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SIX CATEGORIES OF NASAL EPENTHESIS: THEIR PLACE  
IN THE EVOLUTION FROM LATIN INTO ROMANCE

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1. Epenthesis is one of those processes variously called sporadic or spontaneous or saltatory shifts, or even general accidents (G. I. Ascoli), or minor sound laws, which have traditionally received widely varying degrees of attention from tone-setting scholars: It has attracted students of general phonology, like Maurice Grammont, but has not sat well with Leonard Bloomfield, least of all in his 1933 textbook, perhaps on account of its low level of predictability. Like other members of its family of changes, it is not neatly delimited in time and space and hardly qualifies as a criterion in the classification of languages and dialects, in attempts at periodization, and in similar ventures. In short, it involves, at first sight, little more than a sharply-profiled tendency. Having its radix in general phonology, it lends itself in principle to discussion in the framework of universals; but narrower, more sharply focused examinations, such as the one attempted here, also have their share of wisdom, provided one is cautious about generalizing first impressions.

In the field of Romance there has occurred a scattering of attention to nasal epenthesis. The one attempt at a provisional synthesis that comes to mind at once is Hugo Schuchardt's article about 'Nasaleinschub', traceable to the year 1911. There has occurred no follow-up on any sweeping scale; <sup>2</sup> but in scores of historical grammars one finds, usually short, relevant paragraphs, often inconspicuously relegated to the end, <sup>3</sup> and brief discussions flare up in hundreds of entries in etymological dictionaries, which few avant-garde linguists, for unexplained reasons, bother to consult these days.

Although English will not be included in our survey, let me briefly remark that related problems also exist for the Anglicist, in part but not entirely on account of the heavy overlap of Graeco-Latin as well as of medieval and modern Romance with the English lexis. In the analysis of E. shrink 'to contract', orig. 'to cower, huddle, retreat, recoil', such congeners as Norw. skrekka, skrøkka, as well as G. schrecken 'to be seized by fear', have figured prominently, but the problem here is at the opposite pole of possibilities: At issue is not the addition, but the loss of an inherited nasal in certain branches. Concern with bonanza 'exceptionally rich ore pocket', fig.

'something that yields an unexpectedly large profit' leads one via Sp. bonanza 'fair, calm weather at sea' (note the phrase ir en bonanza 'to sail with fair weather' > 'to do well') to a lexical type peculiar to sailors' jargon, \*bonákia, initially \*bonakía, a witty, mildly superstitious Latin-Romance reinterpretation of Gr. malakía 'softness, gentleness' (from the adj. malakós). The relation of messenger to message, of passenger to passage, of porringer 'bowl for liquid food' to porridge 'pottage or soup', 'soft food made with oatmeal' causes trouble; one may add obs. wharfage 'provision of, charge for use of, a wharf' beside wharfinger 'owner or keeper of a wharf' (which could but need not have been preceded by \*wharf-ager, -iger), also harbinger, orig. 'one who provides lodging, host', 'purveyor of lodging, e.g., for an army', 'forerunner', from ME herbergeor, which in turn echoes OFr. herbergeour of remote Gmc. background. The starting point cannot have been scavenger in its relation to scavenge, which latter, as chronology shows, was in fact extracted from the longer word; scavenger happens to be an elaboration on scavager 'officer who took scavage 'toll formerly levied in London on merchant strangers', later 'person employed to keep the streets clean' and thus, in the last analysis, involves another Old French formation in -age.<sup>4</sup> Family names such as Kissinger, Schlesinger applied to immigrants from Central Europe, round out the procession of lexical or onomastic items eventually sucked into the vortex of the newly-emerging suffix or suffixoid -inger [ingə']. The real medieval starting point was, transparently, challenge/challenger, lit. 'calumniator' (via Old French).

How should one go about classifying the instances of the epenthetic nasal so far collected? One approach, favored, e.g., by Max L. Wagner in his historical phonology of Sardinian, is to start out from an illustrated catalogue of exact positions of the wedged-in nasal in the given words, while allowing in principle for a variety of causes (1941: 219-27). Such an approach might be adequate in a descriptive monograph; for the historian it beclouds that which is most arresting. Should we then swing to the opposite extreme and aim at setting off chronological layers, including strata due to infiltration of migratory words from other languages, and the like? Given the panchronic character of such a phenomenon, plus the difficulty of dating the genesis of many slangy words or of items of dialectal provenience, this method is inadvisable too. Since etiology, the study of ultimate causation, is at the end of the tunnel for most diachronists, it may be fruitful to gear one's primary classification to the character of each addition to the original body of the word: Is infixation a

grammatical feature in this context, is it due to the conflation of two words, is a manifestation of phonosymbolism involved, can one appeal to the agency of false regression, does one recognize the echoing of a preceding nasal or the anticipation of a following nasal, and - if so - only within the limits of a morpheme or also across morpheme boundaries? - these are some of the obvious questions. In many cases one expects to discover an interplay of two or more isolable factors; patterns of such interplays are definitely worth stating. If there remains a residue of admittedly unexplained changes, then our schema simply bears elaboration or revision.

