1. The data, arranged chronologically in each group.

1.1. Deverbals

mercimōnia ‘item of merchandise’ Pl.+ ← mercāri ‘trade’  
parsimōnia ‘thrift, temperance’ Pl.+, parsimōnium CIL 9.8449 (171–300 A.D.) ← parcere ‘spare; be sparing’ (with irreg. -s-) 
querimōnia ‘complaint, protest’ Pl.+ ← querē ‘complain’  
mendicimōnia ‘beggary’ Laber. ap. Gell. ← mendīcārī ‘beg’  
moechimōnia ‘adultery’ Laber. ap. Gell. ← moechārī ‘commit adultery’ (or ← moechus ‘adulterer’)  
alisān(n)ium and alimōnia ‘food, nourishment; nurture, upbringing’ Var.+ ← alere ‘nourish’  
regimōnium ‘direction, control’ CIL 4.918, Pompeii, ← regere ‘direct, rule’  
gaudimōnium ‘joy’ Petr. 61.3 ← gaudēre ‘rejoice’ (cf. semantics of §1.3 below)  
parcimōnium ‘savings’ CIL 5.95+ (3rd cent. A.D.), parsimōnia CIL 2.6278 ← parcere

1.2. Desubstantivals (base is a personal noun)

testimōnium ‘evidence given by a witness, testimony; token, proof’ XII+ ← testis ‘witness’  
mātrimōnium ‘marriage’ Pl.+ ← māter ‘mother’  
ualdimōnium ‘guarantee that a defendant will appear in court’ Pl.+ ← uas ‘surety’  
patrimōnium ‘property of the pater familias’ Rhet. Her.+ ← pater ‘father, head of household’  
flāmōnium ‘office of a flāmen’ Liv.+ ← flāmen ‘flamen’

1.3. Deadjectivals (mostly) expressing negative emotional states

aegermōnia ‘mental distress, agony’ Pl.+ (← aeger ‘sick’)  
falsimōnīā ‘tricks, treachery’ Pl. Bacch. 541, standardly lemmatized as falsimōnia (← falsus ‘false’)  
ācrimōnia ‘caustic quality, harshness; vigor’ Cato+ (← ācer ‘sharp’)  
miserimōnium ‘wretchedness, misery’ Laber. ap. Non. (← miser ‘wretched’)  
trāstimōnia ‘sadness’ Bell. Afr.+; trāstimōnium Petr. 63.4 (← trāstis ‘sad’)

1.4. Deadjectivals expressing states of ritual purity

sānctimōnia ‘sanctity, probity’ Rhet. Her.+ (← sānctus ‘holy’)  
caerimōnia ‘respect for the sacred, reverence, holiness; (pl.) rites, ceremonies’ Caes.+ (prob. ← *kairos, cf. sincērus ‘ritually intact’; Hiltbrunner 1958:146–54, with earlier lit.)  
castimōnia ‘ritual purity’ Cic.+ (← castus ‘morally unpolluted’)

1.5. Diff. between -mōnium and -mōnia secondary and largely predictable, agrees with -ium/-ia pattern more generally (Leumann 1977:291–6): -ium usu. deverbal or denominal from personal nouns (types gaudium, arbitrium), -ia usu. deadjectival, sts. denom. from personal nouns or deverbal (types audācia, mūlitia, exsequiae).

2. The prehistory.

2.1. Usual view: -mōnium/a < *omōn-ijom/ā to anamite stems in (Ital.) nom. -mō, stem -mōn- (← PIE *-mō, *-mōn-). But not totally straightforward.

2.2. *-mon- orig. in exocentric internal derivatives to deradical neuter men-stems (IIr., Gk.); usage then variously extended to produce both adj. and nouns, to form both adjectives and nouns, the latter both personal and non-personal, derived both deradically and depressentially.


2.3.1. Celtic: Suffix mostly appears as renewed *-amon-, *-iamon-; found in deradical, depresential, and desubstantival forms in OIr. and Mlr., e.g. inherited deradical OIr. tālam ‘earth’ < *telh₁-mon-, depresential Mlr. foidem ‘messenger’ (← foid ‘sends’), desubstantival OIr. brithem ‘id.’ < *britijamon- (← brith ‘judgment’ < *bhṛ-ti-). See Watkins 1962:182–5, Stüber 1998:146–65.

