

Romance Reflexes of Latin *nūtrīcia* and *nūtrīciō*

YAKOV MALKIEL, Berkeley

I.

The absence of any genuine liaison between the Latin (and, stationed immediately behind it, the Indo-Europeanist) teams of researchers, on the one hand, and, on the other, the smaller contingent of Palaeo-Romanists can be explained and excused in several ways, but its legitimacy can no longer be seriously defended. The classic example of the dire consequences of this gradual drifting-apart of the two groups in question has been the history of a major word family in the ancestral language—a family clustering, in the opinion of seasoned Classicists, around the verb *nūtriō*, *-īre* ‘to suckle, feed, nourish, bring up, foster, rear’. Complications arise at the very start of any sustained inquiry, because any self-confident researcher’s initial optimism is apt to be dampened before long by the discovery that Romance scholarship in unison interprets the parental verb thus: *nŭtriō*, *-īre*, i. e., with a short nuclear *ŭ*, on the basis of an impressive consensus of reflexes in the daughter languages; as a matter of fact, authorized spokesmen for it tend not to bother any longer to mark *nŭtriō* and its offshoots as mere reconstructions, by means of asterisks.¹⁾ A thorough discussion of the embarrassing gap on this score between two equally reputable traditions of historical linguistics has been reserved for a separate, distinctly longer paper;²⁾

¹⁾ This strange policy has, e. g., been followed by W. Meyer-Lübke as late as 1930–35; by W. von Wartburg and his collaborators until 1953; and by J. Corominas not only in the mid ’fifties, but all the way down to the ’eighties (for full bibliographic details see below). The last-mentioned scholar, aware of the bizarre discrepancy, explicitly declares the Classicists guilty of a stubborn perseverance in error, concluding his indictment with this pious wish: “La etimología indoeuropea permite lo mismo un vocalismo *ŭ* que *ū*. Esperemos que algún día haga un análisis detenido de la cuestión un filólogo latinista”.

²⁾ Without preëmpting the results of that collateral inquiry (which basically operates with the assumption of influence of *pŭteō* and *pŭtr-ēscō/-īscō* ‘I rot’ on *nūtriō* as semantic near-opposites), let me point out that Latin evidence allows for a modicum of variation in Antiquity. Epigraphy has brought to light the existence of the var. *noutrix* (merely an aberrant spelling): “Diana mereto *noutrix* Paperia” (*CIL*, Vol. I² [Berlin, 1918], No. 45); while the occurrence of *nōtrīx* in Quintilian (I 4, 16), for all its isolation, has prompted F. Sommer, *Handbuch der lateinischen Laut- und Formenlehre* (Heidelberg, 1914), § 66, to bracket this instance of wavering with *fōnus* ~ *fūnus* ‘funeral procession, burial’ (Mar. Vict.,

taking this particular instance of incompatibility for granted, I here intend to focus attention on a single sector of the sprawling family of *nūtrīō*/**nūtrīō*, namely the suffixal derivatives in *-īcia* and *-īciō*, in an effort to build a conciliatory bridge between their conflicting interpretations by the aforementioned schools of thought.

II.

Traditional Classical learning, on which—after 1880—the pioneering Romanists heavily depended for leadership, was fully aware of the existence of a noun *nūtrīcius*, used both adjectivally and substantivally, and subdivided the latter function into a masculine and a feminine branch (keeping out the neuter for a while), both marked by appropriate endings, thus: *nūtrīcia* ‘die Amme, Erzieherin’, supported by a reference to St. Jerome’s *Epistles* (108,30).³) With the advent to influence of a 20th-century style of research, based in part on the ready availability of new tools of information, adjoining sectors of the far-flung family moved into the center of attention. Wilhelm Heraeus, e.g., in his stimulating article, “Die Sprache der römischen Kinderstube”, bracketed *nūtrīcia* with the nursery word *amma* ‘mom(my)’ and laid bare the scopes of two near-synonyms for ‘Ernährer, Wärter, Erzieher’: *nūtrītor*, preserved solely in a bilingual gloss (*CGL*, V, 342.20 = *τροφεύς*) and *nūtrīciō*, which can be peeled off from an inscription: “Nutriciones votum fecerunt” (*CIL*, V 1676).⁴) The oft-repeated devotional phrase: (dat.) *nūtrīciō optumō* ‘for my mentor, educator’ was made the object of meticulous

VI 12₂); with *rōbus* ‘rusty’, *rōbīgō* ‘rust, mildew, blight’, beside *rūfus* ‘red(dish)’; and with (epigr.) LOSNA (Praeneste) alongside *Lūna* (see *CIL*, I₂, N° 549). One wishes the author had pursued this matter further in the companion volume, *Kritische Erläuterungen . . .*, simultaneously issued.

³) See, e.g., Karl Ernst Georges, *Ausführliches lateinisch-deutsches Handwörterbuch, aus den Quellen zusammengetragen . . .*, 8th edn., rev. by H. Georges (Hannover & Leipzig, 1913), II, 1231 a.