As Schuchardt saw clearly 73 years ago, it is sufficient, in Romance, to speak of a nasal intercalation; whether, on closer inspection, an [m], an [n], a [ŋ] or a [ɲ] is actually involved depends almost exclusively on the surroundings; essentially, on the specific character of the following consonant. One is tempted to predict that certain consonants which experience has often taught us to expect to behave very similarly to the nasals in miscellaneous positions, namely /r/ and /l/, should also raise issues in epenthesis; they actually do so, but on a distinctly more modest scale and, as regards /l/, almost idiolectally in Spanish, even though the situation seems to have been radically different in the history of French. The so-called velar insert, as in Sp. It. pongo 'I put', tengo 'I hold, have', and vengo 'I come', is fundamentally a grammatical tool and invites separate analysis, morphological and morphophonemic; it is typologically comparable only to one of the six categories of the nasal insert here under survey. Instances of loss of a nasal in a corresponding word-medial position, as well as those of its intermittent addition word-initially and word-finally, are to come up, at best, for incidental mention only. The exploratory paper will be rounded out by hints as to how familiarity with the nasal insert can serve, at least heuristically, in the discovery of nascent prefixes and suffixes and in the identification of word origins recalcitrant to easy inspection.

2. As the first class (=A) of what, within Romance, deserves to be called an intrusive nasal we can set off certain functionally eroded remnants of a grammatical use of such an insert in Latin, where it served to set off a well-defined aspect, namely - speaking with A. Meillet - the infectum, within certain conjugation classes. This particular use of the nasal infix, which obviously involves a morpheme, is not restricted to Latin, but is shared by several Palaeo-Indo-European languages; its

prehistory, fascinating as it is, need not concern us here. <sup>5</sup> It was, by definition, initially absent from the perfectum (whether the latter be reduplicative or formed through lengthening of the nuclear vowel or sigmatic) and from the past participle as well. Thus one arrives at such formulas, to cite characteristic "principal parts", as rumpō, rūpī, ruptus, rumpere 'to break', or linguō, liquī, lictus, linguere 'to leave, quit, abandon, resign', or tundō, tutudī, tūsus, tundere 'to beat, strike, thump', or tangō, tetigī, tāctus, tangere 'to touch'. There are several traces of this state of affairs in the learned vocabulary of English: relinquish vs. derelict, tangential vs. tact, etc. Now, within the bounds of Classical Latin one observes isolated instances of the spread of the nasal to the perfectum and the past participle, a process usually taken as proof of the speakers' weakening awareness of the original function of the infix. Thus over against pangō, pepigī, pāctus, pangere 'to fix, settle' and pingō, pixī, pictus, pingere 'to represent pictorially, paint, embroider', which show different but equally tidy paradigms, the ensemble iungō, iunxī, iunctus, iungere 'to join', beside more archaic iugum 'yoke', testifies to the internal spread and consequent functional dilution of the nasal. Sometimes the past participle alone is affected by the intrusion, as is shown by pungō, pepugī/pupugī, pūctus, pungere 'to prick'; interestingly, the characteristic compounds go farther than the simplex, displaying -punxī in the preterite. The mechanism of this inner diffusion has been pieced together thus: from tinguō, tinxī, tinctus, tinguere 'to wet, moisten' and unguō, ūnxī, ūctus, unguere, whose nasal was not morphemic and belonged to the radical, variants such as tingō ... -ere, ungō ... -ere could easily have branched off, serving in turn as models for iungō, iunxī, iunctus, with what used to be called a parasitic nasal.

In Romance the development went much farther - and at an early date, on circumstantial evidence. Attingere, a compound of tangere, had the past ptc. attāctus, as against Fr. atteint; frangere 'to break' displayed frāctus 'broken' (cf. E. fraction, fracture, also fragment), but It. franto 'broken, shattered, crushed', flanked by frantoio 'oil-press', 'olive-press', frantumare 'to break into small pieces', convey, in the aggregate, a different message; witness also Fr. enfreint 'infringed, transgressed', lit. 'broken' (in reference to a law). Lat. pictus, -a 'painted' clashes with Sp. pinto 'sort of bean', pinta 'spot, mark, sign', pintón 'ripening' (said of a class of grapes), pintojo 'spotted, mottled'; by the same token, ancestral pictōre 'painter' emerges as pintor, and pictūra

'painting' as pintura. Observe further Fr. j'ai peint, peintre, peinture and their echoes in English (where pint, as in pint-sized, and the transparent Hispanism pintado 'guinea fowl' are also worth mentioning). And so is Ptg. pint(a)inho 'baby-chick' and untold other derivatives.

Occasionally we can lay our fingers on the possible reasons for the diffusion of this kind of nasal insert. There coexisted in Classical Latin the following lexical units at a given cut-off point: pāctu 'agreement'; pectu 'chest, breast'; dēspectu 'contempt' (actually, dē-spectu 'looking down', but apt to be reinterpreted in provincial speech as \*dis-pectu); and pictu 'painted'. All four, in Romanized Spain, started moving in the direction of paitu, peitu, with the threat of complete eventual convergence. At the prospect of such a tangle, why wonder that pictu was here and there allowed, for the sake of disambiguation, to advance to \*pinctu?

