

East Germanic and West Germanic in contact: *n*-stem personal names in the Continental runic inscriptions

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Of the runic inscriptions written in the 24-character Older Futhork, those found on the Continent are fewer in number and cover a much smaller time-period than those in Scandinavia. The corpus of material consists of eighty to ninety inscriptions produced between the fifth-seventh centuries (predominantly in the sixth), with find-sites concentrated in the region of the upper Danube and the upper and middle Rhine. The inscriptions are useful to linguists because they provide us with some of our earliest witnesses to the Germanic dialects of this region. In this paper I consider the possibility that they show indications of contact between East and West Germanic dialects in the ethnic and linguistic melting-pot of this region at the frontier of the collapsing Western Roman Empire.¹

All of the Continental runic inscriptions – apart from the Kleines Schulerloch cave inscription, the authenticity of which is in doubt (see, *inter alios*, Düwel 2006; Nedoma 2006; Pieper 2006; Rosenfeld 1984) – are on small portable objects. The texts range from unintelligible sequences of runes like **fþae** (Herbrechtingen fibula) to short clauses, such as **blīþgub:uraitruna** ‘Blīþgunþ wrote runes’ (Neudingen-Baar wooden stave). The inscriptions contain numerous personal names, many of which are abbreviated or familiar forms belonging to the ‘*n*-declension’; that is, to the nominal class with a stem-formant derived from Proto-Indo-European (PIE) */-ōn-/. Names of this class attested in the runic inscriptions include **adō**, **awā**, **bigina**, **boba**, **bobo**, **boso**, **bubo**, **buirso**, **dādo**, **dāþa**, **dāþīna**, **dnlo**, **feha**, **hiba**, **ida**, **imuba**, **koþo**, **leuba**, **leubo**, **liano**, **rada**, **segalo**, **sigila**, **wi⁹/_nka**, **wobro**.² The identities and etymologies of some of these names are

¹ This paper uses a number of abbreviations which are conventional in the philological literature but which may be unfamiliar to the non-specialist. A full list of the abbreviations used is given at the end of the paper.

² I am here adhering to the convention of using bold type to transliterate a runic spelling. A dot below a letter in these transliterations indicates that the reading of the character is uncertain. Parentheses indicate uncertainty about whether a rune is present at all. A ligature (bind-rune) is indicated by underlining. Words and phonemic representations from proto-languages are marked with an asterisk to indicate that they are reconstructions, rather than attested forms.

disputed, but we do not have sufficient space to discuss them in detail here (For more detail and further references, see Nedoma 2004).

The development of the *n*-stem nominals in the Germanic dialects differs from that in other Indo-European (IE) languages. In general, this class contains both masculine and feminine nouns which behave in the same way with respect to their inflectional morphology. Compare Latin *ordō* 'row, series' (masc.) and *oratiō* 'speech' (fem.):

	<u>masc.</u>	<u>fem.</u>
nom.	<i>ord-ō</i>	<i>orati-ō</i>
voc.	<i>ord-ō</i>	<i>orati-ō</i>
acc.	<i>ord-ōn-em</i>	<i>orati-ōn-em</i>
gen.	<i>ord-ōn-is</i>	<i>orati-ōn-is</i>
dat.	<i>ord-ōn-ī</i>	<i>orati-ōn-ī</i>
abl.	<i>ord-ōn-e</i>	<i>orati-ōn-e</i>

(after Antonsen 2003:12. Because we will be concerned with personal names in the following discussion, I have omitted the plural forms).

In the Germanic dialects, on the other hand, the masculine and feminine *n*-stems take different inflections. Here are the singular paradigms for Old High German *hano* 'cock' (masc.) and *zunga* 'tongue' (fem.):

	<u>masc.</u>	<u>fem.</u>
nom.	<i>han-o</i>	<i>zung-a</i>
acc.	<i>han-on ~ -un</i>	<i>zung-ūn</i>
gen.	<i>han-en ~ -in</i>	<i>zung-ūn</i>
dat.	<i>han-en ~ -in³</i>	<i>zung-ūn</i>

(Braune 2004:207-208).