⁴) The piece appeared originally in *ALLG*, XIII (1903), 149–72, but the version absorbed into the noted philologist’s *Kleine Schriften . . . zum 75. Geburtstag . . . ausgewählt . . .*, ed. J. B. Hofmann (Heidelberg, 1937), pp. 158–180 (see esp. at 169) carries with it the advantage of numerous elaborations. Less meritorious, on balance, seems the author’s willingness (p. 173) to toy with the possibility of recognizing in *nūtrīx* a haplological variant of **nūtrītrīx*. For sharp criticism see A. Ernout & A. Meillet, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine*, rev. 4th edn. (Paris, 1959–60), p. 453 ab, which makes the late rise of *nūtrītor* hinge on the semantic development of the corresponding verb: ‘to suckle’ > ‘to nourish’.

investigations, archaeologically flavored.⁵⁾ On the side of derivational analysis, Manu Leumann, in his expert revision of an older grammar, assembled a good collection of the semantically elusive *-iōn-* formations to the extent that they served to form “nomina personalia”, including jocular offshoots, remarking: “Später recht geläufig für Berufsbezeichnungen”; he listed separately the use of *-iōn-* in zoonyms, conspicuously important in Romance studies.⁶⁾ It thus became understandable how the very same word, namely *nūtriciō*, could—depending on grammatical context (case) and real-life circumstances—have designated now the suckling (= G. *Säugling*), entirely dependent for bare survival on his mother or wet nurse (= G. *Säugamme*, R. *kormilica*), now the breadwinner, provider of livelihood—typically a masculine agentive (or a male deity).

Finally, approaching the midpoint of the century, Hofmann magisterially summed up the situation so far ascertained, recording and setting off three well-documented Latin words for ‘wet nurse’, namely: a) *nūtrīx, -īcis* (since Plautus), b) *nūtrīcula* (since Cicero),

⁵⁾ These stretched from *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, ed. H. Dessau, I (Berlin, 1892), 340, N° 1600: “fec[it] sibi et Thamyro . . . *nutricio* opt[umo]” via David Moore Robinson, “Greek and Latin Inscriptions from Asia Minor”, *Transactions of the Amer. Philol. Assn.*, LVII (1926), 228, N° 68: *nu[t]ricio optumo*, to Manu Leumann’s superb critical digest, “Literaturbericht für die Jahre 1926–27”, *Glotta*, XVIII (1929), 248, who specifically likened Fr. *nourrisson* to Lat. *nūtrīcius*, as underlying the misspelled Lat. *nuricio*.

⁶⁾ *Lateinische Grammatik: Laut- und Formenlehre*, which enters into a revision (and, at the same time, 5th edn. [München, 1928]) of Stolz and Schmalz’s preceding grammatical venture and, at the same time, forms part of Walter Otto’s monumental encyclopaedia of *Altertumskunde*. Characteristic examples, picked from those adduced by Leumann, were: *cūriō* ‘wasted by sorrow, emaciated’, *homunciō* ‘little man, manikin’, *lucriō* ‘one fond of gain’, *lūdiō* ‘stage-player, pantomimist’, *mūriō* (act.) ‘gazer’, (pass.) ‘defectively-formed person [provoking gazes]’, *pumiliō* ‘dwarf, pygmy’, *seneciō* ‘funny old man’ (cf. R. *starikaška*, Fr. *vieillard*, Sp. *vej-ete, -ancón*), *tenebriō* ‘trickster, swindler’, lit. ‘one who shuns the light’. For further analysis see *infra*.

These semifacetious *-iōn-* formations played a certain part in Ernst Gamillscheg’s thinking, when, after retreating from his earlier (1921) apophonic conjecture concerning the distribution of *-in* and *-on* in French (see his “Grundzüge der gallo-romanischen Wortbildung”, which enters into his own, and Leo Spitzer’s, *Beiträge zur romanischen Wortbildungslehre*, *Bibl. dell’Arch. Rom.*, II: 2), he made Lat. *-iōn-* responsible for the diminutive character of Fr. *-on*, as against Sp. *-ón* and It. *-one*, predominantly augmentative: “Zur Frage der Auswahl bei der suffixalen Ableitung” (*Dietrich Behrens Festschrift* [Jena, 1929], pp. 56–76; reprinted in *Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, [I] [Jena, 1939]). I happen to regard that problem as still essentially unsolved.

and c) *nūtrīcia* (since St. Jerome; preserved in Romance). He also caught in his dragnet the rare adjective *nūtrīciōsus*, extent only in glosses; paid separate attention to special uses in literature, sometimes inspired by Greek models; and placed *nūtrīcō*, *-āre* and its peculiar network of derivatives in the closest vicinity of *nūtriō*, *-īre*,⁷⁾ singling out as verbal abstracts (action nouns, in this instance) *nūtrīcium* 'act of suckling' (since Seneca) alongside *nūtrīcātiō* (since Varro). If one conjoins this lexical panorama and the one, slightly later and somewhat differently skewed, that we owe to the final version of Meillet and Ernout's parallel explorations and comparable knack for synthesis,⁸⁾ justice will have been done to the projection of events as seen by highly competent Latinists hesitant to transcend the realm of their maximum specialization.

The mosaic laboriously pieced together by Latinists acquires much sharper contours if collated with findings made by Romanists, and vice versa. It was Hugo Schuchardt, a scholar stationed midway between the two disciplines, who, in the ambitiously expanded version of his Bonn dissertation,⁹⁾ made it clear, through the instrumen-

⁷⁾ Catullus's use of *nūtrīx* for 'breasts' turned out to echo Callimachus' appeal to *τιτθῶν* from *τιτθός* 'breast', related to *τιτθή* 'nurse', lit. 'breast-feeder'.

⁸⁾ The basic difference between the two approaches consists in this: Whereas from Hofmann's revision of Walde the entire *nūtr-* family emerges as a single close-knit unit, Ernout and Meillet's approach, by adopting a characteristic pattern of paragraphing, sets off three tiers, as it were, with the two verbal subfamilies of *nūtr-* and *nūtric-* plus the nominal subfamily of *nūtrīx* remaining semi-independent, their mutual relationship being less than very clearly defined.

