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North and South extremes: A comparative analysis of Vandal and Old Norse personal names

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to compare the anthroponymic system of Vandalic and Icelandic populations of the 9th–13th centuries. Despite these tribes being both Germanic, their personal names show affinities (like the simultaneous presence of monothematic and dithematic names), but they also manifest differences in the morphophonemic structure and in the borrowed phonemes. These differences are prompted by the fact that the evidences on personal names found in these languages come from different periods and, additionally, by the contacts that Vandals and Icelanders had with alloglot populations. Furthermore, Vandalic and Norse names reflect the differences in the culture of these Germanic populations, who lived in the extreme ends of the ecumene of the European continent.

Keywords: Vandals, *Landnámabók*, anthroponymy, Germanic languages.

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Nord et sud : analyse comparative des noms personnels des Vandales et des Islandais

Résumé : Cet article compare le système anthroponymique du peuple vandale et celui des Islandais du IXe au XIIIe siècles. Ces peuples sont tous les deux germaniques et donc leurs noms propres ont des affinités importantes (telles que la présence simultanée de noms monothématiques et dithématiques). Cependant, les différentes époques des attestations de noms propres dans ces langues et les contacts des Vandales et des Islandais avec différentes populations d'alloglottes ont donné lieu à des différences considérables dans la structure morpho-phonétique et à des phénomènes d'emprunt linguistique. Les noms des Vandales et des Islandais reflètent également les différences de culture de ces peuples germaniques qui vivaient aux pôles opposés de l'Europe médiévale.

Mots-clés : Vandales, *Landnámabók*, anthroponymie, langues germaniques.

Die nördlichen und südlichen Extreme: Vergleichende Analyse von vandalischen und altnordischen Personennamen

Zusammenfassung: Diese Arbeit vergleicht das onymische System der Vandalen (5. Jh.) mit dem der Isländer im 9.–13. Jh. Beide Stämme sind germanisch, und ihre Eigennamen spiegeln daher wichtige Ähnlichkeiten wider (wie das Vorhandensein von monothematischen und bitematischen Namen). Gleichzeitig haben die unterschiedlichen Zeiträume der Bezeugungen von Eigennamen in diesen Sprachen sowie die Kontakte von Vandalen und Isländern mit unterschiedlichen fremdsprachigen Bevölkerungen bemerkenswerte Unterschiede in der morpho-phonetischen Struktur und Entlehnungsphänomenen hervorgerufen. Die Namen spiegeln auch Unterschiede in der Kultur dieser germanischen Völker wider, die an entgegengesetzten Enden des mittelalterlichen europäischen Horizonts lebten.

Schlüsselbegriffe: Vandalen, *Landnámabók*, Anthroponymie, germanische Sprachen.

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North and South extremes: A comparative analysis of Vandal and Old Norse personal names

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1. Introduction

This paper compares the anthroponymic systems of Vandalic and of Old Norse (henceforth ON), two languages of the Germanic family, in order to highlight the influence of different cultures on personal names (henceforth PNs/PN). Despite the linguistic relationship and the temporal distance between the analysed sources, these languages demonstrate how the natural and cultural environment can influence the mechanisms of creation of PNs, which are an important mean of affirmation of the individuals' personal and/or social identity (Alford 1988: 59, 144). For this reason, this paper will investigate the ON PNs contained in the *Landnámabók* and an unfortunately not very extensive corpus of Vandalic names. All the etymologies of the PNs that I reconstructed here are based on suitable literature and dictionaries of Proto-Germanic and ON.

This work is structured as follows: after an introduction to the two corpora of names, the main characteristics of Germanic anthroponymy will be outlined. In the penultimate section it will be illustrated how PNs (and this is especially true for Vandalic) represent a criterion for the reconstruction of a language, as well as a tool to trace back the culture of a civilization. In particular, I will focus on the foreign influences in Vandalic and ON onomastics. In fact, what happened in late Roman Italy, where *nomina singularia* with Germanic elements such as *Vivaldus* began to appear instead of the *tria nomina*, occurred in Vandal Africa as well and, to a much lesser extent and with different characteristics, in Iceland in the 9th–10th centuries. Finally, some conclusions will be drawn.

2. Vandalic traces

Among the Germanic populations of the Migrations, Vandals are perhaps those who left the fewest traces. This, despite the fact that they founded a kingdom in the Roman-age Africa (429–534). The Vandals were Arians, as were, after all, the Goths of Bishop *Ulfilas*. Francovich Onesti (2002) claims that, most likely, they read Ulfilas's translation of the Bible. This brings us to the issue with their language. The Vandals, as well as the other

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Germanic peoples of the Migration Period, did not make use of a written language before entering into contact with the Romans and the Byzantines. After that, they began writing in Greek or Latin, generally not finding their own language suitable for that purpose. Vandals never put anything into writing; neither literature, nor their traditional laws. They began their cultural and linguistic Latinisation as early as in their Spanish period (409−429). They founded their African kingdom in what is perhaps the least documented period in the history of Western civilisation. Then, they vanished without a trace after their defeat. PNs are almost all we have left as a testimony of their ethnic and cultural identity.

