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## DELETING A LAUTGESETZ: LAT. *EXĪLIS* AND RELATED ISSUES

Martti Nyman

### 1. The case history

The Latin adjective *exĭlis* 'thin; meagre; scanty' is an etymologically opaque formation. No cognates can be discovered in other languages, and therefore all the solutions that have been proposed to this etymological problem have been based on Latin-internal considerations. Following reconstructions have been proposed or implied:

- (1) a. *\*eks + ag + slis* (cf. *exāctus* 'exact') "exactly weighed" (WP I 36; P 5; LEW<sup>3</sup> I 427; cf. Dvoreckij 1976:394; Wahlgren 1976:30; Bader 1962:195);
  - (α) *\*eksig + slis* (Regula 1957:190);
  - (β) *eks + ag + lis* (OLD 643)
  - (γ) *exiguus* × *subtilis* > *exĭlis* (Pisani 1975:300);
- b. *\*eks + eg + slis* or *\*eks + eg(e)s + lis* (cf. *egēre* 'to lack') "lacking" (Cuny 1913:425; Muller Jzn 1926:159; cf. DELL<sup>1</sup> 301);
- c. *\*eks + ĩlis* (cf. *ĭlia* 'flanks; groins; guts') "lacking the *ĭlia*" (Corssen 1870:1003; morphologically to the same effect, but with a different semantic interpretation, Paul. Fest. 71, 4; 81; cf. also Regula 1957:190 and Leumann 1977:347 [but cf. 398]);
- d. *\*eks + (h)ĭlis* (cf. *hĭlum* = *fĭlum* 'fibre') "unravelled, sfilacciato" (Pisani 1940:128; cf. Leumann 1977:347 [but cf. 398]);
- e. *exĭlis* (cf. *exĭre* 'to get out') "tenuis quod possit quamvis per angustum exire" (Isid.orig. 10,88);

f. \**eks* + *ālis* (cf. *āla* 'shoulder') 'shoulderless', 'narrow-shouldered' (1917:16).

The mapping relations between these etymological basic representations and the (expected) Latin reflexes are summarized in Table 1. From the viewpoint of phonological mapping the cases are divided into three groups:

Table 1. The mapping relations between the etymological basic forms proposed and the (expectable) Classical Latin words. (Explication of the arrows: / $\Rightarrow$ / = direct mapping; / $\rightarrow$ / = mapping by means of a well-established rule of the diachronic grammar of Latin; / $\dashrightarrow$ / = mapping by means of a poorly-established or doubtful rule.)

BASIC FORMS	INTERMEDIARY REPRESENTATIONS	CLASSICAL LATIN
I $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} *eks + \bar{i}lis \\ *eks + (h)\bar{i}lis \\ *eks\bar{i}lis \end{array} \right\}$	$\xRightarrow{\hspace{10em}}$	$\Rightarrow ex\bar{i}lis$
II $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} *eksig + slis \\ *eks + ag + slis \\ *eks + eg + slis \end{array} \right\}$	$\begin{array}{l} \xrightarrow{(1)} *eksigzlis \xrightarrow{(2)} *eksizlis \xrightarrow{(4)} \\ \xrightarrow{(1)} *eksagzlis \xrightarrow{(2)} *eksazlis \xrightarrow{(3)} \\ \xrightarrow{(1)} *eksegzlis \xrightarrow{(2)} *eksezlis \xRightarrow{\uparrow\uparrow} \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{l} \xrightarrow{(4)} \\ \xrightarrow{(4)} *eks\bar{e}lis \xrightarrow{(5)} \\ \xrightarrow{(5)} \end{array}$
III $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} *eks + ag + lis \\ *eks + \bar{a}lis \end{array} \right\}$	$\xrightarrow{\hspace{10em}}$	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} (*exiglis) \\ (*exeglis (?)) \end{array} \right\}$ $\xRightarrow{\hspace{10em}} (*ex\bar{a}lis)$

Rules: (1) Voicing; (2) Consonant Cluster Reduction; (3) Medial Vowel Reduction; (4) Compensatory Lengthening; (5) Vowel Height Assimilation.

(I) Those involving a direct mapping from the antecedent underlying representation onto the Latin form; (II) those involving an indirect mapping onto *exīlis* by means of Lautgesetze; (III) those underlying forms that cannot be mapped onto *exīlis* by means of established rules.

Considerations of simplicity speak for those proposals grouped under I (and group III is ruled out by the same criteria), but the generally favored solution is (1a) of group II. Obviously semantic considerations

have outweighed the importance of formal simplicity: *Exīlis* and *exiguus* 'small, scanty, meagre' are at least partial synonyms. E.g. Cuny writes: "Les deux mots forment un couple inséparable, presque tous leurs sens étant identiques" (1913:424). This starting point is shared by the proponents of (1a), but Cuny's reconstruction (1b) has been rather unanimously rejected, obviously because there is no such verb as *\*\*exigēre* (cf. *indigēre*) 'to lack'.

## 2. A critique of the Lautschieber etymologies of *exīlis*

2.1. Semantics. It is true that the semantic structures of *exiguus* and *exīlis* overlap to an appreciable degree, but if due attention is paid to the differences in meaning, a case can be made for the claim that these two adjectives do not have the same source. It would, however, be superfluous to elaborate on this matter, because the connection between *exiguus* (from *\*eks+ag+*) and *exīlis* can be shown to be formally impossible. Let it just be noted that, whereas the polysemy of *exiguus* has obviously proliferated from the notion of "limitedness" (i.e., *exiguus* 'limited'<sup>1</sup> > 'small, scanty, slight'), that of *exīlis* centers around the notion of "thinness".

