A Diachronic Excursion into the Anthroponymy of Eastern Romania

Oliviu FELECAN

Key-words: *anthroponymy, (re)Romanization, connections, Latin, Getae-Dacian*

1. Preliminary considerations

In the landscape of the Roman world, Romania enjoys a special status conferred not only by its keeping the common ethnic name inherited from the Latin word *Romanus* > *rumân / român*[1], but also by the particular circumstances in which the Romanian language was formed and developed, both to the north of the Danube (in Dacia), as well as to the south (Moesia, eventually Illyria, the land between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains). Although Dacia was among the last regions conquered by the Roman Empire, which meant a shorter time span of Roman domination in that territory, on the periphery of the Roman world and, from a point onward, in isolation – being surrounded by Slavic and Hungarian neighbours –, the Romanization process was fast and intense, due to the people's interest and will to master Latin. As, according to *Enciclopedia limbilor romanice* [The Encyclopaedia of Romance Languages], the Romanization is a

> fenomen istoric complex (lingvistic în primul rând, dar şi social, cultural, etnic, religios), care constă în adoptarea de către băştinaşii unui teritoriu cucerit de romani a limbii, felului de viaţă, culturii cuceritorului [a complex historical phenomenon (mainly linguistic, but also social, cultural, ethnic and religious), which consists in the appropriation of the Romans' language, lifestyle and culture, by the natives from a territory the Romans had previously conquered] (1989: 273).

1.1. Factors which helped trigger the Romanization process in the Carpathian–Danubian–Pontic space

More than three centuries had to pass until the Romanization of the Dacian-Getae space, due to the fact that the Roman troops first entered the Balkan Peninsula in 229 *a. Chr.* A series of wars followed (with the Illyrians, the Macedonians, the Greeks, the Thracians, the Getae-Dacians etc.) and only in 106 *p. Chr.*, under the reign of emperor Trajan, could the definitive triumph of the Empire in Southeastern Europe be celebrated. Even if certain elements of the material and spiritual culture had permeated the borders prior to the conquest, as a result of commercial

[1] Both forms refer to the Daco-Romanian dialect, which can be identified with the Romanian language, in the stricter sense; the last variant was recreated by written means as early as the 16th century.

„Philologica Jassyensia", An VI, Nr. 1 (11), 2010, p. 57–80

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

exchanges or military incursions, one cannot talk of Romanization in the absence of the complete domination of a region. For the process to be triggered some factors are absolutely essential, according to the *Encyclopaedia of Romance Languages* (2001: 497–498). It is primordial to integrate a territory in the Roman state and to establish a complex administration, in which the positions are held by Latin-speaking citizens. The second step consists in the settling in the province of a number of Latin-speaking Roman colonists, in parallel with that of certain military units, quartered till the farthest points along the frontier. It is also important to establish in the province a Latin type of educational system and, broadly speaking, to implant forms of the Roman spiritual culture, in which the religious phenomenon plays an overwhelming part; the access natives, including people of inferior social status, have to the imperial cult (the colleges of the *Augustales*), along with Christianity, propagate Latin in widespread circles. To this, one needs to add the dense network of lines of communication which cover the whole Empire, facilitating the circulation of the people and thus contributing to the dissemination and preservation of the Latin language within the conquered territories. The roads ease people's travelling in all directions, and they are a great help especially for merchants who travel throughout the territories even before these are conquered. The economic relationships established between the natives and the Latin speakers are consolidated by the gradual granting of rights and even of citizenship. The prospect of these rights and the possibility to get out of the narrow frame of the provincial life increased the natives' interest to learn Latin. As *The Encyclopaedia of Romance Languages* observes,

> toți acești factori au conferit limbii latine un prestigiu atât de ordin cultural, cât și de ordin social și economic, care a determinat însușirea ei de bună voie, într-o formă din ce în ce mai corectă [all these factors bestowed upon the Latin language a kind of prestige which was both cultural, as well as social and economic, and which determined the language to be assumed willingly, more and more properly] (1989: 273).

1.2. Evidences of Romanization

The evidences of the Romanization of Dacia are undeniable and they consist of, apart from historical documents and literary pieces (*Breviarium* by Eutropius, *The Gothic War* by Procopius of Caesarea, Theophylact Simocatta or Theophanes Confessor), the existence of a Romance language in the conquered territory, even if the limits of the Roman province do not fully correspond with the present-day linguistic ones, as is the case of Dacia and Moesia, to the north and south of the Danube. Moreover, the Latin inscriptions, the number and the division of the territory prove the constant presence of learned Latin-speakers. As I. Fischer mentions in *Latina dunăreană* [Danubian Latin],

> pentru regiunea care ne interesează, cifrele sunt concludente: în Dacia s-au găsit circa 3000 de inscripții provenind din peste 200 de localități, în Moesia Inferioară, aproape 2000 inscripții din peste 300 localități, iar în Moesia Superioară, aproximativ 1500 inscripții din 200 localități [for the area that raises our interest, the figures speak for themselves: about 3000 inscriptions from over 200 settlements were found in Dacia, approximately 2000 from over 300 settlements in Moesia Inferior, and about 1500 from 200 settlements in Moesia Superior] (1985: 19).

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

Last but not least, we should also note the archeological traces which reflect the appropriation of a Roman way of life, including the Latin pattern of denomination. Before moving further to actually discussing the Roman names from the first centuries after the conquest of Dacia, it is only proper to undergo an excursion in the Getae-Dacian anthroponymic universe.

2. The Getae-Dacians

The Getae-Dacians[2] were part of the big family of Thracophone Indo-European tribes and they inhabited the territory that spread from the Haemus Mountains (the Balkans), the Black Sea and the Danube right to the northern part of the Carpathians, to the springs of the Tisa river. Characterized by Herodotus as being „cei mai viteji şi mai drepţi dintre traci" [the bravest and most dignified of the Thracians] (*IV*, *93*), the Getae appear under this denomination in most of the Greek sources (Strabo, *VII, 295;* Scymnos, *659*), whilst the Roman ones referred to them as Dacians, with a sidenote that the two peoples talked the same language, even if dialectally differentiated: Strabo, *VII, 305*; Iustinus, *XXXII, 3, 16*; Appian, *Prooem*. Unfortunately, just like the Illyrian language, the language of the Thracians disappeared as it was replaced with Greek, Latin and, later on, with the Slavic one, without leaving any consistent texts that could be decrypted.

2.1. The Thraco-Dacian Onomastic Field

The most visible Getae-Dacian linguistic elements belong to the field of onomastics[3], and they refer to toponyms and anthroponyms which have in common a number of radicals and most of the suffixes. In what names of places are

[2] For the part referring to the Thraco-Dacians, I have used the following sources: Grigore Brâncuş, *Vocabularul autohton al limbii române* [The Autochtonous Vocabulary of the Romanian Language], Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1983; Paul MacKendrick, *The Dacian Stones Speak*, The University of North Carolina Press, 1975; Mihail Macrea, *Viaţa în Dacia romană* [Life in Roman Dacia], Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică, 1969; Vasile Pârvan, *Dacia. Civilizaţiile antice din ţările carpato-danubiene* [Dacia. Ancient Civilizations from the Carpathian-Danubian Countries], Fourth edition, revised and annotated, Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică, 1967; Vasile Pârvan, *Getica. O protoistorie a Daciei* [Getica. A Protohistory of Dacia], Chişinău, Editura Universitas, 1992; Constantin C. Petolescu, *Dacia şi Imperiul Roman* [Dacia and the Roman Empire], Bucureşti, Editura Teora, 2000; I.I. Russu, *Limba traco-dacilor* [The Language of the Thraco-Dacians], Second edition, revised and enlarged, Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică, 1967; I.I. Russu, *Elemente autohtone în limba română. Substratul comun româno-albanez* [Autochtonous Elements in the Romanian Language. The Common Romanian-Albanian Substratum], Bucureşti, Editura Academiei, 1970; I.I. Russu, *Daco-geţii în Imperiul Roman (în afara provinciei Dacia traiană)* [The Dacian-Getae in the Roman Empire (Outside the Borders of Dacia under the rule of Trajan)], Bucureşti, Editura Academiei, 1980; I.I. Russu, *Etnogeneza românilor. Fondul autohton traco-dacic şi componenta latino-romanică* [The Ethnogenesis of the Romanian People. The Autochtonous Thraco-Dacian Stratum and the Romance-Latin Component], Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1981; Silviu Sanie, *Din istoria culturii şi religiei geto-dacice* [On the History of the Getae-Dacian Culture and Religion], Iaşi, Editura Universităţii Al.I. Cuza, 1999; Ariton Vraciu, *Limba daco-geţilor* [The Language of the Dacian-Getae], Timişoara, Editura Facla, 1980.

[3] Ancient documentary sources offer much information in this respect through notes made by Greek authors, from Homer to Tzetzes and Photios, by Roman authors, from Ennius to Jordanes and Pope Gregory the Great (7th century), as well as through inscriptions from all the linguistic and cultural Greco-Roman territories, inscriptions found in Egyptian papyruses or on coins from the Thracian territories (Russu 1967: 47).

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

concerned, 910 are known, of which 700 are simple words and 210 are compound with the elements *-dava* (*Argedava, Piroboridava, Sucidava*), *-para* (*Αθυπαρα, Βενδιπαρα, Γελουπαρα*[4]), *-basta* (*Στρανβαστα, Τασιβαστα – CIL, III, 703*) "village", "town", or *-bria* (*Alaibria, Mesambria*[5]), *-dizos* (*Beodizos, Tarpodizos*) with the meaning of "citadel", "stronghold". Of the simple toponomastics, those that have been kept till the present times are hydronyms (*Marisius – Mureş*[6], *Samus – Someş)*, oronyms (*Carpaţi* "the Carpathians"), oiconyms (*Turda*). It is worth mentioning that, of the multitude of names of settlements from Dacia, including those from the first centuries *post Christum natum – Apulum, Drobeta, Porolissum, Sarmizegetusa*, etc. – only one is typically Latin (*Romula*), referring to a settlement situated on the inferior course of the *Alutus – Olt* river.

2.2. Getae-Dacian Anthroponyms

Anthroponyms are more numerous than toponyms; there are 1190 names recorded, of which 890 are simple and 300 compound. As opposed to the Illyro-Messapians, where there are only about 35 compounds out of the total of approximately 1000 names, with the Thraco-Getae the bimembral compounds add up to a quarter from the total.

