

Indigenous naming practices in the Western Mediterranean: the case of Iberian

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Abstract. *The Iberian language is directly attested by ca. 2250 inscriptions spanning the period from the 5th century BC to the 1st century AD, distributed between Eastern Andalusia and Languedoc. Although it must be considered a non-deciphered language, a large number of personal names have been identified in Iberian texts. The document that enabled the understanding of the basic structure of Iberian names is a Latin inscription from Italy (the Ascoli Bronze) recording the grant of Roman citizenship to Iberians who had fought for Rome during the Social War (90–88 BC). The study of this document paved the way for the identification of Iberian names in texts written in local languages, on the one hand, and in Latin and Greek epigraphic and literary sources on the other. This paper provides a state-of-the-art overview of research on Iberian onomastics, by synthesising the main recent achievements along with the remaining lines of research; it also investigates our understanding of the grammatical and syntactic structure of Iberian names, and analyses the evolution of Iberian naming patterns under Roman domination, by taking into account both Iberian and Latin documents.*

Rezumat. *Limba iberică este atestată în mod direct de aproximativ 2250 inscripții datând din secolele V a.Chr.–I p.Chr., distribuite între estul Andaluziei și Languedoc. Deși trebuie considerată o limbă nedescifrată, un număr mare de nume de persoane au fost identificate în textele iberice. Documentul care dă posibilitatea înțelegerii structurii de bază a numelor iberice îl constituie o inscripție latină din Italia (bronzul din Ascoli), care înregistrează acordarea cetățeniei romane ibericilor care au luptat pentru Roma în timpul războiului cu socii (90–88 a.Chr.). Studiarea acestui document a deschis drumul identificării numelor iberice în textele scrise în limbile locale, pe de o parte, și în inscripțiile grecești și latine, de partea cealaltă. Articolul de față prezintă o trecere în revistă a cercetărilor privind onomastica iberică, sintetizând cele mai recente realizări în domeniu; de asemenea, autoarea investighează gradul de înțelegere a structurii gramaticale și sintactice a numelor iberice și analizează și evoluția tiparelor onomastice iberice sub dominația romană, luând în considerare atât documente iberice, cât și latine.*

Keywords: onomastics, Iberian names, epigraphy, Hispania, Palaeohispanic languages.

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1. Introduction²

Adingibas, *Talskubilos*, *Iskeildun*, all these names belong to the same Palaeohispanic language, Iberian, and form a consistent onomastic tradition whose evolution will be determined by the Roman conquest of the Iberian Peninsula. Thanks to the finding, more than a century ago, of the so-called Ascoli Bronze (*CIL* I² 709), a key document for the ancient history of Hispania, Iberian personal names are well-known, and we are at present able to identify them not just in the Graeco-Roman sources, but also in the texts written directly by the local populations.³

The study of Iberian onomastics started, nevertheless, much earlier: in 1820, Wilhelm von Humboldt published what is considered to be the first study on the early onomastics of Hispania, *Prüfung der Untersuchungen über die Urbewohner Hispaniens vermittelt der vaskischen Sprache*. This work mainly focuses on place-names but, to a lesser extent, it also makes use of an analysis of indigenous personal names known from literary sources.⁴ Although Humboldt's linguistic study it is still valid in some aspects, some of the conclusions he reached have subsequently been proved to be erroneous, namely: (1) the Iberians were a large group of people settled throughout the Iberian Peninsula; (2) the Iberians spoke one single language; (3) the Iberians spoke Basque.

Surprisingly, among these three assertions, the only one about which there is no consensus today is the third one, the equation between Basque and Iberian. Indeed, the possible relationship between these two languages represents one of the main debates of the discipline: on the one hand, some correlations are undeniable and too consistent to be incidental,⁵ but, on the other hand, they appear to be just limited to a certain category of words, which makes it impossible to determine whether they are due to a linguistic family connection or if they just arise from linguistic contact.

² In this paper the Palaeohispanic inscriptions are quoted according to the *Monumenta Linguarum Hispanicarum* by J. Untermann; for the inscriptions found after the publication of this work, the references are given according to the Hesperia database (hesperia.ucm.es). The typographic conventions used to transcribe the Iberian languages are as follows: bold for texts written in Iberian non-dual script (**neitinke**), bold italics for texts in Iberian dual script (***baidesbi***) and italics for Graeco-Iberian texts (*naltinge*).