According to the ancients such as Procopius (*Bellum Vandalicum* 1,2, 2), they spoke a language similar to Gothic. Therefore, they are considered part of the eastern family of the Germanic languages. It is thus reasonable to assume that the shared Arian faith of the Goths and the Vandals may offer additional cultural evidence for the close linguistic relationship between the two populations, as stated by Wrede (1886: 7), Francovich Onesti (2002) and recently by Reichert (2009: 47). This emerges also in the similarities between the onomastic heritage of the Vandals and of the Ostrogoths. From the time of Wrede (1886), who wrote the first summation of our knowledge on the Vandals, commenting 53 PNs, we have to wait until 2002 to see the subject of the Vandalic language tackled once again, in the work of Nicoletta Francovich Onesti. The scholar expanded the onomastic *corpus* up to 121 units. The anthroponyms known to us are those occurring in late ancient historical sources, both Latin and Greek, especially in chronicles and epigraphy. Wrede extensively collected the traditional written sources, and also included the coins and epigraphs known at that time[1].

Nevertheless, from 1886 to today, other PNs have emerged in African inscriptions from the Vandal period. Those were made known throughout the 20th century until recent years, and others may be discovered in the near future. In 2008, the new edition of an important text was also published: the *Collatio Aurelii Augustini cum Pascentio Arriano* (Müller et al. 2008), which allowed Reichert (2009) to correct some earlier assertions made by previous scholars, bringing the final number of names to 97. These names are investigated in this work.

In his book, *Les Vandales et l'Afrique*, Courtois (1955: 121) was sceptical about the possibility of outlining linguistic characteristics of the Vandalic language, whereas the only data available were PNs. Wrede, however, was more optimistic. In any case, the Vandal anthroponymy, still in the African period, showed a clear connection to the onomastic traditions of the Germanic tribes (see below, section 3).

The value of anthroponymy as a linguistic testimony is distinct and

[1] A comprehensive list of sources of Vandal names is provided by Wrede (1886: 20−35). They range from the 1st to the 7th century.

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important for historical linguistics (see Parker 2019 on ancient Greek onomastics). Nonetheless, names constitute a peculiar kind of linguistic testimony, because they present elements of uncertainty. They often retain archaic features or may undergo adaptations required by the Greek or Latin orthography. In Vandalic we can observe a divergence between the onomastic sources and the common terms, in that the latter seem closer to the Gothic language. However, since PNs constitute all is left of this language, they represent the most valuable testimony not only for the Vandalic language, but also for Vandalic culture in Africa.

3. Old Norse onomastics: The *Landnámabók*

The *Landnámabók* is a prose composition describing the colonization of Iceland by Norwegian settlers between 870 and 930 AD. The reported events, despite originating during the age of mobility of the Vikings, reached posterity through copies of an original source which had probably been lost in the beginning of the 12th century (around 1120 AD). These copies were compiled after the 13th century.

As Würth (2005: 158) points out, the *Landnámabók* has "probably the most complicated textual history of all the Old Icelandic writings". It was transmitted through five editions: three medieval and two much more recent (17th century). The oldest version is contained in the *Sturlubók* (S), from Sturla Thordarson, (1214−1284), one of the first *lǫgmaðr* (lawman), who composed it in the years 1275−1280. The ON *Sturlubók* was destroyed in the Copenhagen Fire of 1728. However, in the 17th century, before the manuscript left Iceland, a copy was made (AM 107 folio). The critical edition of Pállson (1972) is based on this copy[2].

The settlement of Iceland by the Norwegians between the 9th and the 10th centuries is narrated in the 399 chapters of the "standard" edition of the S, through the events of the 430 families of the first settlers, whose names, origins and partition of the lands are reported. The main aim of the *Landnámabók* is to guarantee the property rights of the individual families on the Icelandic lands. Up to that moment, this legal right was entrusted to memory, because the first settlers did not make use of written language. The book also retraces the genealogies of the families to prove their nobility. For these reasons, the text is filled with names of people that we can assume are historically accurate, considering that the book deals with a matter of no small importance for Icelandic society: the legal right of the various families to the land occupied by their ancestors.

The simple prose and the content, which, traditionally, has been

[2] Since I do not presume to deal with philological issues, I will leave out the problems related to the *Landnámabók stemma codicum*. I refer to the accepted scheme of Jóhannesson (1941), although Rafnasson (1974) and Boyer (2000) propose alternative hypotheses.

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considered faithful to the historical reality of the narrated facts, led scholars to accept this text as a reliable source, whose historicity was not questioned. Today there is a critical tendency towards this attitude: scholars are more careful when taking into consideration the political motivations underlying the composition of an historical work. It is important to note that, together with the two historical works *par excellence* of the Icelandic tradition – the *Landnámabók* and the *Íslendingabók* – other sagas like the *Jómsvíkinga saga* and the *Orkneyinga saga* can also be considered "more broadly historiographical works" (Würth 2005: 161).

In response to the assumption of Byock (2001: 95–98), who defines the *Landnámabók* and the *Íslendingabók* exclusively as "historical writings", Whaley (2000: 165) claims that the volume and variety of writings "about the past" makes the definition "historical writings" problematic, and calls the apparent impartiality of these writings into question. More recently, Hermann (2010: 72) claimed that the text focuses on the cultural memories that shape the narrated matter. For this reason, the *Landnámabók* tends to reflect the social concerns and anxieties of the period in which it was framed and written down. According to this framework, the latest period of writing (12th–14th centuries) is seen as the most authentic (Friðriksson & Vésteinsson 2003: 153–154). Nevertheless, I agree with Barraclough (2012: 82) that it is not possible to completely discard the historicity of the *landnám* period, in particular when focussing on the onomastic component. Although the *Landnámabók* was written in the 12th century, it does contain oral material that had been transmitted for centuries, sometimes reworked or revised. However, the older version most likely contained only genealogies with onomastic and parental information (Wellendorf 2010: 4).