Although a gender distinction is found in all of the Germanic languages, the attested forms vary from one language to another. In contrast to the OHG forms shown above, the Gothic cognates take the following forms:

³ The forms in *-un* and *-in* are characteristic of Upper German, while those in *-on* and *-en* are usual in Frankish dialects.

	<u>masc.</u>	<u>fem.</u>
nom.	<i>han-a</i>	<i>tugg-ō</i>
acc.	<i>han-an</i>	<i>tugg-ōn</i>
gen.	<i>han-in-s</i>	<i>tugg-ōn-s</i>
dat.	<i>han-in</i>	<i>tugg-ōn</i>

(after Wright 1954:97, 99).

Of particular interest to us is the patterning of the nominative forms: OHG masc. /-o/, fem. /-a/ versus Goth. masc. /-a/, fem. /-ō/. The origins of the Germanic gender differentiation are unclear (for further discussion, see Bammesberger 1990:167; Ringe 2006:274-276). It appears that although a gender distinction is present throughout the Germanic language family, different dialect groups settled on mutually contradictory forms of the nominative suffix. The Gothic pattern is established in the Biblical Gothic of the fourth century, and the OHG pattern in the earliest OHG manuscripts (mid-eighth century), which is also attested in Old Saxon from the ninth century).

We are not, strictly speaking, dealing with a distinction between a West Germanic and an East Germanic pattern. The West Germanic language group consists not only of the dialects of the Continental interior (OHG and OS), but also the 'Ingvaemonic' dialects (Old English and Old Frisian), which display a third pattern, masc. /-a/ and fem. /-e/ (OE *hana*, *tunge*). This third type, and the behaviour of the *n*-stems in the Scandinavian dialects, do not concern us at present.

As mentioned earlier, the Continental runic inscriptions are concentrated predominantly in what is now central and southern Germany – that is to say, in areas normally associated with OHG. This being the case, it would seem reasonable to suppose that where we have an *n*-stem written with a termination **-o**, it represents the OHG/OS masculine type (*hano*, as opposed to Goth. *hana*), and that **-a** represents the corresponding feminine type (*tunga*, as opposed to Goth. *tuggō*). However, the evidence of Latin inscriptions from the Rhine region suggests that personal names of the EGmc type were current in the fifth and sixth centuries alongside WGmc ones. Names of both types may occur within the same inscription, and indeed within the same family.

Haubrichs (2003; 2006) discusses the names on the 'Remico stone' from Goddelau am Rhein (Kr. Groß-Gerau, Hessen), which bears the following memorial inscription:

HIC [Q]VIISCET IN PACE MATRO/NA N[O]MENE REMIC/O SIMVL CVM/
FILIS SV[I]S DVCCIONI ET DER/STO DADILO [CU]M FILIIS SIUIS/
TETULU POSUERUNT

'Here rests in peace the matron by the name of *Remico* together with her sons *Duccio* and *Derstus*. *Dadilo* and his/her sons placed the gravestone.' (After Haubrichs 2006:296, my translation).

The inscription clearly identifies *Remico* as a woman. Haubrichs connects the name with Goth. *rimis* n. 'peace', with the diminutive suffix /-īkō/ (the termination /-ō/ here representing a nom. fem. *n*-stem inflection, as in Goth. *tuggō*). *Derstus*, on the other hand, contains (so Haubrichs argues) a stem *Deuri-* (cognate with OS *diuri*, OHG *tiuri* 'valuable, expensive'), which is attested as a name-element only in WGmc sources. If a woman with an etymologically and morphologically EGmc name had a son whose name had an identifiably WGmc stem, it appears that both types could co-exist.⁴ As Haubrichs points out (2003:236-237; 2006:297), we cannot be sure whether *Dadilo* is a masculine name terminating in /-o/ (the OHG type) or a feminine terminating in /-ō/ (the Goth. type).