> În numele compuse trace (la fel în numele greceşti, slave, celtice etc.), primul element alcătuitor este de obicei un adjectiv determinativ al celui de-al doilea (substantiv), de ex. *Germi-sara* «caldă apă (izvor)», *Diu-zenus* «din zeu născut» ori «de divină origine». Ca structură, elementele alcătuitoare ale numelor trace au în general un loc fix: fie în partea iniţială (*Aulu-, Dini-, Dia-, Epta-*), fie la sfârşit (*-centus, -poris* etc.). [In the compound Thracian names (just like in the Greek, Slavic, Celtic etc. ones), the first element is usually an adjective which acts as a determiner for the second element (a noun), for example *Germi-sara* 'warm water (spring)', *Diu-zenus* 'from gods born' or 'of divine origin'. In what structure is concerned, the components of the Thracian names generally have a fixed position: they appear either in the first part (*Aulu-, Dini-, Dia-, Epta-*), or in the final one (*-centus, -poris*, etc.)] (Russu 1970: 60–61).

Some examples of Dacian names, illustrative of bimembral components, are *Aulubeista, Aulucentus, Auluporis, Diagiza, Διασκενθος, Diastes, Diazenis, Eptacent(h)us, Epteporis, Decebalus, Biticentus, Mucacentus*. Some of the constituent elements also have variants, such as *-poris, -porus, -por*, a proof in this respect being examples like *Auluporis, Daleporis, Pieporus, Mucapor.* Other elements, however, can be suffixoids (*-buris, -bur: Mocabur*), as well as prefixoids: *Bur-* in *Burebista, Βουρκεντιος*. The situation is the same with *-sarios* (*Belisarius, Μαιοσαρα*) and *Saro-* (*Σαρατοκος, Σαρατος, Sarula*)[7].

[4] The spelling of the Thraco-Dacian names appears both in the Greek alphabet, as in the Latin one, considering that the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic space was under the direct influence of the Greco-Roman civilization, just like all the Eastern Mediterranean world.

[5] See Strabo, *Geographica* and Stephanus Byzantius: *τῆς πόλεως βριας καλουμένης Θρακιστί* (*apud* Russu 1967: 96).

[6] The first form is ancient, and the second is modern.

[7] See Russu (1967: 89–130) for further examples along with their etymological explanations, starting with the Indo-European stage and proceeding with multiple comparisons from the languages of the Antiquity.

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

Simple anthroponyms, made up of one root only, are preponderant, representing solely Indo-European bases: *Atta, Bastas, Bendis, Bila, Bisa, Bobas, Bosis, Cosis, Goca.* Some of them even have a derivative suffix (*Abro-zes, Dria-zis*), like *-nt-* (*Bubentis, Dorzenthes, Mucantius*), *-ng-* (*Consingas, Cosingis, Putinga*), *-sk-*[8] (*Ammadiscos, Daciscus, Dizasscos*), *-st-* (*Cozistes, Degistion, Diastes, Dizastes, Medistas, Romaesta*) (Russu 1967: 168–169). Thematic anthroponyms can be found in tens, even hundreds, of certifications, such as *Bithus* (370 cases), *Teres* (125), *Mucatralis* (120), *Seuthes* (115), *Cotys* (90), *Mucaporis / Mocaporis* (85), *Auluzanus / Auluzenus* (70), *Doles* (62), *Dudas* (48), *Tarsa* (42), *Tarula* (40), *Z(e)ipa* (33), *Mucatra* (30), *Sadala* (30) and others, according to I.I. Russu (1970: 60).

The Thraco-Dacians' names were individual (*Cotiso, Deceneu, Dicomes, Dromichaites)*, just like for the majority of the Indo-Europeans, as confirmed by the historico-literary and epigraphic texts from Illyricum, Thracia, Moesia or Dacia. Patronymics seem to had been missing, and each individual, man or woman, initially had only one name, an ethnic one, received in the family: *Aulucentus, Bato, Bithys, Bitritalis, Dasius, Decebalus, Sassa, Scorilo*. Beginning with the 5th century *a. Chr.*, when the Thracians were under Greek influence, filiation was implied through the name of the father in the genitive case. This manner of indicating kinship reveals information about descent and helps distinguish homonymous people within a family or gens. It can also be found in Greco-Roman texts: *Aulupor Aulusani* (*CIL, XIII, 11941*), *Αυλουπορις Μουκαπορεως*, *Bato Liccai, Clagissa Clagissae f(ilius) Bessus* (*CIL, XVI, 83*), *Dolanus Esbeni* (*CIL, XIII, 7585*), *Diurpaneus qui Euprepes, Sterissae f(ilius) Dacus* (*CIL, VI, 16903*), *Καρωσης Αυλουπορεως*, *Meticus Solae*.

2.3. Ancient anthroponymic connections in Dacia

The first change within the Thraco-Dacian anthroponymic system occurred as a consequence of the intense Hellenization process produced in the Black Sea area (*Pontus Euxinus)* and it was extended to the whole territory once the Romanization began. Its linguistic feature aimed not only at the mastering of the Latin language, in parallel with forgetting the native one, but also at the gradual appropriation of some Latin names: *Θουκυδίδης Ολορου*[9], *Ερμογένης Αυλουζενεος*, *Ηραὶς Διζαλου*, *Μηνόφιλος Αυλουζελμεως* (Russu 1967: 163), *C. Iulius Dizalae f(ilius) Fab(ia tribu) Gemellus* (*CIL, VI, 2645*), *Sex. Rufio Achilleo Sex. Rufius Decibalus fil(io)* (*CIL, VI, 25572*).

> Depinzând mai mult decât oricare aspect al limbii de comportamentul cultural al individului şi al generaţiilor, antroponimele sunt mult mai instabile decât toponimele [Depending more than any other linguistic aspect on the cultural behaviour of the individual and of the generations, anthroponyms are less stable than toponyms],

according to the *Encyclopaedia of Romance Languages* (1989: 28), and it is the reason for which I support the ethnic and historical process of Romanization.

[8] The *-esc* suffix from Romanian should not be explained through the Latin *-iscus*, and neither is it to be confounded with the Latin inchoative *-sc-*, as it comes from the Thraco-Dacian substratum and it can be found in numerous anthroponyms (*Ionescu, Popescu)* and toponyms *(Costeşti, Negreşti*) even today.

[9] The famous historian from Athens was the son of a Thracian (Thucyd., *IV, 10, 4*).

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

2.4. The Romanization of Thraco-Dacian names

First, the Thraco-Dacians adopted a Latin name, sometimes expressed through the formula *qui et*... ("also called…") – *Planius Baezi qui et Magister* –, and the indication of filiation, typical of the Thraco-Dacians, remains even after the Romanization, like in the following examples: *Caius Epicadi f(ilius), Cassius Dasantis, Gemellus Breuci, Maximus Diti, Quintus Mucatralis (filius)*. To once again prove the attachment towards the Roman values, many natives borrowed the classical Latin onomastic system with the *tria nomina*, in which the "barbaric", individual form takes the place of the cognomen: *P. Aelius Bitus* (*CIL, VI, 31151b14*), *Aurelius Aulutralis* (*CIL, III, 8118*), *T. Aurelius Bitus* (*CIL, VI, 3243*), *Aurelius Dizala* (*CIL, VI, 3202*), *T(itus) Flavius Plassus*, *M(arcus) Ulpius Bitus* (*CIL, VI, 31166*), *Marcus Valerius Dromochetas*, *Ulpius Aulucentus* (*CIL, III, 4378*) (Russu 1967: 164; 1981: 90). Nevertheless, replacing the "barbaric" names was not done uniformly and definitely, as long as one still finds recordings of

> cazuri de reveniri la nume trace în aceeaşi familie: nepotul primeşte numele naţional purtat de bunic, de ex. [cases of returning to the Thracian name within the same family: the grandson receives the national name born by the grandfather, for example] *Λυσίμαχος Βαστακιλου Θρᾲξ καὶ Βαστακιλας καὶ... ωμος οί υιοὶ αυτοῦ*, *Σαβαλα Αριστοδήμου*, *Claudius Terens*, son of *Cn. Claudius Leonticus*, *Mucasenus Ce(n)sorini* (*CIL, III, 1195*)" (Russu 1967: 163).

The abandoning of Dacian names and the adoption of Latin ones in the new province of Dacia has multiple explanations. The Dacian names did not help their bearers in any way; on the contrary, they were a disadvantage, as they could spark resentments immediately after the wars of 101–102 and 105–106 *p.Chr.* For their own good, it was safer for the natives to make their ancestral names forgotten and to adopt those of the conquerors[10]. Then, to enjoy the benefits granted by the Roman citizenship, many strived to achieve this status and, as a result of becoming Roman citizens, they became the owners of a Latin name. The Dacians who changed their names cannot be identified in the inscriptions, whereas those that kept their names did not leave any evidence regarding their existence. On the one hand, they were to a great extent deprived of their lands and political rights, so they did not have any fortune to leave to their descendants, and neither were there any descendants to honour them for any eventual inheritance. On the other hand, the majority lived in villages and their main occupations were related to agriculture and sheepherding. Therefore, they were not faced with the issues of erecting monuments and of making any kind of inscriptions[11]. Moreover, as they were uneducated, they did not know how to write, and, even if they had been literate, there was no point in turning to their fellows, since the culture and civilization were almost completely the appanage of the Roman conquerors.

[10] Traditional Dacian names, like *Decebalus, Diurpaneus, Scorilo*, „lipsesc din inscripţiile din Dacia, în timp ce ele se întâlnesc în afara provinciei, ca de pildă la Roma, în Britannia sau chiar în Moesia Inferior şi Pannonia, unde au fost duse trupele auxiliare de daci" [are absent from the Dacian inscriptions, while they can be found outside the province, like, for example, in Rome, in Britannia or even in Moesia Inferior and Pannonia, where the auxiliary troops made up of Dacians were taken] (Macrea 1969: 268).

[11] The common, ordinary life is never recorded, neither in epigraphic sources, nor in historical documents.

