

STUDIES OF NAMES OF SAINTS (LATIN BY ORIGIN),
PROTECTING PEOPLE FROM NATURAL DISASTERS
AND DURING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

Gergana ATANASOVA PETKOVA,
Assistant Professor
(Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, Bulgaria)

Abstract

The present article examines the Latin names of saints regarded by many as protecting people from natural disasters and helping them during difficult situations in life. The observation is based on a corpus of 20 names of saints, 15 of which are of masculine gender and 5 are of feminine gender. These names are classified into several major groups in accordance with the object protected by a saint, i. e. a thematical group, and in accordance with the type of the appellative used as a part of speech and the principles of derivation applied in the process of coining the examined anthroponyms.

Keywords: *Latin names of saints, people, natural disasters, difficult situations.*

Rezumat

În articol, supunem cercetării numele de sfinți de origine latină, care se consideră protectori împotriva calamităților naturale sau care ajută în situații dificile. Ca fapte de limbă, au servit 20 de nume de așa tip, dintre care 15 de gen masculin și 5 de gen feminin. Toate aceste nume au fost grupate, ținându-se cont atât de caracterul obiectelor protejate de sfinți și numite de aceste nume, cât și de natura morfo-lexicală a unității nominalizatoare sau de tipul de derivare pus la baza creării acestor antroponime.

Cuvinte-cheie: *nume de sfinți de origine latină, popor, calamități naturale, situații complicate.*

The present article examines the Latin names of saints regarded by many as protecting people from natural disasters and helping them during difficult situations in life.

The observation is based on a corpus of 20 names of saints, 15 of which are of masculine gender and 5 are of feminine gender.

As the main source of information about the basic classification in accordance with the object protected by a saint whose name is of Latin origin, the Russian site <http://kurufin.narod.ru/>¹ is used. These twenty names are also classified according to the type of the appellative used as a part of speech in the process of their forming, i. e. a noun, adjective, etc., and to the principles of derivation, i. e. if the name is coined from the form for Nom. sg. of the appellative or from its working base. In order to complete the information presented in these classifications, some additional sources have also been used: St. Ilchev's „Речник на личните и фамилни имена у българите“², N. Petrovsky's „Словарь русских личных имен“,

¹ *kurufin...*

² Илчев, 1969.

„Латинско-български речник“ by Michail Voinov and Alexander Milev etc.

I. Classification in accordance to the object, protected by a saint

1. Masculine names

A. Names of saints protecting people from natural disasters:

- a. Crop failure: *Florianus*;
- b. Drench: *Honoratus*;
- c. Drought: *Agricola, Honoratus, Julianus/Iulianus*;
- d. Fire: *Amabilis, Caesarius, Laurentius, Florianus*;
- e. Flood: *Florianus*;
- f. Frost: *Urbanus*;
- g. Hail: *Magnus*;
- h. Lightning strikes: *Vitus, Magnus, Urbanus*;
- i. Storms: *Vitus, Urbanus, Florianus*.

B. Names of saints protecting people in dangerous and complicated situations of life:

- a. Defamation: *Marinus, Felix*;
- b. Drowning: *Florianus*;
- c. Lack of success in school: *Sergius*;
- d. Unemployment: *Caietanus (Gaetanus)*;
- e. War: *Agnellus*;

2. Feminine names:

A. Names of saints protecting people from natural disasters:

- a. Drench: *Scholastica*;
- b. Drought: *Solongia (Sollemnia)*;
- c. Storms: *Scholastica*;

B. Names of saints protecting people in dangerous and complicated situations of life:

- a. Betrayal: *Flora*;
- b. Poverty: *Regina*;
- c. Trouble with the law: *Pulcheria*³.

II. Classification according to the type of the appellative as a part of speech

1. Masculine names:

a) derived from a noun: *Agnellus* (<*agnellus, i, m* – “lambkin, little lamb”), *Agricola* (<*agricola, ae, m* – “farmer”), *Caesarius* (<*Caesar, aris, m*, (1) a Roman cognomen with meaning “heary”⁴ or (2) derived from the verb *caedo*, (3)

³The name of one and the same saint can be “met” in more than one group because he or she “has the ability” to help people in different situations.