Haubrichs (2003:226, 229) dates the *Remico* inscription to the fifth or sixth century on palaeographic and iconographic grounds. A vase depicted on the stone has parallels datable within the period 450-563 (see also Boppert 1971:168-169). The location is close to the find-sites of several runic inscriptions containing *n*-stem personal names in **-o** and **-a**: within 50 miles of Goddelau we find the names **boso** and **ḍaḥīna** (Freilaubersheim bow fibula); **koḷo** (Griesheim bow fibula); and possibly **badā** (Bad Ems bow fibula). It is conceivable that any of these names might also follow the EGmc pattern, regardless of whether the peoples in the area spoke WGmc or EGmc dialects at the time. In none of the runic inscriptions do we have any co-text like *MATRONA* to tell us explicitly the sex of a named individual.

⁴ The name of Remico's other son, *Duccio*, is of Celtic origin (Haubrichs 2003:232-233; Reichert 1987).

The variation in naming traditions exemplified by the 'Remico stone' may be a regional phenomenon restricted to the middle and lower Rhine, whereas most of our runic material comes from further south. It does, however, give us good reason to be cautious in assigning gender to names in **-a** and **-o**. In order to assist us with gender assignment, we can draw on three types of evidence: the form of the stem; the oblique inflectional suffixes; and syntactic clues from the co-text.

Stem forms

If we can show that the stem in a particular name is formally and/or etymologically EGmc or WGmc, then perhaps we can infer the gender assignment from this. For example, the names **leuba** and **leubo** appear in two inscriptions (respectively, on a silver capsule and on a disc fibula) from Schretzheim (Kr. Dillingen a.d. Donau, Baden-Württemberg). If these were EGmc names, we might expect them to show the merger of Germanic */i/ and */e/ which is normal in Gothic (Wright 1954:26), and which ought to yield surface forms ***liuba**, ***liubo**. If it follows from the actual forms in **-eu-** that the names are WGmc, then perhaps we can conclude that **leuba** is feminine and **leubo** masculine. A similar argument can be made in regard to the names **segalo** and **sigila** (both on a bow fibula found at München-Aubing, Bavaria). Both of these names are thought to contain a stem derived from PGmc */segez-/ 'victory' (> Goth. *sigis*; ON *sigr* ~ *sig*; OE *sige* ~ *sigor*; OFris *sī*; OS *sigi-* (in compounds); OHG *sigu*) (Düwel 1998:76; Nedoma 2004:399-407, 409-410; Opitz 1987:172-174). If these were EGmc names, we would expect ***sigalo**, **sigila**.

The 'Remico stone', however, gives us pause for thought: REMIC/O is clearly a feminine name in /-ō/, but the form of the stem appears to reflect a phonological distinction between /i/ and /e/, whereas a 'regular' Gothic parallel would be **Rimico*. It is likely that the form REMICO is an artefact of Latin phonology, with lowering of Late Latin [i] > [e] (Haubrichs 2003:230). The presence of <I> in the suffix could perhaps be explained by appeal to analogy with the common masculine suffix *-icus* in Latin names (Haubrichs cites a parallel *Remicus*).

Variations between <i> and <e> are common in Late Latin, as the relatively open reflex of Classical Latin /i/ = [i] merges with that of long /e:/ following the loss of length distinctions (Allen 1965:47-48; Kent 1945:46; Rohlfs 1960:41-44). Haubrichs points out several alternations between <I> and <E> elsewhere in the 'Remico' inscription: [Q]VIISCET ← *quiescit*; NOMENE ← *nomine*; DVCCIONI ← *Duccione*; TETULU ← *titulu(m)* (2003:229; 2006:296). Felder also notes that on Merovingian coins, the spellings <E> ~ <I> for PGmc */i/ occur in approximately a 1:1 ratio, while */e/ is consistently <E> (Felder 1978:16-20). It is reasonable to conclude that REMICO represents a phonological form /rimikō/.