In this subtler classification of facts and cross-connections, *nūtrīcula* is defined as a hypocoristic ("diminutif de tendresse") of *nūtrīx*; *nūtrīcius* (adj.) 'nourricier' is recognized as the direct basis of the three substantives: *-īcius* 'père nourricier, tuteur', *-īcia* 'nourrice', and *-īcium* 'soins nourriciers', while epigr. *nūtrīciō* 'père nourricier', thrown in for good measure as the fourth substantive, one step farther removed, is explicitly separated from the abstract **nūtrītiō*, without any forewarning, however, to the effect that *-īciō* and **-ītiō* must have been pronounced exactly alike in colloquial Late Latin. Observe one disagreement in a matter of vowel quantity: The *LEW* operates with *ī* in *nūtrīcāre*, while allowing for the subsequent shift *ī* > *ĩ* at the Romance stage, while the *DÉLL* posits *nūtrīcāre* from the start, loosening in the process its connection with *nūtrīx* and citing *fōdicāre* 'to dig, pierce' (from *fod-ēre*) as a model or parallel.

Jacques André's elaborations, in the 2nd (1967) and the 3rd (1979) printings of the *DÉLL* 4, contain no addenda to, or suggested changes in, his teachers' lexicographic masterpiece.

⁹⁾ *Der Vokalismus des Vulgärlateins*, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1866–68), II, 186; III, 225. True, the author could fall back on a pertinent remark dropped by A. Musafia at a slightly earlier date (in 1864).

tality of Low Latin records brought to light, that—unlike Classical Latin—the Latin prototypes immediately prefiguring the clusters of Romance forms must have had a nuclear vowel other than *ū* (either *ō* or *ū*, by implication). Closer to the problem on hand was the tentative reconstruction of the Romance family, literally from scattered debris, by Gröber and a felicitous remark on Fr. *nourrice* ‘wet nurse’ as an echo of *nutrīcea*, rather than of *nutrīce*, by Horning; not insignificantly, these two German end-of-the-century scholars were among the first Romanists who had witnessed their discipline challenged or affected by the new Neogrammarian vogue.¹⁰⁾

**Nūtrīce*, I hasten to add, was not henceforth eliminated from further consideration in the study of Latin-Romance lexical relationships; it continued, e.g., to qualify as the direct forerunner of OSp. *nodriz*.¹¹⁾ But old and modern *nodriza* began to pose a serious problem of strategy. There were those, e.g., willing to argue that OIt. *nodrice* and OSp. *nodriz* involved straight outgrowths of [*]*nūtrīce*, with the implied consequence that Fr. *nourrice*, Prov. *noirisa*, Cat. *nodrisa*, and (O)Sp. *nodriza* displayed the addition of *-e* and *-a*, respectively, by way of hypercharacterization of gender and sex;¹²⁾ this view, tacitly espoused by Meyer-Lübke as late as the first version of his dictionary, swept under the rug two ticklish issues: (a) the

¹⁰⁾ G. Gröber’s spadework forms part of his celebrated (if at present seldom consulted) *Vulgärlateinische Substrate romanischer Wörter*; see *Archiv für lateinische Lexikographie und Grammatik*, IV (1887), 136. Horning’s remark here alluded to constitutes the concluding lines of his, in several respects, controversial note, “Französische Etymologien, 2: Afrz. *norriçon*”; see *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, VI (1882), 438. On Gröber’s trepidation at the thought of an unprecedented Neogrammatical rigor see his Prefatory Note to Vol. I (1877) of the *ZRPh*. Horning was among the first Romanists—preceding Meyer-Lübke by the margin of, perhaps, two years—who became converts to the tenets of *Junggrammatiker*; in essence, his monograph, *Zur Geschichte des lateinischen C vor E und I im Romanischen* (Halle, 1883), involves an attempt to apply Verner-inspired thinking to a slice of Romance material.

¹¹⁾ Not yet caught in W. Meyer-Lübke’s dragnet—judging by its absence from the *Registerband*—by the time he was at work on his comparative grammar; nor placed in the limelight of the early editions (1901, 1909) of his *Einführung in die romanische Sprachwissenschaft*. But cf., for an example of positive action, the original edn. (Heidelberg, 1911–20) of that author’s *Romanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*.

¹²⁾ The candidacy of the key term here chosen was advanced and theoretically defended at a much later juncture; see my paper, “Diachronic Hypercharacterization in Romance”, *Archivum Linguisticum*, IX (1957), 79–113; X (1958), 1–36, and the various critical reactions to it.

date, relative or absolute, of the explicit marking of the vernacular designations of a female *par excellence*—a young woman suckling a baby, even if it happens to be not her own; and (b) the wisdom of viewing the processes individually observed in Northern and Southern France, Catalonia, and Spain proper as either disconnected or interlocking—even after one has discounted the alternative of projecting them onto the temporal level of Latin. Whatever the answer to this dilemma (to be sure, a by no means unimportant side issue), the hypothesis as a whole still has its contingent of supporters, among them Juan Corominas.¹³⁾

The reverse opinion, operating with **nutricia* as the foundation of most Romance forms (to the exclusion, to be sure, of OIt. *nodrice* and OSp. *nodriz*, either item clearly traceable to [***] *nūtrīce*), was emphatically brought forward by the Italo-Swiss etymologist Carlo Salvioni on the eve of World War I.¹⁴⁾ Salvioni's analysis was so subtle (he distinguished carefully, e. g., between native Neapolitan or Sicilian deposits and rival forms borrowed from French), and his formulation sounded so forceful, despite or perhaps on account of its lapidary succinctness, that Meyer-Lübke, in revising his own dictionary between 1930 and 1935, gave in and arranged for an intercalary entry, [***] *nūtrīcia* (§ 6003 a), sharply reducing, by the same token, the ambit of [***] *nūtrīx* without, however, entirely abandoning it (§ 6008).¹⁵⁾ Twenty years or so later, W. von Wartburg, who had at his disposal a documentation of crushing weight, followed suit,¹⁶⁾ a decision which threatens to have left Corominas fairly isolated. The question now before us is: Exactly how can we best describe the status of *nū-*, **nū-trīcia*?