3. Because it clearly had its roots in Classical Antiquity, Factor or Force B, the phonosymbolic use of the epenthetic nasal, suggestive of something comic, laughter-provoking, deserves to be presented next. Initially this function was restricted to nouns, particularly to adjectives capable of substantival use, and was thus neatly distinguishable from Factor A, by definition confined to verbs. Moreover, the nouns subject to the influence of Factor B had a characteristic structure, being - to begin with - bisyllabic; in fact, displaying the CVCVC schema. Semantically, they referred to physical defects, congenital or acquired deformity, and temporary incapacitation, or odd behavior, including madness and stupidity. Within Latin, there existed other devices to mark off nouns so architected and conveying approximately such a message; e.g., a strong preference for a as the stressed vowel, including the diphthongs ae and au, witness calvus or glaber 'bald', caecus 'blind', claudus 'limping', laevus 'left-handed', etc. Independently, there was also observable a mild predilection, especially in folk speech, for lengthening the central consonant, so that, when speakers of Latin borrowed Gr.  $\pi\lambda\alpha\tau\acute{\upsilon}\varsigma$  and started favoring it over native plānus 'flat', they gave it the form \*plattus, which indeed has survived, after undergoing certain expected changes, in several Romance vernaculars, including Fr. plat. We need not worry about the fact that other stem vowels at no time ceased to be admissible, e.g., u - as in curvus 'bent', luscus 'one-eyed', surdus 'deaf'; or i - as in līmus 'looking askance' = G. scheel; or f - as in mūtus 'dumb, mute'; or the diphthong oe - as in foedus 'ugly'; and we can afford to disregard such compounds and derivatives as fall under the same semantic rubric, e.g.,

longimanus 'long-armed' or crīnītus beside comātus 'hairy' (from crīnis and coma, respectively). We shall remain alert to the possibility that cases which, from the semantic angle, look promising, could be fraught with etymological uncertainties, which may counsel their eventual omission from the inventory; e.g., It. manco 'weak, defective', 'left-side' (cf. Lat. mancus 'maimed, infirm') and stanco 'tired'.

What, then, would make a perfect case? Let me cite Sp. ronco 'hoarse', flanked by ronquera 'hoarseness', enronque-quecer 'to make or grow hoarse'. Here a solidly established, textually-supported etymon, namely raucus, is indeed available, and the consensus of cognate languages clearly testifies to regular development: It. roco, West.R.-Rom. [rok'], O.Fr. rou, Fr.-Prov. (Fribourg, Vaud) rutau, Prov. rauc, and even near-by Ptg. rouco are uniformly well-behaved, showing the predictable development. Had Spanish evolved similarly, it would have produced \*roco; the medieval and modern form ronco, found instead, exhibits the addition of n, an acoustically crude suggestion to the effect that something is going wrong with the given individual's voice production.

Back to Antiquity: Among the numerous words pertaining to the adjacent domains of anatomy, physiology, and veterinary science that the Romans borrowed from the more sophisticated Greeks was στραβός 'squint-eyed', which in Latin yielded strabus and lent itself to figurative use ('envious'; in Cassiodorus: 'perverse'). Several by-forms are on record, among them: (a) strabō, -ōnis, which involves interference by the indigenous Latin nāsō, -ōnis 'long-nosed', 'large-nosed', 'nosey' type; (b) strabōnus, used in Petronius' novel - a compromise between strabu- and strabōne?; (c) Strabōnilla, a diminutive -hypocoristic used as a proper name; plus, most interesting to us, (d) strambus, traceable to glosses. Also on record are the two hypocoristics (e) strabulus and (f) strambulus.

Latinists, in a lame effort to justify the epenthesis here, cite as alleged parallels the two celebrated instances of wavering, sābucus ~ sambucus 'elder-tree' and sabbatum ~ sambatum 'Sabbath'. The parallels invoked hardly constitute easily manageable slices of material in this context. For the appearance of sabbatum ~ sambatum one need not await the rise of Church Latin: The elusive word was already familiar to Ovid and Horace: It clearly goes back to Greek σάββατα and eventually to a Hebrew-Aramaic prototype; the nasal insert (which, I repeat, was a mere possibility in Latin) is also peculiar to QHG sambaztac, which in turn underlies mod. Samstag. The case of sā-, sam-bucus is even more intricate, because

(a) it apparently altogether lacks I.-E. cognates; (b) there is on record a variant displaying the epenthesis of the nasal at a different place, namely sābuncus; (c) side by side with the dendronym, there existed the near-homonym sambūca designating (α) a musical instrument, 'a sort of harp' and (β) a 'war machine used to climb on the wall of a beleaguered fortress', a lexical unit assuredly traceable to Greek (σαμβούκη), where, so Hellenists report, it must in turn rank as a borrowing; and (d) to revert to the elder-tree, sābūcus and sambūcus alike have, bewilderingly enough, both survived into Romance. My own preference would be for completely disregarding two words marked by such complex patterns of transmission and to bracket strambus, from στράβος, with \*plattus, from πλατύς, arguing that lengthening the central consonant and inserting a homorganic nasal before it were two alternative devices of stressing comicality.

If the joint weight of the vicissitudes of stra(m)bus and plattus fails to carry conviction, examine the dossier of gibbus 'hunch-backed'. Strictly, gibbus, peculiar to Imperial Latin, was preceded by gibber, -a, -um (like miser, -a, -um 'wretched'), already favored by Varro. In addition, Latin offered to its speakers, for the designation of the hunch itself, either gibbus, -ī or gibba, -ae. All the members of the family so far mentioned boasted a lengthened /b/ as their central pillar; but, upon approaching the derivatives, one encounters gibātus (comparable to alātus 'winged', comātus 'hairy') spelled with a single b in the texts; among its rivals observe gibōsus beside gibbōsus, involving the abundantial suffix -ōsus (i.e., literally, 'equipped with a big chunk of a hunch'), plus invariably gibberōsus, reminiscent in its architecture of tūberōsus, from tūber 'lump, bump'. So far, not a single instance of a nasal insert has surfaced in our analysis, and congeners picked from Sanskrit, Persian, and Germanic (specifically, Middle High German) show no trace of any, either. But, as one scrutinizes marginal Latin evidence, one comes upon gimberōsus in a Late Latin gloss, which obviously presupposes \*gimbus, as Ernout puts it, or - perhaps more realistically - \*gimber, and is echoed by gembrōsus in an early-7th-century Isidorian text. The Ernout and Meillet etymological dictionary (1959-60: 274b, 275a) goes one step farther and recognizes both \*gūbbus and \*gūmbus, beside \*gibberūtus (displaying a suffix borrowed from cornūtus 'horned') as legitimate reconstructions from Romance, filtered by Meyer-Lübke's etymological dictionary. Rum. gheb may even presuppose, so A. Graur argued, the otherwise unknown var. \*glibbus,

