

X. $\sqrt{alb-}$ Derivatives in Apicius

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So long as the total inventory of post-classical Latin words and their meanings remains incomplete, any new evidence must have significance not only for students of Latin but for Romance philologists as well. Thus it is of some interest that the two oldest MSS. of the late Latin cookbook attributed to Apicius (E and V from the ninth century) and the sole MS. of the related *Excerpts* of Vinidarius (A from the eighth century) attest nine derivatives of $\sqrt{alb-}$, denoting "whiteness," with orthographical variants not listed in the standard dictionaries of late Latin, and with several meanings not previously explored.

The adjective *albus*, -a, -um, meaning "white," occurs in seven passages in Apicius: cineres vitis albae (V, albe E) idem faciunt (Apic. 1.5)¹; piperis albi unc. iii (1.13.1 E); albas betas minutas . . . elixas (4.5.1); in mortario mittis cum pipere albo . . . (5.3.2); in copadiis ius album (7.6.6); ius album in copadiis (7.6.9); ius album in assum leporem (8.8.4). A variant, **alvus*, -a, -um, with the same meaning occurs once: piperis alvi unc. iii (1.13.1 V), b ~ v being a common orthographical phenomenon of late Latin and especially frequent in Apicius.² *Candidus*, -a, -um, also meaning "white," is attested eleven times in Apicius, modifying *vinum* four times and *ius* seven times, thus suggesting that the adjectives *albus* and *candidus* are not usually interchangeable in culinary idiom except as modifiers of *ius*.

Noun derivatives of $\sqrt{alb-}$ are always technical in Apicius, the abstract "state of whiteness" being reserved for *candor*, which occurs once in Apicius and once in the related *Excerpts*: alicam elixā (V, elixatam E) nucleis et amindalis depilatis et in aqua infusis et lotis ex creta argentaria, ut ad candorem pariter perducantur (2.2.10); porcellum lactentem . . . in frigida adsidue

¹ Place references are made to book, chapter and recipe of Apicius as numbered by C. Giarratano and Fr. Vollmer, *Apicii librorum X qui dicuntur De re coquinaria* (Leipzig 1922), but all readings are taken directly from microfilms of the original MSS.

² C. H. Grandgent, *An Introduction to Vulgar Latin* (Boston 1907), 133-36.

intingis ut candorem habeat (*Exc.* 23). Among the commonest √*alb*- derivatives in Latin are those meaning "white" of egg, two of which, *album* and *albamentum*, are attested in Apicius: obligas ius (Hemelberg,³ obligas sive EV) albo ovi liquido (8.1.5); concidis cepam minutatim et albamentum ovi (5.3.4). In addition, *b* ~ *v* produces a variant of *albamentum* and of *albor*, another noun often having the same meaning: lomentum ex faba factum vel ovorum trium alvorem in lagonam mittis (1.5); obligas eundem alvamentis ovorum tritis (6.9.11). Thus Apicius attests four nouns meaning "white" of egg with the possibility of differing connotations. *Albamentum* and **alvamentum* are used in recipes clearly demanding chopped boiled egg whites, while *album* and **alvor* refer to raw egg whites, *album* using the adjective *liquidus*, -a, -um in the example quoted above.

Perhaps the most interesting √*alb*- derivative in Apicius is *albamen*, which Souter,⁴ Ernout-Meillet⁵ and *Thesaurus linguae Latinae* all list as a variant of *albumen* and Forcellini⁶ as a variant of *albamentum*. Common as the phenomenon of -amen/-umen and -men/-mentum alternations in late Latin may be, *albamen* cannot be demonstrated to share any meaning with either *albumen* or *albamentum* and thus becomes a "variant" only in the broadest of general terms. The only non-Apician occurrence of this noun, a passage in the *Mulomedicina Chironis* (80) dealing with an eye injury to a mule, attests: inunges, si albamen fecerit, collirio acro. curabis. sanum fiet. Oder⁷ glossed *albamen* as *morbus oculi*, a meaning which seems to be far too general. Vegetius,⁸ in his Latin paraphrase of the same passage, "translates" *albamen* to *albugo*, thus raising a problem of meaning in another group of non-Apician √*alb*- derivatives. Although this author suspects that the true meaning of *albamen* in the *Mulomedicina* may be "pus" or at least another equally technical term, this problem clearly shows the need for a completely modern and scientific review of the vocabulary of the late Latin veterinary texts. At any rate there

³ G. Hemelberg, *Apicii Caelii De opsoniis et condimentis sive arte coquinaria. Libri X* (Zurich 1542).

⁴ A. Souter, *A Glossary of Later Latin to 600 A.D.* (Oxford 1949).

⁵ A. Ernout and A. Meillet, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine*³ (Paris 1950-51).

⁶ A. Forcellini, *Totius latinitatis lexicon* (London 1828).

⁷ E. Oder, *Claudii Hermeri Mulomedicina Chironis* (Leipzig 1901) 322.

⁸ E. Lommatzsch, *P. Vegeti Renati Digestorum artis mulomedicinae libri* (Leipzig 1903).

is no clear evidence at this time equating the meaning of *albamen* in Chiro with uses of *albumen* or *albamentum*, and so the listing of *albamen* as a variant of those forms, while permissible by common practice, should be treated with discretion.