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

Dismissing the traditional Thraco-Dacian names in the favour of the Roman ones did not happen suddenly; it took place in time, throughout several centuries. Hyginus mentions the Dacians along with the peoples (*nationes*) from the Roman army who preserved their weapons and their battle cry (*De mun. castr., 29–30)*. Just like soldiers were brought to Dacia *ex toto orbe Romano*, Dacians were recruited, ever since the reign of emperor Trajan, for the auxiliary troops and the cohorts sent to Britannia, Cappadocia, Moesia Inferior, Moesia Superior, Pannonia and other provinces. The proof lays in the numerous inscriptions and historico-literary documents, which record people from all social strata, from slaves, freedmen, and soldiers to those from the core of the power in Rome (cf. Russu 1980), like emperor Galerius Maximianus (292–311)[12]. Another example is offered by historian Mihail Macrea (1969: 214), who speaks of 16 *equites singulares*, horsemen from the emperor's personal guards.

> Cei mai mulți își indică originea prin expresia *nat(ione) Dacus* sau într-un caz *Daciscus* […], iar despre un altul se spune că este originar din *colonia Malvese ex Dacia* [Most of them indicate their origin using the expression *nat(ione) Dacus* or, in a particular case, *Dascicus* […], and about another one they say he is a native from the *colonia Malvese ex Dacia]* (*CIL, XVI, 144*).

The next-to-last stage of the Romanization of Thraco-Dacian names refers to the situation when, besides the fully Roman *tria nomina*, the name of origin is kept for memory's sake. It is a *signum*, a sort of distinguishing souvenir from which the native does not want to or cannot part yet. This onomastic element, a kind of nickname connected through the formula *qui et* to the Latin name, appears

> destul de frecvent în inscripțiile greceşti şi latineşti din epoca imperială, mai ales în secolele III şi IV [frequently enough in the Greek and Latin inscriptions from the imperial period, especially in the 3rd and 4th centuries]: *Ael(ius) Vale(n)s qui et Esbenus* (*CIL, III, 8040*), *A. Iulius Valens qui et Diza Serri fil(ius)* (*CIL, X, 8374a*), *C. Iulius Victor qui et Sola Dini f(ilius)* (*CIL, X, 3593; CIL, II, 2984*), *M(arcus) Baebius Celer qui et Bato Dasantis (filius)* (Russu 1967:164).

The Thraco-Dacian anthroponyms finally disappeared completely only in the 6th–7th centuries *p.Chr*., but the ethnic indication of the bearer is still kept, attached to the tripartite Latin nomenclature: *Aurelius Iulianus nat. Dacus, M(arcus) Aurelius Fuscus natione Delmata, P(ublius) Aelius Avitus nat. Thrax, T(itus) Iulius Verecundus nati(one) Del(mata)* etc. As I.I. Russu (1981: 90) noted, if the national descent of the bearers was not mentioned, the "classical" Roman names could mask any distinctive feature regarding the ethnical and territorial provenance of the Romanized individuals, because most of the Latin-names bearers from Dacia, just like those from the other provinces, are not necessarily Italic, so much as Romanized provincials, but also natives who had recently been granted Roman citizenship.

[12] Eutropius, *IX, 22, 1*: „*Maximianus Galerius in Dacia haud longe a Serdica natus*"; *Epitome de Caesaribus:* „*ortus Dacia Ripensi ibique sepultus est, quem locum Romulianum vocabulo Romulae matris appellarat*"; Lact., *Mort. Persec., 9*: „*mater eius Transdanuviana infestantibus Carpis in Daciam novam transiecto amne confugerat*".

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

3. Anthroponymy in Roman Dacia

The statistics regarding the anthroponyms known from the Dacian inscriptions show that, of a total of approximately 2600 names, most of them – about 1920, meaning 74% – are Italic, which demonstrates the intense Romanization of the province. The names *Aelius*, *Aurelius* (~700 attested epigraphically), *Septimius* and *Severus* (~50), which represent over a quarter of the total number of names from the inscriptions, occurred with people who had recently been granted citizenship, during the reign of emperors Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Commodus, Septimius Severus and Caracalla. What distinguishes Dacia within the frame of the Roman Empire is

> frecvența extrem de mare a numelor imperiale (chiar fără a ține seama de numeroşii *Flavii* şi mai ales *Ulpii*), care întrece proporțional pe cea din oricare din provinciile vecine, ca Pannonia, cele două Moesii, Dalmația, spre a nu mai vorbi de provinciile apusene ale imperiului [the great frequency of imperial names (even without taking into account the numerous *Flavii* and especially *Ulpii*), which proportionally surpasses that of any other neighbouring province, like Pannonia, the two Moesias, Dalmatia, not to mention the western provinces of the Empire] (Macrea 1969: 267).

As a matter of fact, during the Antiquity, the imperial families were the trend-setters par excellence[13].

After the emperors, the representatives in Dacia were the governors of the province (*legati Augusti pro praetore)*, the officers in command of the legions (*legati Augusti legionis*), laticlavian tribunes (superior officers from the legions). Of the Roman citizens attested epigraphically, only a few are members of the senatorial order, the privileged stratum of the ruling class in the Empire. The rest are of plebeian origin, none of them comes from a patrician family. They are only passing through Dacia, where they rest only as much as it takes for them to perform their military duties or their civil functions[14]; their stay is mentioned both in the Carpathian-Danubian space, and in other parts of the Empire: Italy, Africa, Syria, Numidia etc. Examples from the first century of Roman domination are: *M. Macrinius Avitus, M. Sedatius Severianus, L. Aemilius Carus, C. Arrius Antoninus, C. Vettius Sabinianus, L. Vespronius Candidus, Ti. Manilius Fuscus, T. Flavius Ianuarius, Iulius Pacatianus, T. Flavius Longinus, M. Ulpius Apollinaris, T. Flavius German(i)us, Aelius Constans, C. Sempronius Urbanus, Ti. Claudius Xenophon, C. Valerius Catullinus, Polus Terentianus, P. Septimius Geta*[15]*, Tib. Claudius Claudianus, C. Iulius Corinthianus*; during the 3rd century *p. Chr.*: *C. Iulius Maximinus, L. Octavius Iulianus, L. Pomponius Liberalis, P. Mevius Surus, Claudius Gallus, P. Aelius Gemellus, Herennius Gemellinus, M. Herennius Faustus,*

[13] Jérôme Carcopino observed in *Viața cotidiană în Roma la apogeul imperiului* [Every-day Life in Rome during the Apogee of the Empire] (1979: 208–211) that the emperor and his wife were trend-setters even in matters of hairstyle, trends which crossed borders with the help of the statues and busts that flooded even the farthest provinces.

[14] Until Septimius Severus, the military officers were with no exceptions from outside the province, initially from Italy and from areas Romanized a long time ago. Those known from inscriptions are about 1000.

[15] The brother of Septimius Severus.

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide”
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

D. Terentius Scaurianus, L. Octavius Felix, T. Cornasidius Sabinus, P. Aelius Sempronius Lycinus, M. Cocceius Genialis, T. Aurelius Flavinus, Iulius Paternus, L. Marius Perpetuus, L. Antonius Marinianus, Marcius Claudius Agrippa, M. Antonius Valentinus and others (Macrea 1969: 49–94). Most of these present the "classical" Latin structure, derived from the *praenomen – nomen gentile – cognomen* system.

3.1. *Praenomen – nomen – cognomen*

The terminology of the Roman names, even if well-structured, sometimes seems ambiguous. Pierre-Henri Billy (1996: 4) mentions that the *praenomen* was given at birth, *gentilicium* was the name of descent, *agnomen* – the personal sobriquet, and the *cognomen* designated both the name of the inhabitants of a house (from the *pater familias* to the slaves) and the individual sobriquet. *Nomen* was used to refer to the *gentilicium* and the *cognomen*.

Of the poor inventory of Latin forenames[16], about 10 can be found in Dacia, as well, even if abbreviated – a common fact both with complex nominal formulas and with inscriptions: *Decimus, Gaius, Gnaeus, Lucius, Marcus, Publius, Quintus, Servius, Sextus, Spurius, Titus, Tiberius*. In inscriptions, starting with the second half of the 2nd century, the forename is omitted, it being considered dispensable.

Gentile names end in the *-ius* adjectival termination; they were „la origine mai ales patronimice formate de la (supra)nume individuale: prenume în uz în perioada clasică sau abandonate" [to begin with, mostly patronymics derived from individual (by)names: forenames used in the classical period or those that were abandoned] (*Marcius* < *Marcus, Octavius* < *Octavus*), or even nicknames (Claudius < *claudus* "limp").

> În perioada imperială apar noi formații de la teme străine (greceşti sau de alte origini), de la nume etnice, nume de luni, compuse cu numele generic al divinității [During the Imperial period, new formations from foreign themes (of Greek or of other origin) appear, from ethnic names, names of months, compounds with the generic name of a divinity] (*E.L.R.* 1989: 216).

The use of multiple gentile names is not out of the ordinary in the anthroponymic system from Roman Dacia, being initially favoured by numerous adoptions: *C. Iulius Septimius Castinus*, a consular legate during the time of Caracalla (*CIL, III, 7638*).

Functionally speaking, besides the *individual names* (forenames), which designate by self-reference, and the *collective names* (the gentile names), which designate by reference to the group to which the individual belongs, what is representative of the tripartite Latin system of denomination is the *individual sobriquet* (*the cognomen*). During the Imperial age, it loses its individuality and becomes fixed, being handed down from generation to generation, as proven by the inscriptions related to families from the Dacia province. There are often indications of filiation, homeland, or residence.

[16] According to the list of 18 Latin forenames mentioned by Varro.

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

3.2. Changes within the classical Latin anthroponymic system

Apart from the classical tripartite nominal system[17], established since the days of Sulla, radical changes are recorded in the Carpathian-Danubian space beginning with the 3rd century *p. Chr.*:

> numele de familie (uneori dublu sau chiar multiplu) devine principalul element denominativ; se dezvoltă supranumele (*supernomen* sau *signum*); formula […] se simplifică la două sau la un singur nume, adesea individual şi neereditar) [the family name (sometimes double or even multiple) becomes the main element of the denomination; the sobriquet is developed (*supernomen* or *signum*); the formula […] is simplified to two names or to one name only, often individual and noninheritable)] (*E.L.R.* 1989: 29).