³ Some useful compilations of Iberian personal names can be found in: *Monumenta Linguarum Hispanicarum* by J. UNTERMANN (vol. III.1); J. RODRÍGUEZ RAMOS 2014, which updates and synthesises the previous works by the author, and the series of "Crónica de onomástica paleo-hispánica" by A. MARQUES DE FARIA, with different instalments published from 2000 onwards, usually in *Revista Portuguesa de Arqueologia*. See also MONCUNILL 2007; 2010 for partial compilations, and MONCUNILL-VELAZA 2016 and MONCUNILL 2016 for a presentation of the new resources on indigenous onomastics in the Hesperia Databank (for a succinct description of this database, see as well the last section of this paper).

⁴ Note that at that time the Iberian script was not yet deciphered; this is the reason why Humboldt's study does not take into account Iberian or any other Palaeohispanic inscriptions.

⁵ The most striking coincidence concerns the name of numbers in both languages: see ORDUÑA 2005; 2011 and FERRER 2009.

On the other hand, thanks to the progress in archaeology and in the interpretation of Palaeohispanic inscriptions, it is definitely known that the Iberians did not occupy the whole Peninsula, but were just restricted to the Mediterranean coast, from Languedoc to Eastern Andalusia, and the Ebro Valley.

The map in Figure 1 shows the area where Iberian inscriptions have been found, which matches the territory where classical authors locate different peoples such as the *Cerretani*, *Indicetes*, *Laietani*, *Ausetani*, *Ilergetes*, *Laietani*, *Cessetani*, *Sedetani*, *Ilercavones*, *Edetani*, *Contestani*, *Oretani*, or the *Bastetani*. Thirdly, even if the Iberian language appears to be surprisingly homogenous in the central and northern part, the same cannot be stated to apply with certainty to the meridional inscriptions, whose interpretation is hampered by our inadequate understanding of the writing systems and of the syntactic and morphological structure of the texts.

As a consequence, this paper will specifically focus on Iberian personal names *stricto sensu*, that is the anthroponomical system belonging to the non-Indo-European language attested in the above-mentioned territory next to the Mediterranean Sea.

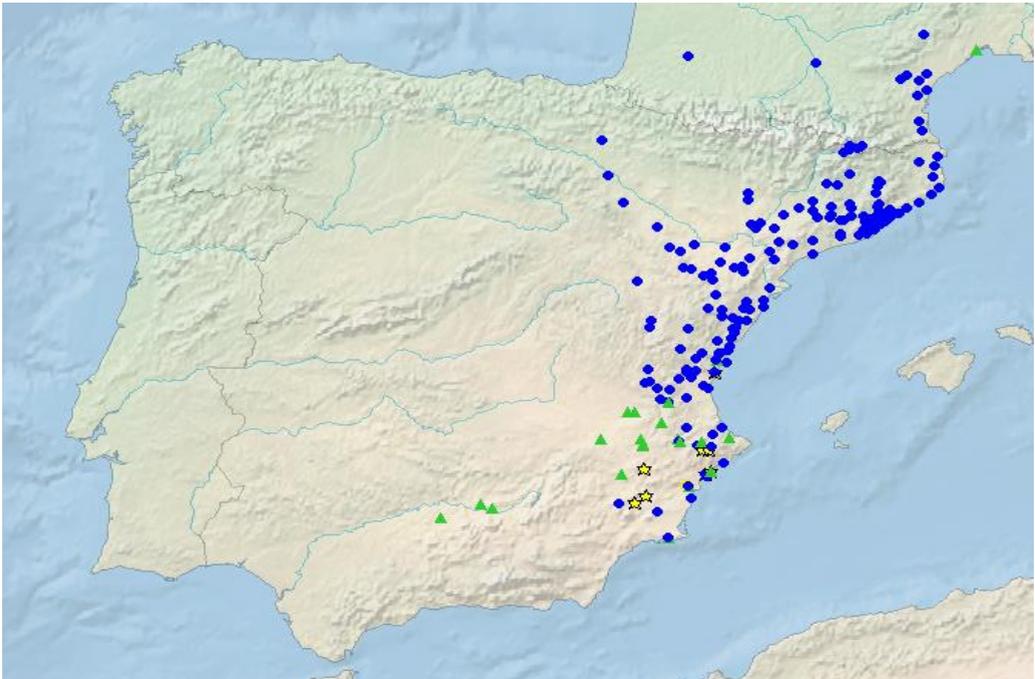


Figure 1. Distribution area of Iberian inscriptions: in blue, inscriptions in the north-eastern Iberian script; in yellow inscriptions in the Graeco-Iberian script; in green, inscriptions in the south-eastern Iberian script. The first two scripts are fully deciphered, whereas some characters in the last one are still pending identification.