From the *Landnámabók* I collected a total of 745 anthroponyms: I used the critical edition of Benediktsson (1968) and the English translation of Pálsson (1972). In my opinion, this data can be representative of the onomastic system popular among the Nordic people from the 10th to the 12th century[3]. Thus, the *Landnámabók* turns out to be a convenient source for an overview of ON anthroponymy and a comparison with Vandalic.

4. Main features of the Germanic onomastics

Among the old Germanic societies, PNs could be coined in three different ways: 1) through the conversion of any word into a PN (*Proprialisierung*); 2) through derivational affixation and 3) through compounding (Andersson 2009: 10).

[3] My intention is to focus only on Iceland, and thus, *Landnámabók* is one of the most important and oldest sources. Furthermore, it contains a suitable and investigable number of PNs. If we take into account the names in runic inscriptions of 1st–6th centuries, as well as the names in the sagas up to the 15th century, we would reach a total of more than 4700 anthroponyms. On Icelandic PNs in general, see Kvaran (2011).

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The conversion of common terms into PNs is a widespread practice among European cultures and is the oldest method of name creation (Andersson 2003: 589, 604). This mechanism makes it possible to find Norse people called *Ketill*, literary meaning 'pot', 'cauldron' or, in Vandalic, *Baudus*, from the Proto-Germanic (henceforth PGerm.) *bauða-z*, meaning 'master', 'lord'. Epithets coined in this way or by means of affixation, constitute monothematic names. They are found in all old Germanic languages (Pulgram 1960), to the extent that they sometimes represent, in a text such as the *Landnámabók*, the absolute majority of all the anthroponyms.

However, the most distinctive means of PN creation among Germanic languages is compounding. Germanic dithematic names are formed from two elements (typically nouns or adjectives). The latter is masculine or feminine according to the gender of the person it refers to. Therefore, we find the ON *Hall-bjǫrn* and *Hall-bera* pair of masculine and feminine names, where the second element of the compound is the noun designating the male and the female bear. In Vandalic we find *Ari-fridos* and *Guiti-frida*. In the first, we identify the masculine PGerm. noun **friþuz* 'peace', while the second one might be the PGerm. noun **friþō* 'female friend' or the adjective **friþaz* 'handsome', in its feminine weak declension.

Germanic double-membered names helped to testify the family ties among members of the same tribe or an extended family (Germ. *Sippe*) through two tools: alliteration and variation.

Alliteration is the repetition of an identical initial sound in the names of people tied by kinship. See the example of the genealogy of King Aethelbert of Kent, as narrated by Bede in his *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* (II, 5). The first four names alliterate among themselves, starting from the forefather: *Woden, Wecta, Witta, Wihtgisl*.

The second method is the inheritance of one of the two elements usually forming the Germanic name, while changing the other element (*variatio*). Scherer (1953) demonstrates how this 'development' works for males. However, Andersson (2009: 13) remarks that the same mechanism also applies to the construction of female names using elements of the mother's name.

PNs are an essential part of the history of a language and a society. As section 4 will demonstrate, the majority of Germanic anthroponyms are transparent. That means that it is easy to link the monothematic name or parts of the dithematic name with elements of the vocabulary of the language. For this reason, the anthroponyms in the *Landnámabók* represent a mirror through which it is possible to retrace frames of the medieval Icelandic society. The same goes for Vandalic names.

It is assumed that many Germanic names described a feature of the bearer or were auspicious. Let's consider, for example, the PN *Hlewagastiz*, as found on one of Gallehus's golden horns dated to the early 5th century (it means either 'lee guest' or 'fame guest'). The Germanic system of transmission of

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names between generations brought an unexpected consequence: a progressive loss of the semantic transparency in PNs. In fact, in the names of the heirs, one of the two onomastic bases of the name of the ancestor, was mechanically associated with another, sometimes without any consideration for the overall meaning. This approach gave origin to compounds in which the meaning was mainly that of social taxonomy[4].

The following step was that of using, for this purpose, almost exclusively the phonological level. I thus agree with Caprini's conclusion (2001: 105) that Germanic onomastics tend to diachronically proceed from a stage in which the semantic aspect of the PN is predominant, to a stage in which the phonological aspect prevails (alliteration of the first sound, repetition of a phonic sequence). Therefore, we reach a stage where the Germanic PN incongruously evokes the common lexicon. That is, we encounter Germanic dithematic names which, despite consisting of known words with a specific meaning, do not have a meaning as a whole (see sections 5 and 7). The PN becomes opaque and this may have effects on our conclusions regarding the environment of the onomastics.

5. Names in the *Landnámabók*: Morphology

The *Landnámabók* contains 745 anthroponyms, compared to the roughly 3500 characters whose deeds are narrated. This discrepancy is caused by the frequent cases of homonymy, which is often made unambiguous through the use of nicknames, since the patronyms can be ambiguous as well. Monothematic names in the *Landnámabók* represent roughly the 30% of all the anthroponyms. They are more frequent in masculine names compared to feminine names (34% against 16%). Based on the different morphological mechanisms which originate that name, it is possible to divide monothematic names into subclasses[5]. The first two classes were already illustrated in section 3, namely: the conversion of nouns denoting objects, people or animals into masculine and feminine PNs (*Proprialisierung*, as in the masculine name *Svanr* < ON *svanr* 'swan'); and derivational affixation (as *Hyrningr* < ON *horn* 'horn').