which might be an outgrowth of \*gibbulus, as pieced together by S. Pușcariu (1905: §§ 708, 710); cf. pōpulus 'popular tree' alongside \*plōppus recognizable through Sp. chopo, Tusc. pioppo. The u-colored variants (including the descendants of \*gubbus and Ven. gufo) could well have been influenced by Gr. κῦφος 'hunch', κῦφός 'leaning forward', or else by Lat. curvus, but \*gimbus and \*gumbus, reconstructed from a spectrum of dialect forms recorded in peninsular Southern Italy, also in Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and as far north as Genoa, betray in unison the presence of -mb- as a substitute for lengthened -b-, on contextual evidence in a laughter-provoking context. Hence we are once more dealing here with a semi-submerged instance of expressivity or phonosymbolism.<sup>12</sup>

One more example of phonosymbolic use of the nasal can be provided here; it places heavy emphasis on the comic element in a given situation as its sole identifiable goal at the end of a long journey. The Latin verb for 'burying' was sepeliō, -īre - ancient (recorded, e.g., in the Laws of the Twelve Tables) and Classical; its initial syllable contains a short vowel and must not be bracketed with the progressively infrequent suffix sē- suggestive of separation, as in sēcēdere 'to walk away, secede', sēducere 'to move away from the straight path, seduce', sēgregare 'to separate from the flock', and no such simplex as \*peleō existed or is suspected of ever having existed. Despite the heavy legal and religious-ritualistic implications of the verb, it was not discarded with the advent to power of Christianity; witness its survival in French as ensevelir beside enterrer, from newly-coined \*interrāre 'to inter'. Such coexistence of neologisms and words inherited from paganism was widespread; observe the survival of fidēs alongside newly-minted \*crēdentia for 'faith, belief': Fr. foi, croiance, etc. In Old Spanish sebolir, sobolir were not immediately pushed back by the more graphic innovations soterrar, from \*subterrāre, and enterrar from already mentioned \*interrāre, either. Now Low Latin shows scattered traces of a by-form with lengthened l, namely sepelliō, perhaps initially through contamination with the powerful family of pellō, -ēre 'to push'; and as the unstressed front vowels of sepellire, in the course of the word's transmission into Old Spanish, were being pushed back through contiguity with the bilabial stop (at first voiceless, later voiced - witness OSP. sebolir, sobolir), those variants that had substituted geminate l for normal-length l helped speakers to establish a contact with the descendant of bullire 'to seethe', namely bolir (or bollecer) - transparently the cognate of Fr. bouillir.

Bollir was associated with bubbles (to this day Sp. bulli-  
cio means 'bustle, tumult, uproar') - but how could 'burial' and 'boiling, bubbling' be allowed to impinge on each other? Since nothing is a priori impossible in language history, the availability of so- or en-terror as serious words for 'burying, interring' gave speakers the chance to yank se-, so-bol(l)ir loose from its original semantic domain; to lay to rest any purist's anxiety, intensive-iterative sepultar was imported through learned channels. Freely-drifting se-, so-bol(l)ir lent itself to ticklish associations with 'boiling, bubbling' only in a single real-life context, namely when certain humans, animals, and fish or insects dive, burying themselves in water (sometimes for the sake of self-protection), with many bubbles, upon impact, rising to the surface. And this is what actually happened, as sobollir found itself on its way to sabullir, via vowel dissimilation (much like sacudir 'to shake' in lieu of \*socodir, from succutere). But the real-life correlate of 'diving' (i.e., typically, 'splashing water with some noise') had its amusing component, and this comic-situation ingredient was brought out sharply by two supervenient shifts-- (a) the change of word-initial s- into ç- (z-), at first [s], later, in Castille, [ç], and (b) the - at first optional - insertion of the nasal, word-medially, before the pillar consonant, thus: za(m)bullir. This was a post-medieval process, when the temporary exclusion of verbs from this category of infixation was no longer operative. 13

4. In Force (C) we encounter, for the first time, a purely phonetic factor generating one nasal from another, pre-existent one. We can distinguish between (a) an echoing effect, through inertia, and (b) an anticipatory event, typologically resemblant to metaphony; (c) a combination of both pressures has also occurred at intervals. A second set of conditions to be considered is the position of the two (or more) nasals - the primary and the secondary ones - not to each other, as before, but within the word or the word-like phrase. Of particular relevancy is the presence or absence of any morphemic boundary between the two. Examples of (a), (b), and (c) include, to start out from a better-known language, the development of nec ūnu 'not one' to OSp. nenguno via neguno: Nenguno has lingered on in the standard, after transmutation into ninguno (the raising of the pretonic front vowel having been a trivial side-development before a consonant cluster), or undergoes tendential dissimilation of the coronals in dialect speech (denguno). In any event, we have before us an instance of case (c), with two pre-existent nasals (the n- of nec and the -n- of ūnu), and a third, newly-added in the middle. Since parental /k/ underwent only intervocalic voicing, we have here, in addition, internal proof that the nasal re-