For the phonological development of *eRa > aRa in Celtic reflected in tālam, see Schrijver 1995:75–93, esp. 84–5.

2.3.2. Desubstantival type innovatory; so also Tocharian A, but no trace in Brittonic. Maybe a deadjectival example that’s old in Celtic if Weiss 2017 is correct: Gallo-Lat. dat. (Marti) Segomoni, Ogam gen. Segonas < virtual *segho-mon- ‘the strong one’ to *segho- ‘strong’, also yielding Lat. Sēmō, Osc. seemunéi. No textual support for Lat. Sēmō being internal deriv. to sēmen; his sphere is martial. Pushes (at least one) deadjectival mon-formation to pre-Italo-Celtic.

A little differently Watkins 1962:184, who takes it as deverbal to *segh-.

2.3.3. Does this help with deadjectival -mōnium/a formations (§§1.3–1.4 above)? Not really. In *segho-mon- ‘the strong one’, *-mon- is an individualizer; but a putative (virtual) *aigri-mon- ‘the sick one’ or *kaire-mon- ‘the holy one’ as base for aegrimōnia or caerimōnia difficult. Italic didn’t use *-mon- as individualizer; used *-on-, or simply substantivization. Semantics also off:
caerimōnia is ‘reverential attitude towards something/someone else that is holy’, not ‘the state being the holy one’. Deriving adjectival state from an individualization also seems fishy. My view: -mōnium/a already a unit when these deadjectivals were formed.


2.4.2. Tellumō (Aug. Civ. 4.10, 7.23). Maybe = OIr. talam ‘earth’ (Weiss 2017:386 n. 51), influenced by tellūs.

Weiss ibid. actually claims that “perhaps Tellumō represents *Tellum, the exact match for OIr. talam m. ‘earth’ < *telh,mōn-.” But *telh,mōn- (< telamōn-) would have given Lat. §Tolûmō or (with syncope) §Tûlmō because -e- plus “dark” l became o (> u if another consonant followed the l; Leumann 1977:47, Weiss 2020:150). This may weaken the meaningfulness of Weiss’s claim, since getting from §Tolûmō/§Tûlmō to Tellumō involves a more fundamental recreation of the word and leaves only -mō as part of the original form. None of this changes the overall picture, though.

2.4.3. Sabellic: nothing to add; U. airmune Ilb 7 is a candidate, but interpretation unclear.


2.4.4.2. Alemona Tert. De animis 37, listed alongside Lucina and Partula as pagan goddesses of gestation and childbirth. Maybe fem. of masc. *Alimō, or maybe back-formed to alimōnium/a. Note -ōna in other (tutelary) goddesses (Angerona, Bellona, Latona [← Dor. Lūtō], Bubona, Intercidona, etc.).

Aug. Civ. 7.23 mentions alongside Tellus and Tellumō two other divine principles of the earth, Altor and Rusor. Altor is the nourishing principle. Could Alemona/*Alimo be a variant of Altor with similar morphology to Tellumō?

Another unhelpful form is Vadimonis lacus, lake with floating islands considered sacred to the Etruscans: unknown morphology, vocalic quantities, or etymology.

2.4.5. Interim result: no solid evidence that mon-stems were productive in Italic.

2.5. Forms in -mōnium do not obviously presuppose intermediates in -mō to the same types of stems. Dubious in deadjectivals (as per above); impossible in desubstantivals to personal nouns (testimōnium ← *testimō? No -mō, Nanette!). Works better for deverbals, but Irish deverbals mostly names of professions (fleithim ‘ruler’, medam and brithim ‘judge’, airem ‘plowman’, cairem ‘shoemaker’, ollam ‘scholar, master of a skill’, mraithim ‘traitor’, orbam* ‘heir’, etc.) or temporary but societally important roles (fēchim ‘creditor; debtor’, etc.). (Virtual) *querimō (*kē/esimō) ‘ketcher’, etc. would be different.
2.6.1. Exception: *flāmōnium. Stolz 1894–5:498, Skutsch 1909:400 claimed this was the origin of the other desubstantivals in -mōnium and that it points to a *flāmō, later replaced by flāmen. This itself is taken as < *flāmēn (type ποιμήν), leading to discussions of fate of *-
ēn (e.g. Leumann 1977:371, Weiss 2020:330–1 with n. 48).

