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***Patruelles* as cousins in Latin inscriptions**

à trop croire une société sur sa parole et à la voir comme elle-même se voyait, on finit par oublier certaines réalités économiques, politiques et mentales (Veyne 2001: II).

There was nothing of high mark in this. They were not a handsome family (. . .) But they were happy, grateful, pleased with one another, and contented with the time (Dickens 1843: chapter 3).

1 Introduction

How frequently and in what capacity are cousins mentioned in Latin inscriptions? Even in times of sophisticated searchable epigraphical databases, this is a tough question. No doubt, it only takes a few clicks using the right search terms (*consobrinus/a*, *patruelis*, *sobrinus/a*) to come up with a first answer. Yet such a search only yields a very partial result. One should also include cases in which an individual is named “son / daughter of uncle / aunt”. Ideally, and in order to secure exhaustiveness, one would even have to make the effort of browsing through all family inscriptions. Imagine two brothers commemorating themselves, their wives, and the children from these two unions. Although devoid of any family terminology, such an inscription also connotes the relationship between cousins.

In a way, the laborious question has been answered already. Since the eighties, innovative times of databased research, the massive effort of compiling all family relations in a corpus of about 250,000 Latin commemorative inscriptions has been executed more than once. The pioneering study by Richard Saller and Brent Shaw is still solid as a rock. For inscriptions of all regions, the members of the extended family (grandparents, uncles, aunts, nephews, cousins, and others) are rather poorly represented, with five percent or less – a very small proportion in comparison with the overwhelming representation of relationships that belong to the nuclear family unit (parents, children, siblings).¹ True, the article by Dale Martin offered a possible corrective, by suggesting that we count stones rather than family relations, which signifi-

1 Saller, Shaw (1984).

Note: With this article, I want to warmly thank the dedicatee Manfred Clauss. In the first place, for his incomparable database that radically changed the field of epigraphic studies, and that will remain the irreplaceable first search tool for years to come. Also, for unforgettably nice lunches and conversations in the heart of lovely Bonn. Thanks also to my friend and colleague John Taylor (University of Manchester) for his language review. In the rendering of the text of the inscriptions, when necessary for the sake of clarity, I have stuck to the conventions of *L'Année Épigraphique*, another great and everlasting project in our field.

cantly increased the percentage of cases with extended family members. His article gives no further information though on the exact percentage of cousins in such counting, but the number would anyway be low.² Another big database project attempted to count family relations in Roman Italy in detail. In the published results, cousins are left unmentioned, as are aunts and uncles.³ Other historians of the Roman family have turned their attention to regional patterns in specific provinces too.⁴ Invariably, commemorations involving cousins appear to be a very tiny minority.⁵ Recently, a detailed study on Mauretania Tingitana counted exactly two cases of cousin commemoration, with again a high prevalence of nuclear family relationships (93 %) over extended family (7 %) for the whole of the province.⁶ A monumental study on the iconography of Roman family inscriptions leaves cousins completely unnoticed.⁷

With the basic counting done and the overall picture crystal-clear, the search for case stories based on specific word searches is still open. In this contribution, I will focus on *patrueles* – male or female cousins by paternal uncles. For cousins in the wider sense of the word, *consobrini/ae* and *sobrini/ae*, studies based on epigraphic series have been written already, as is the case for both nephews / nieces and aunts in Latin epigraphy.⁸ In this chapter, I will ask about the consistency of the use of the term *patruelis*. Was it also used to denote cousins in the wider sense of the word, and did it become more or less synonymous with *consobrinus/a* and *sobrinus/a*? Or did the writers consistently stick to the meaning of paternal cousin? How is the evidence distributed geographically? And what do specific case stories tell us about the nature of the families involved?

² Martin (1996).

³ Gallivan, Wilkins (1997).