Abbreviation is frequently used in ON anthroponymy. A name such as *Ási,* represents the abbreviated form of all the masculine names having *áss* 'Aesir' (deity, Aesir) as their first constituent (*Ásgeirr, Áskell, Áslákr*). What differs is the hypocoristics: endearing forms of names which become PNs. There are also subtypes like, for example, diminutives/terms of endearment of monothematic names which can be traced back to just one original name. This is the case for forms

[4] See the *Geirr*'s case in *Landnámabók*: *Geirr* became known as *Végeirr* because he was a great sacrificer (*Vé* means 'temple'). He gave his sons and daughters names containing all *Vé* as first element: *Vébjorn* (temple-bear), *Véstein* (temple-rock), *Véþorm* (temple-honour), *Vémund* (temple-protection) *Végestr* (temple-guest), *Véþorn* (temple-thorn) and *Védis* (temple-woman).

[5] For an in-depth description of the morphology of PNs in the *Landnámabók,* see Saracco (2020).

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such as *Karli* or *Kalli* for the name *Karl*, and *Hrafsi*, diminutive of *Hrafn* < ON *hrafn* 'craw' through the suffix *-si* used in animals names (Sturtevant 1929: 473).

ON dithematic anthroponyms of the *Landnámabók* exhibit a noticeable variety of compositional structures. Therefore, they result in different types of compound names. If we look at the morphology, we identify six combinational patterns:

- N+N: combination of two nouns as in the masculine *Hróðólfr* (*hróð* 'fame' + *úlfr* 'wolf') or in the feminine *Dagrún* (*dagr* 'day' + *rún* 'secret', 'rune');
- A+N: combination of an adjective and a noun as in the masculine *Illugi* (*illr* 'sick', 'evil' + *hugr* 'mind'), or the feminine *Aldís* (*allr* 'all' + *dís* 'woman');
- N+A: masculine *Roðrekr* (*hroð* 'fame' + *ríkr* 'rich', 'powerful') or feminine *Vémý* (*vé* 'temple' + *ný* 'new').
- A+A: rare combination; the feminine *Fastný* (*fast* 'strong' + *ný* 'new').
- V+N: anthroponyms formed by a verbal root and a noun. In the masculine *Gizurr,* one of Odin's *heiti* used as a PN as well. The first element is the verb *geta* 'to guess' and the second one the noun *svar* 'answer', functioning as an object. Thus, *Gizurr* is 'who guesses the answer'.
- N+V: verbal root in the right position; the masculine *Vígbióðr*. The verb *bióða* 'to offer' is combined with its direct object, *víg* 'fight', 'battle'. Thus, the anthroponym means 'who offers battle'.

6. Names in the *Landnámabók*: Semantics

I divided the components of the *Landnámabók* names into five different semantic spheres: the first four are religion, war, glory in combat and the sense of belonging to one's *Sippe*. Religion, along with all the forces of nature connected to deities, plays a central role in Norse society (Orton 2005). Theophoric names are thus widely used. One common element, as a first compositional member, is *áss-* 'Aesir', a group of deities of Norse mythology (*Ásbrandr, Ásgeirr, Ásbjórg, Ásvǫr*), while, the names *Þórr* and *Freyr*/*Freya* are the most frequently used as the first member or the second (in this case, just *Þórr*). Examples of names using *Freyr*/*Freya* are: *Freyviðr, Freysteinn* and *Freygerðr*. As for *Þórr,* examples are: *Þorkatla, Þórodda, Þorgestr,* and *Þorfinnr.* Using *Þórr* as a second member we find the following examples: *Bergþórr, Hafþórr, Bergþóra* and *Halldóra.* Odin (ON *Óðinn*) never appears in the onomastics of the *Landnámabók* with his name and some of his *heiti* are used instead (*Gautr, Bǫlverkr* and *Grímr*).

Natural elements believed to possess magical properties are often used to create PNs, especially feminine ones. We find *ey* 'isle' (*Botey*), *laug* 'hot spring' (*Geirlaug*), *rún* 'rune', 'secret' (*Guðrún*), *ælfr* 'female elf' (*Þórelfr*). The noun *vé,* 'sacred place', 'temple', occurs in both masculine (but only in

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the first member) and feminine names, see *Vébrandr* and *Þórvé*.

In Germanic and Norse societies war and glory in combat are particularly salient concepts. These themes are relevant to the Indo-European epic poetry in general (Schramm 2013: 28–31). Especially frequent in masculine names describing the Germanic warrior-hero, are nouns denoting:

- Weapons: *brandr* 'sword' (*Brǫndólfr*), *brynja* 'chain mail' (*Bryniólfr*), *gríma* 'helmet face mask' (*Eldgrímr*), *bogi* 'bow' (*Finnbogi*), *geirr* 'spear' (*Geirleifr*), *oddr* 'javelin' (*Naddoddr*), *skjǫldr* 'shield' (*Skialdbjǫrn*);
- Words connected to war: *bǫð* 'battle' (*Bárðr*), *herr* 'army' (*Einarr*), *gunnr* 'war' (*Gunnsteinn*), *friðr* 'peace' (*Hallfreðr*), *sigr* 'victory' (*Sigmundr*), *víg* 'battle' (*Víglundr*);
- Heroism and fame: *baldr* 'strong', 'intrepid' (*Vilbaldr*), *valdr* 'mighty lord' (*Haraldr*), *hlǫð* 'fame' (*Hlǫðver*).