sonance hardened into an n after the voicing of /k/ to /g/. Nenguno, moreover, illustrates the spread of /n/ across an old morpheme boundary. Ptg. ninguém 'nobody' < neque quem followed a similar course. To revert to nec ūnu: in Portuguese the velar stop was eroded before the nasal resonance had gathered momentum, so nem /nẽ/ + ũ(u) produced, through dissimilatory denasalization of the first vowel, nenhum /nɛ̃nu/. Instances of case (1) happen to be very frequent in Spanish. Lat. macula 'spot, mark, stain' or 'mesh' (in a net) yielded mágoa in Portuguese, but mancha in Spanish, with sharp semantic differentiation: once more, chronological inferences are possible, inasmuch as syncopated mac'la alone was apt to have yielded a /ç/, probably via /matla/ or /matla/, with the spread of the nasal coming later. To exemplify case (2), let me cite ancestral rēgula 'rule, ruler' (lit. 'straight piece of wood'). A semilearned reflex in Spanish is regla 'rule', while a separate word for 'line' was devised through addition of the common derivational suffix, -ón to regla; the result must initially have been \*reglón, speedily overlaid by renglón. The process, upon occasion, is seen affecting learned words: The Latinism intrícatus 'entangled, embarrassed' has been introduced in its pristine form into English (intricate) and Italian (intricato), without much thought, on the part of speakers and writers, of trīcae, -ārum 'trifles, hindrances, tricks' as the erstwhile head of the family; Spanish displays intrincado instead. Not all such innovations are successful: OFr. message 'message, messenger' (from a type \*missaticu) infiltrated into Spanish, where a by-form it promptly cast off, namely mensaje, quickly ousted the intruder. Conversely, enderençar 'to direct', an OSp. by-form of endereçar (from \*indirēctiāre), which conceivably sprang into existence with some help from començar 'to begin [jointly]' (cum + intiāre), before long fell into desuetude.

5. As the fourth factor (D) one is tempted to identify a purely lexical force - the speaker's, as it were, latent predisposition both toward isolated lexical blends (or conflations), and toward any sort of more meaningful, less random ordering of units within certain lexical fields. In the course of such associative and contaminative processes the intercalation of a nasal, typically before a medial intervocalic consonant, can easily occur; examples from numerous languages can be adduced by the hundreds. The salient issue, by no means easy to settle, is whether the prospect of such a superadded nasal, in the given position, has or has not demonstrably (or, at least, plausibly) stimulated and/or accelerated the observable fusion or integration in a clearly

circumscribed series.

Let me first provide a few concrete examples. In some instances lexical polarization seems to have been at work, as when, in Proto-French, the existence of the verb prendre 'to take', originally 'to snatch away', descended from prae-hendere, apparently sufficed to cast its semantic opposite, namely reddere 'to give back, return', into the mould of rendre; cf. It. prendere : rendere and Ptg. prender : render, with a somewhat weaker semantic yield attached to it, while mod. Sp. prender : rendir exhibits a secondary attrition of the earlier maximum formal resemblance and OProv. redre in rivalry with rendre exemplifies an incomplete exertion of prender's polarizing power (there are parallels in Catalan and in Rhaeto-Romance). To illustrate the effect of serialization - better still, the opportunities opened up by that process - let me cite the tail section of the list of the names of the months inherited by modern European cultures from a Latin pattern. Observe that September, November, and December rhyme, to the exclusion of interjacent October; and while details vary, the schema of an erratic shape for 'October' prevails in most Western languages, standard German and English included. Certain German dialects, however, allow for two stages of rapprochement of the local word for 'October' to the "big three": mere insertion of the nasal (Oktomber) or the same adjustment, plus equalization of the stressed vowel. In Russian, Sentjabr', Oktjabr', Nojabr', Dekabr' clearly rhyme; so do in German dialect speech September, Oktember, etc. <sup>14</sup>

The postulated blend need not involve two free forms of complete words: The partners may be an affix and a characteristic segment of a root morpheme, as when descendants of Lat. in- occasionally replace a so-called "dangling" word-initial front vowel, whose survival happens to be endangered in Romance ("Lex Ascoli"). Thus, ancestral aequāle 'equal' produced OProv. egal, alongside which - given the ever-present threat of crippling reduction to \*gal - there also arose engal. <sup>15</sup>

6. For the position of a fifth discrete force (E) one can nominate false restitution, or hypercorrection, an agency which, by definition, can be observed at work best where two (or more) dialects (either regional, or social, or both) happen to overlap. Consider the following situation: The word-medial cluster -ns- in practically all Romance languages and -nf- in Hispano-Romance (the former also word-finally), in lexical units inherited from Latin, tended to produce on the level of folk speech, at first,

lengthened s and f, later just standard-length s and f; e.g., infāns 'baby (still unable to talk)' > OFr. enfes; mēnse 'month' > It. mese, OFr. meis, mois; mēnsa 'table' > Ptg. mesa, ORum. measā (later masā); spōnsu 'betrothed man, bridegroom' > It. sposo, Fr. époux, OSp. esposo 'fiancé', later 'spouse, husband'; trāns 'beyond' > OFr. tres (mod. très) 'very'; also infante > OSp. yffante 'prince', Infernu 'hell' > OSp. yffierno (as against Fr. enfant, enfer), with modern infante, infierno representing belated regressions. Meanwhile, in learned pronunciation -ns-, -nf- remained intact: Contrast Sp. pesar 'to weigh' and pensar 'to think' (or Fr. peser and penser) as rival products of pēnsāre 'to weigh intensely or repeatedly'. This was fertile soil for reverse spellings and reverse pronunciations, or both: Hispano-Latin documents are replete with examples of occansio 'accident', from occāsiō 'opportunity', and of thensaurus 'treasure', from Gr.-Lat. thēsaurus; but there is no assurance that speakers actually pronounced these words with an n before the s. One final complication: Since in Hispano-Romance -rs-, as in versu, and -ls-, as in insulsu 'unsalted', also tended to be reduced to -(s)s- - witness OSp. viesso, (en)sosso - there emerged the additional risk of new categories of false regressions, redounding in part to the benefit of -ns-. Thus, certain speakers of Aragonese eager to come up with a socially preferable pronunciation of the zoonym for 'bear' than just os(s)o would inadvertently say onso rather than aiming for orso.<sup>16</sup>