We cannot apply a similar explanation to forms like Schretzheim **leuba, leubo**: in the first place, there is no reason to believe that the runic inscriptions are being produced by people whose first language is non-Gmc, or that there is interference from LLat phonology (see Düwel 1994b). Secondly, the merger of LLat /i/ and /e:/ cannot be invoked here, since neither of these phonemes is involved; we are dealing with the PGmc diphthong */eu/ < PIE */eu/. The Latin reflex of PIE */eu/ is /u:/ (Kent 1945:92-93), and no alternative /eu/ is productive in Latin; apart from the interjection *heu*, the few Latin words which do contain /eu/ = [ɛʊ] are either contractions or loanwords from Greek (Kent 1945:50). Opitz does invoke LLat/Romance orthographic influence to explain the form **seg-** on the München-Aubing fibula (Opitz 1987:174), a hypothesis which is greeted with scepticism by Nedoma (2004:403) as it leaves unexplained the alternation between **seg-** and **sig-**. I do not share Nedoma's confidence that a Latin-influenced spelling would not show free variation between **e** and **i**; but I refer to the point made above, that we have no corroborating evidence on which to base an argument that Latin interference is involved. The only place in the Continental runic inscriptions where we find a spelling **e** which can plausibly be connected with an underlying /i/ is **seḡun** (Bezenye bow fibula II, Kom. Mosony, Hungary). This form is thought to represent a loanword, Lat. *sīgnum* 'mark, sign' or the verb *sīgnāre* 'to bless (with the sign of the Cross)', which appears in OHG as *seḡan* 'blessing, power, benediction, dedication' (Köbler

1993).⁵ In this case, **e** (and <e> in OHG *seġan*) probably reflects the interpretation of Lat /i:/ as /e/ by Germanic speakers borrowing this word, rather than Latin interference in the runic spelling.

It would seem, then, that the alternations between <I> and <E> in Latin inscriptions are the orthographic consequence of features of Latin phonology. The principle cannot readily be extended to runic orthography; we might reasonably conclude that our original hypothesis about the Schretzheim forms is correct, and that the names are of the OHG/OS type (**leuba** → *Leuba* f.; **leubo** → *Leubo* m.). We are, though, relying on an assumption that the runic spelling reflects the phonological form (/leub-/ vs. Goth. /liub-/), and this presents us with a further problem: in OS and OHG, PGmc */eu/ develops in different ways, depending on the height of the vowel in the following syllable: */eu/ > /iu/ before a high vowel (/i u/), /eo/ before a mid or low vowel (/e o /a). These variants may already exist as allophones, or may already be phonemic, in late PGmc (van Coetsem 1994:47, 94-98; Klein 2001:583; Ringe 2006:221). In the Upper German dialects, the consonant following the diphthong also plays a role: /eo/ appears only before dental consonants preceding a non-high vowel, whereas before a labial or velar consonant, the form is /iu/, regardless of the quality of the following vowel (Braune 2004:49-54; Penzl 1971:137-140). If this consonant conditioning applies in the dialect of the Schretzheim inscriptions in the sixth century, we would expect to see ***liuba**, ***liubo** (the same forms we would see if we were dealing with EGmc *Liuba* m., *Liubō* f.). On the other hand, if the consonant conditioning does not apply in this dialect, the umlaut process ought to produce the forms ***leoba**, ***leobo**.