Schröder (1944: 10) already noticed that names of weapons do not occur as second members in feminine anthroponyms. However, names related to war, strength and heroism are equally present. Besides being employed as feminine names and adjectives, as in *dís* 'feminine essence', *fríðr* 'beautiful' and *vǫr* 'wise', which Scherer (1953: 25) listed as representative of the authentic feminine ideal[6], elements denoting strength and war occur as well and they concur to create many feminine names:

- *gunnr* 'war': *Arngunnr*, *Gunnvǫr*;
- *hildr* 'battle': *Ragnhildr*, *Yngvildr*, *Þórhildr*;
- *veig* 'strength', 'power': *Sólveig*, *Rannveig*;
- *þruðr* 'strength': *Arnþruðr*, *Herþrúðr*;
- *bjǫrg* 'protection': *Geirbiórg*, *Hallbjǫrg*, *Þorbjǫrg*.

The fifth semantic field from which ON elements were taken to create anthroponyms is that of common names of objects (as in *ketill* 'cauldron') and, most of all, animals. The masculine and feminine names in the *Landnámabók* are formed from 33 different names of animals; the most frequent are *úlfr* 'wolf', *bjǫrn* 'bear' and *ari/ǫrn* 'eagle'. It is well known that the ancient populations believed that through the name one could also transmit the characteristics of the semantic content of the name itself. It was believed that the meaning of the name itself reproduces its inherent qualities in the human being (Müller 1970: 178–179; Ainiala et al. 2012: 127). As De Felice (1987: 185) points out, in Italian onomastics, children may receive auspicious names like *Beata* 'blessed' or *Felice* 'happy'. These are examples of child-oriented

[6] These names "reden von Liebenswürdigkeit und Anstand, von Frohsinn und Klugheit, von Schönheit und Kraft, von Adel und Treue".

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names, through which parents make a lifelong wish on behalf of their children.

Among Scandinavians, it was believed that zoonyms allowed the bearer to incarnate not only the animal's physical and behavioural properties, but also its magical qualities (Chiesa Isnardi 2012). This belief is certainly an Indo-European legacy, in Greek, Indian and Celtic cultures there are even evidences of double-zoonyms: Greek *Ἀρκτο-λέων* ('bear'+'lion'), *Κύνιππος* ('dog'+'horse'), *Λεοντό-λυκος* ('lion'+'wolf'), Sanskrit *Gajasiṃha* ('elephant'+'lion'), Old Irish *Ossbran* ('deer'+'crow') (see Müller 1970: 166). Some names are used by reason of their relation to war: let us consider, for example, the *ulfheðnar,* wolf-warriors consecrated to Odin, or the *berserker*, likewise consecrated to Odin. These warriors fought clothed in bearskins, were subject to fits of frenzy, roared like bears and gnawed their shields.

Höfler (1961: 29–31) points out that the types of animals which are used to name individuals and entire tribes, are also symbolically related to those people. Such symbolic coincidence of object and symbolization is found in the whole Germanic area in attributing to a child a PN containing an animal name, as well as in more purely social forms:

- use of masks that recall the totem animal of a social group, an animal that recurs as characteristic also in the name of that group (like *úlfr* in *ulfrheðnar*, warriors covered with wolf fur);
- the preference of PNs that denote that type of animal in the group in question;
- the cult of the animal that is sacred to the God-protector of that group;
- the preference for symbols and emblems that are directly or indirectly related to the animal in question.

For these reasons, for most of the animal names encountered in PNs, the following main phenomena of animal cult can be seen:

- believing in the special physical and psychological abilities of that animal that humans do not have;
- special functions in worship and myth (sacrificial animal, animal demon, etc.);
- the person's desire to resemble that animal or to be connected to it in faith (masking and heraldic symbolism) (De Vries 1956: 264ss; Müller 1970: 201–202).

As already mentioned, the eagle, the wolf and the bear are the most commonly occurring animals in masculine names. *Ari/ǫrn* 'eagle', appears in 15 names (only in the first member), *bjǫrn* 'bear' in 19 names (especially in the second member), *úlfr* 'wolf' in 38 anthroponyms of which 34 in the second member in the forms *úlfr* (*Skiǫldúlfr-*), *-ólfr* (*Fǫstólfr*) and *-lfr* (*Hrólfr*). Among

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masculine names, considering its frequency, *hrafn* 'crow' too emerges as relevant. In the *Landnámabók* it occurs 19 times as a monothematic name (*Hrafn* and feminine *Hrafna*) and as a member of a dithematic name in *Hrafnkell* and *Hrafnhildr*. Among feminine PNs it is worth noting that zoonyms occur only as first members of dithematic names or as monothematic names: *Ormhildr* (with *ormr* 'snake'), *Riúpa* (< *riúpa* 'Rock ptarmigan'). The only exception is the name *Hallbera*, containing the feminine version of 'bear' (< IE **ber(i)njō-*).

7. Vandalic names: Morphology

The small number of Vandal PNs does not allow extensive research about their morphology, also due to the fact that we do not have exhaustive information about the Vandal language in general. From the earliest studies on the legacy of Vandals, there has been much discussion on the connection between the Gothic and Vandal languages. Certainly, both belong to the Eastern Germanic family, now extinct, and there are many affinities, so many that some PNs are the same for both populations. Examples are: Vandalic *Andvit* and Ostrogothic *Anduit*; Vandalic *Tanca* and Ostrogothic *Tancane* (ablative); Vandalic *Vitarit* and Ostrogothic *Witterit*. On the other hand, there are many differences, especially phonological. These differences are so relevant that Vandalic language can be considered at least a dialectal variant of the Gothic language, if not a completely different language (Robinson 2005: 54–56; Reichert 2009: 89–95).