We recall the view taken by the pioneering Latinists: The way they visualized the development, there must have branched off, still within the bounds of Antiquity, several substantival uses from the

¹³⁾ There has been no re-orientation on this score during the three decades separating Corominas' own four-vol. *Diccionario crítico etimológico de la lengua castellana* [1954–57] from the six-vol. expansion, just off the press, which he wrote in collaboration with J.A. Pascual.

¹⁴⁾ "Centuria di note etimologiche e lessicali", *Romania*, XLIII (1914), 341–402, 560–86, at 402.

¹⁵⁾ Meyer-Lübke and, in his wake, W. von Wartburg also learned from Salvioni the wisdom of paying heed to the local names of the wet nurse's husband: Sic. *nurrittsu*, Cat. *nodriz*. These are typical back-formations, as are, almost everywhere, the names of male prostitutes and concubines.

¹⁶⁾ *Französisches etymologisches Wörterbuch: Eine Darstellung des gallo-romanischen Sprachschatzes*, vol. VII, fasc. 48 (Basel, 1953), pp. 247 b–248 a.

adj. *nūtrīcius*, -a, -um ‘pertaining to nourishment’, namely a), a masculine word, meaning ‘nourisher, educator’; b), a feminine counterpart, amounting to a competitor of *nūtrīx*; and, let me toss in, c), a neuter, ‘nourishment’ (Ernout: ‘soins nourriciers’). If we now shift the place of our camera to the Romance observation post, we discover at once that Branch a) was doomed to extinction in Romance, except for semilearned *nutrízio* in older Portuguese (by way of partial compensation, there arose innovative **nūtricārius* in one portion of the territory, judging from OPic. *norrekier*, OProv. *noiri-guier*, with **nūtr-īcāre* or *-īcāre* doing service as a substitute for **nūtrīre*);¹⁷⁾ that Branch c) was long assumed to have barely lingered on solely in far-off Rumania, at the cost of having exchanged its *-ītium* for *-īcium*: *nutreṭ* ‘food (for domestic animals)’ = G. ‘Futter’, until W. von Wartburg demonstrated that it was spottily represented, in Gallo-Romance as well, at the level of dialect speech, involving semantic developments not invariably transparent;¹⁸⁾ all of which leaves Branch b), the reputed fountainhead of Fr. *nourrice*, Sp. *nodriza*, etc., as the single truly productive member of a subfamily of four (provided one includes in one’s count the subjacent adjective as a separate unit). What could have instilled, one is left wondering, such conspicuous strength into this particular lexical item, *nū-*, **nū-trīcia* – a member of an otherwise unmistakably retreating, if not downright moribund, subfamily?

It is the contention of this paper that *nū-trīcia*, assuming it had indeed been at the outset merely a substantivated adjective, was

¹⁷⁾ See *FEW*, VII: 48, 246 a: „Offenbar im spätern Latein Galliens gebildet worden, und lebt im Wesentlichen an den beiden diametral entgegengesetzten Ecken des Sprachgebietes, in der Pikardie und in der Provence“.

¹⁸⁾ *REW*’s information on *nutreṭ* goes back to S. Pușcariu, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der rumänischen Sprache*, I: *Lateinisches Element* . . . (Heidelberg, 1905), § 1210, where the lexical item is said to match the verb *nutresc*. Macedo-Rumanian, instead, makes use of a non-Latin family for verb and noun alike (*hănescu*, *hrană*). For a digest of the older literature on instances of interchange of *-īciu* and *-īciu* at various stages of the development see my two overlapping papers: “The Prelude to the Old French ‘Frequentative Action Nouns’ in *-ēiz*”, *Festschrift Kurt Baldinger* . . . (Tübingen, 1979), pp. 361–74, and “The Old French Abstracts in *-ēiz*”, to appear in *ZRPh*. As regards the scattered evidence of Gallo-Romance, both medieval and modern-dialectal, for *nū-*, **nū-trīcium*, von Wartburg distinguishes between a, semantically, older stage, not necessarily confined to older records (‘entretien du bétail, élevage’), and a whole cluster of more recent stages, “übertragen auf den Pflegling”: ‘nourrisson, enfant mis en nourrisse, petit d’un animal, jeune porc à l’engrais’, and the like.

before long reinterpreted by speakers as a member of a vigorously flourishing set of designations of females (whether humans or large animals) only marginally represented in Classical Latin (e. g., by the contradistinction *av-us* 'grandfather, gramsy' vs. *av-ia* 'grandmother, granny'), but plentifully exemplified in Folk Latin, whether epigraphically preserved or cautiously reconstructed through appeal to approved glottodiachronic techniques. Some reconstructionist experiments along that line were made more than a century ago; the existence of *nep(ō)tia* 'niece', in lieu of Class. *nēptis*, is guaranteed not only by inscriptional evidence but also by OFr. *niece*, mod. *nièce* (which percolated into English), while *avia*, for the sake of symmetry, gave rise to *avius* in preference to the aforementioned standard form *avus*, with Sp. *ayo* 'preceptor, tutor, mentor' and *aya* 'governess' emerging as the respective offshoots, provided one makes a certain realistic allowance for the pronunciation of the difficult group /vj/ by very young children: cf. Fr. *aïeul(e)* 'forebear', etc. To **cerv-ia* 'hind' (from *cerv-us* 'stag'), recognized long ago by A. Mussafia as the distant model of OFr. *cierge* (f.), a fresh layer of research not so long ago added **curt-ia*, lit. 'the female animal endowed with a short tail', i. e., 'roe-deer' which, as if by recoil, made it eventually possible for the corresponding masculine to jell at its side (witness Sp. *corz-o, -a*). Conceivably the best-remembered example, among zoonyms, is that of It. *cagna* 'bitch', from **cania*, alongside *cane* 'dog'. Some of the latest etymological gropings along this promising line have involved attempts to trace OSp. *combl(u)eça, -brueça*, OPtg. *comborça* 'concubine' to **con-vortia*, against the background of *dī-vortium* 'marital separation', and to recognize in Fr. *sergent* 'sergent' and *concierge* (orig. **consierge*?) 'porter', orig. 'guardian', faint echoes of the submerged type **sěrv-īa* 'maidservant', conducive to the mintage of **serv-ius* (semantically differentiated, one further argues, from *serv-us*).¹⁹⁾ While details, for a while, may remain con-