7. Finally, there may crystallize the ill-defined situation, involving a sixth independent factor, to be known as (F), of given speech communities apparently finding certain medial dyadic consonant clusters so attractive as to tend to expand, for no good reason, an 'etymological' -b- into an -mb- by intercalating -m- before it, but also, roughly on a comparable scale of frequency, to widen an etymological -m- into the very same -mb- by intercalating a -b- after it. Speakers can be expected to strike a similarly bidirectional attitude in attempts to increase the incidence of -nd-, etc. In Sardinian, e.g., ancestral ubi 'where' appears either as ube or as umbe; siliqua 'pod, husk' is either silibba/tilibba or silimba; for the phytonym 'sorrel' Sardinian uses lapattsu, an outgrowth of Gr.-Lat. lapathium, but lampattsu is also recorded in the South, a variant with Continental counterparts in Campania, Abruzzi, and Apulia. Our analysis of these forms (an exiguous sample indeed) is corroborated by an approximately equal number of cases

where the same goal has been reached through intercalation of a -b-. Thus, Lat. simila 'finest wheat flour', known also from its Italian reflex semola, is ordinarily simula in Sardinian, but simbula also occurs. Then again, ancestral \*glomulu, lit. 'little ball or clue of yarn' (the counterpart of Sp. ovillo from \*lovillo < \* globellu) yields in Sardinia either grómeru or metathesized lórumu; but lómburu, lómberu are also plentifully represented. Max L. Wagner has abundantly and reliably documented this phenomenon of large-scale reversibility. Cf. the case of Pt<sub>2</sub>. tombo, above.

8. In numerous instances, perhaps in the majority of cases, one may well reckon with multiple causation, i.e., with an interplay of two or more factors. This holds for some of the word biographies already presented with epigrammatic brevity, but perhaps, at least, one new example will add a touch of freshness. For 'stumbling' Spanish uses tropezar in the standard, while dialect speech on both sides of the Atlantic often if not mostly favors trompezar. Medieval texts display instead either entrepeçar or apheresized trepeçar. Of these four variants the third is, on philological evidence, the oldest and also the one that lends itself most smoothly to etymologizing. As one confronts the base \*interpediāre one is reminded of the idiom echarle a uno la zancadilla 'to stick out one's foot and trip someone'. Trepeçar was arrived at through apheresis: A fairly mobile prefix, namely en- < in-, was sloughed off. In the shift from trepeçar to tropezar one witnesses labialization of a weakly-stressed vowel by contiguous /p/. But why trompezar, -zar? One is tempted to posit a blend with trompa 'snout, face', a conflation which may thus have twisted and enriched the original meaning: 'to fall on one's face'. If this is so, two forces have been at work: Force (B): comic effect, and Force (D): lexical blend. Seeing someone fall on his face ('snout') is an uproariously funny event - for the onlookers.

9. Increased familiarity with the nasal insert in Romance, as its image slowly emerges in diachronic perspective, should be useful in two different contexts.

For the particularist, the knowledge thus gained throws light on certain obscure prefix and suffix variants and, in conjunction with these, on the prehistory of not a few words etymologically opaque. To supply just a scattering of examples: Much as there exists a hazy prefix zam-, which we have connected, in at least one case, with Lat. sub-, but which also had a side-link with Gr. συμ-, witness συμπαρία, stressed symp̄hōnia in Graeco-Latin and underlying Sp. zampona 'kind of bagpipe', so there deve-

loped a quasi-prefix ens- (var. enx-), as in ensalçar 'to raise' from \*exaltiāre, in imitation of ensanchar 'to widen, broaden' (from ancho) and of ensangostar 'to narrow down' (from angosto), i.e., of contexts where the nasal insert was clearly anticipatory. Much the same (mutatis mutandis) happened with suffixes: If you dissect step by step vejancón 'decrepit from old age', you will recognize the addition, to viejo, of a short suffix chain, its two links being -ac- and -ón (cf. vej-arr-ón 'very old man'). But since the wedging-in of an n [ŋ] before the [k] is a source of pleasure for this speech community, vejancón before long did come into existence (unlike inadmissible \*vejanrón). I suspect that -anchón and -anzón can be explained in basically much the same way. And, to conclude with an example taken from the etymological laboratory, my guess is that the highly controversial word rincón 'inside corner, angle formed by the meeting of two walls', known from medieval texts as rencón, with the occasional by-form recón, is essentially borrowed OFr. recoin 'nook, recess', presumably pronounced [rəkɔŋ], which in the last analysis involves Lat. cūneu 'wedge'. It may have been introduced by visitors from France, whether clerics, pilgrims, jugglers, or warriors; the loss of the feature of palatality reminds one of Sp. desdén 'contempt', similarly borrowed from Fr. dédain, OFr. [dezdejn].