From the data collected by Francovich Onesti (2002) and Reichert (2009) we know for sure that there are both monothematic and dithematic PNs. The monothematic names mainly occur with diminutive suffixes which create hypocoristics. See Vand. *Valilu,* probably to be linked to PGerm. **wal-il-ō,* feminine diminutive of the verb **waljan* 'to choose', 'to favour' or in *Sifila* (not considered as Vandalic by Reichert 2009: 83), derived from the noun **siβjō* 'kinship', 'harmony'.

The monothematic name *Untancus* is instead created from the PGerm. form **þanka-* 'grateful' with the negative prefix *un-* (cf. Goth. *un-* in the adjective *un-triggws* 'unfaithful'). However, there is also evidence of pure monothematics, such as the already mentioned *Tanca* < **þanka-* 'grateful' (with the weak masculine inflection in *-a*) or *Baudus*, tracing back to **bauðaz* 'ruler' (similar to the masculine inflection of Latin names with Indo-European (IE) *-o* theme).

More numerous are dithematic names (mostly formed by combining two nouns), although these are not always transparent in their structure. It is possible, in fact, to find names such as *Guitifrida*, formed by PGerm. **wīti* 'fight' and **friðō* 'friend', or *Raginari,* formed by **ragina-* 'destiny' and **harjaz* 'army', in which the letter *h* does not occur, as it is the case of many Gothic names (see

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Ogot. *Ragnaris* and *Arigernus*). Lastly, there is *Vifrede*. In this case it is not clear which is the first element of the compound: it could be PGerm. **wih-/wig-* 'to fight', 'conflict'; or, a syncopated form of **wiðu-* 'wood'.

Names such as *Hunirix* or *Hildirix*, found in coins or Latin literary sources, incorporate the inflectional ending *-s* of masculine nouns in the nominative case (compare Gothic *-reiks*). In other masculine dithematic names, however, the ending of the singular nominative is expressed with the Latin inflectional morpheme *-us*, for the II declension: see *Ostariccus* (PGerm. **Aust-* 'east' + **rīkaz* 'powerful') and *Gundericus* (PGerm. **gunþjō* 'battle' + **rīkaz* 'powerful').

We must also point out the presence of some dithematic names without inflectional endings: they are names that have *-mut*, *-vult*, *-mer*, *-rit* and *-mal* as their second element (such as *Beremut*, *Sindivult*, *Hildimer*, *Hegerit*, *Fridamal*). It is not clear why this happens, because there is no phonetic rule that can explain this lack. Francovich Onesti (2002: 162) reports that Victor of Tunnuna, bishop of Tunnuna, used Vandal names with *-mer* without inflectional endings. Nonetheless, Victor uses with the inflectional ending *-us* for Vandalic names that other sources instead report without this morpheme. This issue seems to be therefore unsolvable at the moment.

In Vandalic anthroponymy only feminine nouns may occur as second members of compound nouns. In this respect, see *Guiliaruna* (with PGerm. *rūnō* 'secret', 'rune') and *Hildeguns* (with PGerm. **gunþjō* 'battle').

8. Vandalic PNs: Semantics

With regard to semantics, the compositional elements of Vandal PNs already show some characteristics suggesting that Vandalic society was deeply different from the Norse society of the 9th century. The first noticeable difference is that, among Vandalic anthroponyms, theonyms do not occur. There is no trace of Thor, Freyr or other deities of Germanic mythology. One of the main reasons may perhaps be the early conversion of the Vandals to Christianity. This can be observed with *Γοτθαῖος*, the name of an ambassador of King Gelimer, which is a compound formed from PGerm. **guþa-* 'god' and *þewaz* 'servant' (see Got. *þius* 'slave') which means 'servant of God'. Christian auspicious names are, as a matter of fact, more common in the Germanic tribes of Southern Europe. Compare, for example, the Langobard equivalent of *Γοτθαῖος, Godisteus* (Francovich Onesti 1999: 197) and the Ostrogothic names *Gudeliva/Gudelivus* 'dear to God' (Francovich Onesti 2007: 133).

The second difference between Vandalic and the Norse anthroponymy is the scarcity of Vandal zoonyms. The only pair of names having an animal reference is *Beremut/Beremuda.* The pair appears on a tombstone of the Basilica of Saint Monica in Carthage (Ennabli 1975: 215–216). It contains PGerm. **bera-* 'bear' as a first element. However, it does not seem to have any magical

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or ritual significance. The fact that these two almost identical names are located very close to each other on the same tombstone suggests that they belong to two siblings or, at least, relatives from the same family. This would imply that these may be another example of the inheritance of compositional elements.

Anthroponyms containing names of common objects or abstract entities are not very frequent as well. *Dagila* may be traced back to the Germanic word for 'day', PGerm. **daga-*, while from PGerm. *gaila-* 'joy' originate *Geilimir* and *Γειλάριδος*.