¹⁹⁾ On the plausibility of **serv-ia* and, by way of recoil, *-ius*, see the two interlacing papers: "The Two Sources of Old French *serjant*", *French Studies*, XXXVIII (1984), 1–5, and "The Etymology of French *concierge*" (unassigned). For a bird's-eye view of the entire problem, the following piece, to appear shortly in the *BSLP*, may lend the best service: "A la recherche des désignations latines de femmes et de femelles in *-IA*". Additional relevant titles include: "Los prototipos latinos de (esp. ant.) *avuelo* ~ *avuela*", *Medioevo Romanzo*, VIII: 2 (1981–83), 161–74; "The Discovery in Old French Phonology of the *niece, piece, tierç, cierge* Type", *Medieval French Textual Studies in Memory of T. B. W. Reid* (London, 1984), pp. 99–118; "Para el marco histórico de *comborça* ~ *combuerça* 'concubina', *Homenaje a Álvaro Galmés de Fuentes*, I (Madrid, 1985), pp. 245–64. On

troversial, there can, in the face of this massive accumulation of examples, remain no reasonable doubt as to the productivity of *-ia* in low-class spoken Latin; on the semantic and cultural side, *nū-*, **nū-trīcia* would fit this situation like a glove. Without, then, wholly ruling out the traditional explanation, which places *nūtrīcia* within the scope of the *-īcius* family, preëminently adjectival but undoubtedly endowed with potentialities for secondary substantival use, we are safe in attributing the new wave of strength injected into it, in dramatic contrast to the decline of its masculine and neuter pendants, to its close association with the flourishing series of *-ia* words, some of which refer precisely to females seen at work in the household.

One mild objection, to be sure, can be raised against the string of events here summarily posited: If it is true that OSp. *nodriza* goes back, in an uninterrupted line of descent, to Antiquity's *nū-*, **nūtrīcia*, how can one reconcile this pattern of continuity with the local survival of *nodriz* < *nū-*, **nūtrīce*? A clear-cut answer cannot yet be provided. Aside from the general fact that lexis is not so tightly organized as to make, say, *nodriz* and *nodriza* mutually incompatible, and from the particular fact that *nūtrīx* and *nūtrīcia*, after all, coexisted peacefully for centuries in Latin, a narrow-meshed map for the regional distribution of *nodriz* and *nodriza* in medieval Spanish is unavailable at this point. One is tempted to attach some importance to a detail, such as the fact that *nodriz* was peculiar to Old Riojan, a variety of Western Navarrese (cf. Berceo, *Vida de San Millán*, quatr. 19 c) and *nodriza* farther east to an Old Aragonese text further nuanced by an undoubtedly Catalan-speaking copyist (cf. *Poema de Apolonio*, 331 d)—a geographic distribution which, in the case of the latter, takes us closer to OCat. *nodrissa*; but the record is simply too lacunary to encourage such bold conjectures.²⁰) Not implausibly, any protracted rivalry between *nodriz* and *nodriza* would have given impetus to the spread of a truly popular circumlocution, unequivocal as to form, namely *ama de leche* (cf. Ptg. *ama de*

the animal names involved, my forthcoming contribution to the *Studi linguistici e filologici per Carlo Alberto Mastrelli*: "The Differentiation of Two Hispanic Zoonyms Based on Latin *cūrtus* 'short'" aims to throw light. An aftermath of studies so tilted is foreseen.

²⁰) From V.R.B. Oelschläger's *A Medieval Spanish Word-List* (Madison, [1940]), pp. 141 b and 142 a, one gathers that Gonzalo de Berceo had a strong predilection for the entire word family: the verb (*nodrido*, *nudrió*); the abstract (hybrid *nudrición*); and the agentive (*nodriz*).

leite),²¹⁾ even though the principal reason for the decline and near-extinction of *nodriz(a)* except as a strictly literary word, must actually have been the observable decay of the corresponding verb, *nodrir/nudrir*, with the—equally doomed—companion form *nodrecer*. Sporadic attempts—on balance, more successful in Portuguese than in Spanish, where the remedy remained ephemeral—to save the situation by introducing the straight Latinism *nutriz* turned out to be of no avail.

III.

With the Latin and Romance designations of the ‘wet nurse’ at long last out of our way, we are now free to examine at greater leisure the names of her counterpart in this unique sort of relationship, namely of the suckling or breast-fed infant (= G. *Säugling*, Fr. *enfant à la mamelle* beside *nourriçon*, later *-isson*).²²⁾ The problem for the analyst here is to decide whether the starting point of the development could have been *nūtrītiō*, on the understanding that the original abstract (‘nourishment’, Fr. ‘nourriture’) became, first, a mass-noun and, eventually, a “nomen unitatis”, as in Sp. *camarada*, lit. ‘roomful [of companions]’ > ‘comrade’; or, alternatively, *nūtrīciō*, i. e., an elaboration, by means of a slightly elusive hypocoristic or caricaturing suffix notoriously favored in folk speech, on *nūtrīcius*, an item whose path we have already crossed.

