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Onomasticon Provinciae Daciae

-Teză de doctorat-

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Onomasticon Provinciae Daciae

Abstract

Keywords: Personal Names, Latin, Greek, Praenomina, Nomina Gentilia, Cognomina.

By the terminus *Onomasticon*, one should normally understand a list of names belonging to a certain population, geographical area or specific time span. Despite the fact that the title suggests a list of names belonging to Roman Dacia, the contents of the PhD thesis differs. A study of this amplitude could not have been completed with only the lists of Latin, Greek and barbarian names found on the inscriptions from Dacia. Thus I have extended the thesis and developed it into a study of Roman social history. The persons found on inscriptions are not regarded here as *names with relevant information* but as individuals who have lived and died, trying to be remembered by history through the kindness of time. The history of the study of personal names begins with Valerius Maximus and his writings about the names of the Romans. For the province of Dacia, I.I. Russu was the most prolific researcher. His studies concerning the personal names began in 1936 and launched a trend for the future Romanian scientists who will ever since trouble themselves with the naming systems of the classical world. Various scholars have been preoccupied by this topic and their thorough research gave birth to some of the most impressive studies concerning the personal names of: senators and their wives, local elites, slaves and freedmen, ethnical groups etc., most of them being found in the chapter referring to the Historiography of the subject.

The hereby study treats - as far as possible - all the individuals found on the Latin, Greek and Semitic inscriptions from Dacia together with all the others found in the Roman Empire which have a certain relationship with this province but leaves out the officials sent by the government, officials whose names and life events belong to a different part of the social history of Rome. The individuals found in the Roman province are treated as a whole and their names, *tria* or *dua nomina*, are not divided in name parts, *praenomina*, *nomina gentilia* and *cognomina* but are handled all together as a group. This group of 3584 individuals is arranged in alphabetical order by *nomina gentilia* first and *cognomina* second. Those who do not possess or are not attested having a family name (*nomen gentile*) are also arranged in alphabetical order. Therefore the content of the study is to be considered as a dictionary of distinctive humans who constitute a part of our history. Upon searching for a name, the reader will find the following: the bibliographical reference of the name, what kind

of a name it is, how often it appears in Dacia together with the references of its attestations, the occupation of the individual, his filiation, his *tribus*, where he comes from (*domus*) and where else in the Empire this particular name can be found.

At the end of this 300 page long odyssey the reader will stumble upon the conclusions of the study beginning with a discussion about the *Polyonymi* that are documented in Dacia. There are few special cases of adoption and several others which cannot be explained due to the lack of sources. Another chapter of particular importance is the one referring to Filiation which in the Romanian historiography was mistaken for a *patronym*. This part of the subject explains how *filiatio* is documented in inscriptions, special cases and its purpose in the naming system of the classical world. A particularly interesting chapter refers to the names of the slaves and freedmen, who can be public, private or imperial. Normally the imperial slaves and freedmen should not have been part of the hereby study because they are not part of the province but are sent here for administrative purposes by the Roman State. Nevertheless, they are included and their names are discussed in two different chapters: Slave Names (*Nomina Servorum*) and Names of the Freedmen (*Nomina Libertorum*). The purpose of these two chapters is to shed light upon the common misconception that most slaves have Greek names and/or in case they possess a Latin name, this should be *Felix*.

The part of the thesis referring to the Latin names (*Nomina Civium Romanorum*) is a alphabetically ordered group of names ranging from Aelius to Valerius and consists of *nomina gentilia* that appear more often in the province. Not all family names are here discussed because some of them appear only once or twice and their analysis would not have given us further knowledge. Each name has its own discussion together with the corresponding statistics. All individuals belonging to the same name group are divided into male and female. As such, the male group is divided into civilians and soldiers or veterans for a better understanding of the civilian-soldier ratio.

A turning point in the Roman history is the Imperial Constitution of Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (212-217 A.D.) commonly known as *constitutio Antoniniana*. This Imperial decree grants the Roman citizenship to all the inhabitants of the Roman Empire, with only one exception, the *dediticii*. The chapter concerning this constitution and its outcome is in fact a demonstration of how this law affected Dacia and how some of the inscriptions found in this province can be dated. Those *peregrinii* who didn't possess the Roman citizenship will, through this edict, become *cives Romani* and their naming system

will change dramatically. The individuals who will not change their naming system after 212 A.D. will constitute the group of *dediticii*, the exception from the law.

As I have stated before, by filiation, one must not understand a *patronym*. Therefore a different chapter is dedicated to the *patronymica* in Dacia, what kind of names these patronyms are and why do they appear.

A common misconception is that the Romans had only three names (*tria nomina*). The last chapter of the thesis is the one related to *Agnomina-Supernomina-Signa* or commonly known as nicknames which in inscriptions are documented by *qui/ quae et*. These nicknames, together with other name parts, are proof that Roman citizens had a complex naming system and that no exact rules could be specified regarding this subject.

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