *Emerita*)
 (Sempronius) + Marcia **Tempestiva** = Sempronia **Tempestiva** (*IRC* II, 6, *Ilerda*)
 (ignotus) + Sempronia **Varilla** = Sempronia **Varilla** (*CIL* II²/7, 800, *Mellaria*)

2. SON'S *COGNOMEN* IS A MASCULINE FORM OF THE MOTHER'S *COGNOMEN*

In most cases this involves the Latin ending *-a* (or Greek *-e*) being replaced with *-us*. “Nympho” is a shortened spelling of Greek Nymphōn. Among Latin third declension names, Vitalis is the same in both genders, while Clementis is the feminine form of Clemens.

- (Aemilius) + Lucia Avircia **Aciliana** = M. Aemilius Afer **Acilianus** (*Eph. Epig.* VIII, 306, *Callet*)
 (ignotus) + **Amoena** = **Amoenus** (*HEp* 2003/04, 1000, *Ammaia*)
 (Iulius) + Cassia **Amoena** = L. Iulius **Amoenus** (*Eph. Epig.* VIII, 45, *Emerita*)

M. Aurelius Laberianus + Publia **Avita** = M. Aurelius **Avitus** (*CIL* II, 370, *Conimbriga*)

M. Cornelius + Assalica **Avita** = M. Cornelius **Avitus** (*CIL* II²/14, 1311, *Tarraco*)

(ignotus) + Volcinaea **Calliste** = M. Volcinaeus **Callistus** (*HEp* 1989, 71, *Villajoyosa*, *Alicante*)

[L.? Pedanius? G]ermanus + [Pedania? C]lementis = [L.? Pedanius? **Clem**]ens (*IRC* IV, 114, *Barcino*)

(ignotus) + **Fortunatiana** = L. Concordius **Fortunatianus** (*CIL* II²/14, 1564, *Tarraco*)

(ignotus) + Arquia **Helena** = **Helenus** (*CIL* II, 377, *Conimbriga*)

L. Iulius Reburus + Iulia **Iusta** = L. Iulius **Iustus** (*HEp* 2003/04, 998, *Bucelas*, *Portugal*)

L. Pomponius + Marcia **Marc[ella]** = L. Pomponius **Marcellus** (*CIL* II²/14, 745, *Onda*, *Castellón*)

(Aemilius?) Aemilianus + Iunia **Materna** = Aemilius **Maternus** (*HEp* 1995, 629, *Olóriz*, *Navarra*)

(ignotus) + **Materna** = Sempronius **Maternus** (*AE* 1965, 61, *Veleia*)

(Caecilius) + Sempronia **Materna** = C. Caecilius Iubatus Sempronius **Maternus** (*CIL* II²/14, 1346, *Tarraco*)

(Cretius) + Cervia **Mau[ra]** = C. Cretius **Mau[rus]** (*CIL* II, 1942, *Barbesula*)

(ignotus) + Iulia **Maxima** = **Maximus** (*Eph. Epig.* VIII, 267, *Pax Iulia*)

(Valerius) + Flavia **Max{s}ima** = Valerius **Maximus** (*Eph. Epig.* IX, 28, *Collippo*)

(Iunius) + **Melina** = D. Iunius **Melinus** (*CIL* II, 1955, *Cartima*)

C. Aufustius + Iulia **Modesta** = C. Aufustius **Modestus** (*Eph. Epig.* VIII, 303, *Seria*)

M. Aurelius + Maria **Nymphe** = M. Aurelius **Nympho** (*CIL* II, 1099, *Ilipa*)

(Caecilius) + Iulia **Paterna** = C. Caecilius **Pa[ternus?]** (*CIL* II²/14, 776, *Lesera*)

L. Aemilius Celatus + Porcia **Proba** = L. Aemilius **Probus** (*IRC* III, 9, *Aquae Calidae*)

(ignotus) + Varia **Proc(u)la** = L. Varius **Proc(u)lus** (*CIL* II²/14, 78, *Valentia*)