2. Sources available for a repertoire of Iberian personal names

The sources available have made it possible to identify ca. 900 different Iberian names to date. In accordance with their importance for the constitution of the repertoire, the different corpora are as follows:

a) Iberian epigraphy. Most names are known through inscriptions in the Iberian language, dating between the 5th century BC and the 1st century AD. These names belong, for instance, to magistrates mentioned in coin legends, ownership graffiti, authorship signatures, names of the deceased in funerary inscriptions, or names on lead tablets, probably corresponding to lists of debtors, witnesses or just the sender and/or the addressee of a letter. The identification of these names has played a crucial role not only in our comprehension of Iberian naming habits, but also in the overall analysis of Iberian language, which is not yet fully deciphered. As a matter of fact, the study of personal names is the cornerstone of the interpretation of Iberian texts: it allows us to segment sequences in *scriptio continua*, to isolate the lexical roots from the morphemes with grammatical or syntactical value and, finally, it allows us to define recurrent and formulaic expressions and occasionally even interpret their meaning or at least their functionality.⁶

The anthroponomical mentions found in Iberian inscriptions can include, especially in those places with mixed population or in frontier areas, names in other languages, such as Latin, Gaulish, Celtiberian and even Greek. Among the most quoted cases there is the *nomen kofnelij*, from Empúries (C.1.1,2), probably datable to the 1st century BC⁷ and belonging to an almost fully Romanised individual; as for Gaulish names, the occurrences are relatively abundant:⁸ this is the case, for instance, of the names **tesile** (B.1.351, cf. *Tessillus* [CIL III 14368.28]) or **uašile** [B.1.352,A], cf. *Vassil(l)us* [CIL XII 2286]) on pottery stamps from southern France, among others. Celtiberian and Greek names, in contrast, are very rare and we can only quote a few examples: among the Celtiberians, we can recall the famous **likine**, in the mosaics from Andelo (K.28.1) and Caminreal (K.5.3)⁹, which appears several times in the form *Likinos* on the Third Botorrita Bronze, in the Celtiberian language (K.1.3); as for Greek, finally, we can mention the name **bilonike** (K.1.7), maybe the Iberian adaptation of a *Philonicos*, which also appears on the above-mentioned Botorrita Bronze as **bilonikos** (K.1.3,III-28 and 51). As can be observed, these Indo-European names are adapted in Iberian, a non-Indo-European language, with a termination in **-e** or **-i**. If we consider some other examples, such as the Iberian graffiti

⁶ The combinatorial method currently used to analyse the Iberian language was mainly developed by J. UNTERMANN in the *Monumenta Linguarum Hispanicarum*.

⁷ See SIMÓN 2013, 153.

⁸ See UNTERMANN 1969; CORREA 1993; LUJÁN 2003; RUIZ-DARRASSE 2010; FARIA 2015.

⁹ For the interpretation of these inscriptions see SIMÓN 2015, with the previous bibliography.

luki (D.1.1) or **kai** (D.15.3), which could stand for the Latin *praenomina* *Lucius* and *Caius*, we can conclude that Iberian just adopted the vocative for the adaptation of all these foreign names.¹⁰