2.6.2. So two questions: (a) Could flāmōnium have generated -mōnium? (b) Does flāmōnium necessarily presuppose a *flāmō? My answers: (a) Probably not, and (b) no, viz.:

2.6.3. Flāmōnium first securely attested in Livy in lit.; in inscr., Flavian era+. But note adj. flāminius (Paul. ex Festo several times), flāminicus Metellus Pius+, and esp. nomen gentil. Flāminius. Attested saec. ii B.C.+ but dating back much earlier. Central Italian system of gentile names prob. fixed by 7th century (Solin 1996). No other derivatives built to flāmōν-.

See Mommsen 1872:221–2 on philology of flāmōnium and its ms. variant flāminium, which actually appears earlier (most mss. of Cic. Phil. 13.41), though he strongly doubts its evidentiary value (followed by TLL, OLD, and many text editors, but may need reinvestigation).

2.6.4. Flāmōnium can be haplogologized from *flāmi-mōnium (for *flāmi- rather than *flāmini- cp. homi-cīda, nun-cupāre < *nomi-cupāre, etc; for haploglogy cf. *sēmi-modius > sēmodius). Or a blend of flāmen and -mōnium, perh. under infl. of praecōnium Pl.+ ‘heraldship’.

2.6.5. Flāmen < neut. (**divine inspiration’? *’prayer’? whatever) → ‘the person associated with the inspiration/prayer’. Cp. ōrāculum ‘divine utterance’ → ‘mouthpiece of the divine utterance’. Change of gender as in Venus (neut. → fem.), Cupīdō (fem. → masc.). Tells us nothing about fate of *-
ēn in Latin.

But could derivational stem flāmin- instead continue *flāmōn-, from before *-mōn- → -mōn-? Not chronologically possible. Generalization of -ō- in -mōn- pre-Latino-Sabellie, but creation of gentile names centuries later. Would be weird if other derivatives of flāmen were from *flāmon- while flāmōnium was created a little later, but still before -mōnium could be abstracted.

3. Other possible approaches to think about.

3.1. Option 1. There used to be more derivatives in *-mon-, and to more kinds of stems. But why did only a very few of the more archaic deradical sort (besides Sēmō and maybe *alimō) survive? Irish mon-derivatives still only deverbal or formed to non-personal nouns. Intermediate stage with more productive use of *-mon- seems therefore unlikely.

3.2. Option 2, the am-mōnia or bleach(ed) compound approach: -mōnium/a was once a SCM like Eng. -ship or -hood. Appealing, but methodologically suspect; unconstrained hypothesis-space. (If orig. compound had verb as FCM, it would have been a pickpocket-type compound, excessively rare in Italic: Leumann 1977:396, Bork 1990:241–2, Nielsen Whitehead 2012:114–32.)

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1 Yeah, I know, technically ammonia isn’t used in bleach, but many people think it is. By the way, you should never mix bleach and ammonia or you’ll die from the chloramine fumes.
3.3.1. Option 3. While *mon*-stems are marginal in Italic, very common are *men*-stems and their derivs. in *-mentum*. Often depresidential, e.g. certāmen ‘contest’ ← certāre ‘contend’, monumentum ‘commemorative object or structure’ ← monēre ‘remind’, integumentum ‘covering’ ← integere ‘cover’, farcīmen ‘sausage’ ← farcīre ‘stuff’, uolūmen ‘roll’ ← uolure ‘roll’, even occasionally denominal (sincipītamentum ‘half a head’ ← sincipit ‘id.’). Well-known Nebeneinanders: alimōnium/a ~ alimentum, regimōnium ~ regimen(tum), testimōnium ~ testāmentum.

3.3.2. *men*-stems could form collectives in *-mōn*. On the various meanings these forms can take, see in detail Nussbaum 2014a:287ff. and 2014b:239ff. Collectives/possessives are derivatives and therefore separate lexical items (cf. on this also Melchert 2014:258), and thus can come to replace their bases as the basic word for the concept, in Gk. ὕδωρ ‘water’ (: Hitt. uidār pl. ‘waters’) replacing *yōd-t-, Gmc. *namō ‘name’ replacing *hnōm-ŋ. Such collectives could become derivational bases, e.g. TB ytārye ‘road’ alongside TA ytār ‘a journey’ < coll. *hī-tōr to *hī-t-y (> Lat. iter).