The choice is made difficult by the fact that *-ītiō* and *-īciō* were pronounced alike in Late Latin folk speech (as has long been known from careless graphies), except perhaps in the very few and conspicuously small redoubts where the prevailing assibilation of velars before front vowels ran into stiff resistance; cf. the testimony of Central Sardinian dialects and of now-extinct Dalmatian.

²¹⁾ Contrast *ama de leche* (or *de cría*) with *ama de casa* ‘housewife’; *ama de llaves* or *de gobierno* ‘housekeeper’; *ama de brazos* ‘child’s nurse’; and, above all, with *ama seca* ‘nursemaid’. Cf. G. *Heb-*, *Säug-amme*. This morphological schema is to be added to those surveyed by Kathleen Connors, “Studies in Feminine Agentives in Selected European Languages”, *RPh*, XXIV: 4 (1971), 573–98.

²²⁾ For the act itself numerous paraphrases are available as substitutes for Class. *nūtrīre*: Fr. *allaier un enfant, donner le sein, donner à téter*; Sp. *amamantar*; It. *allattare*. Strictly speaking, there exist two sets of substitutes, depending on the perspective in which the act at issue is being seen (cf. coll. It. *dare la poppa*, in reference to the wet nurse or mother, and *poppare*, speaking of the breast-fed baby), where Latin could do with a single verb, through smooth interplay of active and mediopassive.

There is one more hindrance to any speedy solution of the problem: Whereas *nūtriciō*, not unlike underlying *nūtricius*, basically signified ‘preceptor, educator, tutor’, a meaning once reflected in certain usages of Fr. *nourrisson*, long since forgotten, it may also have left—judging from the record of *nūtricius* this time²³)—several isolated traces of the opposite meaning, namely ‘suckling’ (see *LEW*), a use which could have served as an unimpeachable starting point for OFr. *norriçon* and vars., the forerunners of mod. *nourrisson*. The two hypotheses here outlined, of which the first was championed by an unwavering W. von Wartburg,²⁴) are not mutually exclusive; but, clearly, one of the sources under consideration should be persuasively identified as primary, and the other as subsidiary or concomitant.

The key to the admittedly painful decision lies, first, in an unhurried look at the range of functions of the parental suffix *-iō*, *-iōnis*; and, second, in a leisurely examination of indirectly relevant material garnered outside Gallo-Romance. With respect to the former lacuna in our knowledge,²⁵) recall that *-iō*, fundamentally, joined nominal stems, helping speakers to mint comical or derogatory designations of individuals of objectionable appearance, behavior, or occupation.²⁶) Thus, *libelliō*, presupposing prior existence of *liber*, enables

²³) A circumstance to which Meyer-Lübke, to the bitter end, attached considerable importance; see his parenthetic remark in *REW*, § 6007: “Setzt eine nicht überlieferte Bedeutung des lat[einischen] Wortes voraus und ist nicht nötig”, aimed at Carlo Salvioni, and at Moritz Regula’s “Etymologische Nachlese . . .”, *ZRPh*, XLIV (1924–25), 641–57, at 653. The latter anticipated certain ideas developed in the present paper.

²⁴) See his three entries: *nūtriciō* ‘Erziehen’, *nūtricium* ‘Säugling, Pflege’, and *nūtritiō* ‘das Säugen’ (consistently misspelled, on purpose, with *ū*) in *FEW*, VII: 45, pp. 248*b* and 252*b*–253*a*. Of course, he had several predecessors, including Meyer-Lübke.

²⁵) E. Gamillscheg, I repeat, tried to drag *-iōne* into his second attempt to account for the conflicting values of (diminutive) Fr. *-on* as against (augmentative) Sp. *-ón*, It. *-one*; but his explanation remains unconvincing as long as we lack independent knowledge of the regional distribution of *-iōne* in Latin folk speech. Moreover, between diminutive and augmentative lies, on the semantic scale, a wide stretch of sheer characterization without explicit reference to size.

²⁶) My account is based squarely on Manu Leumann’s statements in the rev. 5th edn. of Stolz and Schmalz’s *Lateinische Grammatik* (München, 1928), p. 239, except that I have omitted from consideration *toculiō* (Cicero) ‘user’, based on a Greek simplex, hence a hybrid, as well as Church Lat. *circumcelliō* ‘going from cell to cell’ (Augustine, Jerome), used in reference to certain categories of monks or heretics, an item which gives the impression of being an artificially-minted, polemic term. (The revised edn. of Leumann’s *Lateinische Laut- und Formenlehre*,

interlocutors to evoke the image of a 'notary' with his nose constantly buried in records (Varro), or of a 'bookseller' (Stattius, *Silvae*). *Litteriō*, transparently from *litterae*, was a (petty, pedantic, uninspired) 'language master'. *Mūliō* designated a person somehow associated with mules—not the noblest among the larger domestic animals—be it as a 'mule-dealer', or as a 'mule-driver', or else as a 'mule-keeper'. *Homunciō*, in ill-fated rivalry with *homunculus* (headed for greater survival success, not least through Goethe's *Faust*), referred to 'little man, manikin', a tag applied in a derogatory key. Alternatively, the starting point could well have been some pictorially suggestive adjective. Thus, *pūmilus* 'dwarfish, diminutive' gave rise to *pūmiliō* 'dwarf, pygmy'. Small size did not necessarily coincide with tender age, as it often does; here it was, at times, apt to suggest graphically the reverse, that is, shriveling, shrinking, dwindling from old age, witness self-explanatory *seneciō* and *soceriō*; cf. Fr. *vieillotte* (even more than *vieillard*), It. *vecchierello* (with an additional allusion to poverty), Sp. *vej-ete, -ancón*, R. *starikaška* alongside *stariček*.