b) Latin epigraphy. The second most important set is known through Latin inscriptions, where Iberian names are mostly adapted as *cognomina*. This is obviously a very interesting corpus as it gives first-hand information on the granting of Roman citizenship to the indigenous elites and, in more general terms, to the advance of Romanisation in Hispania. So far, it has been possible to identify *ca.* 125 Iberian names in these sources, including the list of the *Hispani equites* of the *Turma Salluitana*, on the Ascoli Bronze, which lists 44 different Iberian names; this means that only around 80 Iberian names are known through Latin inscriptions from Hispania. This number is quite striking if we compare it to the total number of indigenous names in Roman inscriptions from the whole Peninsula, which gives almost 5,000 occurrences.¹¹ In other words: we have only about eighty Iberian names from the Mediterranean coast and Ebro Valley in comparison with almost five thousand Indo-European vernacular names, distributed throughout the hinterland and the Atlantic and Cantabrian basins. Even though the Indo-European part of the Iberian Peninsula is larger, this cannot alone explain this substantial numerical difference, and we need to consider alternative explanations regarding diverse adaptation processes on the part of the local elites into the new Roman society. On the other hand, one must also take into account the fact that during the first centuries of Roman domination, the predominant written culture in Hispania was still the vernacular one, and that the number of Iberian inscriptions during the Republic is actually much larger than the Latin corpus. This means that in those areas which had developed local literacy, the impact of Rome did not imply the abandonment of the native languages for more than two centuries, even for these new epigraphic media that arose from Roman influence (*i.e.* monumental and official inscriptions). Taken together, this suggests that the disappearance of Iberian literacy, in the 1st century AD, went almost hand in hand with the loss of Iberian names, and changing names went hand in hand with linguistic change probably even in the oral register.¹²

c) Celtiberian epigraphy. The third group to be considered is the one formed by Iberian names attested in Celtiberian epigraphy. All these names come from one single inscription, the so-called Third Botorrita Bronze (K.1.3).¹³ It consists of a list of more than 200 individuals, reflecting a mixed society formed, on the one hand, by a majority of Celtiberians, and, on the other hand, by Greek, Latin and Iberian name bearers. In this list Iberian names are sometimes quoted according to the standard Iberian onomastic formula, as is found in Iberian texts: either

¹⁰ See CORREA 1993, 103; 1994, 269 and JORDÁN 2008, 18.

¹¹ See VALLEJO 2016.

¹² For this last step, see ADAMS 2003, 290.

¹³ For an initial approach to these names, see UNTERMANN 1994–1995.

two names in juxtaposition, with no morphological mark in either, to express filiation (e.g. **bartiltun ekarbilos**, which might be understood as Bariltun, son of Ekarbilos); or just one single name alone, without the patronymic: Tarkunbiur. Instead, in some other cases, we find a hybrid formula, half Iberian, half Celtiberian, with an Iberian name followed by a Celtiberian family name in genitive plural: **bilosban betikum** (Bilosban of the Betikos); **biurtilaur alaskum** (Biurtilaur of the Alaskos) or **anieskor talukokum** (Anaieskor of the Talukos), among other examples.

d) Literary texts. Another set of local personal names from Iberia are known through literary sources. Out of a total of 100 indigenous names in this kind of sources, only around 15 could belong to the Iberian language. The linguistic analysis of them is, moreover, not always clear due to the significant phonetic alterations that they have suffered in the course of the long process of text transmission. Nevertheless, Titus Livy, Polybius or Diodorus, among others, are valuable sources in this respect.¹⁴

e) Greek epigraphy. Finally, a small group of Iberian names, less than ten, has been identified in Greek inscriptions.¹⁵ Besides some short graffiti on pottery, the most interesting documents are the two commercial lead tablets, from Empúries¹⁶ and Pech Maho¹⁷, which bear direct witness to the interaction between Greek and Iberian traders during the 5th century BC.

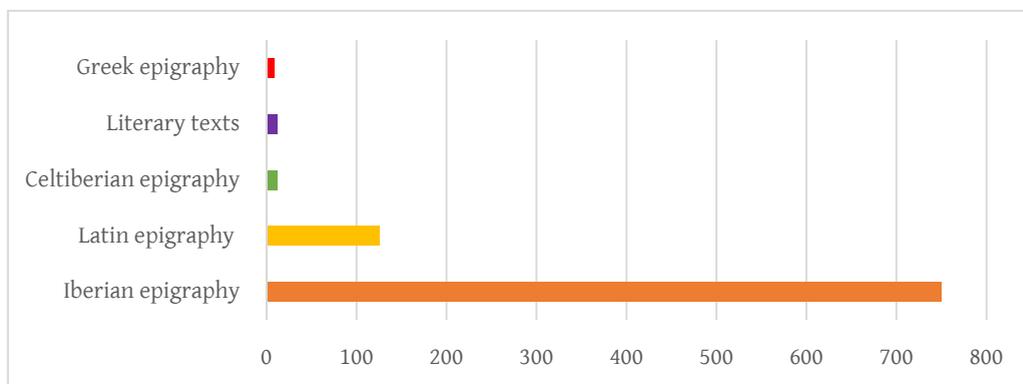


Figure 2. The proportion of names attested in the different sources available, according to the data available in the Hesperia Databank – Onomastics in September 2016.