(Trebius) + Terentia **Quieta** = C. Trebius **Quietus** (*CIL* II, 2805, *Clunia*)

M. Helvius + Helvia **Rufina** = M. Helvius **Rufinus** (*Eph. Epig.* IX, 147, *Segida*)

(ignotus) + Mettia **Saturnina** = **Saturninus** (*CIL* II²/5, 974, *Ostippo*)

(Septumius) + Aquilia **Severa** = L. Septumius **Severus** (*HEp* 1995, 110, *Olivenza, Badajoz*)

Caecilius Epaphroditus + Voconia **Sincera** = L. Caecilius **Sincerus** (*CIL* II²/13, 7, *Titulcia*)

T. Cornelius Felix + Valeria **Tusca** = T. Cornelius **Tuscus** (*AE* 1983, 492, *Emerita*)

Eugenius + **Urbica** = **Urbicus** (*HEp* 2009, 171, Santo Tomé, Jaén)

Flavus + **Valentina** = **Valentinus** (*CIL* II, 882, Béjar, Salamanca)

Sex. Quintius + Quintia **Vitalis** = Sex. Quintius **Vitalis** (*CIL* II²/7, 36, *Iliturgi*)

3. CHILD'S *COGNOMEN* IS A SUFFIXED FORM OF THE MOTHER'S *COGNOMEN*

These compound names include four examples of the suffix *-ina*, three of *-ianus*, two of *-io*, and one each of *-inus*, *-ulla* and *-illa*.

L. Cornelius Themison + Cornelia **Blanda** = Cornelia **Blandina** (*CIL* II²/5, 798, *Singilia Barba*)

Exuperius + **Materna** = **Maternianus** (Elorza Guinea, 1967: n° 36, Foronda, Álava)

(ignotus) + Messia **Maura** = T. Messius **Maurio** (*AE* 2003, 883, *Emerita*)

(Marius) + Stelina **Prisca** = C. Marius **Priscianus** (*CIL* II, 5185, *Pax Iulia*)

Q. Cornelius Secundus + Geminia **Q[uar]ta** = Cornelia **Quartulla** (*IRC* IV, 59, *Barcino*)

(Maridius) + Baebia **Quieta** = Maridia **Quietilla** (*CIL* II²/14, 1326, *Tarraco*)

Q. Pomponius Clodianus + Claudia **Sabina** = Q. Pomponius Clemens **Sabinianus** (*CIL* II, 1188, *Hispalis*)

(L. Cornelius) + Cornelia **Secunda** = Cornelia **Secundina** (*IRC* IV, 126, *Barcino*)

(ignotus) + **Severa** = **Severina** (*CIL* II²/14, 521, *Saguntum*)

(Iulius) Severus + Iulia **Severa** = Iulia **Severina** (*HEp* 2003/04, 912, *Civitas Igaeditanorum*)

(Fuficius) + Claudia **Tertulla** = Sex. Fuficius **Tertullinus** (*CIL* II, 1148, *Italica*)

(ignotus) + Horatia **Vitalis** = M. Horatius **Vitalio** (*CIL* II²/14, 161, *Edeta*)

4. CHILD'S *COGNOMEN* IS A DE-SUFFIXED FORM OF THE MOTHER'S *COGNOMEN*

In these examples, the suffix *-illa* or *-ina* of the mother's name is removed, leaving the simple form of the *cognomen*.