What is common to the Vandalic and the Norse anthroponymy is the ample presence, in the common lexicon, of words pertaining to the semantic fields of war and weapons. These nouns, in Vandalic, may occur both as first and second elements of a compound, or can be used as monothematic names. See the following Vandalic PNs:

1. PGerm. **friþu-* 'peace': *ΦΡΙΔΕΡΙΧ, Fridus, Munifrida*;
2. PGerm. **gaiza-* 'spear': *Geisericus, Oageis*;
3. PGerm. **gunþjō* 'battle': *Gundericus, Gunda, Hildeguns*;
4. PGerm. **harja-* 'army': *Arifridos, Trigari;*
5. PGerm. **hildjō-* 'battle': *Hildimer, Agisild*[.];
6. PGerm. **mundus* 'defender': *Gunthamundus*;
7. PGerm. **segu-/segi-* 'victory': *Sigisteus;*
8. PGerm. **triwwa/triwwō* 'loyal': *Trigari, Trioua*;
9. PGerm. **þrasō* 'menace': *Þrasamundus*;
10. PGerm. **wig-/wih-* 'war': *Vifrede*;

On the other hand, a common feature of Vandalic and Ostrogothic anthroponymies is the presence of words that can be traced back to the "semantic field of migration" (Francovich Onesti 2007: 128–129) in the repertoire of the compositional elements. These terms recall concepts such as travel, journey or wayfarers. See the Vand. *Sindivult* (with PGerm. **sinþa-* 'path' cf. Ostrogothic *Sendefara*) and Vand. *Obadus* < **Uuadus* < **Wadus* (from PGerm. **wadaz* 'wayfarer', cf. Ostrogothic *Vadamera*).

9. Onomastics as a mirror of linguistic and cultural contact

Around 40% of the lexical elements which join to form PNs in ON and in Vandalic are the same. This does not mean that the two cultures were completely different. The wide presence of words referring to war, fighting and fame reminds us of that.

Although *Landnámabók* was composed from the 12th century (and therefore after the conversion of Iceland to Christianity around the year 1000), the PNs of the settlers and their successors demonstrate how the Norse traditional custom to insert theonyms in the names of children was maintained. The introductory sections of *Landnámabók* describe behaviours (such as that

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of Ingolfr Arnason, one of the first settlers) which had a precise meaning within the framework of the religious convictions and worldview of these men. They certainly expressed an attachment to strongly rooted beliefs, as evidenced by references in the *Landnámabók* to the cult of the god Thor in Iceland[7]. The cult also materializes in the onomastics: *Þórr* is not only the most frequent theonym but also the most commonly recurring element in the PNs contained in the text (Saracco 2020). The fact that the theonyms managed to remain within the PNs even after the conversion is explained by the variation and alliteration processes described in section 3.

At the other extreme, the early conversion of the Vandals to Christianity most likely resulted in the disappearance of theonyms[8] from the onomastics. Sometimes the reasons for the onomastic choices simply lie in the inevitable influences that were exerted between the Latin and (partially) Greek majority and the Vandal minority (see below); the arrival of the Vandals in Africa also meant adapting to the onomastic uses of the local Christian and aristocratic population.

PN elements used by Norse settlers and Vandals have many examples of contacts with the neighbouring tribes. The compositional elements, which denote names of populations, imply what kind of contacts these groups have had. In the PNs of the *Landnámabók* we come into contact with a number of ethnonyms testifying the connections with Germanic and other cultural groups. With ON *finnr* ('Finnish', 'Lappish', 'Sami') we find the monothematic *Finnr* or the dithematic *Finnbogi*. From ON *Gautr*[9] originates *Gautrekr* and *Þorgautr*. From ON *Svabar* 'Saxons' originates *Sváfarr*.

As we will see in the next examples of this section, occasionally, in the morphology, we may observe some alloglot inflections. These are frequently lexical borrowings adapted to the inflexions of the target language. On other occasions, it is the types of inflexions or the derivational morphemes that pass from one language to another as if it were a permeable membrane. The reasons are numerous but, as we will see, they are different for the Icelanders and the Vandals.

In ON anthroponymy, as shown in the *Landnámabók*, names with alloglot thematic inflexion do not appear, but we find alloglot suffixes which are adapted to ON morphology forming composed nominal bases. However, a great number of simple bases are also found. The majority are names of Irish and Scottish origin. See, for example, the masculine names *Kalman* and

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7 See in Pálsson (1972) the passages relating to Þórólfr Mostrarskegg and his son Hallsteinn, to Kráku-Hreiðarr and to Ásbjǫrn Reyrketilsson. The first threw into the sea the columns of his old house on which the god was carved: where they touched the ground Þórólfr settled, called the place *Þórsnes* (Thor's promontory) and built a temple to the god. The second made sacrifices to Thor; the third called upon Thor to know where he might settle in Iceland. Ásbjǫrn, on the other hand, is said to have consecrated his land to the god and named it *Þorsmǫrk* (Thor forest).

8 However, we have no data for the pre-Christian Vandal period.

9 *Gautr,* the name of one of Odin's sons, is the founder of the tribe of the Geats, a tribe located in *Götaland*. Therefore, *Gautr* may indicate both the God and the people of *Götaland*.

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Kiaran, formed by the diminutive suffix *-ān* which we find in Old Irish as well. The lexical basis, still in Old Irish, are the noun *colm* 'dove' and the adjective *ciar* 'black'. This should come as no surprise, since we know that the Gaelic influence in Iceland had been so strong that it was part of the sagas of the oldest Icelandic families (Sigurðsson 2000: 87–90). It is well known that some of the settlers came from the British Isles. Many of them had been converted to Christianity or, at any rate, abandoned their old pagan beliefs. In many cases there was a mixture of Celtic heritage, and quite a large number of their servants were, no doubt, of Celtic origin (Sveinsson 1957: 3–4).