As it occurs in Apicius, *albamen* has a unique meaning not shared by any other $\sqrt{alb-}$ derivative, "white head" of leek: *alicam purgas et cum liquamine intestini et albamine porri concisi minutatim simul elixas* (2.5.3 E); *concides in caccabum albamen de porris minutatim* (4.3.2). But in the first of these passages MS. V records: . . . *abamine porri concisi* . . . (2.5.3. V), which raises the possibility of a variant **abamen*. *Alb- ~ ab-* is rarely attested in post-classical Latin, but Meyer-Lübke long ago suggested **abula* beside the regular *albula*, "whiting," to explain a number of Romance derivatives referring to the same fish⁹; this form DuCange¹⁰ had also discussed under the headings *ableia* and **abula*. DuCange also attests an opposite example of the use of *alb-* for *abb-/ab-* in the annals of Carcassonne in the high middle ages: *albergam Abadilem*; *albergam abbadilem*; *albergam albadilem*.¹¹ The evidence, therefore, indicates some justification for *alb- ~ ab-* elsewhere in late Latin, and thus it seems reasonable to admit **abamen* as a variant of *albamen* in Apicius.

The use of *albamen* to describe the "white part" of leeks leads to another problem in Apician terminology: *albā* (V, *albam* E) *et capita porrorum simul elixabis in caccabo novo* (3.2.5). Since MSS. E and V attest one use of *caput* to refer to the head of a leek and the *Excerpts* another, and since five uses of an adjective *capitatus*, *-a*, *-um* are attested with forms of *porrum*, the given example might indicate a pairing of approximate synonyms, a common stylistic device in Apicius, if *albam* could be legitimately emended to *albamen*, as Humelberg suggested. But the expected abbreviation for *albamen* in a ninth-century manuscript would be *albām*, as in *sem* and *liquām* elsewhere in E and V, a form which does not occur. Torinus'¹² emendation to *allia* is a sheer conjecture, unjustified, since the noun for "garlic" does not appear with this orthography elsewhere in Apicius. The only safe conclusion which can be drawn about this passage is that Apicius

⁹ W. Meyer-Lübke, *Romanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg 1911).

¹⁰ D. DuCange, *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis*, new ed. (Graz 1954).

¹¹ *Ibid.* (above, note 10), s.v. "**Abadilis*."

¹² A. Torinus, *Caelii Apatii Summi adulatricis medicinae artificis de re culinaria libri x* (Basel 1542).

attests an unknown form of **alba* which may represent a scribal error, a variant of *albamen* or a totally new form.

A final Apician problem is technical but more botanical than medical; it concerns the meaning of *album* as it refers to the *folium* of a rose. The use of *folium* to refer to a "petal" is by no means unique in Apicius,¹³ but this *album* is attested only three times in Latin, twice in Apicius: *folia rosarum albo sublato lino inseris* (1.3.1); *accipies rosis (sic) et exfoliabis: album tolles* (4.2.9). Both of these passages describe the use of rose petals for flavoring, the first in rose wine and the second in an egg-and-brain casserole, and *album* in this context can mean only the white base of the rose petal, which is still considered too bitter for suitable flavoring,¹⁴ and which must therefore be removed. Although the context is very different, the same technical nouns appear in another passage in late Latin. Spartianus in his *Life of Aelius*¹⁵ describes an elaborate couch which the emperor had made for himself and his mistress, cast in a golden net and strewn with rose petals: *foliis rosae, quibus demptum est album* (Spart. *Ael.* 5.7).¹⁶ It is probable that the meaning of *album* is the same here, although the horny hardness of the white base is more probably the reason for its removal from the petals in this context.

Thus Apicius' late Latin cookbook attests derivatives from \sqrt{alb} -, denoting "whiteness," in nine morphological shapes, with evidence supporting the following lexical entries: **abamen* (variant of *albamen*), "white head of leek" (Apic. 2.5.3 MS. V); **alba*, meaning unknown (Apic. 3.2.5); *albamen*, "white head of leek" (Apic. 2.5.3 MS. E; 4.3.2); *albamentum*, "cooked white of egg" (Apic. 5.3.4); *album*, (1) "white base of rose petal" (Apic. 1.3.1; 4.2.9; Spart. *Ael.* 5.7), (2) "white of egg" (Apic. 8.1.5); *albus*, -a, -um, "white"; **alvamentum* (variant of *albamentum*), "cooked white of egg" (Apic. 6.9.11); **alvor* (variant of *albor*), "raw white of egg" (Apic. 1.5); **alvus*, -a, -um (variant of *albus*, -a, -um), "white" (Apic. 1.3.1 MS. V).

¹³ *ThLL*, s.v. "Folium."

¹⁴ E. Rohde, *Rose Recipes* (London 1939) 67. For this reference I am indebted to Mr. Albert M. Fuller, Curator, Division of Botany, Milwaukee Public Museum.

¹⁵ D. Magie, *The Scriptores Historiae Augustae* (London and N.Y. 1922) 93. By translating *foliis rosae* as "rose-leaves" Magie has preserved the identical ambivalence of *folium* in English and thereby obscured the real meaning.

¹⁶ *ThLL*, following the Latin spelling of the name (Helius), uses the abbreviation Spart. *Hel.* for this and other references to Spartianus' *Life of Aelius*.