⁴ As a side note, it must be said that not publishing these enormous databases on the internet has deprived ancient historians of huge chances and opportunities. How much more complete would an epigraphical study on, say, aunts be, when one could do the appropriate query and get a list of all inscriptions in which such a family relation is involved. The same counts, by the way, for the tens of thousands of inscriptions mentioning age at death. The book by Laurence, Trifilò (2023) shows enormous potential, but the massive database on which the book is based is not available to the public. If one wants to compile a list of, say, + 60-years-old, the only possibility is looking at the extensive lists by J. Szilagyi in in *AArchHung* 13–18 (1961–1967). All this again testifies to the greatness and the generosity of the *EDCS* project by Manfred Clauss.

⁵ Edmondson (2005) on Lusitania, Corbier (2005) on Africa, and Boatwright (2005) on Pannonia.

⁶ Curchin (2022).

⁷ Mander (2012).

⁸ Armani (2008) 3–5 and (2009) 1258–1262 for lists of, respectively, *consobrini* (only for the Iberian peninsula) and *sobrini*. After c. fifteen years, these thorough studies which approach individual inscriptions in great detail could benefit from an update based on a word search in the *EDCS*. Brunet (2022: 320–323) for a list of *neptes* and *neptes* who presumably were nephews / nieces. Laes (2023) is a study on aunts, with p. 141, n. 39–41 on three instances of cousins denoted as (grand)children of an *amita*. See also Laes (2023: 135, n. 5). A major epigraphic study on uncles (*avunculi* and *patruī*) is still *in votis*.

2 The use of the term in literary sources

Roman jurists precisely define *patruelles*. They are agnate male or female cousins, born from one's paternal uncle. As such, *filius patrui* is a perfect synonym.⁹ They are family members in the fourth grade:

Quarto gradu (. . .) item fratres patruelles sorores patruelles (id est qui quaeve ex duobus fratribus progenerantur).

Dig. 38.10.1.6 (Gaius)¹⁰

Without the specification of *frater* or *soror*, the word by itself can also be used as either a masculine or a feminine noun.¹¹ Logically speaking, the term *matruelis* would then refer to male or female cousins in the fourth grade by a maternal uncle, but the term is extremely rare and is never attested in the inscriptions.¹² Significantly, the complete 'biography' of the word in the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* does not indicate any unambiguous instance of *patruelis* in the wider meaning of cousin, not necessarily as offspring of the paternal uncle. As for other connotations like "step-sister" or "belonging to the same kin", they seem to belong to the specific tradition of Bible texts and commentaries by patristic writers on the passages concerned.¹³ The latter meaning also seems to apply to the term *compatruelis*, which should probably be viewed as an hapax.¹⁴

9 Gaius, *Inst.* 1.156: *Sunt autem agnati per virilis sexus personas cognatione iuncti, quasi a patre cognati, veluti frater eodem patre natus, fratris filius neposve ex eo, item patruus et patrui filius et nepos ex eo.* *Dig.* 38.16.2.5 (Ulpian): *(. . .) ut puta fecit quis testamentum, cum haberet patruum et patrui filium.* On the parallel between *patruelis* (*patrui filius*) and *erilis* (*eri filius*), see Mueller (1926).

10 According to the same passage, cousins-german from a paternal aunt were called *amitini/ae*: *amitini amitinae (id est qui quaeve ex fratre et sorore propagantur)*. Cousins german from a maternal aunt were *consobrini/ae*: *consobrini consobrinaeque (id est qui quaeve ex duabus sororibus nascuntur, quasi consororini)*. However, *consobrini/ae* was also used as a general term for all cousins: *sed fere vulgus omnes istos communi appellatione consobrinos vocant.*

11 Hickson (1990: c. 79 lines 64–68) e.g. Persius 6.54 *patruelis nulla* or Livy 4.44.6 *Sempronium, patruellem*.

12 Bulhart (1939: c. 490) only mentions Ps-Aurelius Victor, *Orig.* 13.8 and *Dig.* 48.9.1 (Marcianus): *lege Pompeia de paricidiis cavetur, ut, si quis . . . patruellem matruellem occiderit.*

13 Itala Lev. 18.11 (Lugd.): *patruelis soror tua est* (mentioning the *filia uxoris patris tui*). Vulgata Is. 5.1 *cantabo dilecto meo canticum patruelis mei* is understood by most ancient commentators as "belonging to the same kin" (*ex eadem mecum gente*, Jerome, in *Is.* 5.1 l. 21). See Hickson (1990) c. 792. Note that there are no instances of *patruelles* in Christian inscriptions.