The names *Elfráðr* and *Patrekr* offer evidence for the presence of the Norse people in England. The first is an adaptation of *Ælfræd* (recall Alfred the Great), while the second is the Norse form of the Anglo-Saxon *Patrekr* which, in turn, comes from the Latin *patricius* 'patrician'.

Some names occurring in the *Landnámabók* originate from Latin, or even from Latinised Greek or Hebrew. These were either names of biblical figures, or of popular Saints of the Middle Ages. These names might have arrived in Norse society through the first evangelical missions in Scandinavia (11th century) and in Iceland (10th century) or, more likely, through the Anglo-Saxons or the Irish, who had converted to Christianity centuries earlier. They are biblical names like *Ádám*, *Jón*, *Páll* and *Pétr*.

These names of Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, Greek, Latin or Hebrew origin integrated perfectly in the ON morphology and are inflected following the declension of this language.

In the PNs appearing in the *Landnámabók,* there are no mixtures of compositional bases originating from other languages, but this is not the case for Vandalic. In Africa the Vandals were the "invaders". Victor Vitensis (Moorhead 1992: 3) reports that upon their arrival on the African shores, the Vandals could have numbered no more than 80 thousand. A more reasonable estimate is around 20 thousand warriors. In the 5th century, there were four Roman provinces in Africa, all fairly densely populated and urbanized (Schreiber 1979: 93). Therefore, the Vandals were consistently the minority. For this reason, their anthroponymy was subject to a strong influence from the Latin and Greek languages.

The corpus of Vandalic names gathered in the historical sources – especially the epigraphs found in the African territory – shows the first forms mixed with Latin and Greek starting from the 5th century. For example, *Cyrila* and *Armogastes/Armogastem*, prove very interesting in this regard. The first name (perhaps a nickname, see Reichert 2009: 64–65) belongs to an Arian Patriarch of Carthage. In it, it is possible to identify the Greek name *Κύριλλος* as a basis in the nominative case *-a* similarly to the Vandalic and the Gothic names which contain the diminutive suffix **-il-* (see Got. *Wulfila* and Vand. *Fridila*). In addition, *Armogastes* and its accusative form, *Armogastem*, illustrate that the Germanic names in the *-i* theme were rendered in the Latin third declension.

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Many Germanic names abandoned their original declension and adopted the Latin second declension. That happened with certain names ending with the *-i* or the *-u* theme (*Gunthamundus* or *Baudus*). In the suffixed anthroponyms, the common choice seems to be the hypocoristics formed by Germanic materials (*-il-*). Only *Brandini* exhibits the Proto-Germanic basis **branda-z* 'sword' and the Latin diminutive suffix in *-in(i)us.* Also remarkable is *Svartifan*: the name of a Mauri[10] that may have originated from the PGerm. **swarta-* 'black' and a Berber suffix in *-fan* (also recurring in the Mauri name *Guenfan*). However, Reichert (2009: 84–85) does not consider this a Mauri-Vandalic hybrid.

The ON and Vandalic anthroponyms, therefore, demonstrate that PNs can be an indicator of the mixture of different cultures. ON naming system tend to be more "conservative" and, in most cases, the foreign lexical, morphological and phonetic influences tend to adapt to the linguistic system of the local language. The hybrid names and mixed forms of Vandal anthroponyms are, on the other hand, evidence of the various degrees of Romanisation of this Germanic tribe, with different graphic and inflectional forms, varying also with different textual occasions and conditions.

10. Concluding remarks

The comparison between Vandalic and ON anthroponyms allows us to draw some conclusions. With regard to the morphological structure of PNs, both languages mostly present dithematic combinations, the pan-Germanic structure which is common to other Germanic tribes. Nevertheless, monothematic names are found, in large number, in both languages.

Regarding the semantics of names, we noticed how these two languages combine elements from the semantic field of war and common objects. On the other hand, a clear difference is the absence, in Vandalic, of theonyms and zoonyms as lexical compositional elements of names. The environmental and cultural conditions of the two populations were different. The early Christianisation of Vandals and their arrival in a fully Christian Roman Empire did not allow theonyms and zoonyms to be used as components of personal given names.

Names also show us that the two cultures interacted differently with foreign cultural and linguistic influences. The Latinization of some sounds and the use of Latin morphology in anthroponymy – an area which has relevant consequences in terms of the identity of a person and a population – shows the efforts of the Vandals to integrate with the local Berber population and above all with the Romans. This Latinisation proved fatal, both for numerical reasons, and because of the undisputed prestige exercised by the Latin tradition: indeed, the ruling class had to be bilingual. From after the conquest of Carthage (439),

[10] The Mauri were the local Berber tribes. It is established that they joined the Vandals in their way to Carthage to put it under siege.

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Latin became the official language of laws and administration. Bilingualism grew until the entire Vandal population forgot its former native language, and this is the reason why the forms of many Vandalic PN follow the scriptural and linguistic traditions of Latin[11].

In the extreme North of Europe, many centuries later, among the names of the Icelandic settlers, we find evidence of alloglot elements of Celtic and Latin/Greek origin. These, however, adapted to the ON and, above all, the elements in question are just lexical bases. In PNs, there was no integration whatsoever with morphological products of other languages. This would demonstrate a tendency of ON to conservatism, at least as far as anthroponymy is concerned.

PNs thus testify to important implications for the history of these two populations and contribute to the mosaic of the language and culture of tribes that lived on the extreme ends of Europe.

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[11] About hybrid Vandalic names in Latin sources, see Francovich Onesti (2006).

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