¹⁴ See MONCUNILL 2016, 83–85.

¹⁵ They are the following: *Baspedf* (VELAZA 1992) on one of the lead tablets from Empúries (HOZ 2014, n° 129); 6 names on the Greek lead sheet from Pech Maho, in France (LEJEUNE *et al.* 1988): *Basigerros*, *Eleruas* (reading proposed by FARIA 1994, 69, instead of *Bleruas*, in the *editio princeps*), *Golobiur*, *Sedegon*, *Nabaruas*, *Nalbeadin*; and two other names attested on pottery: *Kanikon-e*, on two skyphoi from Peyriac-de-Mer (BDH AUD.7.1; AUD.7.2), in France, and *Gorotigi-nai* (C.1.9), again from Empúries.

¹⁶ HOZ 2014, n° 129.

¹⁷ LEJEUNE *et al.* 1988.

3. Characteristic features of Iberian personal names

The internal structure of Iberian names has been elucidated thanks to the previously mentioned Ascoli Bronze (CIL I² 709), a Latin inscription found in Rome in 1908. This document contains a list of 30 individuals from the Ebro Valley who received Roman citizenship from Pompey Strabo as a reward for their participation in the Social War. The names are organised in groups, according to the origin of the *equites* — *Bagarensis*, [---]licenses, *Ilerdenses*, *Begensis*, *Segiensis*, *Ennegensis*, *Libenses*, *Suconsenses* and *Illuersensis* — and are systematically followed by their patronymic. For instance: *Sanibelser Adingibas f(i)lius*), *Vmargibas Luspangibas f(i)lius*), *Balciadin Balcibil f(i)lius*). A few of them, the ones from *Ilerda*, already present a Latin *duo nomina* even before officially holding Roman citizenship;¹⁸ they are *Quintus Otacilius Suisetarten f(i)lius*), *Cn(aeus) Cornelius Nesille f(i)lius*), *P(ublius) Fabius Enasagin f(i)lius*).

This relatively long list allowed some conclusions to be drawn on the compositional rules for Iberian names, which have later enabled the identification of Iberian anthroponomy in Iberian texts as well, once the decoding of the epichoric script had been achieved, in the mid-20th century thanks to the works of Manuel Gómez Moreno (1922; 1949). The current catalogue of Iberian names points towards the following conclusions:

a) These names were mostly made of two elements, with only a few exceptions, such as *Beles*, on the Ascoli Bronze, in contrast with his father, *Vmarbeles*. These shorter designations were considered by J. Untermann as *Kurznamen*, simple names; however, it not always easy to distinguish the one-element names from simple abbreviations, which are quite common in short inscriptions on pottery vases, usually with the owner's name.

b) These two elements seem to be somehow independent, not in the sense that they can necessarily appear on their own, but in the sense that they can combine more or less freely with each other, thereby creating new personal names. Note, for instance, this chain on the Ascoli Bronze: *Vmar-gibas*, *Adin-gibas*, *Balci-adin*, *Balci-bilos*, *Bilus-tibas*, *Illurtibas*, *Vmarillun* and again *Vmar-gibas*. Bearing this in mind, it has been possible to build a repertoire of anthroponomical components, which currently contains around 200 elements; the most frequent ones are: **adin**, **balke**, **baś**, **beleś**, **bilos**, **biur**, **ildir**, **ildur**, **iskef**, **sosin**, **tar** and **tigerf**.

c) Most of these elements are disyllabic but, again, we can observe a few exceptions, for instance **atin-ko** (B.1.360), **laur-do** (C.2.4), *Biur-no* (CIL I² 709) or **biur-tar** (B.1.3). It has been proposed that some of these shorter constituents, which tend to appear in second position, might in some cases correspond to derivation morphemes rather than to lexemes in composition.¹⁹ Nevertheless, from a structural point of view and from the internal analysis of Iberian itself, these short elements do not seem to be essentially different from the most

¹⁸ For the possibility that they had Latin rights, see CRINITI 1970, 189–190; for a further discussion on this matter see GARCÍA FERNÁNDEZ 2011, 51–52.