14 Augustine, in *evang. Ioh.* 10.2: *fratres (. . .) scriptura nostra non eos solos appellare consuevit, qui nascuntur ex eodem viro et femina (. . .) aut certe ex eodem gradu, velut compatruelles aut consobrinos.* Next to this passage, Wulff (1911) mentions two inscriptions, but EDCS 20800648 (Lambaesis, Numidia) is now read as Q(uintus) Aelius Lucanus mil(es) | com(manipularis?) patrueli cars|simo (= CBI 786), while EDCS 11301375 (Storgosia, Moesia Inferior) presumably reads: Cl(audius) Atius Mon|tanus frater | c<on> patre p(osuit) (= ILBulg 230).

An overview of Latin names for cousins looks as follows (Tab. 1)¹⁵ and helps to situate *patruelis* within the broader context of Latin kinship terminology.

Tab. 1: Terminology for cousins in Latin.

General term:	<i>(con)sobrini/ae</i>	
By paternal uncle:	<i>patruelis</i> (m. and f.)	
By paternal aunt:	<i>amitinus/a</i> ¹⁶	[no epigraphic attestations]
By maternal uncle:	<i>matruelis</i> (m. and f.) ¹⁷	[no epigraphic attestations]
By maternal aunt:	<i>fratruelis/issa</i> (?) ¹⁸	[no epigraphic attestations] ¹⁹

3 The epigraphic dossier

How consistent with the legal and juridic use of the term is the epigraphic dossier?

A search in the EDCS yields 21 results, seventeen out of which are relevant for the present chapter. Indeed, in one case, *Patruelis* clearly serves as a *cognomen*.²⁰ Two inscriptions from the Iberian region are undoubtedly fakes.²¹ EDCS has also mistakenly

¹⁵ Kupisch (1997) is a short overview that deals with difficulties of translation of the different terms in the *Corpus Iuris Civilis*. On a different note, the terminology for cousins (and for nephews and nieces) in Greek inscriptions of the Roman period seems limited and imprecise: ἀνεψιός/-ά (cousin); ἀδελφιδοῦς/ίδης/ιδεύς (m.) and ἀδελφιδή/ιδισσα (f.) (nephew and niece), but the latter terms sometimes refer to cousins too. See Thonemann (2022: 116–119).

¹⁶ Dig. 38.10.1.6 (Gaius) states that cousins-german from a paternal aunt are called *amitini/ae*: *amitini amitinae* (*id est qui quaeve ex fratre et sorore propagantur*). See also the definition in Gloss. ἀνεψιοὶ τεχθέντες ἐκ δύο ἀδελφῶν θηλειῶν. Vollmer (1905) on this rare term.

¹⁷ Bulhart (1939) on this rare term, the meaning of which has been derived by analogy with *patruelis*. The three preserved references do not explicitly state that the word is synonym with *avunculi filius*.

¹⁸ Isidore of Sevilla, *Orig.* 9.6.15: *fratruelles* (. . .) *materterae filii sunt*. In his quest for systematization, Isidore is almost certainly wrong. All references are late ancient, most relate to the *Canticum Cantico-rum* and the Hebrew word *dodi* (“my beloved”). The exact meaning of the term *fratruelis* often seems confused, going in the direction of kinship or brotherhood. See Vollmer (1921a and b). Dig. 38.10.1.6 (Gaius) states that cousins-german from a maternal aunt were called *consobrini/ae* (see supra note 10).

