Proposal to Standardise the Genitive Form of Feminine Forenames Ending in a Consonant

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Reviewed work(s):
Published by: International Association for Plant Taxonomy (IAPT)
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/1223803
Accessed: 01/06/2012 11:08

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(47) Add a sentence at the end of Rec. 60C.1(b): “However, the genitive form of a feminine forename ending in a consonant is formed by adding -ae (not -iae), e.g. Aganosma edithae, Arundinaria murielae.”

To ascertain current usage of feminine forenames (given names) I have compiled from newspapers, dictionaries of first names for guidance of parents, etc., a list of 245 personal feminine names from A to Z. Of these more than two-thirds end in a vowel and are unaffected by this proposal. Over half (126) end in -a after a consonant, for example Ada, Adalgisa, Agatha, Aida, Alexandra, Alfreda, Allegra, Alma, Aliva, Anita, Anna, Augusta. It may be noted that the Anglo-Saxon name Hild (borne by the celebrated Abbess of Whitby) later became Hilda and the bisexual English name Julian (borne by the medieval religious woman Julian of Norwich) got a feminine form Juliana. Only 13 names ended in -ia, viz., Alicia, Amalia, Antonia, Aspasia, Cecilia, Cornelia, Delia, Felicia, Lucia, Marcia, Maria, Octavia, and Valeria. There were 66 names ending in -i or -y, -ce, -le, -me, or -ne, for example Anne, Bernice, Caroline, Cicely, Dorothy, Gabrielle, Geraldine, Heidi, Mimi, Naomi, and Trudy. Many of these have a well established latinized form, for example Anna, Cecilia, Dorothea, and are governed by Rec. 60C.2. Others, to produce a genitive, will have to comply with Rec. 60C.1(a) by having -ae added, e.g. heidiae from Heidi.

Some specific names commemorate women by their forenames. Note that they mostly end in a consonant followed by -ae and end in -iae only when the underlying forename ended in -ia: adalgisae (Ornithogalum), alexandriae (Lilium, Rheum), annae (Dendrobium), beatricis (Rosa), berthae (Taraxacum), camilae (Gladiolus), cathariniae (Adenia), clementinae (Rhododendron), conradiinae (Prunus), florindae (Primula), gizellae (Rubus), isabellae (Dracocephalum), josephinae (Brunsvigia), juliae (Primula), julianae (Berberis), luciae (Rosa), lucilae (Chionodoxa, Omphalodes), margaretiae (Moriae), margarethae (Alsophila), margaritae (Alocasia), mariae (Anaphalis), mariannae (Cotyledon, Ruschia), marthaee (Polypodium), matildae (Impatiens), nathallae (Ramonda), olgae (Eremurus, Incarvillea, Scabiosa), susannae (Platanthera), victoriae (Anthemis, Astragalus).

The question has arisen as to how the genitive of a feminine forename ending in a consonant should be formed: should one add -ae or -iae? The following involve names ending in consonants: Edith (Aganosma edithae, Conophyton edithae), Elizabeth (Saxifraga elisabethae), Helen (Rosa helenae), Marion (Moriae marionae), Muriel (Arundinaria murielae). Thus there is overwhelming support, from general evidence and botanical usage, for simply adding -a (genitive -ae) and not -ia (genitive -iae) to a feminine forename ending in a consonant to give it Latin form for a specific epithet.

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