¹⁹ See UNTERMANN 1975-1997, III.1 § 616.

frequent dissyllabic ones. As a consequence, we cannot confirm whether there are two different structures in Iberian names, compound names and names created by derivation (such as hypocoristic forms), or whether all names must be grouped in the first category.

d) Some of these elements can appear either in the first or second position (for instance, *Balci-adin* and *Adin-gibas*), but some others always appear in the same place. This might be due to the internal syntagmatic cohesion of the compound, regarding, for instance, the natural position of adjectives, nouns, verbs and objects in Iberian.²⁰ Nevertheless, we know little about the syntactical order in this language, which prevents us from describing which category of words fits into which position in the name.

e) The structure of Iberian names suggests that they might be interpreted as "speaking" names (i.e. compound forms with a meaning, reflecting certain characteristics or features) and that the above-mentioned compositional elements might correspond to different categories of words taken from the Iberian lexicon. As a matter of fact, some examples, such as **iunstir-laku** (F.9.5) seem to confirm this hypothesis: the first component of this name, **iunstir**, is attested independently in other contexts where it seems to act as a verb, maybe with a similar meaning to the Greek *chaire* or *salve* in Latin, as it can appear in the beginning of a letter, in votive or in funerary texts, always in connection with personal names followed by a particular kind of suffixation.²¹ Unfortunately, most of the time we are unable to understand what the meaning behind Iberian names is.

f) On some occasions, when the name of the individual is followed by the father's name, the two share one of the elements.²² This is clearly appreciable in the case of the Ascoli Bronze: *Illurtibas Bilustibas f(i)lius*, **Sosinadem Sosinasae f(i)lius**, **Sosimilus Sosinasae f(i)lius**, *Gurtarno Biurno f(i)lius*, *Vmargibas Luspangib(as) f(i)lius*, **Beles Umarbeles f(i)lius**, *Belennes Albennes f(i)lius*, **Balciadin Balcibil(os) f(i)lius**. This phenomenon can also be observed in Iberian texts: for instance, **nefseadin balkeadin e** (F.11.11) and in some other Latin inscriptions from Hispania, for instance *Turibas Teitabas filius*, on the Latin Bronze from Botorrita (*CIL* I³ 2951a).

g) It has not yet been possible to identify feminine names in Iberian inscriptions, and all the proposals so far need to be considered as working hypotheses.²³ However, we do have a few examples of Iberian women mentioned in Latin inscriptions. These are some of the clearest cases of Iberian female names:

1. Annia L(uci) f(ilia) **Bilosoton** (AE 1998, 743 = HEP 8, 1998, 297).
2. M(arcus) Horatius M(arcus) f(i)lius / Gal(eria) Bodonilur / Ilvir Lucretia L(uci) f(ilia) / **Sergieton** uxor (*CIL* II²/7, 91).

²⁰ For further examples see MONCUNILL 2012.

²¹ See for instance MONCUNILL, FERRER, GORROCHATEGUI 2016, 268–269.

²² See MONCUNILL 2012, 211–213.

²³ See UNTERMANN III.1 § 616; VELAZA 2006; RODRÍGUEZ RAMOS 2014.

3. Pompeia M(arci) f(ilia) / **Bileseton**(- - -) / Proba v[e]ixit(!) (CIL II 3537).
4. Titinae P(ubli) f(iliae) / **Bastogaunini** / M(arcus) Licinius / Neitinbeles / coniugi (CIL II 6144).
5. **Socedeiaunin** / Istamiuris filia (CIL III 154).
6. [- Cor]nelius Cervi f(ilius) / [- - -] Niger pater / [- - -]a **Galduriaunin** / [- - - u]xor / - - - - -? (CIL II²/7, 26).
7. Atiliae M(arci) f(iliae) Poti/tae Iunia **Tanne/gadinia** p(iissimae?) n(eptae?) an(norum) XX (CIL II²/14, 148).
8. **Astedumar**²⁴ / a(nnorum) LXXX h(ic) s(ita) e(st) (CIL II² 14, 274).
9. P(ublius) · Aurelius / Tempestivos / Aurelio · Tanne/paeseri · patri / et · **Asterdumari** · matri / her(es) · d(e) · s(ua) · p(ecunia) · f(aciendum) · c(uraverunt) (CIL II²/14, 148).²⁵
10. Betatun / Aelia · **Belesiar** / sorte · ius(s)u / v(otum) · s(olvit) · l(ibens) · m(erito) (HEp 16, 2007, 446).
11. Corneliae L(uci) f(iliae) / **Sillibori** Vetuli / pleps(!) Latoniensis / honorem accepit / inpensam remisit (CIL II²/7, 5).
12. Calpur/niae **Vr/chatetelli**²⁶ / L(ucius) Aemilius / Seranus / matri (CIL II 2967 = HEp 8, 1998, 376).
13. Baebia / Cn(aei) l(iberta) / **Tavaccalaur** (CIL II² 14, 427).
14. Caecilia / **Geseladin**²⁷ / h(ic) s(ita) e(st) (HEp 5, 1995, 636).