PGmc */leuba-/ 'dear, beloved' (> Goth. *liufs*; ON *ljúfr*; OE *lēof*; OFris *liāf*; OS *liof*; OHG (Frank.) *liob* < *leob*, (UG) *liub*) is the most frequent lexical stem in the corpus of Continental runic inscriptions, appearing in ten places: **leub** (Bad Krozingen disc fibula A); **leub** (Engers bow fibula); **leub** (Kleines Schulerloch cave inscription); **leubwini** (Nordendorf bow fibula I); **liub** (Niederstotzingen strap end); **leuba** (Schretzheim

⁵ Whether or not the semantic development 'sign' → 'sign of the Cross' → 'blessing, benediction' and the specifically Christian sense applies here is a matter of debate, but does not concern us at present.

capsule); **leubo** (Schretzheim disc fibula); **liub(i)** and **leob** (Weimar bow fibula I); **leob** (Weimar buckle). Where we would expect to find two forms, **leob-** vs. **liub-**, we have three, and **leub-** is by far the most common. We could perhaps interpret the spelling **eu** as an archaism; but if we can appeal to archaic spelling in respect of a WGmc dialect with surface forms in /eo/ versus /iu/, why can we not also do the same in respect of an EGmc dialect which only has /iu/? A significant general problem in interpreting runic inscriptions is that, once we allow a discrepancy to exist between written and spoken forms, our basis for arguing that different spellings represent real phonological variation is substantially weakened. Because we have only a small dataset, we cannot easily distinguish aberrant or idiosyncratic forms from phonologically significant variants by making reference to a 'normal' form (in contrast to the situation with a form like [Q]VIISCET, which can readily be compared to the regular contemporary Latin <quiescit>).

Before moving on, it is worth briefly mentioning another sound change which distinguishes the WGmc from the EGmc dialects: one of the PGmc long vowels, */ǣ/, develops into /ā/ in all of the WGmc dialects (as well as in Old Norse and the dialects of the early Scandinavian runic inscriptions), but /ē/ in Gothic. It would seem reasonable to suppose that a name in a runic inscription which contains a reflex of this vowel is EGmc if it has the spelling **e**, and non-EGmc if it has **a**. If we survey the *n*-stem personal names in the Continental inscriptions, the only one which contains a reflex of PGmc */ǣ/ is **rada** (Soest disc fibula). We can conclude that in this case we are dealing with a WGmc *Rāda* f. < PGmc */rǣd-/ (> Burg. **rēps*; ON *rǫð*; OE *rǣd*; OFris *rēd*; OS *rād*; OHG *rāt* 'counsel, advice')⁶ (see Nedoma 2004:222-224).

In the few instances discussed here, we appear to have evidence that the stems are WGmc, and we can infer (though not with complete certainty) that the inflectional endings conform to the OHG type: **leuba** → *Leuba* f.; **leubo** → *Leubo* m.; **rada** → *Rāda*

⁶ Note that the stem **rēp-* ~ **rēd-* is not attested in Gothic, and in Burgundian it appears only as a name-element.

f.; **segalo** → *Segalo* m.; **sigila** → *Sigila* f.. For the majority of the *n*-stem personal names in the inscriptions, though, the stems may plausibly be either EGmc or WGmc.

Oblique inflections

We have three plausible oblique forms of an *n*-stem name: **godun** (Arlon capsule); **iddan** (Charnay bow fibula); and **idun** (Weimar buckle). Possible, but less certain, cases are **ditan** (Chéhéry disc fibula) and **iglu⁹/_n** (Gomadingen disc fibula).

godun and **idun** must be feminine forms of the OHG type in /-ūn/, while **iddan** is generally believed to be a form of an EGmc masculine *Idda* (Krause 1966:22; Looijenga 2003:235-236). *Iddan* can only be masculine: if the underlying name were feminine, we would expect ***id(d)un** (OHG type, as on the Weimar buckle), or ***id(d)on** (to **Id(d)ō*) (Goth. type).

The reading **ditan** for Chéhéry is tentatively proposed by Fischer (1999). If this is correct, we may be dealing with an oblique form of a masculine *Dito/-a*. A name of this type is attested only once (OHG *Titza* f.), and the etymology is obscure (Förstemann 1900:1416; Nedoma 2004:280).