C. Calpurnius Fronto + Orbia **Flaccilla** = C. Calpurnius **Flaccus** (*HEp* 2006, 488, *Conimbriga*)

Cornelius Restitutus + Annia **Iustina** = Cornelia **Iusta** (*CIL* II²/14, 594, *Saguntum*)

(ignotus) + Cornelia **Marullina** = L. Cornelius **Marullus** (*AE* 1958, 4, *Castulo*)

M. Fabius + Rantulana **Priscilla** = Fabia **Prisca** (*AE* 1979, 348, *Manzanilla, Huelva*)

M. Iunius C[---]armillus + Aurelia **Quin[tilla]** = **Quinta** (*CIL* II, 571, *Emerita*)

Fabius Iustus + Sempronia **Rufina** = Fabius **Rufus** (*CIL* II, 214, *Olisipo*)

(Cornelius) + Iunia **Severina** = Cornelia **Severa** (*CIL* II, 3305, *Castulo*)

5. CHILD'S *COGNOMEN* IS A SUFFIXED FORM OF THE MOTHER'S *NOMEN GENTILICIUM*

This pattern consists of attaching the suffix *-ianus*, *-iana* or *-inus* (and in one case, *-illa*) to the mother's *nomen gentilicium*. An historical example is provided by the emperor Vespasian, who derived his *cognomen* Vespasianus from the *nomen* of his mother, Vespasia Polla. Although this practice was particularly common among the senatorial élite,¹² there are ample instances among the lower classes.

(Pedanius) + **Aemilia** Furiana = [L.? Pe]danius **Aemilianus** (*IRC* IV, 67, *Barcino*)

T. Flavius Speudon + **Antonia** Rhodoe = T. Flavius **Antoninus** (*CIL* II²/7, 290, *Corduba*)

(Cassius) + **Arria** Avita = Q. Cassius **Arrianus** (*CIL* II, 204, *Olisipo*)

(Lucretius) + **Atilia** Auctilla = Lucretia **Atiliana** (*CIL* II²/14, 1608, *Tarraco*)

(Claudius) + **Iulia** Avita = Claudia **Iuliana** (*Eph. Epig.* 9, 136, unknown provenance)

L. Valerius Daphnus + **Caecilia** Moschis = L. Valerius **Caecilianus** (*Eph. Epig.* VIII, 35, *Emerita*)

Marius Marianus + Maria **Calpurnia** = P. Marius **Calpurnianus** (*IRC* II, 35, *Aeso*)

M. Sulpicius Crispus + **Calpurnia** Lupercilla = M. Sulpicius **Calpurnianus** (*CIL* II²/14, 767, Alcalà de Xivert, Castellón)

(Catinius) + **Canidia** Albina = Catinius **Canidianus** (*CIL* II, 111, *Ebora*)

¹² Kajanto, 1965: 33; Nuorluoto, 2021: 205-206.

(Licinius) + **Iulia** = Licinius **Iulianus** (*CIL* II, 3036, *Complutum*)

L. Vibius Nigellio + **Manlia** Fabiana = Vibius **Manlianus** (*CIL* II, 3698, *Pollentia*)

L. Fulvius + **Numisia** Perpernia = L. Fulvius **Numisianus** (*IRC* IV, 131, *Barcino*)

Simplicius + **Pompeia** = **Pompeianus** (García Iglesias, 1973: n° 346, *Emerita*)

(Vettius) + **Sempronia** Acca Capito = Vettius **Sempronianus** et Vettia **Sempronilla** (*CIL* II, 5771, *Pallantia*)

P. Pomponius + **Sulpicia** Callirhoe = P. Pomponius **Sulpicianus** (*CIL* II²/7, 907, *Iulipa*)

C. S(empronius?) Sempronianus + **Valeria** Paterna = C. S(empronius?) **Valerianus** (*CIL* II, 2766, *Confloenta*)

(Fabius) + **Vibia** Lucana = C. Fabius **Vibianus** (*CIL* II, 1947, *Iluro*)

6. CHILD'S *COGNOMEN* AND MOTHER'S *NOMEN GENTILICIUM* ARE COGNATE FORMS

In this example, both names are derivatives of *iuvenis* “youth”.