The generalist can avail himself of this stock of information in his concern either with consonant epenthesis in the languages of the world or with the special uses to which nasals seem to lend themselves.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Orin Gensler, Gary Holland, and Martin Schwartz (among others) for their constructive comments on an earlier, slightly different version of this paper, prepared for oral presentation.

<sup>2</sup> Let me mention, in addition, an excellent research paper (unfortunately left unpublished) which Cornelia Rippere, a talented graduate student, wrote under my direction here at Berkeley in the early 'seventies. I wish it could have been broadened into a doctoral dissertation.

<sup>3</sup> Only a few random examples can be supplied here. Wiese (1904), who examined the source languages from the vantage of Old Italian, routinely listed a few instances of nasal epenthesis in the sections dealing generally with the provenience of m and n (§§ 25-6). Zauner (1908) reserved a special section (§ 78: 'Zusatz von Konsonanten') for epenthetic

n, its much rarer counterparts l and r as well as d and t used in Old Spanish to transmute certain newly-formed dyadic into corresponding triadic consonant groups; Meyer-Lübke, in his general introduction into Romance (1909), found a niche for briefly discussing assimilation and dissimilation at a distance, as well as consonantal metathesis (§§ 146-8), but decided against reserving space for epenthesis; later, in coming to grips with French historical grammar (1913), he confined his exemplification of epenthesis to r and l (§ 235), providing useful bibliographic hints, but skipped the intercalated nasal consonants altogether, except for a fleeting observation in a different context (§ 41), where he tersely remarked: 'Zusatz von Lauten ist nur in sehr geringem Umfange anzuerkennen .... Was man sonst unter dieser Rubrik anzuführen pflegt, gehört im Grunde alles in die Wortgeschichte'. Outside the German-speaking countries one discovers a similar climate of opinion. Thus, in Spain Menéndez Pidal (1914) provided a number of appropriate examples of epenthetic m/n and r, among them the verb so(n)sacar 'to steal' and za(m)bullir 'to dive', as well as the nouns alondra 'lark', almondra 'almond', manzana 'apple', and ponzoña 'poison' (§ 68), but despaired of cutting a swath through the jungle: 'Otras veces, sin razón aparente, se desliza un sonido entre los latinos'. I have deliberately cited here some of the older editions of well-known handbooks, to set off the (expected) originality and independence of thinking of H. Schuchardt (1911: 72-93).

<sup>4</sup> For useful chronological and semantic information see several pertinent entries in Onions et al. (1966: 427ab, 635ab, etc.), where certain archaisms - such as ostrager, -inger 'keeper of goshawks' - are also listed and where attention is further drawn to nighti(n)gale (cf. G. Nachtigall) and to popi(n)joy. However, Onions and his team fell short of recognizing challenge (from calumnia, via Old French) in its relation to challenger as the obvious starting point for the entire development.

<sup>5</sup> Some ideas, in reference to Indo-Iranian, Greek, Anatolian, Tocharian, Armenian, Italic (predominantly Latin, occasionally Osco-Umbrian), Celtic, Germanic, Baltic, and Slavic, can be gleaned from Jaan Puhvel (1960: 14-40).

<sup>6</sup> This dimension might profitably have been added to my earlier inquiries into the disentanglement of clusters of homonyms and near-homonyms (1952: 299-338; 1979: 1-36).

<sup>7</sup> To these may be added plancus 'flat-footed', also used as a Roman surname. Mancus and plancus clearly belong to-

gether. Could stagnum 'pond, swamp, fen, stagnant water' have been re-interpreted as an adjective (\*stagnus, -a, -um, then \*stancus), thus providing the starting point for It. stanco 'tired'?

<sup>8</sup> I am falling back on the account offered by Ernout and Meillet (1959-60: 655b). For a stimulating counterinterview and, as usual, a more copious bibliographic underpinning see J.B. Hofmann's revision of A. Walde (1954: 600), where an epistolary comparison, by W. Heraeus, of strabōnus with OLat. centuriōnus, epulōnus is mentioned and E. Schwyzer's characterization of strambus ("expressiver Geminatenersatz") is cited. Interestingly, the numerous Romance offshoots of the Latin qualifier all seem to go back to strambus, to the virtual exclusion of strabus, judging from the evidence collected and tentatively classified by Meyer-Lübke (1930-35: § 8281). Hispano-Romance is only peripherally represented: zambo 'knock-kneed', estrambótico 'odd, queer, freakish', because the basic designations of 'squinting' in that branch go back to the putative verb \*versicāre 'to turn or twist one's eyes' (from vertere): Sp. bizco < viesco, Ptg. vesgo. The straight line of transmission is represented by It. strambo 'crooked', 'odd, queer, eccentric'. Note also Sp. zo(m)po 'cripple(d)'. On the phonosymbolic evocation in Latin of physical defects, etc. by means of a vocalism see Malkiel (1982: 138-78).

<sup>9</sup> There exists an extensive and fairly recent corpus of literature in Romance scholarship on the names of the days of the week, starting with H. P. Bruppacher's influential doctoral thesis (1948). On sa(m)batum see, in particular, W. von Wartburg (1949: 10-14), with a working bibliography appended.

<sup>10</sup> The problem of the transmission of 'Sabbath' has many facets which cannot be examined here in detail. M. Schwartz draws my attention to the (uniquely?) attested spelling sambatha in Latin and to relevant epigraphic evidence (see Thesaurus Linguae Graecae) for PN Σαμβατεῦς. His feeling is that the -mb- of sambatha and of OHG sambaztag should, in all likelihood, be traced "directly or indirectly, to an Aramaic var. \*šanbat, def. \*šanbattā alongside the attested šabbat(tā), etc.; the transmission into Latin may have taken place via Greek" (there exists indirect evidence for \*σάμβατεος).