The most numerous are the bipartite examples, disseminated throughout the whole territory of the province[18]: *Iul. Paternus* (*CIL, III, 1565*), *Simonius Iulianus* (*CIL, III, 1573*), *Iul. Valerianus* (*CIL, III, 1579*), *P. Pontia(nus)* (*CIL, III, 6271*), *Aurel. Annianus* (*CIL, III, 7916*), *Iulius Flavianus* (*CIL, III, 1557*), *Varen(ius) Pudens* son of *T. Varenius Probus* (*CIL, III, 1482*), *Crassus Macrobius* (*CIL, III, 7894*), *Lucius Crattius* (*CIL, III, 12576*), *Domitius Herculanus* (*CIL, III, 1339*), *Firmi(us) Florentinus* (CIL, III, 7888). The rarer unique name prepares the passage towards the Medieval denomination system: *Aurelius Flavus* (a merchant mentioned in *CIL, III, 7761*), *Cornelianus* (*CIL, III, 1438*), *Maximinus* (officer in the V Macedonica legion), *Paulus dec(urio) col(oniae)* (*CIL, III, 1580*), *Surus* (*CIL, III, 8008*). Many of these are soldiers, but this comes as no surprise if we consider that the forces of the Roman armies were consistent throughout the domination: during Hadrian – around 30.000 soldiers, divided into a legion and several auxiliary troops; after the reorganization from 167-169, the number of soldiers grew to approximately 50.700, disposed as follows: in Dacia Porolissensis ~18.600, in Dacia Apulensis (Superior) ~ 20.600, and in Dacia Malvensis (Inferior) ~11.500. These figures seem great, but they are only natural if we take into consideration the province's peripheral position within the Empire and its massive colonization, as described by Eutropius: *Traianus, victa Dacia, ex toto orbe Romano infinitas eo copias hominum transtulerat, ad agros et urbes colendas* (*VIII, 6, 2*). The historian from the 4th century further on presents the reason put forward by Hadrian's friends to support the keeping of the province when, being only recently crowned, the emperor wanted to abandon it, just as he had done with the other conquests made by Trajan, his predecessor: *idem de Dacia facere conatum amici deterruerunt ne multi cives Romani barbaris traderentur* (*VIII, 6, 2*). The migration of the population from outside continued in Dacia throughout the 2nd century and during the first half of the 3rd one. The origin of the colonists was heterogeneous, both in matters of ethnic texture, and in matters of places of origin: first from Italy, then the great majority

[17] Illustrated by a number of governors of Dacia: *Q. Marcius Turbo* (*CIL, III, 1462*), *D. Terentius Gentianus* (*CIL, III, 1463*), *C. Curtius Proculus* (*CIL, III, 1458*), *P. Furius Saturninus* (*CIL, III, 943*), *M. Statius Priscus* (*CIL, III, 7882*).

[18] Roman Dacia included, to a great extent, the Banat, Oltenia and Transylvania (strictly speaking) areas; it was described by Jordanes as being like a fortress protected by tall mountains, which encircle it like a wreath: *Dacia est ad coronae speciem arduis Alpibus emunita* (*Getica, 34*).

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

came from the neighbouring provinces (the two Moesias, Pannonia, Thracia and Dalmatia), but also from more distant areas.

3.4. Greek anthroponyms in Roman Dacia

The important flow of colonists from the whole territory of the Roman Empire is also reflected in what onomastics is concerned, by the names discovered in Dacia, which reveals a great variety of the population[19]. Second in line after the Italic Roman anthroponyms are the Greek or Hellenic ones, such as *Achilleus, Alexander, Antipater, Apollonius, Artemidorus, Callisthenes, Callistus, Demetrius, Diogenes, Dionysius, Eupator, Hermes, Philetus, Socrates, Theodorus, Timotheus, Zeno* etc. Their bearers are not necessarily of Greek descent; they may be provincials from the Balkans – which had already been exposed to the Greek influence for many centuries –, from the Orient or Asia Minor, who came to Dacia as merchants. They represent about 13%, being attested more than 350 times, and the Greek names reflect the cultural, political, economic and religious influences within the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic space. Many of these individuals are found in Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa, being slaves (the great majority), freedmen, Augustales or peregrine elements.

3.5. Illyrian anthroponyms in Roman Dacia

Next in line, in decreasing order, the Illyrian names come 3rd, with about 110 confirmations (~4%) and they reflect the share this people had in the ethnic configuration of Dacia. Coming from Dalmatia and from some parts of Pannonia, the Illyrian colonists were, to a great extent, miners and merchants, settled in the auriferous region in the Apuseni Mountains[20], where they formed compact groups in certain localities, which concentrate more than 2/3 of the total number of inscriptions with Illyrian names (agreements, documents inscribed on wax or stone tablets): *Ael(ia) Andena* (*CIL, III, 1488*), *Anduenna Batonis (fil.)* (*CIL, III, 930*), *Bato* (7 attestations), *Bedarus* (*CIL, III, 917*), *Dasius* (6 attestations, of which 3 are with *-ss-*), *Epicadus* (7 different characters, one spelled *Aepicadus – CIL. III, 956*), *Scenobarbus* (*CIL. III, 7800* + 4 other evidences), *Verzo* (*CIL, III, 1271* + 4 other homonymous characters) and others. Some adopted the Latin trinominal system, but also keeping an Illyrian cognomen: *Publius Aelius Ariortus* (*CIL, III, 8009*) sau *M. Aur(elius) Scenobarbus* (*CIL, III, 1265*).

[19] Very well-structured bibliographical sources are the studies made by Ion I. Russu, published in "Anuarul Institutului de Studii clasice" [The Annual of the Institute of Classical Studies] – *Onomasticon Daciae. Numele de persoane în inscripţiile provinciei* [Names of persons in the province's inscriptions] (vol. IV, 1941–1943, MCMXLIV, Sibiu, p. 186–233) and *Rectificări şi adause la „Onomasticon Daciae"* [Amendments and additions to the *Onomasticon Daciae*] (vol V, 1944–1948, MCMXLIX, Cluj, p. 282–296) –, as an answer and addendum to the book by Kerényi András, 1941, *A Dáciai személynevek (Die Personennamen von Dazien)* [Dacian Names of Persons], Budapesta, 303 p.

[20] We are referring to Alburnus Maior (Roşia Montană, Abrud and present-day Zlatna), which is even nowadays a very attractive landscape, especially in what concerns auriferous exploitation, although it is over 2000 years old.

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

3.6. Thraco-Dacian anthroponyms in Roman Dacia

Replacing the national ancestral names with Italic ones and, generally speaking, with Roman ones is clearly a symptom of the very strong current of the Romanization the provincials underwent, regardless of their ethnic origin. It is to be found in the case of the Thraco-Dacians, as well, and that is why not many anthroponymic evidences were preserved (about 70, meaning approximately 3%). The rare occurrence of the Thraco-Dacian names in Roman Dacia was already explained above; however, it is worth mentioning the fact that many names may belong to the Thracians coming from the south of the Danube, though it is almost impossible to make a clear distinction, as we are talking about minor dialectal differences: *Balius* (*CIL, VI, 10767*), *Brais* (*CIL. VI, 37261*), *Diales* (*CIL, III, 4146*) with his son *Ditucentus* (*CIL, III, 835*), *Esbenus* + wife *Sira* (*CIL, III, 8040*), *Potazis* (*CIL, VI, 32542*), *Tzino* (*CIL, III, 870*). I.I. Russu (1944: 217–218) observes that, of the approximately 52 epigraphic evidences with 92 names of soldiers/officers and about 30 other ones, with around 40 Dacian civilians,

> o mică parte dintre aceşti provinciali au nume naţionale dacice; cei mai mulţi poartă nume de cea mai bună factură romană, ca *M. Aur. Lucianus, P. Aelius Victorinus, C. Iulius Herculanus, C, Marius Gemellinus* [a small part of these provincials have national Dacian names; most of them bear names with an obviously illustrative Roman structure, like *M. Aur. Lucianus, P. Aelius Victorinus, C. Iulius Herculanus, C, Marius Gemellinus*].

Autochtonous names represent the majority in other regions of the Empire, a fact shown by the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum III* (Bulgaria, Macedonia)*, VI* (Rome)*, VII* (Britannia)*, VIII* (Algeria)*, XI* (Ravenna)*, XV* (Rome)*, XVI* (Bulgaria).

3.7. Oriental anthroponyms in Roman Dacia

About as many as the Thraco-Dacian names are the Oriental ones: Semitic (Syrian), Egyptian, Iranian. Even if they did not come in great numbers, the Helenophone Orientals[21] excelled in the erection of inscriptions, from which we find out that they came to Dacia either as soldiers, or as merchants and businessmen. What also "helped" them to become "immortal" was the Oriental fashion, reflected especially in the religious background from the 2nd and 3rd centuries *p. Chr*., when many Semitic and Persian divinities and cults were adopted. The Egyptian names revealed by the archeological discoveries are *Iul. Arphocras* (*CIL, III, 6254*), *P. Aelius Hammonius* (on a votive inscription from Sarmizegetusa), *C. Valerius Sarapio* (*CIL, III, 1003*, from Apulum, in Transylvania); some of the Persian names are *Aur. Arimo* (*CIL, III, 12565*), *Arzakeios* (from Alburnus Maior), *Farnax* (two characters from Apulum – *CIL, III, 986* –, Potaissa, respectively – *CIL, III, 7688*), *Sattara* (*CIL, III, 1322*). Most of the Oriental names belong to the Syrians, many being natives from Palmyra: *Ael(ia) Habib(is)* (*CIL, III, 7999*), priest *Flavius Barhadadi* (*CIL, III, 7760*), *Gaddes* (*CIL, III, 8000*), *Godes* (*CIL, III, 8065*), *Iarse*

[21] Although they were Greek speakers, most of the inscriptions are in Latin (only two have Semitic characters), as this was the universal language of the Antiquity, with the help of which people could get along regardless of their ethnic or geographical background.

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

(*CIL. III, 7998*), *Salmas* (from Porolissum, v. *CIL, III, 837*), *Surillio* (*CIL, III, 7693*)[22], *Theimes* (*CIL, III, 7954*, along with 3 other inscriptions with the same name) and so on.

3.8. Celtic anthroponyms in Roman Dacia

Most of the immigrant population from Dacia was made up of Dalmatian Illyrians, Italics and provincials from the western areas, but also of Celtic elements, initially coming from Pannonia and Noricum, and later on from the Rhine area.