(ignotus) + **Iuventia** Paula = **Iuventus** (*CIL* II²/14, 1107, *Tarraco*)

7. CHILD'S *COGNOMEN* AND MOTHER'S *COGNOMEN* ARE COGNATE FORMS

“Chare” and “Charite” come from Greek *charis* “grace”. “Chreste”, “Chresumus”, “Chrestenis” and “Chrestus” are formed from Greek *chrestos*, *chresimos* “useful”. “Felicitas” and “Felicianus” are related to *felix* “happy, lucky”. “Tyche” and “Eutychia” refer to Greek *tyche* “fate, luck”.

(ignotus) + Fabia **Chare** = [**Chari?**]te (*CIL* II²/14, 157a, *Edeta*)

(ignotus) + Marcia **C(h)reste** = Marcius **C(h)resumus** (*CIL* II, 6272, *Maceira*, Portugal)

Vitalis + Minicia **Chrestenis** = Minicius **Chrestus** (*CIL* II²/13, 166, Carmena, Toledo)

(ignotus) + Iulia **Felicitas** = **Felicianus** (*CIL* II²/14, 1547, Tarraco)

(ignotus) + Numisia **Eutychia** = Numisia **Tyche** (*IRC* IV, 195, Barcino)

CONCLUSIONS

Cognomina could give a distinctive identity to an individual, but they could also be used to provide intergenerational continuity. While some children were assigned a propitious *cognomen* or one based on physical appearance or personal characteristics, others received one that was directly derived from the name of the father or, as we have shown, the mother. The practice of giving a child the same (or similar) name as oneself may seem egotistical or unimaginative, but it created an onomastic bond between parent and offspring and may have expressed a hope that the child would grow up to be as successful or virtuous as its namesake. The use of a diminutive form such as Quietilla (“little Quieta”), which “had an emotional, hypocoristic meaning”,¹³ emphasized this affinity. The addition or deletion of a suffix helped prevent confusion between the similar names of parent and child.

The origin of this type of nomenclature must be sought in Roman rather than Hispanic tradition. While there is some evidence for matrilineal social organization in parts of Hispania in pre-Roman times,¹⁴ this does not provide an adequate etiology for matronymic *cognomina*, which are found in all areas of the Peninsula during the Roman Empire, as well as in Italy and in other provinces. Moreover, the matronymic names found in Hispania are Latin (or occasionally Greek) rather than Celtic or Iberian. While the use of *cognomina* by Roman women is not recorded before the end of the second century BC,¹⁵ matronymic *cognomina* for men are already attested in the Middle Republic. The sons of Cato the Censor, both named M. Porcius Cato after their father, had the additional *cognomina* Licinianus and Salonianus, formed from the *nomina* of Cato’s two wives, Licinia and Salonia.¹⁶ By the Augustan period, female *cognomina* were gaining in popularity, and their use was

¹³ Kajanto, 1965: 124.

¹⁴ Pereira Menaut, 1993.

¹⁵ Nuorluoto, 2021: 247.

¹⁶ Kajanto, 1965: 33.

soon widespread. Once women acquired a *cognomen*, it was an obvious step to use it, as well as the *nomen gentilicium*, as a basis for children's names.

This study demonstrates that matronymic *cognomina* in Hispania were far more common than is generally recognized. However, the reasons why children, both male and female, were given *cognomina* taken from their mother rather than their father can only be surmised. In quasi-marital unions without *conubium*, the child would legally follow its mother's status and might also take her name.¹⁷ The same principle would apply in the case of a single mother. If she had been abandoned by the baby's father, one can readily understand why she would give the child a name reflecting matrilineal descent. In families with several children, one or more children might be given the father's *cognomen*,¹⁸ and another the mother's. Since a variety of *cognomina* might be used to distinguish different family members, there was no reason why one of these should not come from the mother. Occasionally, children's *cognomina* were borrowed from other female relations, such as a grandmother or an aunt.¹⁹

Seven naming patterns have been identified here. By far the most common procedure was to adopt the mother's *cognomen*, either in the same form (with altered gender ending where necessary) or by adding or removing a suffix; but *cognomina* could also be formed from the mother's *nomen gentilicium*, again by appending a suffix. Lastly, a small number of *cognomina*, mostly Greek, were cognates of the mother's name.