¹⁹ Vollmer (1921: c. 1261) rightly mentions a misreading of a now lost inscription from Rome, which is now read as *Rnonosir(?) m|aritu et ka(rissimo)* (EDCS 18900194).

²⁰ EDCS 60300012: *M(arcus) Tif[t]ius P[at]ruelis* (Gundremmingen, Raetia), on which see Dietz, Weber (1982). *Patruelis* originated from the *civitas Sequanorum* and was thus a ‘foreigner’ thus took office in Raetia.

²¹ EDCS 44500130: *D(is) M(anibus) S(acrum) | Sext(us) An(ius) Fortunatus | h(ic) situs e(st) | obiit in obsidione | Collip(i) et Q(uintus) Cassius | Long(inus) patruelis | praefuit bust(o). Q(uintus) | An(ius) Fortun(atu)s frater | signif(er) cohort(is) | Celtib(eriorum) cin(eribus) moestis | soepelivit | s(it) t(ibi) t(erra) l(evis)*. Modern editors agree on this inscription being a fake (*CIL* II.*35 and *ERCollippo* 45). It is indeed very hard to make any case for a *patruelis* who was not a cousin by a paternal uncle. This text would be the only instance of it, but the inscription is only known in a copy by Friar Bernardo de

included one double.²² The geographical distribution of the seventeen significant inscriptions is as follows (Tab. 2):

Tab. 2: Geographical distribution of *patruelles* inscriptions.

Region	Number of inscriptions (percentage)	EDCS number
Iberian provinces	1 (6 %)	05502332
Italy without Rome	4 (24 %)	11500410; 05101170; 21500370; 12700527
Rome	4 (24 %)	02700049; 18200428; 17201693; 01000264
African provinces	7 (41 %)	14900272; 17900442; 59600009; 17700456; 20800648; 21600340; 25600220
Gaul and the Germanic provinces	1 (6 %)	09200645

This is obviously a small sample, but it is fair to say that the African provinces get a proportionally high percentage: the expected percentages would have been 8, 24, 28, 15, and 8.5 for these five regions respectively.²³ The absence of evidence from the Balkans (and Asia) is also remarkable, with an expected total of 9.5 %. This region is known for a pattern of stronger representation of extended family relationships.²⁴

Thirteen of the *patruelles* mentioned were men, only four were women (three inscriptions from Rome and one from Milan, Tab. 3). Gender is not systematically specified by the addition of *frater* or *soror*.

The only way to find out whether inscriptions for *patruelles* effectively refer to agnate cousins, born from one's paternal uncle, is similarity of the *nomina gentilicia* of both the individual who is named *patruelis* and the person who addresses him / her as such. Here, our dossier reveals the following pattern (Tab. 4):

Brito (1569–1617), a Portuguese Cistercian monk and historian, who is renowned for his insertion of fake inscriptions in his two volumes of the *Monarchia Lusytana*. Interestingly, Friar Bernardo translated *patruelis* himself as *tio* (Portugese for “uncle”). EDCS 41700172: *C(aius) Terent(ius) T(iti) Terent(ii) f(ilius) patricia Romanorum gente ortus proh dolor nephando coeli contagio | oppress(us) interiit. P(ublius) Martius M(arci) Mart(ii) f(ilius) patruelis pientissimo cum quo egregie sub C(aio) Caesare militarat tumulo locari iussit. Vixit an(nos) xxxviii mens(es) iiii dies x*. The text is now commonly viewed as a phantasy of Konrad Peutinger (1465–1547) (*CIL* II.*364). See González Germain (2014).

²² EDCS 2700049 and 07700043 are the same – in what follows, I will always refer to 2700049. See *infra*, note 26.

²³ Laes (2023: 116) for expected percentages and application to the distribution of inscriptions for aunts.

²⁴ Boatwright (2005) and Mander (2012: 183). Note that Mander has no entry “cousins” in the index, while nephews are dealt with.