> Este o dovadă elocventă despre remarcabila intensitate a legăturilor Daciei cu regiunile apusene ale lumii romane şi de preponderența romanismului occidental şi a graiului latin în provincia carpatică [It is an eloquent proof regarding the remarkable intensity of Dacia's ties with the western regions of the Roman world and of the supremacy of the Western Romanity and the Latin language in the Carpathian province] (Russu 1949: 294).

The relatively small number of Celts mentioned in the Dacian inscriptions (just a bit more than 50) can be explained through the geographical distance of the Celtic regions from the central and the western parts of Europe in relation to the Carpathin-Danubian space. The Celtic anthroponymic evidences are: *Attio* (*CIL, III, 1400*), *Birsus* (*CIL, III, 13766*), *Cimio* (*CIL, III, 7975*), *Iestinus* (*CIL, III, 1221*), *Sameccus* (*CIL, III, 7828*), *Suanus* (*CIL, III, 1185*). An inscription with several Celtic names was discovered in Potaissa (*CIL, III, 917*): *D. M. Aia Nandonis vixit annis LXXX, Andrada Bi[t]uvantis vix. anis LXXX, Bricena vixit anis XL…*[23]

3.9. Feminine denomination in Roman Dacia

Within the last example, feminine names also occur, with the indication of paternity. As anthroponyms, they have several peculiarities described by the *Encyclopaedia of Romance Languages*. Initially,

> femeile nu aveau prenume; minorele erau desemnate în intimitate cu nume comune, eventual numerale indicând ordinea naşterii (*Secunda, Tertia*), iar tinerele majore, obligatoriu, cu forma de feminin a numelui gentilic patern […], asociată uneori cu o expresie patronimică […] sau cu un nume de familie derivat cu *-illa* sau *-ina* […]; la căsătorie, soția adăuga numele soțului [women did not have a forename;

[22] The form Syrillio appears on another inscription.

[23] „Multe dintre inscripțiile monumentale (*scripturae monumentales*) din Dacia prezintă numeroase stângăcii, imperfecțiuni şi forme de litere proprii altor alfabete, astfel că s-a alcătuit o adevărată *scriptura vulgaris*, caracterizată tocmai prin amestecul formelor de litere şi redactarea lor stângace, lipsită de eleganță. Tăblițele cerate sunt scrise în alfabetul cursiv, *scriptura cursiva*" [Many of the monumental inscriptions (*scripturae monumentales*) from Dacia present numerous samples of clumsiness, imperfections and letters from other alphabets, so that it resulted in the construction of a genuine *scriptura vulgaris*, characterized exactly by the mixture of letter patterns and their clumsy, graceless spelling. The wax tablets are written in a 'running' hand, *scriptura cursiva*" (Macrea 1969: 339). The language of the Dacian inscriptions is similar to that from other provinces from the late Imperial period, but it does not betray any autochtonous influence. It is difficult to find in the inscriptians from Eastern Romania samples of vulgar language or violations of the literary norm which cannot be encountered in the other provinces, as well, both regarding phonetics, and concerning morphology and syntax.

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

> minors were referred to in intimate circles with common names or numerals to indicate the order in which they were born (*Secunda, Tertia*), and the young women who attained full legal age had to be referred to with the feminine form of the paternal gentile name […], sometimes accompanied by a patronymic expression […] or by a family name derived with *-illa* or *-ina* […]; once married, the wife received the husband's name" (*E.R.L.* 1989: 29).

The inscriptions from Roman Dacia are full of such examples: *Aelia Adiuta* (*CIL, III, 1473*), *Aelia Hygia*, the wife and freedwoman of *Ael. Valent[inus]* (*CIL, III, 7868*), *Aelia Romana* (*CIL, III, 1423*), *Aurelia Rogata* (*CIL, III, 12596*), *Baebatia Gamicen* (*CIL, III, 8011*), *Cassia Saturnina* (*CIL, III, 1230*), *Fabia Lucilla* (*CIL, III, 1207*), *Flavia Ingenua* (*CIL, III, 1557*), *He[renia] Valentina* (*CIL, III, 7894*), *Iunia Cyrilla* (*CIL, III, 1561*), *Lusia Prisca* (*CIL, III, 1414*), *Maria*[24] *Donata* (*CIL, III, 8008*), *Sextia Augustina* (*CIL, III, 14471*), *Valeria Blandiana* (*CIL, III, 6271*), *Ulp(ia) Opiava* (*CIL, III, 7892*). The bearers' ethnic origins are diverse, as can be seen in the *nomina gentilicia* and the *cognomina* just mentioned. Even if scarce, there are, nonetheless, examples in which the *praenomina* appears: *P(ublia) Ael(ia) Ingenua… et P(ublia) Ing(enua) Florentina* (sisters from a funerary inscription in Tibiscum), *Lucia Aelia Nices* (*CIL, III, 1548*), *P. Iulia Successa* (*CIL, III, 7998*). In *Viața în Dacia romană* [Life in Roman Dacia], Mihail Macrea mentions polyonomies,

> în cazul fetelor adoptate, ca de pildă *Publia Aelia Iuliana Marcella*, fiica lui *P. Aelius Iulianus* şi adoptiva lui *P. Ael(ius) Marcellus* de la Apulum (*CIL, III, 1182*). Se întâlnesc şi la femei uneori porecle, de pildă *Septimia Septimina quae et Revocata*, care, ca fiică şi moştenitoare (*filia et heres*), ridică împreună cu mama sa piatra de mormânt tatălui său la Sarmizegetusa [in the case of adopted girls, like *Publia Aelia Iuliana Marcella*, daughter of *P. Aelius Iulianus* and adoptive daughter of *P. Ael(ius) Marcellus* from Apulum (*CIL, III, 1182*). Nicknames can occur with women, as well, for example *Septimia Septimina quae et Revocata*, who, as daughter and heiress (*filia et heres*), erects together with her mother her father's funeral monument in Sarmizegetusa] (Macrea 1969: 412).

Unique names are not rare; they usually point to an inferior social status: *Alexandria*, coming from Egipt (*CIL, III, 8002*), *Antonia* (*CIL, III, 7987*), *Glavicida, Valeria, Velavia* etc.

3.10. Romanized families. An anthroponymic perspective

Regarding family life, the inscriptions offer quite many evidences about people bearing the same gentile name. The complete trinominal formula appears almost with no exceptions with the Roman citizens from the most notable families, along with the marker of filiation, even after the second half of the 2nd century, when forenames begin to be omitted sometimes from inscriptions: *Aurelius Peditianus* (son of *Aurelius Peditus*), *P. Ael. Aelian(us)* (son of *Piper(as)* and of *Aeliae Epictesis*), *M. Procilius Regulus* (son of *M. Procilius Niceta – CIL, III, 1509*). Both the forename and the gentile name are shared within the family; it is only the cognomen that distinguishes them from one another, this name having an individual

[24] Perhaps an early evidence of the settling of Christianity in Dacia.

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

value[25]. The first born can take over the father's name, either intactly, or transformed into an adjectival derivative. It is why *praenomina* and *gentilicia* can be used in the plural. Mihail Macrea mentions

> inscripție onorară de la Sarmizegetusa pusă în cinstea lui *C. Iul(ius) C. f(ilius) Pap(iria tribu) Valerius* de către fiii săi *C(ai) Iulii Valerianus, Carus et Fronto*, împreună cu surorile lor *Valeria et Carissima*. Primul fiu şi prima fiică îşi formează cognomenul după tată, al doilea fiu şi a doua fiică îşi formează cognomenul probabil după mamă, nenumită în inscripție [an honorary inscription from Sarmizegetusa made in honor of *C. Iul(ius) C. f(ilius) Pap(iria tribu) Valerius* by his sons *C(ai) Iulii Valerianus, Carus et Fronto*, together with their sisters *Valeria et Carissima*. The first son and the first daughter form their cognomen after their father, the second son and the second daughter probably form their cognomen after their mother, who is not mentioned in the inscription] (Macrea 1969: 412).

Other examples of families immortalized through inscriptions, even if with different types of kinship relations between their members, are: *T. Fl. Rufus*, a veteran born in Cappadocia, together with *Iul(ia) Maxima* had three children: *Fl(avia) Venusta, Maximus, Rufinus* (*CIL, III, 971*); *Ianuaria Titia* gave birth to *L. Ianuarius Romulus* and to *Ianuaria Pupa* (*CIL, III, 1236*); knight *T. Varen(ius) Sabinianus* had for sister *Varenia Probina* (*CIL, III, 1198*); *T. Fl. Italicus* was married to *Statilia Lucia* (*CIL, III, 1132*); *Cominius Celerinus* had two daughters – *Cominia Sperata* and *Cominia Caecilia* – and a son, *M. Cominius Quintus* (*CIL, III, 1473*).

3.11. Anthroponymy in Roman Dacia. A sociolinguistic perspective

From a sociolinguistic point of view, the names preserved from Roman Dacia cover the whole range of social categories, from the ruling, military, civilian and religious classes to slaves and freedmen[26]. For example, *Iulius Pacatianus, L. Quaesidius Praesens, L. Aelius Terentianus, M. Cominius Quintus, Sextus Attius Secundinus* were superior magistrates in Dacian towns, such as Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa, Apulum, Napoca, Drobeta, Romula, Tibiscum, Potaisa. These individuals, along with those belonging to the equestrian order and holding certain positions and dignities in the urban regions, have typically Italic names: *C. Iulius Diocletianus, M. Procilius Regulus, P. Aelius Marcellus, [P. Anto]nius Valens, T. Flavius Ianuarius*. *Pontifices* appear in inscriptions from Sarmizegetusa, Apulum, Napoca, Tibiscum; not at all forgotten are the *flamines*, whose job was to make public sacrifices, or *augures*, and to consult the will of the gods. Even a *haruspex* is testified in Apulum, in the person of *C. Iulius Valens* (*CIL, III, 1114*). There are epigraphic evidences of „edilii (*aediles*) care se ocupau cu îngrijirea pieţelor, a străzilor şi a clădirilor publice, cu asigurarea ordinii, aprovizionarea publică, organizarea jocurilor, a banchetelor" [the aediles (*aediles*) who dealt with the maintenance of the markets, streets and public buildings, with maintaining order, public provisions, organizing games and banquets (Macrea 1969: 139) in Sarmizegetusa, Apulum, Potaisa, Napoca and Romula. Two of them are *Marcus*

[25]According to I. Kajanto (1965), *The Latin Cognomina*, *apud* Macrea (1969: 412).