¹⁷ Curchin, 1999: 124.

¹⁸ Since children of the same family could be distinguished by different *praenomina*, they were sometimes given the same *cognomen*; for example, the younger brother of Marcus Cicero was Quintus Cicero. In other families, the children might have different *cognomina* but the same *praenomen*; for instance, the sons of Vespasian were Titus Vespasianus and Titus Domitianus.

¹⁹ In *AE* 1983, 503 (Villar de la Yegua, Salamanca), the mother and daughter of the dedicant Amaenea are both named Apana; therefore the daughter seems to have been named after her maternal grandmother. In *CIL* II²/14, 1328 (*Tarraco*), the deceased Clodia Rufina may have been named after her maternal aunt (*matertera*) Rufina; the mother is not named and was presumably dead. In *IRC* II, 50 (*Aeso*), the paternal aunt (*amita*) of Porcia Catulla bears the identical name Porcia Ca[tulla], if correctly restored. She is also her mother-in-law (*socrus*), signifying that the niece Catulla married a cousin.

There is no evidence of class distinction in the use of matronyms in Hispania. They appear in *tria nomina*, *duo nomina* or single names, and are borne by Roman citizens, peregrines, freedmen and slaves.²⁰ Nor is there a regional preference for this practice, as the various patterns of matronymic *cognomina* are distributed equitably over all three Hispanic provinces.

In a study of inscriptions from Italy, Thylander found that matronymic *cognomina* are usually given to the second child, the first child receiving the father's *cognomen*.²¹ This is difficult to verify from the Hispanic inscriptions, most of which name only one child. In two cases the matronym is indeed given to the second child, but the father's *cognomen* is unknown.²² In two other inscriptions, both dedicated by the mother without reference to a father, the oldest of three children bears the matronymic *cognomen*.²³ In a further instance the matronym is given to the third of four children, none of whom takes the father's *cognomen*.²⁴

It is possible that the use of matronymic *cognomina* was even more widespread than appears in the inscriptions. In ancient times there was a high incidence of female mortality during childbirth.²⁵ If the baby survived, the grieving father might decide to give it a matronymic *cognomen* in tribute to the deceased mother. Such a phenomenon is practically impossible to trace in epigraphy. We may have the epitaph of the mother, but the newborn child bearing her name is unlikely to be named as a commemorator.

Finally, the use of matronymic names was not confined to the Latin West, but can be situated in a broader historico-typological context. In inscriptions and papyri from the Greek East in the Roman period, the mother's name is sometimes added to the patronymic.²⁶ In modern times, daughters sometimes have the same first name as their mother, and in the

²⁰ Only one bearer of a matronymic name is explicitly a slave (*CIL* II, 161), though several people with single names are possible slaves. One person with a matronymic *cognomen* is a freedman (*CIL* II²/14, 1107), and several others are sons of freed persons (*CIL* II²/7, 290, 907; *Eph. Epig.* VIII, 303; *AE* 2003, 883).

²¹ Thylander, 1952: 110.

²² *CIL* II, 1099, 2805.

²³ *CIL* II, 377, 999.

²⁴ *IRC* IV, 59.

²⁵ Gourevitch, 1987.

²⁶ E.g. "Jason son of Demetrios and of mother Basilis" (McCabe, 1985: n° 445, 7/6 BC) or "Didymos son of Atilion, of mother Ammonilla" (*SEG* 40: 1568, AD 220). For papyri, see Broux and Depauw, 2015.

English-speaking world children may retain the mother's surname as a middle name or as half of a hyphenated surname. Similarly in Spanish-speaking countries, personal names include both the father's and mother's surnames. What is unique to Roman practice, as we see from the Hispanic corpus, is the attachment of masculine gender endings to the mother's *cognomen*, or augmentation of her name with diminutive and other suffixes.

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