Tab. 3: Gender distribution of *patruelles* inscriptions.

Gender indication	Number of inscriptions	EDCS number
Male	5	14900272; 17700456; 05502332; 20800648; 12700527
Male (with addition <i>frater</i>)	8	17900442; 59600009; 09200645; 11500410; 21600340; 25600220; 02700049; 21500370
Female	3	17201693; 01000264; 05101170
Female (with addition <i>soror</i>)	1	18200428

Tab. 4: *Patruelles* as proven cousins from the male lineage.

	Number of inscriptions	EDCS number
Same <i>gentilicia</i>	11	14900272; 17900442; 59600009; 17700456; 09200645; 05502332; 20800648; 21600340; 25600220; 01000264; 21500370
Impossible to establish	6	11500410; 02700049; 18200428; 17201693; 05101170; 12700527

The main reason for the impossibility of proving kinship via male uncles is the fragmentary state of an inscription, in which the *gentilicia* are illegible. In cases where the dedicator is not named, it is beyond our reach to establish the exact lineage with the dedicatee who is called *patruelis*. Also name-giving practices relating to (former) slaves make it impossible to ascertain any such family relation. In one case, the dedicator mentioned only his *cognomen*. Here, I have hypothesised that he did so because his *gentilicium* was the same as that of his *patruelis* (05502332). Be this as it may, Tab. 4 persuasively shows how the inscriptional evidence and the literary sources firmly correspond.²⁵

4 Case stories

4.1 One-on-one dedications

I first turn my attention to one-on-one dedications, in which an individual sets up an inscription for his *patruelis*, or receives it from his paternal cousin. Such dedications by no means prove that the cousin concerned had no other surviving kin left. Other inscriptions are possibly lost, or a dedication might have belonged to a larger entity

²⁵ Laes (2023: 118) found next to no evidence of divergence between epigraphy and the literary records in the way *amita* or *matertera* is used.

comprising several family inscriptions. Nevertheless, such cases arguably reveal a rather unique bond between two paternal cousins.

No less than ten cases in our dossier reveal this pattern. The inscriptions frequently belong to individuals of high status.

Close to Emperor Marcus Aurelius stood Titus Pomponius Proculus Vitrasius Pollio, who was a consul twice. He was married to Annia Fundania Faustina, paternal cousin to the Empress Faustina, who had died already when the honorary inscription was set up. Together with the inscription, two statues were erected: one of Pomponius Proculus as a civilian, and one of him as a military man – respectively in the Forum of Trajan and in the pronaos of the temple of the deified emperor Antoninus Pius. Because of the family ties of his wife, Pomponius Proculus proudly calls himself “related to the imperial house” (*adfini domus Augustae*) (EDCS 01000264; EDR 093415, inscription dated 178–180).

Lucius Mammius was an equestrian military tribune in the city of Herculaneum in the last decades of the first century BCE.²⁶ Another equestrian inscription originates from the town of Sellaoua Announa (Thibilis, Numidia). Clodia Vitosa Tertullina, who had served as the *flaminica IIII coloniarum*, is commemorated by her *frater patruelis* Publius Clodius Quadratus, who as a decurion of the same four colonies was honoured with equestrian status (*equo publico ornatus*). By decree of the decurions, he was allowed to honour his cousin for her great generosity, and he paid for the dedication out of his own pocket (EDCS 25600220). Another *flaminica*, Sammia Honorata, is named in a grave inscription from Rome, presumably set up by one other individual (EDCS 17201693). In Grenoble (Gratianopolis), Cassia Attia commemorates her *patruelis* Titus Cassius Mansuetus, who had fulfilled important magistracies and held offices in his hometown: from *flamen* priest of the local *iuventus* to *duumvir iure dicundo* (EDCS 09200645).