⁴www.behindthename.com; <http://kurufin.narod.ru/>

“cut”⁵), *Caietanus (Gaetanus)* (<*Caieta, ae, f* (present *Gaeta*), name of a town in Ancient Italy, which is derived from the Greek *Καιαδας* (the name of the place, where the prisoners were isolated in the past) or from *Caieta*, the name of *Eneus’* nephew”), *Florianus* (<*Florus, i, m*, (1) a Roman cognomen, derived from *florus*, (2) “blooming; wonderful”), *Iulianus/Julianus* (<*Iulius/Julius, ii, m*, a Roman family name, derived from the Greek adjective *ιουλος* – „curly”), *Laurentius* (<*Laurentum, i, n*, name of a town in Ancient Italy, which is derived from *laurus, i, f*– “laurel, bay tree”), *Vitus* (<*vita, ae, f*– “life”) etc.;

b) derived from an adjective: *Amabilis* (<*amabilis, e* – “kind, amiable”), *Felix* (<*felix, icis* – “lucky, happy”), *Honoratus* (<*honoratus*, “respectable, honored”), *Magnus* (<*magnus*, “big”), *Urbanus* (<*urbanus*, “city”) etc.;

c) names with more than one etymology: *Marinus* (<(1) *Marius*, a Roman family name⁶; (2) *marinus*, “sea, marine”⁷; (3) from the female personal name *Maria* (or rarely from *Marina*)⁸); *Sergius* (<(1) *servus, i, m* – “slave; servant”⁹; (2) a name with Etruscan origin with unknown meaning¹⁰).

It is important to mention that *Caesarius*, *Florianus* and *Iulianus/Julianus* are derived from another anthroponym. *Caietanus (Gaetanus)* and *Laurentius* are derived from toponyms, names of towns in Ancient Italy.

2. Feminine names:

A. Derived from a noun: *Flora* (<*flos, floris, m* – “flower”), *Regina* (<*regina, ae, f*– “queen”), *Scholastica* (<*scholasticus, i, m* – “rhetorician”) etc.;

B. Derived from an adjective: *Pulcheria* (<*pulchra*, feminine form of *pulcher, chra, chrum* – “beautiful, wonderful”), *Sologia* (<*sollemnis, e* – “pious”) etc.

III. Classification according to the principles of derivation

1. Masculine names

a) derived from the form for *Nom. sg.* of the Latin appellative: *Agnellus*, *Agricola*, *Amabilis*, *Caesarius*, *Caietanus (Gaetanus)*, *Felix*, *Honoratus*, *Magnus*, *Urbanus* etc.;

b) derived from the working base, i. e. the form for *Gen. sg.* without the case ending, of the Latin appellative: *Florianus*, *Iulianus/Julianus*, *Laurentius*, *Marinus*, *Sergius*¹¹, *Vitus* etc.

⁵Petrovsky, 1966.

⁶It is suggested that the name is derived from *Mars*, the name of the Roman god of war, and its meaning is “belonging to the god Mars” (<http://kurufin.narod.ru/>), from *maris* (a form for *Gen. sg.* of *mas* - „male” (www.behindthename.com) or from *mare, maris, n* - „sea” (Petrovsky, 1966).

⁷Petrovskii, 1966; www.behindthename.com; <http://kurufin.narod.ru/>

⁸Ilchev, 1969.

⁹www.behindthename.com

¹⁰www.behindthename.com; <http://kurufin.narod.ru/>

¹¹There is a phonetical change in the limits of the working base, too.

2. Feminine names

- a) derived from the form for *Nom. sg.* of the Latin appellative: *Regina*, etc.;
- b) derived from the working base, i. e. the form for *Gen. sg.* without the case ending, of the Latin appellative: *Flora, Pulcheria, Scholastica, Solongia* etc.

The examined names are canonized only by the Catholic Church (*Agnellus, Agricola, Amabilis, Cajetanus (Gaetanus), Florianus; Flora, Regina, Scholastica, Solongia (Sollemania)* etc.), or by both Churches, the Catholic and the Orthodox ones (*Caesarius, Felix, Honoratus, Julianus/Iulianus, Laurentius, Magnus, Marinus, Sergius, Vitus, Urbanus; Pulcheria* etc.).

From the information, presented in the classifications above, it is obvious that the number of saints, protecting people from natural disasters, is bigger than of those, whose aim is to help during an uneasy period of human life.

The majority of the names, and it is valid for both masculine and feminine ones, are derived from nouns¹². Most of the male anthroponyms are coined from proper nouns (three from another anthroponym and two from toponym).

In most of the cases linked to the derivational process, the form for *Nom. sg.* of the appellative is used as the basis of the name-forming of masculine names, while the opposite is true of the feminine names.

Ten out of fifteen observed masculine names of saints are canonized by both Churches, the Catholic and the Orthodox ones. The other five are honored only by the Catholics. The case with the feminine anthroponyms is just the opposite - there is only one feminine name which is canonized by both Churches, while the other four are honored by the Catholics.

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¹²In the case of the masculine names it is worth mentioning that the number of anthroponyms derived from nouns is the same as of those derived from adjectives.