Where any secondary association with verbs was achievable, a dosage of active or passive coloring, or of a combination of both, ensued. Thus, *lucriō* 'one fond of gain, one whose mind is bent on gain' hinges chiefly, as one would indeed expect, on *lucrum*, but a side-connection with *lucror, -ārī* (a verb of wide currency in folk speech, judging from Rum. *lucra* 'to work', Sp. *lograr* 'to attain, achieve') is plausible, in which case an active semantic or functional overtone is assignable to it. Conversely, *cūriō*, derived from *cūra*, but apt to be indirectly associated with *cūro, -āre* as well, by virtue of its meaning ('wasted by sorrow, lean, emaciated', rather than *'causing sorrow or worry') qualifies as a word endowed with passive overtones.

With an intransitive verb in the background, the emergent coloring was apt to be neutral, as when *lūdiō* 'stage-player, performer', extracted from *lūdus*, took a syntactically undifferentiated attitude toward *lūdō, -ēre* 'to play'. The inherent passivity of *flagriō* 'slave or serf subject to whipping' is somewhat obscured by the immediate

München, 1977, p. 365, offers valuable additional illustrations, e.g., *sanniō* 'grimacing person', and subsumes under the tag "underivable items"—some of them traceable to Greek—*cociō* 'broker', Plautine *opiliō* 'shepherd', *steliō* 'falsifier, manufacturer of fake documents', *talassiō* 'savorer, beneficiary of a wedding ceremony', *vapiō* 'probrosus homo' [i.e., 'infamous individual'], plus Livy's *histriō*, transparently traceable to Etruscan.)

proximity of the noun alone (*flagrum*, *-ī* ‘whip, scourge’); it may have been hazily felt in *tenebrīō* ‘one who shuns light’, ‘trickster, swindler’, from *tenebrae*, *-ārum*, against the backdrop of a late and infrequent verb (*tenebrō*, *-āre* ‘to darken’), because impostors are known to prefer operating in a shaded area rather than themselves casting a shadow on their deeds. Finally, *mīriō* has completely switched to the verbal domain (*mīror*, *-ārī*), meaning now ‘gazer, admirer’ (actively), now ‘defectively-formed [and therefore incredulously looked-at] body’ (passively).

Once the observer develops the necessary feeling for this two-headed derivational schema, the possibility of *nūtrīciō* having functioned in one milieu of the far-flung Imperial society as ‘tutor, mentor’ and elsewhere as ‘infant (at the breast)’ will cease to appear abnormal.

An illuminating sidelight comes from the many-faceted development—phonological, morphological, and semantic—of ancestral *īnfāns*, lit. ‘baby too young to talk’, an evolution whose boldness is at once recognizable from a glance at an ensemble of such reflexes as Fr. *enfant* ‘child (of any age, boy or girl)’, It. *fante* ‘(young) infantry recruit’, and Sp. *infante* (OSp. *yffante* and vars.) ‘prince of royal blood’.²⁷⁾ The specifics of this convoluted growth have been examined elsewhere, by other investigators, and their findings need not be circumstantially summarized here.²⁸⁾ Suffice it to state that,

²⁷⁾ The hypothesis of Germanic descent of *fante* (launched by J. Bruch and temporarily supported by W. Meyer-Lübke and E. Gamillscheg) must at present be written off as a total failure. The authors of today’s tone-setting Italian etymological dictionaries (specifically, B. Migliorini in collaboration with Aldo Duro and, somewhat later, G. Devoto) even do not deem it necessary to mention, let alone to refute it.

²⁸⁾ R. Menéndez Pidal’s entry *infante* (pp.442 *b*–443 *b*), in the Glossary appended to his thesis, *La leyenda de los Infantes de Lara* (Madrid, 1896), later satisfied him so thoroughly that he deemed it supererogatory to elaborate on it in the Addenda (pp.451–88) attached to his revised edn. (Madrid, 1934) of the book. However, his turn for examining separately *y(n)fante* and *ynfançon* came when he unhurriedly compiled his masterly *Cid* vocabulary; see his “editio maior” of *Cantar de Mio Cid: texto, gramática y vocabulario* (Madrid, 1908–11; rev. edn., 1944–46), II, 718–23, bristling with quotations from sources often difficult of access. Relevant passages from dated charters and the earliest literary texts were tapped by V. R. B. Oelschläger, *A Medieval Spanish Word-List: A Preliminary Dated Vocabulary . . .* (Madison [1940]), pp.108 *b* and 109 *a*, s.vv. *infanzón* (an archaic spelling for *-çón*), *-zona*, *-ta*, *-te* (m. and f.), *-tadgo*, *-tissa*, a rich slice of ordered raw material subsequently put to analytical use by J. Corominas, *Diccionario crítico etimológico de la lengua castellana*, Vol. II (Madrid [1955]),

on Spanish soil, there must have branched off, at a conspicuously early date, from the oblique case *īnfante* the derivative **īnfantiōne* which, after the tendential assimilation of *n*, the assibilation of *t* by *i* pronounced as a semiconsonant, and the loss of the word-final vowel—advanced to *yn-* or *y(f)-fançon*. This derivative must for centuries have accompanied *īnfante* on its erratic course; by the time its vernacular offshoot was hitting legal and historiographic texts, including those couched in Barbaric Latin, abounding in thinly-disguised vernacular words, *ynfançones* designated the members of middle-level nobility, standing halfway between the *ricos omnes*, above them, and the *fijos d'algo*, beneath them.