The case of Quintus Aelius Minucianus, who died at age 45, is situated in the higher military ranks of Lambaesis (Numidia). As a *beneficiarius*, relieved of active service by the prefect of his legion, cousin Quintus Aelius Lucanus, who had probably served in the same manipule, took care of his funeral and named him *patrueli car(i)ssimo*, the only instance of an explicit term of endearment in our dossier of inscriptions.²⁷

To the circles of the imperial household belongs an inscription found in the Forum Romanum, on which a *cubicularius* and imperial freedman commemorates his paternal cousin.²⁸

26 EDCS 11500410: [L(ucio)? Ma]mmio Ti(beri) f(ilio) | [Men(enia)], fratri | [patr]ueli, | [tr(ibuno) mil]l(itum) ter | — (EDR 102147). See supra note 22.

27 EDCS 20800648: D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum). | Q(uinto) Aelio Mi|nuciano b(ene)ff(iciario) | praef(ecti) leg(ionis) v(ixit) a(nnos) XLV. | Q(uintus) Aelius Lucanus mil(es) | com(manipularis?) patrueli cars|simo.

28 EDCS 02700049: — | [—] fr(atris) patr(uelis) | [—? lib]eror(um) | [—]us Aug(usti) lib(ertus) | c[ubicular(ius)] | [—]o++[—] | —.

Finally, some other one-to-one inscriptions do not allow for more conclusions on the social background of those involved. In Es Schiri (Africa Proconsularis), 45-years-old Caius Aurelius Cuttitanus (?) is commemorated by his cousin Caius Aurelius Saturninus (EDCS 14900272). Most remarkable is the age of 93 of Caius Fabricius Fuscus, who died in Iruna Oka (Veleia, Hispania citerior) and receives a dedication from his *patrueles* Secundinus (?). Even if one allows for a considerable age gap between the two brothers who were the fathers of respectively Fuscus and Secundinus, we have to presume that the latter had reached old age too when he set up this gravestone (EDCS 05502332). In Amelia (America, Umbria), Marcus Cutius set up an inscription for himself and for his *frater patrueles* Titus Cutius, according to his testamental wish (EDCS 21500370).

4.2 Family inscriptions

The other seven inscriptions place the *patrueles* concerned in the context of a larger family unit. The fragmentary state of a gravestone from Assisi (Assisium, Regio VI) does not allow for any conclusions, except for the possibility of a freedman mentioned together with at least one other freedman and an individual who is perhaps named a *patrueles* (EDCS 12700527). Two brothers, Iulius Marinus and Iulius Magnus, honoured their deceased cousin (*fratri patrueles*) Caius Iulius Silvanus, who died at age seventeen in Lambaesis (Numidia) (EDCS 21600340). A more extended family network is mentioned on a stone from Milan (Mediolanum, Regio XI). Marcus Garrius set up an inscription for himself, his father and mother, wife, daughter, three of his brothers, at least two sisters, a female whose cognomen ends on *-occae* who was his *patrueles*, and at least two other individuals, the family ties of whom we cannot retrieve anymore (EDCS 05101170; EDR 124337). In Qasr Manarah (Africa proconsularis), a certain Suellius commemorates his father Suellius Quartus, another Suellius Quartus (his paternal uncle ?), his *patrueles* Caius Suellius Pontianus, his maternal uncle (*avunculus*) named Lucius Aemilius Africanus, a man named Marcus Aemilius Paulus (maternal grandfather?), Claudia (?) Casta who was his grandmother (*avia*), his wife Aemilia Pia, and some other relatives in a part of the inscription that is irretrievably lost (EDCS 17700456).²⁹

Two cases lead to the tradition of magnificent building inscriptions in the African provinces, more specifically in the town of Mest (Mustis, Africa proconsularis). Caius Iulius Galba, an ex-centurion of the *legio XXII Primigenia*, had appointed as sole heir his *frater patrueles* Lucius Iulius Rogatus Kappianus. By testament, the sum of 30,000 sesterces was designated to build a temple for the Emperors Marcus Aurelius and Verus. To this, Rogatus Kappianus added another 10,000 as a thanksgiving for the hon-