The list mainly shows that it is not easy to identify what makes these names feminine in Iberian and that different procedures might have existed. Whatever the case, it is possible to try to regroup the names in different sets, mainly according to their different terminations:

- i. Some of them present a particular ending in **-eton/-oton**: *Bilos-oton*; *Biles-eton*; *Sergi-eton*;
- ii. A second group presents a termination in **-(i)aunin** (*Bastog-aunin*, *Socede-iaunin*, *Galdur-iaunin*), maybe internally composed by *-(i)a-* (a Latin derivative?²⁸) and *-unin* (an Iberian word carrying the semantic notion of feminine?²⁹)
- iii. The segmentation above (§ ii) would allow a similar Latin derivation in *-ia* to be recognised in the name *Tannegadin-ia*.

²⁴ For this reading, see VELAZA 2014, 43.

²⁵ For a new edition of this inscription see also ORDUÑA-VELAZA 2012.

²⁶ GORROCHATEGUI 2002, 91, considers it a Basque adaptation of an Iberian name, as there are no aspirations in Iberian. Note, moreover, that the inscription comes from Navarra.

²⁷ The reading is doubtful. For the one chosen here, see VELAZA 1993, 80.

²⁸ See QUINTANILLA 1998, 199.

²⁹ SCHMOLL (1959, 66, note 2) proposed an interpretation of **unin** as 'daughter' or 'woman'.

iv. A different group could contain *Astedumar*, *Asterdumar*, *Belesiar*, with a termination in *-ar* belonging to the root of the last element (*-dumar* and *-iar*), but maybe chosen as feminine because of the Indo-European influence of the feminine *-a* (as actually could have happened in §§ ii and iii).³⁰

v. Finally, other names fail to exhibit any apparent feature that would allow them to be distinguished from masculine forms: *Sillibor*, *Vrchatetel*, *Tavaccalaur* and *Geseladin*.

Another interesting feature arising from this list is that female names do not display any formal relationship with their fathers' or husbands' names, as can be seen, for instance, in example n. 5: *Socedeiaunin / Istamiuris filia* (CILa III 154) or in number 4: *Titinae P(ubli) f(iliae) / Bastogaunini / M(arcus) Licinius / Neitinbeles / coniugi*.³¹

4. The Iberian onomastic formula

The peculiar way in which Iberian names are formed, with the combination of two elements taken from quite a restricted pool of words, allows the creation of many different names, with few cases of homonymy. This system offers two advantages: despite the high number of different personal names in use, they are easy to recognise as such; moreover, no additional information is strictly required to distinguish one individual from another since repetition of identical names is quite rare.³² This could be one of the reasons why the original onomastic formula appears to be very simple, containing just a single name, without even the patronymic, whose appearance in the formulae probably must be considered a result of Roman influence. However, one also needs to consider the lack of Iberian public epigraphy before the Roman period *i.e.* from 5th to 3rd century BC, a fact that could also explain the apparent simplicity of the onomastic formula during the first epigraphic horizon, when writing was mainly used for trade and private purposes — it is less necessary to use the complete name in the private than in the public sphere. As a consequence, even if, from the documentation available, it is possible to state that the patronymic appeared in Iberian epigraphy after the arrival of the Scipios, it is not possible to determine whether this was due to a specific change in indigenous onomastic practices or to a more general change in the vernacular epigraphic habit, which could influence our perception and interpretation of the data.

Be that as it may, the most plausible interpretation is that the introduction of the filiation was carried out in Iberian with two names in asyndeton usually followed by the word **eban** or

³⁰ For an alternative explanation, see VELAZA 2006, 252.

³¹ Note as well that when names are declined, which is not always the case, they follow the Latin 3rd declination, which is not surprising, since root endings in *-o* or *-a* are rare in Iberian.

³² On the Ascoli Bronze, for instance, out of 51 indigenous names referring to different people, only two are repeated, just two individuals share the same name.