While this precise definition, arrived at by Menéndez Pidal three quarters of a century ago, still holds in reference to relevant medieval texts (9th–15th centuries), the situation a millennium earlier is apt to have been entirely different, quite apart from the diversity of the societal structure involved. Coming from the lips of Roman legionaries and, subsequently, settlers or colonists, **īnfantiō(ne)* is likely to have related to the slightly more formal—and, as a result of that formality, copiously recorded—*īnfante* the way *baby* does to E. *infant* (or G. *Kindchen*);²⁹ and *īnfantiō* comes to life easiest when bracketed with *nūtritiō* as a designation not of the ‘tutor’ (‘Erzieher’) but, for a change, that of the mentor’s charge (‘Zögling’).

As if this argument were insufficient, we notice, in canvassing the labels of humans, animals, birds, and other living beings, that *-ō/-ōnis* (alongside *-ō/-īnis*) was reserved for the big, majestic, pom-

p. 997, who also set off a few samples of 12th- and 13th-century verse in which *y(n)fante*, as in French, simply meant ‘child’, if not necessarily ‘infant’. Some unusual forms and meanings, including *infant-ado*, *-azgo*, *-ejo*, *-esa*, *-illo*, *-ina* as well as *infanzon-ado*, *-azgo*, *-ía* are listed, sometimes with tentative localizations, but with no attempt at dating except for the use, where appropriate, of the tag “obsolete”, in the 20th edn. (1984) of the Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy, p. 770 a. Within the narrower circle of Menéndez Pidal, Américo Castro busied himself with identifying an Arabic semantic model for OSp. *fi d'algo* ‘nobleman’ and Diego Catalán became immersed in the study of the unstable *-nf-* cluster, peculiar to *y(n)fante* and *y(n)fierno* ‘Hell’ < *īnfēnu*, in two separate contributions to *Romance Philology*: IV: 1 (1950), 47–53, and XXI: 4 (1968), 410–35.

²⁹ If the interpretation here offered turns out to be accurate, then *y(n)fançon* would belong to the same layer of the Hispano-Latin lexicon as the abovementioned *combrueça/comborça* ‘concubine’ < **conuortia* and as *chozn-o, -a* ‘great-grandchild’ (lit. ‘kid, tot’) < Kelto-Lat. *ploxēnu* (and vars.) ‘wagon-box(ful)’. On the latter derivation see my piece, “La etimología de *choto* y *chozno*”, *Homenaje a Ana María Barrenechea*, edd. Lía S. and Isaías Lerner (Madrid, 1984), pp. 105–17.

pous, often slow-moving species (*homō, leō, *caprō, pāvō*, etc.), while *-iō/-iōnis* fitted best the smaller, usually flitting counterparts; witness **pisciō* ‘fast-moving fish(let)’ (Fr. *poisson*), *līriō/*lēriō* ‘dormouse’, *curculiō* or *gurguliō* ‘corn-worm, weevil’, *vespertiō* ‘bat’ (lit. ‘evening bird’), **merguliō* beside *mergulus*, an ornithonym (‘diver’, Fr. ‘plongeon’ – in contradistinction with the abstract *mersiō* ‘immersion’),³⁰⁾ *papiliō* ‘butterfly’, ‘moth’, ‘any winged insect’. This frolicsome company is far more readily compatible with a passive tilt of *nūtrīciō* ‘beneficiary of nutrition’ than with its active antipode, ‘purveyor of nutrition’.³¹⁾ We conclude that there must have existed two words, of identical shape, difficult of reconciliation, and that in folk speech the passively-slanted *nūtrīciōne* was destined to win out, a surmise which does not peremptorily rule out a dosage of additional support for *nourrisson*, from the rich resources of *nūtrītiōne* (identically pronounced).

Between the two problems here selected for brief examination there exists, aside from the affinity stemming from their joint involvement with a single Latin word family, an additional bond accounting for their symmetrical structures. In either case, that of the vernacular names of the wet nurse (Fr. *nourrice*, to cite a representative member of the cluster of formations) and that of the designations of the infant benefited by her attentions (Fr. *nourrisson*), the etymologist’s escape from an intricate situation saturated with ambiguity lay in the careful inspection of the suffixal material involved, with heightened attention paid to Latin folk speech (*-ia* and *-iō*). As Swedish and Swiss scholars were among the first, after Schuchardt, to have recognized many decades ago, the assumption of any sharp dividing line between the territories of Latin and older Romance, in regard to such slices of material, is both arbitrary and illusory.

³⁰⁾ **Merguliō*, obl. *-ōne* is a safe reconstruction from such Luso- and Hispano-Romance forms as Ptg. *mergulhão* ‘any of various diving birds’, hence the verb *mergulhar* ‘to plunge, submerge, dip, dive’ (e. g., a pen in an inkpot), which in turn became the fountainhead for *mergulhador* ‘(deep sea, pearl) diver’, *mergulhia* (hort.) ‘layerage, layering’; plus Sp. *somorgujo*, var. *-ormujo* (orn.) ‘dabchick, grebe’, flanked by the verb *so-morgujar*, *-ormujar* ‘to dive, duck, plunge’, which was accompanied, in turn, by an agentive in *-ador*, all of them involving the –obviously very opportune– prefix *so-* < *sub-*. For details see my article in *AJPh*, LVII (1946), 151–67.

³¹⁾ Note that in colloquial Russian *červjačĕk*, lit. ‘wormlet’, can stand occasionally for ‘baby’.