3.3.3. Nussbaum 2014b: Gk. τέκμωρ ‘sign’ and τέρμων ‘boundary’ are lexicalized “collectives” of homosemus τέχμαρ and τέρμα, respectively.


3.3.5. …and maybe in Latin too: Fest. 498.1–4 L.:

**Termenem** Enniius Graeca consuetudine dixit, quem nos nunc terminum hoc modo:

“Ingenti uadit cursu, qua redditus termo est.” et: “Hortatore bono prius, quam iam finibus termo.”

Enniius said termo, following Greek usage, when we now say terminus [turning post], in this way: “with immense speed it goes to where the turning post is duly set,” and “with a good coxswain before it at the boundaries the turning post.” (tr. Goldberg and Manuwald, Loeb)

Ennian fragments difficult to understand, but ‘turning-post’ is not terminus or τέρμων, but mēta or τέρμα.


3.3.7. So perhaps a couple of lexicalized forms in coll. *(môn-)* spawned derivs. in *(ijo-/-ijā-*, whence substantivizations as abstracts in *(i)om/*-ijā. Adjective type already in Ven. *termonios*. Or abstr. *(i)om/*-ijā added directly to *(môn*, but that seems harder to justify.

Nussbaum 2014b:239–40 (esp. §6.2.2 alongside §6.2.3.3), if I understand him correctly, seems to equate *mon*-agentives and *môn*-collectives as the same formation. If true, it might render this whole thought-experiment pointless; but surely not true anymore in the attested histories of the languages. Cf. the fact that stem τέρμων- from the collective is distinct stem -μον- for regular nouns in -μον.

3.3.8.1. *Sermô* maybe “inspiration” for the group. Verb of speech; speech is common thread at least with *querimônia, testimônia, and uadimôniun*. Sketch of development: On the basis of or parallel to coll. *(ser-môn* ‘bunch of talking’ → *kwes-môn* ‘a lot of complaining/protesting, (legal) protest’ → adj. *kwesemônios* → (subst.) *kwesemônijâ*.

3.3.8.2. *Querimônia*/*kwesemônijâ* really useful: (a) it refers to speech, often of a legal significance, so could have led to *testimôniun, uadimôniun*; (b) it is depreasentual, so it could have provided a model for depreasentals; (c) it comes pretty close to expressing a negative emotion, so could have led ultimately to deadjectivals: possibly *kwesemônijâ* → *akromônijâ* (> *aciromônia* ‘bitterness’) → aegrimônia ‘distress’, etc., and one way or another → caerimônia.

3.3.9.1. Possibly relevant: *calumnia* ‘trickery, deceit, false testimony’ *CIL* I².583+ ← *calûn* ‘deceive’ XII+ (Ernout-Meillet s.v., Leumann 1977:322). Usually taken as ← middle participle in (pre-Lat.) *(m)a(n)-*. But only such participles that have become lexicalized serve as bases for derivation, e.g. Gk. οἰκομενικός ‘of/from/open to the whole world’ ← οἰκομενή ‘the inhabited world’, ἐρωμένον dimin. of ἐρώμενος ‘eromenos’, Skt. *yajamānâta*– ‘office of the yajamâna’ ← *yajamâna*– ‘ritual officiant’, kâyamâni(ka-niketana) ‘grass hut’ ← kâyamâna– ‘id.’.

3.3.9.2. *Calumnia* and *querimônia* refer to negative speech that can have legal significance. If *querimônia* is *kwes-môn-ijâ to *kwes-môn-(-), perhaps calumnia < *kalVüe-*(e)n-ijâ to *kalvüe-mn*. Cf. formally *sèminiun* ‘begetting; breed, stock’ Pl.+. ← *sëmen* ‘seed’. (*kalvüe-mn* would have > Lat. §calûmen like uolûmen to uoluere, etc.)

Another, older view on *calumnia*: Debrunner 1957:277 (comparison with Ir. abstracts in -mna-).

Literature


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