[26] I have already talked about the governors of the province or the superior authorities, as well as about soldiers and their commanding officers.

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

Aurelius Cassianus and *Marcus Aurelius Veteranus*. The names of merchants could not be absent from the inscriptions, as they were the elements that facilitated the dissemination throughout the whole Empire both of the Latin language and of some ethnic peculiarities: the Orientals *Aurelius Alexander, Aurelius Flavus* (*CIL, III, 7761*), *L. Aurelius Trophimus* (*CIL, III, 1061*), *T. Aurelius Narcissus*, probably a native (*CIL, III, 1068*), *T. Fabius Illiomarus* (*CIL, III, 1214*).

Also mentioned are simple people of diverse origins, who reach better positions by obtaining the title of Augustales: *C. Titius Agathopus, Flavius Sotericus, M. Aurelius Timon, M. Ulpius Hermias* (*CIL, III, 1425*), *M. Valerius Longinus* (*medicus legionis VII Claudiae – CIL, III, 14216*), *Q. Vibius Amillus, Septim(ius) Ascl(epius) Hermes*, freedman of the temple of Aesculap[27], *T. Claudius Anicetus, Tib. Claudius, T. Flavius Flavianus*. As Al. Graur observes in *Nume de persoane* [Names of persons], freedmen „luau de obicei prenumele şi numele gentilic al fostului stăpân, la care adăugau porecla din timpul sclaviei, drept cognomen" [usually took the forename and gentile name of their former master, to which they added the nickname they had while slaves, as cognomen] (1965: 41). However, according to the Late Latin pattern, this is also a case of not respecting the trinominal rule, a proof in this sense being the anthroponyms discovered in Roman Dacia: *D. Baebatius Chrisantus* (*CIL, III, 8011*), *Fabricius*[28] (*CIL, III, 1553*), *Ianuarius* (*CIL, III, 7903*), *L. Aeli(us) Hylas* (*CIL, III, 7729*), *Licin[ius] Eup[r]epes*[29] (*CIL, III, 1382*), *Logismus* (*CIL, III, 7981*), *M. Turranius Patroclus* (*CIL, III, 1548*), *P. Ael. Euphorus* (*CIL, III, 1363*), *Q. Aur. Saturninus* (*CIL, III, 7981*). The slaves had only one name, a common custom for this social class. The name could be Greco-Oriental – like in the case of some slaves brought to Ampelum from the Orient to work in the administrative body, as they were very skilled technicians and organizers: *Callistus* (*CIL, III, 1301*), *Diocles* (*CIL, III, 1295*), *Diogenes, Hermias* (*CIL, III, 1312*), *Leonas* (*CIL, III, 1305*), *Sostratos* (*CIL, III, 7836*), *Zmaragdus* (*CIL, III, 1286*) – or Latin: *Fuscinus* (*CIL, III, 1315*), *Iustinus, Tertius* (*CIL, III, 1314*), *Mercurius* (*CIL, III, 1300*), *Neptunalis* (*CIL, III, 1303*), *Verus* and *Romanus* (*CIL, III, 1303, 7837*) (Tudor 1968: 187). There are also slaves with names typical of other ethnic groups, like *Butes* (*CIL, III, 7893*) or *Dades* (*CIL, III, 1181*).

4. Anthroponymy in Eastern Romania[30]

The richness of inscriptions from the 2nd and 3rd centuries does not continue after the retreat of the Roman administration south of the Danube, in 271–275 *p. Chr*. Emperor Aurelian withdrew the army and a part of the civilian population from Dacia, in order to better cope with the all too zealous attacks of the migrating people. The decrease in the number of epigraphic evidences means, in what

[27] *Libertus numinis Aesculapi habens ornamenta decurionalia coloniae Apulensis* (*CIL, III, 1079*).

[28] „Numele gentilic *Fabricius* se dădea foştilor liberţi ai unui atare colegiu (*fabrum*), el derivând de la *faber* 'meşteşugar'" [The gentile name *Fabricius* was given to former freedmen of this particular college (*fabrum*), it being derived from *faber* "craftsman"] (Tudor 1968: 71).

[29] *C. Licinius Ponticus* was the patron.

[30] *Romania*, "the totality of the Romance world", should not be confounded with *Romania*, a country situated in the Central-Southeastern Europe, which will also be mentioned further on.

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

onomastics is concerned, the decrease in the number of certifications of Latin names. They did not disappear suddenly, but they continued to be perpetuated, more timidly, transforming along with the passage from Vulgar Latin to Romanian. During the Late Imperial period, especially during the 3rd–5th centuries, the Latin anthroponymic system suffers radical changes, summarized in the *Encyclopaedia of Romance Languages* (1989: 29):

> [...] numele de familie (uneori dublu sau chiar multiplu) devine principalul element denominativ; se dezvoltă supranumele (*supernomen* sau *signum*); formula se amplifică (polionomie), dar mai frecvent se simplifică la 2 sau la un singur nume (adesea individual şi neereditar), considerat, în sec. V, suficient în uzul popular, al inscripţiilor creştine sau al unor documente oficiale; se constituie şi se extinde categoria numelor de botez creştine [the surname (sometimes double or even multiple) becomes the main denomination element; the sobriquet (*supernomen* or *signum*) is developed; the formula is amplified (polyonomy), but, more frequently, it is simplified to two names or only one name (often individual and nonheritable), considered, in the 5th century, sufficient in the popular use, in that of Christian inscriptions or of certain official documents; what is constituted and expanded is the category of baptismal names],

biblical, hagiographic or calendar names, which in Eastern Romania come from Greek and Hebrew, via the Slavic channel. Just as in Western Romania the Germanic names played a decisive role in the Medieval anthroponymic system, in the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic space the usage of the unique, Slavic name is predominant. Of the Greco-Latin anthroponyms preserved from the formation period of the Romanian language (results of the regular phonetic evolution), we note: *Îndre, Îndrea, Undrea* < *Andreas*; *Îndon, Înton* < *Antonius*; *Barbura, Barbără, Barboră, Barbăr, Barbur, Barbu* < *Barbara*; *Medrea, Medru* < *Demetrius*; *Georz, Giorzu, Zorj* < *Georgius*; *Nicoară, Necora* < *Nicolaus*.

4.1. The Medieval anthroponymic model in the Romanian Countries

The destiny of the Romanian onomastics and the history of the three Romanian provinces are interdependent. If in Moldova and Wallachia the Balkan type of Orthodoxy is linguistically reflected in anthroponyms, as well, in Transylvania[31] the Latin language is official until the middle of the 19th century. Viorica Goicu (2008: 85–86) mentions several Romanian names from the Hungarian documents written in 1360 in Latin:

> Conform uzajului administrativ maghiar, scribii distingeau subiecţii prin următoarele structuri:
>
> 1. Prenume + patronim: *Demetrius filius Borbat*;
> 2. Prenume + nume de origine: *Dusa de Domsus*;
> 3. Prenume + poreclă: *Stoyan Pityc dictus* (cf. românescul *pitic*), Bazarab Longus;
> 4. Prenume + denumirea seniorului, a proprietarului (pentru micii nobili şi ţăranii liberi), tipul: *Myhel iobagio Bazarab Longi* (aici *iobagio* „vasal”);
> 5. Combinarea tipului 1 şi 2: *Baya filius Buz de Clapatiua*

[31] As part of the Habsburg (Austro-Hungarian) Empire, Transylvania received influences from the Catholic and Protestant west until the First World War.

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide”
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

[According to the Hungarian administrative usage, the scribes distinguished subjects through the following structures:

1. Forename + patronym: *Demetrius filius Borbat*;

2. Forename + name of origin: *Dusa de Domsus*;

3. Forename + nickname: *Stoyan Pityc dictus* (according to the Romanian *pitic*), Bazarab Longus;

4. Forename + the name of the lord or of the owner (for the small nobility and the freed peasants): *Myhel iobagio Bazarab Longi* (here *iobagio* means „vasal");

5. A combination between type 1 and 2: *Baya filius Buz de Clapatiua*].

Sometimes we have mentions of the ecclesiastical hierarchy (*Petrus archydiaconus de Oztro*), and the double name appears as early as 1326: *Stan alias Barczan binominatus*. From this we may understand that

> în Transilvania, încă din prima jumătate a secolului al XIV-lea, au coexistat două sisteme de denominaţie, unul oficial impus de uzul administrativ al vremii şi altul popular, în ambele fiind consemnată prezenţa unor nume duble, cel de-al doilea nume fiind adeseori un supranume sau o poreclă [in Transylvania, beginning with the first half of the 14th century, two systems of denominations have co-existed: an official one imposed by the administrative use of the time and a popular one; the presence of several double names can be observed in both systems, with the second name often being a sobriquet or a nickname][32].

In the Middle Ages, the Romanian historical documents record few names of Latin descent, as the specialized studies show[33].

> Analiza etimologică a prenumelor feminine folosite în secolele XIV–XVI arată că inventarul acestora era constituit din elemente aparţinând onomasticonului ecleziastic de factură greco-slavă, fondului tradiţional slav şi fondului tradiţional românesc [The etymological analysis of the feminine forenames used in the 14th-16th centuries show that their inventory consisted of elements belonging to the Greco-Slavic ecclesiastical onomasticon, to the traditional Slavic wordstock or to the traditional Romanian one] (Reguş, Reguş 1999: 67).

The influence of the Slavic language used by the church and the administration is felt in the cultivated form of the Romanian names from Moldova and Wallachia to the same extent as the influence of Medieval Latin in the western Romance anthroponymy.

---

[32] In Hungary, the double name system appears in documents written in Latin as early as the 12th century, only to become generalized in the 14th century.