If the Gomadingen sequence is to be read **iglu⁹/_n**, this may represent *Iglūn* or *Inglūn*, to a feminine *Igla/Inglā*. Again, the etymology is uncertain; the stem may perhaps be connected with PGmc */igila-/ 'hedgehog' > ON *igull*; OE/OS/OHG *igil*). The preferred interpretation in the runological literature is *Iglung/I(n)glung*, i.e., a masculine name with the patronymic suffix /-ung/ (for further discussion, see Förstemann 1900:947; Haubrichs 2004:87; Müller 1970:96; Nedoma 2004:345).

Syntactic clues

The oblique forms are assigned case as part of the syntactic analysis of the texts to which they belong. Arlon **godun** is interpreted throughout the literature as a dative of dedication: '(The capsule is) for Goda' (Arntz and Zeiss 1939:435; Krause 1966:286; Looijenga 2003:227; Nedoma 2004:307; Opitz 1987:175-176). Weimar **idun** is also interpretable as a dative, forming part of a clause with the preceding material:

awimund:isd:leob idun → *Awimund ist leob Idūn* 'Awimund is dear to Ida' (Krause 1966:290; Nedoma 2004:228); or *Awimund Isd(ag) leob Idūn* 'Awimund (and) Is(dag) (wish something) dear for Ida' (Krause, *loc.cit.*). Alternatively, Arntz suggests that it could stand alone as a genitive: 'Ida's (buckle)' (Arntz and Zeiss 1939:375).

In the dominant interpretation of Charnay, **iddan** is accusative, representing the object of the verb **upfnpai** → *u(n)pf(i)npai* 'may... discover' (Krause 1966:22); see below. Antonsen (1975:77), however, reads **upfabai:id dan** → *u(n)þ fabai Iddan* 'To (my) husband Idda', with *Iddan* a dative of dedication like **godun**. In this regard he is at odds with the rest of the runological community.

Fischer (1999:13; Fischer and Lémant 2003:251) identifies Chéhéry **ditaŋ** as dative, without further explanation; I suspect that he regards it as another dative of dedication. As for Gomadingen **iglu⁹/n**, if it does represent a FN in /-ūn/, it is open to the same range of interpretations as **godun**. It is the only legible part of the inscription, so there is no recoverable co-text to assist us in interpretation.

In attempting to assign case, we must beware of the assumption that all of the oblique cases are formally identical. Although this appears to be true for the feminines (OHG *zungūn*; Goth. *tuggōn* (but gen.sg. *tuggōns*)), the masculines have Goth. /-an/, OHG /-on/ in acc., vs. Goth. /-in/, OHG /-en/ or /-in/ in gen. and dat. (see patterns in introduction). In OS, as in OHG, /-en/ forms appear only in gen./dat.sg., but here they alternate with /-an/ ~ /-on/, and /-on/ appears to be the preferred form (Bammesberger 1990:164; Gallée 1910:228).⁷

If these patterns hold true for the dialects of our inscriptions, then they take us no further with **godun** and **idun**, which could be in any of the oblique cases. With **iddan**, however, we can make a little more progress. If it conforms to either the OHG or the Goth. paradigm, it is most plausibly to be interpreted as accusative; if it were dative, as Antonsen suggests, we would expect a form ***idden** ~ ***iddin**. Antonsen's dative interpretation is based on the hypothesis that the PGmc dat.sg. form varies between */-

⁷ Braune (2004:207 Anm. 3) notes that acc.sg. <-an> occasionally appears in OHG sources, but he attributes this variant to Norse influence.

an-i/ ~ */-en-i/. Here he disagrees with Bammesberger (1990:165), Lehmann (2005-2007 §3.2.3) and Ringe (2006:268), all of whom reconstruct only */-en-i/ for the PGmc dative. While it is not my intention to attack or defend a particular model of PGmc, the majority opinion does support the interpretation of **iddan** as acc., and as an EGmc type in /-an/.

If Antonsen's reading and interpretation of Charnay **uþfŕþai:iddan** (**fapai** → *fapē* dat. '(to my) husband') are correct, then *Iddan* is syntactically parallel with *fapē* and the assignment of masculine gender would be supported both grammatically and semantically (although this support is in a sense redundant, since we have already established that **iddan** is not a plausible feminine form). However, this analysis is incompatible with the conclusion stated above, that the form **-an** points to accusative rather than dative case.