²⁹ EDCS mentions *socrus* on the last readable line, but this term does not appear in the editions.

our of the perpetual flaminiate that was bestowed on him. Together with his siblings Potitus, Natalis, and Honorata he oversaw the construction of the temple, which was finally brought to completion by his nephew (*filius sororis*) Iulius Titisenus Rogatus Kappianus, who in the year 164–165 dedicated the temple together with his son Titisenus Honoratus Kappianus (Fig. 1). The festivity of the inauguration was accompanied by games (*ludos*), presents (*sportulas*) to the people, plus a public banquet and the building of a gymnasium. Based on EDCS 17900442 and 59600009, the genealogical tree thus reads as follows:

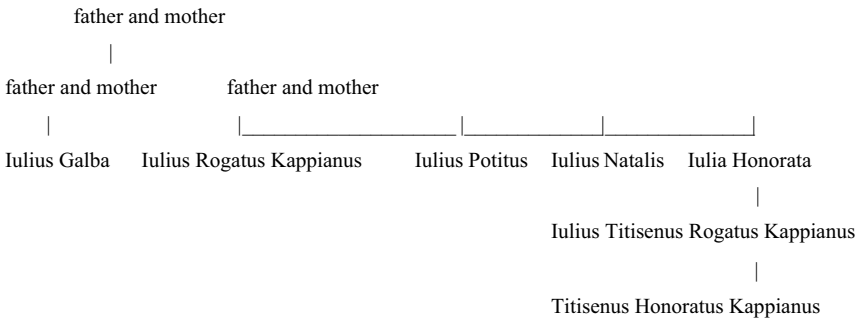


Fig. 1: Genealogical tree based on inscriptions EDCS 17900442 and 59600009, illustrating the lineage of Iulius Titisenus Rogatus Kappianus.

Finally, an ollarium from a hypogeum in Rome, for the last time seen in full and copied by G. Marangoni in 1744 (Fig. 2), gives a unique insight into the familial life of freedmen in the imperial household of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. Staphylus was a house-born slave (*verna*) from Capri. Manumitted by the emperor Augustus, he married his paternal cousin Munatia Lynchnis (note the misreading on the drawing), possibly though not certainly a freedwoman. She must have had a close link with slavery though. Maybe her father Scaeva (Staphylus' uncle) had already been freed, while this father's brother (Staphylus' father) had remained an imperial slave. Or did Staphylus' father, despite him being free, have a female partner in the imperial household at Capri, which would make the son of this union a house-born slave anyway?³⁰ Be this as it may, after Staphylus' death, Munatia Lynchnis married Anthemus, a freedman and book-holder of Tiberius, who had been handed over to the emperor by his predecessor Augustus (*accenso delato ab Augusto*). A son of a freed couple was free-

³⁰ This was a marriage between family members of the fourth grade (cf. *supra* note 9). Roman aristocrats would have frowned upon the practice, but it is attested for other social classes up to Late Antiquity in rescripts (*Cod. Iust.* 6.25.2) and in the papyri. See Laes (2023: 110–111) for further references. For a mythological case, see Probus, *Verg. Georg.* 1.60: *Deucaliona . . . habuisse in matrimonio sororem patruelem Pyrrham*. Uncertain status of Munatia Lynchnis, since she mentions her father Scaeva in (b).

born, and so Quintus Munatius Salutaris proudly bore the *tria nomina* of a Roman citizen. The addition that Anthemus and Lychnis “considered him their son” (*quem pro filio habuerunt*) leads one to suppose that he actually was the son of Lychnis’ first marriage with Staphylus. The young man died at age eighteen.³¹