[33] Of these studies, we mention: Petru Caraman, *L'héritage romain dans l'anthroponymie roumaine*, în *Actele celui de-al XII-lea Congres internaţional de lingvistică şi filologie romanică* [*Actes du XII^e Congrès International de Linguistique et de Philologie Romanes*], Bucureşti, 1970, p. 1107–1113; N.A. Constantinescu, *Dicţionar onomastic românesc* [Dictionary of Romanian Onomastics], Bucureşti, Editura Academiei, 1963; Nicolae Drăganu, *Românii în veacurile IX–XIV pe baza toponimiei şi a onomasticei* [The Romanians from the 9th–14th centuries as reflected in toponymy and onomastics], Bucureşti, Imprimeria Naţională, 1933; Viorica Goicu, *Contribuţii de onomastică istorică* [Contributions to Historical Onomastics], Timişoara, Editura Augusta, 2001; Aspazia Reguş, Corneliu Reguş, *Nume de femei în vechi acte istorice (sec. XIV–XVI)* [Names of Women in Old Historical Documents (14th–16th centuries)], Bucureşti, Editura Mustang, 1999; Domniţa Tomescu, *Romanitatea antroponimiei româneşti* [The Romanity of the Romanian Anthroponymy], in the volume *Limba română, limbă romanică* [The Romanian Language: a Romance Language], Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române, 2007, p. 535–544.

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

4.2. Laic Latin forenames in the Romanian Countries

Still, besides the Christian type of names, we also find mentions of „vechi prenume laice, în uz încă în sec. XIV–XVI (chiar mai târziu în regiunile conservatoare)" [old laic forenames, used since the 14th–16th centuries (even later in the conservative regions)], according to the Encyclopaedia of Romance Languages (1989: 253). *Fichur* (lat. *fetiolus* > rom. *ficior*), *Karachin* (lat. *creationem* > rom. *Crăciun*), *Micus / Mikus* (lat. **miccus* > rom. *mic*), *Qrud* (lat. *crudus* > rom. *crud*), *Tata* (lat. *tata* > rom. *tată*) are of Romanian people confirmed in 1202–1203 in the western part of Transylvania (according to Drăganu 1933: 293). They are motivated anthroponyms, in which the form comes from common words (in what significance is concerned). To the same category belong names like *Bărbat, Dulce, Fata, Floare*, which probably come from the same Roman wordstock, typical of popular Latin. More frequent are the denominations derived from names of animals, such as *Ariciu* [Hedgehog], *Capra* [Goat], *Cuc(u)* [Cuckoo], *Ied(u)* [Kid], *Lupa* [She-wolf], *Lup(u)* [He-wolf], *Păun* [Peacock], *Urs* [Bear], *Ursa* (cf. Mihăescu 1993: 71) [She-bear], *Vulpe* [Fox] etc. Petru Caraman observes that such names with a totemic substratum, also involving magico-prophylactic significances, find their correspondence in Latin, a fact recently confirmed for all the Romance languages by Dieter Kremer and Alf Monjour (1995-1996: 212). In the Romanian anthroponymy, the wolf and the bear entered as symbols of vitality and physical health, and the forenames were meant to magically protect sick children or those threatened by death:

> Numele de persoană *Lupu* şi *Ursu* şi-au creat o bogată familie onomastică, regăsindu-se astăzi ca nume de familie în toate regiunile ţării [The names of persons *Lupu* and *Ursu* created for themselves a rich onomastic family, being found today as surnames in all the regions of the country] (Goicu 2001: 97).

5. The re-Latinization of the Romanian onomasticon

The rebirth of the "classical" Roman anthroponyms took place at the same time as the re-Latinization of the Romanian language. The Latin influence was exerted in all the Romance languages, however, with a difference existing between the Orient and the Occident. In Western Romania – where Latin was throughout the Middle Ages the language of the administration, culture and church – the Latin influence was continuous since the very formation of the Romance languages and it culminated during the Renaissance, leading to the formation and development of the literary languages and of the specialized terminologies.

> Limba română, care a intrat mai târziu în circuitul relaţiilor cu ţările din Romania Occidentală, primeşte aceste influenţe mai târziu şi le însuşeşte mai ales prin intermediul limbilor franceză şi italiană [The Romanian language, which later on entered the circuit of the relationships with the countries from the Western Romania, receives these influences much later and appropriates them especially via French and Italian] (Reinheimer Rîpeanu 2001: 56),

in the second half of the 17th century, the process being more intense during the following century, especially in Transylvania. Therefore, in the case of the Romanian language, the process occurred both directly, from Latin, and via the

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

other related languages, resulting in, on a lexical level, a consistent enrichment of the vocabulary.

In the field of anthroponymy, the re-Latinization had as consequence the massive adoption of names from Latin history and literature, starting with the 19th century. Thus, of the Roman forenames, those that reentered the language by written means are *Caius*[34] (preserved intactly), *Lucius* (in the masc. *Lucian* + fem. *Lucia*), *Marcus* (*Marc(u)* in Romanian), *Titus* (preserved identically) şi *Tiberius* (with the loss of the final *–s* consonant). Then, numerous Roman gentile names became forenames in all Romance languages, including in Romanian: *Aemilius* (*Emil(ian)*)[35], *Antonius* (*Anton(iu)*), *Aurelius* (*Aurel(iu)*), *Claudius* (*Claudiu*), *Cornelius* (*Cornel(iu)*), *Flavius* (*Flaviu(s)*), *Horatius* (*Horaţiu*), *Iulius* (*Iuliu*), *Lucretius* (*Lucreţiu*), *Marius* (homonym), *Silvius* (*Silviu*), *Valerius* (*Valer(iu)*), *Vergilius* (*Vergiliu / Virgil(iu)*). There were many Latin *cognomina* that captured the attention of the modern individuals, although we only mention a few such instances: *Caesar* (*Cezar*), *Claudius* (*Claudiu*), *Octavianus* (*Octavian*), *Traianus* (*Traian*) etc.

5.1. Latin forenames in the Northwestern part of Romania

Further on we will analyze the Late Latin influence on the baptismal names from Northwest Romania[36], as a linguistic tendency which becomes increasingly significant in the contemporary statistics. At a first glance, what is obvious is the preference for double names (Graur 1965: 55), typical of the Occident, to the detriment of the simple, traditional Romanian forms. This has been happening for half a century in the Romanian landscape: *Antonia Patricia*, *Bogdan Domiţian*, *Casian Florin*, *Denis Iulian*, *Felicia Patricia*, *Flavia Romana*, *Flaviu Adrian*, *Flaviu Iulian*, *George Marius*, *Horaţiu Cristian*, *Iulia Antonia*, *Laurenţiu Sergiu*, *Liviu Marius*, *Lucian Sergiu*, *Maria Lavinia*, *Mario Flavian*, Marius *Tiberiu*, *Melisa Adriana*, *Patricia Carmen*, *Romana Iulia*, *Sabin Ovidiu*, *Sergiu Remus*, *Victor Adrian*. These names represent 75% of the total, to the detriment of the simple forenames (*Antoniu*, *Cezar*, *Cezara*, *Lavinia*, *Lucia*, *Marius*, *Maximilian*, *Ovidiu*, *Remus*, *Septimiu*, *Sergiu*, *Silviu*, *Valentina*, *Victor* etc.), which are second in line, and of the triple names, which are not abundant: ***Augusta*** *Ştefana Maria*, *Eduard Alexandru* ***Darius***, ***Iulia*** *Maria* ***Octavia***, *Mariana* ***Claudia*** *Alexandra*, *Petronela* ***Cipriana Iuliana***, ***Remus*** *Dan Andrei* and others. These examples especially highlight Latinized forms, phonetically and morphologically adapted to the Romanian system ever since the period of the re-Romanization of our language. Simultaneously, however, there are also recordings of unadapted Latin forms, either due to the wish to "preserve" the antique tinge, or out of admiration for a famous historical figure: *Andrei* ***Flavius***, *Dan* ***Iulius***, ***Flavius*** *Călin*, ***Flavius*** *Ilieş*, ***Flavius*** *Ştefan*, *George* ***Cornelius***, *Luca* ***Marcus***, ***Marcus*** *Natanael Alexandru*, *Rareş*

[34] Spelled with the letter *C*-, like in the Latin acronym, and not with *G*-, as in *Gaius*.

[35] I placed between brackets the form/forms from the contemporary Romanian language, but only the masculine forms, even if most of them also have a feminine one.

[36] We discuss forenames of newborns from 1987–2007 in the Maramureş county, which will be researched for three years within a grant won in a competition, entitled "Interferenţe multietnice reflectate în antroponimia maramureşeană, spaţiu central-european" [Multiethnic Connections in the Anthroponymy of Maramureş, a Central European Area], and funded by CNCSIS (no. 251/2008).

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

Marcus, *Raul* ***Marcus***, ***Octavianus***, ***Vinicius***. Along with such Latin names, not representative of the Romanian language, some masculine Latin names are also kept in their original form, without losing the *-(u)s* termination, a phenomenon which is typical of the Eastern Romania. Of these, we mention *Adrian* ***Remus***, *Alexandru* ***Marius***, *Antonio* ***Remus***, *Cezar* ***Darius***, *Ciprian* ***Marius***, *Cristian* ***Marius***, *Dacian* ***Titus***, ***Darius Remus***, ***Felix*** *Paul*, *George* ***Marius***, *Gheorghe* ***Remus***, *Liviu* ***Marius***, *Marc* ***Darius***, *Marian* ***Remus*** *Dan*, ***Marius*** *Constantin*, *Mihai* ***Marius***, *Mircea* ***Remus***, *Norin* ***Remus***, *Paul* ***Darius***, ***Remus*** *Nicolae*, ***Romulus*** *Liviu*, *Sebastian* ***Remus***, *Sebastian* ***Romulus***, ***Titus*** *Ionatan*, ***Titus*** *Tiberiu*, *Traian* ***Darius***. Not dropping the final *-s* consonant is justified in the case of short, disyllabic names (*Marius*, *Remus*, *Titus*), although in the 19th century we have recordings of monosyllabic forms, such as *Tit*. Nevertheless, in the case of *Romulus*, the form resulting after the fall of the *-us* termination would be disyllabic, just like in the case of *Flaviu*, *Liviu*, *Sergiu*. The explanation for the intact preservation of the Latin names – including in the case of *Darius*, which, although of Persian origin and passing through the Greek intermediary forms *Dare(i)os*, *Darios*[37], was adopted by the Latin language – must be searched for in the 19th century, when, wanting to renew the Romanian onomasticon, Roman anthroponyms were adopted, especially historical ones, even from the language of *Romulus* and *Remus*, as was previously shown.