Figure 3. These two stela from Badalona, Barcelona (BDH.B.41.02 and BDH.B.41.03) present two different funerary formulae: the one on the left displays just the name of the deceased, whereas the one on the right displays the name of the deceased followed by the patronymic.

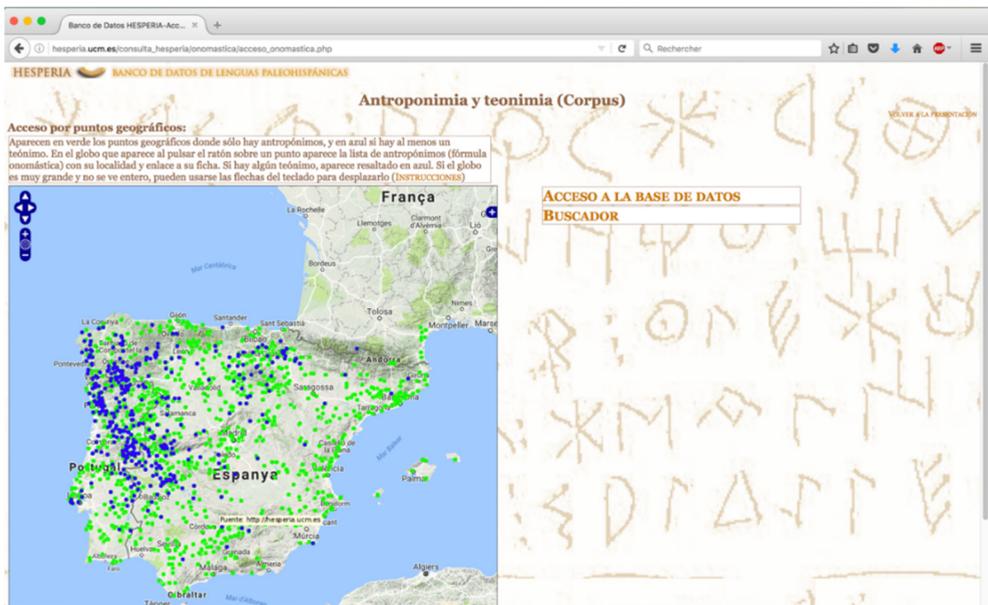


Figure 4. Screenshot displaying the main page of the onomastic sections in the Hesperia databank. The map shows all the places where indigenous personal names (in green) and divinity names (in blue) have been identified.

ebanen, whose meaning could be *filius*.³³ This structure, which is mainly attested in funerary inscriptions dating from the 2nd century BC onwards, is in fact exactly the same as on the Ascoli Bronze, where names are not adapted to Latin declination, but just appear in juxtaposition, followed by the abbreviation for *filius*: remember, once again, *Ilurtibas Bilustibas f.*

The two funerary stele shown in Figure 3³⁴ could plastically illustrate the above described evolution of the onomastic formula: the one on the left contains just the name of the deceased, **mlbebiur**, followed by the suffixation **ar-ml**; the one on the right, belonging to the son, shows instead a more complex formula, **bantuinrml mlbebiur ebanen**, whose interpretation could be "I am of Bantui, son of Nalbebiur".

5. The onomastic sections in Hesperia databank

These are just some of the main points regarding what we can say today on Iberian personal names. Nevertheless, there is still much work to do in order to understand what lies underneath Iberian naming practices and to describe the diachronic evolution of the system. To conclude, it is worth mentioning that an updated repertoire of all indigenous divinity names and personal names from Hispania can be found in the section devoted to onomastics in the Hesperia Databank, which at this moment contains around 6000 different records³⁵ (also see Figure 4). In this open-access tool, the repertoire of names is linked to geographical and bibliographical information, and a specific search engine allows combined searches to be performed and onomastic maps to be created with the results of the search.

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³³ See VELAZA 1994 and 2004, *contra* UNTERMANN 1984 and RODRÍGUEZ RAMOS 2001, who interpret **eban** as the translation of *coeravit* and sustain that the filiation is just expressed in Iberian by the juxtaposition of two names, the son and the father, without any appellative.

³⁴ The *editio princeps* of these inscriptions is COMAS, PADRÓS and VELAZA 2001.

³⁵ Online: http://hesperia.ucm.es/consulta_hesperia/onomastica/acceso_onomastica.php

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