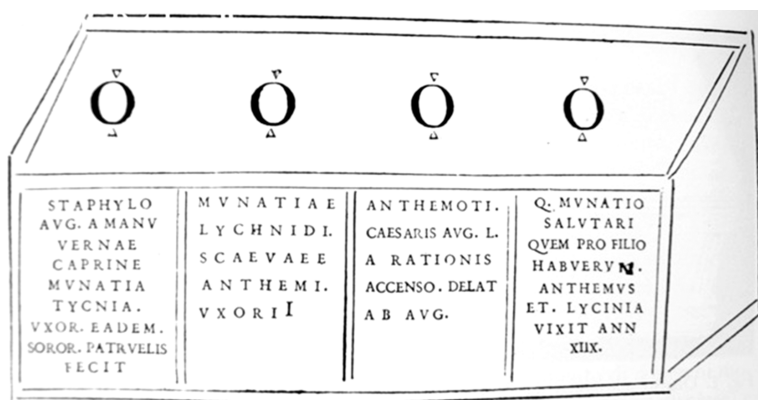


Fig. 2: Grave monument (ollarium). Drawing by G. Marangoni, *Delle cose gentilesche* (Rome, 1744).

5 Conclusions

The two quotes with which I started this chapter reflect very well the challenges historians of the Roman family face at every stage of their research. It seems as if the small dossier of inscriptions for *patrueles* confronted us with ‘special cases’: rather highbrow dedications by families with pretensions to superior status and interests. Paul Veyne was probably right that by focusing on cases like these, we tend to forget underlying economic, political and socio-cultural realities that may have mattered much more in daily life of families all over the Roman Empire. On the other hand, the desire to depict vignettes of a cozy family life is very much a legacy of romanticism, as witnessed by the second quote from Charles Dickens. Ancient historians find glimpses of it in papyri, or in all sorts of allusions in ancient literature.³²

Modest as the amount of inscriptions for paternal cousins is, it nevertheless offers the possibility of combining the best of two worlds. It shows how, within the conventions

³¹ It is useful to refer to EDR 100341, which shows a much clearer text than EDCS 18200428: (a) *Staphylo* | *Aug(usti) a manu*, | *vernae* | *Caprensi*, | ⁵ *Munatia* | *Lychnis* | *uxor eadem(que)* | *soror patruelis* | *fecit*. (b) *Munatiae* | *Lycnidi*, | *Scaevae e(iliae)*, | *Anthemī* | ⁵ *uxorī*. (c) *Anthemō Ti(beri)* | *Caesaris Aug(usti) l(iberto)* | *a rationib(us)*, | *accenso delat(o)* | ⁵ *ab Aug(usto)*. (d) *Q(uito) Munatio* | *Salutari*, | *quem pro filio* | *habuerunt*, | ⁵ *Anthemus* | *et Lycinia*, *vixit ann(is) XIII*.

³² Laes (2023: 110–113) for what is called “a brief history of aunts from 500 BCE to 500 CE”.

of epigraphic fashion, over a geographical area from Grenoble to North Africa, some families stuck to a consistent use of family terminology that attached high importance to agnate relationships. Such relations apparently mattered in arrangements by testament, or in grave and honorary inscriptions that served as advertisements to emphasise the significance of a certain family within the municipal patronage system. For achieving such aims of agnate family pride, female paternal cousins too sometimes played their role, while slave families of the imperial household seem to have taken over the same device. But with the use of a bit of empathy, the stones also offer us case stories that seem to speak to us more directly: *patruelles* who must have been like brothers up to a (very) high age; cousins as brothers-in-arms; a cousin marriage that produced a son, of whom the widowed mother later took care after she has contracted a new marriage.

There are still quite a few family terms left that would lend themselves to similar scrutiny. As such, the combination of both the epigraphical serial evidence and an open eye to the multi-faceted aspects of particular case stories is the way forward for the study of 'the' Roman family, or rather Roman families in the multiple worlds of the Empire. One thing is certain. For all of these future studies, the Datenbank project by Manfred Clauss will be the indispensable and irreplaceable starting point for years to come.

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