<sup>11</sup> Again, there is available a very sizable literature on this dendronym, to which it is impossible to do justice here. See, in addition to the obvious sources (Meyer-Lübke, Ernout and Meillet, Walde and Hofmann), J. Corominas

([1957]: 162b, 163a) and V. García de Diego ([1955]: § 5870), with references to earlier investigations by Bertoldi, Bruch, Guarnerio, Rohlfis, and Dámaso Alonso. The problem is compounded by certain co-variations in the vernacular outcomes: -b- ~ ∅ ~ -y-; -g- (i.e., [ɣ]) ~ -c- (i.e., [k]), for which Corominas posits contaminations by the derivational suffix -uccu. The prevalent form in Old Spanish was sabugo, which obviously does not underlie mod. saúcco, Am.Sp. sáuco; the sam- vars. are strongly represented in Rhaeto-Romance and elsewhere.

<sup>12</sup> Sp. giba and giboso are transparently learned formations. The standard word for 'hump' is joroba, while corcova seems to run second in appeal. Then again, Fr. bosse stands apart. One thus witnesses an extreme case of lexical diversification, which deserves closer inspection. Italy and the Balkan peninsula emerge as potentially the most fertile ground for any dialectally slanted inquiry into the intrusive nasal within this lexical unit.

<sup>13</sup> A closer look at Sp. sa-, san- (sam-), za-, zan- (zam-) is overdue. In addition to words in which this segment is clearly of prefixal origin (e.g., sancochar 'to parboil', related to cocho < p. ptc. coctu 'boiled, cooked'), one encounters others in which it echoes ancestral sanctu 'saint', e.g. sambenitar 'to make infamous, dishonor publicly'. Zaherir 'to censure, blame' (OSp. çaherir) involves metathesized façerir 'to hit the face, slap' < facie(m) ferire.

<sup>14</sup> For summary documentation of this process (sometimes labeled "lexical serialization") see an earlier paper of my own (1957: 106-12).

<sup>15</sup> Earlier scholarship (as represented by, e.g., W. Meyer-Lübke) would speak in such instances of "Präfixeimischung". To be sure, en- was not the only prefix appealed to in such contexts; a witness to the contrary is Cat. esglesia 'church' < Gr.-Lat. e(c)clēsia.

<sup>16</sup> Insecurity traceable to such sporadic regressions, in part "false", may be behind certain lexical confusions otherwise difficult to account for, as when speakers substituted for \*cassar, the ideal outcome of q(u)assāre 'to shake energetically, wear out, break' (cf. Fr. casser) - the iterative-intensive satellite of quatiō, -ēre 'to shake' - the near-homonym cansar, which, judging from It. (s)cansare 'to avoid, elude, shirk', originally served as nautical expression for 'circumnavigating' descended from Greek (campāre). The verbal abstract Ptg. cansaço, OSp. cansacio, mod. cansancio 'fatigue' clearly perpetuates,

through a semilearned conduit (hence the preservation of the nominative), Class. q(u)assātiō.

A similar, but not exactly identical, case of the false restitution (it is, for once, not the nasal itself but its customary partner within a consonant cluster that became the chief beneficiary of epenthesis) can be inferred from the following context. In the West of the Iberian peninsula ancestral -mb- has been preserved to this day, hence ambōs (m.) 'both' and palumba 'wood-pigeon, ring-dove' yielded Optg. ambos, poomba (mod. pomba); conversely, in the Center parental -mb- has been reduced to m, giving rise to OSp. amos (mod. ambos is a crass Latinism), Sp. paloma. In border-zones any intervocalic -m-, foreseeably, is in potential danger of being expanded into hypercorrect -mb-, even though the hazard materializes only at intervals. Not surprisingly, a famous Portuguese archive and treasure trove of medieval manuscripts long relegated to an ancient tower has become locally known as the Torre do Tombo collection, with tombo standing for tomo 'tome', from Gr.-Lat. tomus, lit. 'part, section' (of some larger work).

<sup>17</sup> In addition to za(m)-, zan-, san-, all three marked by vowel dissimilation, one must reckon with a set of less intricately disguised so(m)-, son- variants, as in Sp. som-pesar 'to heft, try the weight of', sonreír 'to smile', sonrodar 'to get stuck in the mud' (said of wheels), son-rojar 'to make blush', sonsacar 'to pilfer'.

<sup>18</sup> The starting points must be suffix chains tending to congeal into inseparable units, such as -azón (less common than -onazo, compounded in reverse order) and -achón, as in coll. bonachón 'good-natured, unsuspecting' and frescachón 'bouncing, buxom, brisk'. The next step is the crystallization of -anzón and -anchón, - the transition is signaled by corpa(n)chón 'big body, big carcass'- with some help from apophonic -anchín (as in parlanchín, hablanchín 'chattering'), which in turn draws strength from de-participial -antín, as in hablantín 'id!', cf. labrantín 'small farmer', correntín alongside correnton 'gadabout, jolly, full of fun'. The terminal point is marked by (largely dialectal) back-formations in -anzo and -ancho. See Hanssen (1913: §§ 282, 382-3).

<sup>19</sup> The detailed etymological dissection of rincón (and of camaranchón 'garret, storeroom', [fig.] 'recess' as well) must be postponed until some suitable future occasion. Also awaiting some such opportunity is any point-by-point comparison of the classificatory scheme adopted here with those previously followed by H. Schuchardt and C. Rippere.

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