6. Conclusions

The anthroponymy of any region has a main ethnic component, which has been subject to foreign influences throughout history. In Eastern Romania, Latin names have massively entered along with the Romanization of the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic space and they became local not only on the territory of the Dacian province, but also outside of it, as it is well-known that elements from the material and spiritual Roman culture can get beyond the borders of the Empire or to non-Romanized provinces, just as elements of the autochthonous culture can survive even after the Romanization. Anthroponyms of Latin descent won the battle against Thraco-Dacian names (the substratum), but also against those of the colonists coming *ex toto orbe Romano*. They contributed to the ever so powerful implementation of the Romanity, so that, in spite of leaving Dacia and of the Slavization during the Middle Ages, they could not be completely deleted from the Romanian onomasticon. Moreover, along with the re-Latinization from the modern times, they came back in full strength, being more and more often used as baptismal names. Nowadays, Latin names, along with those borrowed from the Western Romance Languages – especially Italian, French and Spanish – represent an indispensable component of the Romanian anthroponymic system (cf. Felecan 2007b). Along with Christian names, these form the majority within the onomasticon of Eastern Romania and, in spite of the phonetic adaptation, they reveal the perpetuation of Latin even in the 21st century, either directly, by written means, or indirectly, through the continuing Romance languages.

[37] *Δαρειος*, according to Ionescu (2001: 124, 125).

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide”
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

References

Billy 1996 : Pierre-Henri Billy, *Méthodologie de l'anthroponymie*, în „Nouvelle Revue d'Onomastique", nr. 27–28, p. 3–12.

Brâncuş 1983 : Grigore Brâncuş, *Vocabularul autohton al limbii române* [The Autochtonous Vocabulary of the Romanian Language], Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică.

Caraman 1970 : Petru Caraman, *L'héritage romain dans l'anthroponymie roumaine*, în *Actele celui de-al XII-lea Congres internaţional de lingvistică şi filologie romanică* [*Actes du XII^e Congrès International de Linguistique et de Philologie Romanes*], Bucureşti, p. 1107–1113.

Carcopino 1979 : Jérôme Carcopino, *Viaţa cotidiană în Roma la apogeul imperiului* [Everyday Life in Rome during the Apogee of the Empire], Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică.

Constantinescu 1063: N.A. Constantinescu, *Dicţionar onomastic românesc* [Dictionary of Romanian Onomastics], Bucureşti, Editura Academiei.

Diaconescu 2003: Traian Diaconescu, *Etnogeneza românilor* [The Ethnogenesis of the Romanian People], Iaşi, Institutul European.

Drăganu 1933: Nicolae Drăganu, *Românii în veacurile IX-XIV pe baza toponimiei şi a onomasticei* [The Romanians from the 9th–14th Centuries as Reflected in Toponymy and Onomastics], Bucureşti, Imprimeria Naţională.

Felecan 2007a: Oliviu Felecan, *L'influence des médias sur les noms propres roumains après 1989*, în *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Onomastic Sciences, Uppsala 19–24 August 2002, Volumen 3, Section 2. Names and society. 2b. The conditions for names*, Uppsala, Institutet för språk och folkminnen.

Felecan 2007b: Oliviu Felecan, *Influenţa limbilor romanice în onomastica românească după 1989* [The Influence of Romance Languages over the Romanian Onomastics after 1989], în *Actes du XXIV^e Congrès International de Linguistique et de Philologie Romanes, (Aberystwyth, 1^er–6 août 2004), Volume 4, Section 11: Lexicologie/ lexicographie/ sémantique. Diachronie et synchronie*, Tübingen, Max Niemeyer Verlag, p. 47–59.

Fischer 1985 : I. Fischer, *Latina dunăreană. Introducere în istoria limbii române* [Danubian Latin. An Introduction to the History of the Romanian Language], Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică.

Goicu 2001: Viorica Goicu, *Contribuţii de onomastică istorică* [Contributions to Historical Onomastics], Timişoara, Editura Augusta.

Goicu 2008: Viorica Goicu, *Cercetări de onomastică istorică* [Studies of Historical Onomastics], Timişoara, Editura Augusta.

Graur 1965: Al. Graur, *Nume de persoane* [Names of Persons], Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică.

*** 1975, *Inscripţiile Daciei romane* [The Inscriptions of Roman Dacia], Vol. I, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei.

Ionescu 2001: Cristian Ionescu, *Dicţionar de onomastică* [Dictionary of Onomastics], Bucureşti, Editura Elion.

Kajanto 1965: I. Kajanto, *The Latin Cognomina*, Helsinki.

Kerényi 1941: András Kerényi, *A Dáciai személynevek (Die Personennamen von Dazien)*, Budapest.

Kremer, Monjour 1995–1996: Dieter Kremer, Alf Monjour, *Le loup dans l'anthroponymie romane*, în „Travaux de linguistique et de philologie", XXXII-XXXIV, Strasbourg-Nancy.

MacKendrick 1975: Paul MacKendrick, *The Dacian Stones Speak*, The University of North Carolina Press.

Macrea 1969: Mihail Macrea, *Viaţa în Dacia romană* [Life in Roman Dacia], Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică.

Matei 1995: Horia C. Matei, *Enciclopedia Antichităţii* [The Encyclopaedia of the Antiquity], Bucureşti, Editura Meronia.

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

Mihăescu 1993 : Haralamb Mihăescu, *La romanité dans le sud-est de L'Europe*, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române.

Pârvan 1967: Vasile Pârvan, *Dacia. Civilizaţiile antice din ţările carpato-danubiene* [Dacia. Ancient Civilizations from the Carpatho-Danubian Countries], Fourth edition, reviewed and annotated, Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică.

Pârvan 1992: Vasile Pârvan, *Getica. O protoistorie a Daciei* [Getica. A Protohistory of Dacia], Chişinău, Editura Universitas.

Petolescu 2000: Constantin C. Petolescu, *Dacia şi Imperiul Roman* [Dacia and the Roman Empire], Bucureşti, Editura Teora.

Popa-Lisseanu 2007: G. Popa-Lisseanu, *Dacia în autorii clasici. I Autorii latini clasici şi postclasici; II Autorii greci şi bizantini* [Dacia in Classical Authors. I Classical and Post-Classical Latin Authors; II Greek and Byzantine Authors], Bucureşti, Editura Vestala.

Reguş, Reguş 1999: Aspazia Reguş, Corneliu Reguş, *Nume de femei în vechi acte istorice (sec. XIV–XVI)* [Names of Women in Old Historical Documents (14^{th}–16^{th} centuries)], Bucureşti, Editura Mustang.

Reinheimer Rîpeanu 2001, Sanda Reinheimer Rîpeanu, *Lingvistica romanică. Lexic – Fonetică – Morfologie* [Romance Linguistics. Vocabulary – Phonetics – Morphology], Bucureşti, Editura All.

Russu 1941–1943: I.I. Russu, *Onomasticon Daciae. Numele de persoane în inscripţiile provinciei* [Names of Persons in the Inscriptions of the Province], in „Anuarul Institutului de Studii Clasice" [The Annual of the Institute of Classical Studies], vol. IV, p. 186–233.

Russu 1944–1948: I.I. Russu, *Rectificări şi adause la „Onomasticon Daciae"* [Amendments and additions to the *Onomasticon Daciae]*, în „Anuarul Institutului de Studii Clasice" [The Annual of the Institute of Classical Studies], vol. V, p. 282–296.

Russu 1967: I.I. Russu, *Limba traco-dacilor* [The Language of the Thraco-Dacians], Second edition, revised and enlarged, Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică.

Russu 1970 : I.I. Russu, *Elemente autohtone în limba română. Substratul comun româno-albanez* [Autochtonous Elements in the Romanian Language. The Common Romanian-Albanian Substratum], Bucureşti, Editura Academiei.

Russu 1980: I.I. Russu, *Daco-geţii în Imperiul Roman (în afara provinciei Dacia Traiană)* [The Dacian-Getae in the Roman Empire (Outside the Dacia under the rule of Trajan)], Bucureşti, Editura Academiei

Russu 1981: I.I. Russu, *Etnogeneza românilor. Fondul autohton traco-dacic şi componenta latino-romanică* [The Ethnogenesis of the Romanian People. The Autochtonous Thraco-Dacian Stratum and the Romance-Latin Component], Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică.

Sala 1989: Marius Sala (ed.), *Enciclopedia limbilor romanice* (*E.L.R.*) [The Encyclopaedia of Romance Languages], Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică.

Sala 2001: Marius Sala (ed.), *Enciclopedia limbii române* [The Encyclopaedia of the Romanian Language], Bucureşti, Editura Univers Enciclopedic.

Sanie 1999: Silviu Sanie, *Din istoria culturii şi religiei geto-dacice* [On the History of the Getae-Dacian Culture and Religion], Iaşi, Editura Universităţii „Al.I. Cuza".

Tomescu 2007: Domnița Tomescu, *Romanitatea antroponimiei româneşti* [The Romanity of the Romanian Anthroponymy], in the volume *Limba română, limbă romanică. Omagiu acad. Marius Sala la împlinirea a 75 de ani* [The Romanian Language, a Romance Language. Homage for acad. Marius Sala on his turning 75 years old], Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române, p. 535–544.

Tudor 1968: D. Tudor, *Oraşe, târguri şi sate în Dacia romană* [Towns, Markets and Villages in Roman Dacia], Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică.

Vraciu 1980: Ariton Vraciu, *Limba daco-geţilor* [The Language of the Dacian-Getae], Timişoara, Editura Facla.

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)

Abstract

Eastern Romania proved to be a multicultural and plurilingual space ever since the beginning, a fact also reflected by anthroponyms. Starting with the period of the Romanization, the autochtonous names were interwoven with Latin ones, as shown by the numerous inscriptions and historical documents. These also attest an important component brought by colonists ex toto orbe Romano, but which did not influence the Romance character of the anthroponyms from the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic space. Throughout the Middle Ages there was a "fight" between the religious anthroponyms (most of them of Slavic origin) and the laic ones, but, starting with the 19th century, we witness a strong Romanization of the Romanian onomasticon, which continues till today, through the names of Latin descent.

North University of Baia Mare
Romania

BDD-A933 © 2010 Institutul de Filologie Română „A. Philippide"
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 23:55:38 UTC)