Summary and Conclusion

While I see no grounds for challenging the view that many of the sequences in **-a** and **-o** represent *n*-stem names, the assignment of gender is not directly testable. The only examples which can be assigned gender with certainty are the oblique forms: as discussed above, **godun** and **idun** can only be feminine (OHG type), while **iddan** can only be masculine (Goth. type).

The evidence adduced by Haubrichs from Latin inscriptions indicates at the very least that personal names are known in the middle Rhine region which conform to the Goth. type (masc. /-a/, fem. /-ō/), rather than to the OHG type (fem. /-a/, masc. /-o/). It is not unreasonable to expect that names in the runic inscriptions will follow the latter pattern, since this is regular for OHG, but we cannot rule out absolutely the possibility that the Gothic/EGmc type is present in some cases.

When using the linguistic distinctions 'East' and 'West' Germanic, it is easy to fall into the trap of assuming a simple relationship between dialect, ethnic identity and territory (see Tischler 2003). While I do not wish to overstate the case for EGmc dialects and/or naming traditions – the Charnay fibula is one of only a few runic inscriptions on

the Continent which we can identify with any confidence as linguistically EGmc – the Latin inscriptions provide us with some indications that EGmc names are present in what is commonly thought of as WGmc ‘territory’. This is hardly surprising in view of the historical context of the material: central Europe is on the routes of major population movements in the so-called Migration period. Ethnic identities and political alliances in this period were complex and fluid. In the battle on the Catalaunian plains in 451, for example, we find ethnic and linguistic diversity on both sides: Attila’s army contained not only Huns, but Gepids, Ostrogoths, Rugii and Heruli (all believed to be speakers of EGmc dialects), Franks (speakers of WGmc dialects) and Alans (whose language belongs to the Iranian sub-family of Indo-European). The coalition which opposed them consisted of more Franks and Alans, together with Visigoths and Burgundians (EGmc), among others (Geary 2002:93-119; Grünzweig 2004:99-100). By the sixth century, when most of the inscriptions were produced, the region was home to people from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, with contact between speakers of West Germanic and East Germanic dialects, as well as Gallo-Romance dialects of the Empire and the various languages of non-‘Germanic’ and non-‘Gothic’ peoples from further east such as Huns, Alans and Avars. If relics of those languages are recorded anywhere, it is most likely to be in names. The speakers of these languages had no vernacular written traditions of their own (as far as we know), and the recording of foreign personal names is common in Latin texts, whereas other kinds of linguistic material appear only rarely (for example, in cases of lexical borrowing such as *carrus* ‘wagon’, from Gaulish(?) **karros*).

When dealing with entrenched views of history which have rather more to do with the assertion of modern national identities than with historical – and particularly linguistic – reality, we must not forget that contact and co-existence (peaceful or otherwise) between culturally and linguistically diverse groups is the norm. With regard to language, this implies that multilingualism is the norm, just as it is in the modern world. If Remico and her family all spoke multiple dialects or multiple languages, or were at least in regular contact with them, it is hardly surprising that this linguistic diversity might find

its way into naming practices, even when it is manifest in ways that look curious to the modern philologist.

Abbreviations

abl. – ablative	nom. – nominative
acc. – accusative	OE – Old English
Burg. – Burgundian	OFris – Old Frisian
dat. – dative	OHG – Old High German
EGmc – East Germanic	ON – Old Norse
f./fem. – feminine	OS – Old Saxon
Frank. – Frankish	PGmc – Proto-Germanic
gen. – genitive	PIE – Proto-Indo-European
Gmc – Germanic	pl. – plural
Goth. – Gothic	sg. – singular
LLat – Late Latin	UG – Upper German
m./masc. – masculine	voc. – vocative
n. – neuter	WGmc – West Germanic

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