2.2. Phonology. A century ago a Lautgesetz to the effect of

(2) V(owel) H(eight) Ass(imilation):

$$\bar{e} > \bar{i} / \text{---Ci}$$

was posited for prehistorical Latin in order to etymologize a few words that seemed to presuppose such a change. As far as medial position is concerned (cf. Solmsen 1897), VHAss hinges on four words; viz. *dēlīnio*, *subtīlis*, *convīcium* and *suspīcio* (Leumann 1977:54, cf. 293; Sommer/

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<sup>1</sup> This original meaning might be discerned in Cic. Arch. 23 *Graeca leguntur in omnibus fere gentibus, Latina suis finibus exiguis sane continentur*. It is customary to write *Latina suis finibus, exiguis sane, continentur* to indicate the parsing of *sane* with *exiguis* (N. H. Watts [Loeb Classical Library; London: Heinemann 1923:33] translates: "the vogue of Latin is confined to its own boundaries, and they are, we must grant, narrow"). I propose to parse *sane* with *continentur*: "Whereas Greek literature is read in almost every nation, Latin is really confined to its areal limits".

Pfister 1977:86). The evidential power of these words is negligible, however, because a better etymology (or at least a good start for one) can be proposed to all of them.

2.2.1. *Delinio* 'to soothe, cajole'. The variation *delenio* ~ *delinio* occurring in medieval mss. is customarily believed to demonstrate the necessity to posit VHAss: Because *dēlēnio* is a derivative of the adjective *lēnis* 'smooth, soft', the variant *delinio* must come from *dēlēnio*. This reasoning breaks down on the fact that *\*\*dēlīnio* is a ghost-word: Only *dēlēnio* is genuine, and the spelling variation in mss. is a reflex of the merger of /i/ and /ē/ in Vulgar Latin (for details see Nyman 1978).<sup>2</sup>

2.2.2. *Subtilis* 'fine; subtle; unaffected, artless'. According to Pisani's (1980:186) inventive suggestion, *subtilis* comes from *\*sub + tig + sli +* (cf. Skt *téjati* 'to be sharp, pointed'; Gk *στίζω* 'to sting'). *Subtilis* could accordingly be glossed as 'keen'. Semantically this would be plausible enough, but the assumption of an *s*-less variant for Lat. *stinguo* 'to sting' is rather venturesome. Moreover, the suffix variant *+sli+* (*+slo+*), despite being so in vogue among etymologists, is under suspicion of being a *deus ex machina* (see § 2.3 below). I prefer the age-old etymology, according to which the antecedent form of *subtilis* was *\*sub + tēlis* (cf. *tēla* 'web; loom'). There is no need to account for the diachronic correspondence in terms of a Lautgesetz, because we have Parodi's (1893:435) shrewd assumption of a morphological re-analysis (i.e., *\*subtēl + is* > *subt + īlis*; cf. Kent 1945:87 [§ 98 n. 1]), perhaps — to anticipate the upshot of our discussion — under the influence of *exīlis*.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> This also supersedes Pisani's (1980:185) recent contrivance: "*Dēlīniō* è forse da un *\*leino-*: gr. *λεῖος* da *\*leiu-*: lat. *lēvis*, e risultato di contaminazione con *linō*". It is true that *dēlēniō* was contaminated with the verb *linō* 'to smear', but only at a later stage (see Nyman 1978:85f.). Incidentally, it is epiphenomenally apparent from the semantics of *delēnio* that this verb was prehistorically blended with *lēno* 'procurer, pimp', *lēna* 'procuress, temptress' (Nyman 1978: 83f.).

<sup>3</sup> I thus agree with Pisani (1975:300) that there was a trading relation between *exīlis* and *subtilis*, but as compared with his suggestion, however, I propose to invert the directionality in this case.

2.2.3. *Convīcium* '(angry) outcry, clamor; reproof, abuse' is an etymological moot case. A viable semantic starting point is provided by LEW<sup>3</sup> I 269: "da die häufige Verbdg. mit *clāmor*, *maledictum*..., *obiurgatio*, *probrum* u. dgl. die Bezeichnung auf die Verbalinjurie eindeutung erweist..., ist Zsshang mit *vōx*, *vocāre* als "Zusammengeschrei" ... kaum zu bestreiten" (cf. also the suggestive translation "convocium" in Paul.Fest. 36,39 L.). But the underlying form *\*con + vēc + iom* is a precarious expedient for bringing out this semantic notion: the ablaut variant *\*wēk<sup>w</sup> +* finds no comparative support (cf. P 1135). Pisani's quadragenarian etymology [reported in Glotta 34 (1955) 226; Lehmann 1977:293], according to which *+vīc+* comes from the aorist stem *\*veic+* < *\*we + wk<sup>w</sup> +* [ > Gk εἶπ + εἶν ] by dissimilation, fares far better. Also Pisani's (1980: 185) interesting proposal to connect *convīcium* with Gk ἐνίπῃ 'reproof, abuse', ἐνίσσω 'to reproach' < *\*εῖν + Fīk<sup>w</sup> +* deserves due attention.

2.2.4. *Suspīcio* 'suspicion'. "Upside-down" application of VHAss (2) to the noun *suspīcio* would yield *\*suspēcio*, which seems to be a step to the right direction (cf. *specio*). But although the vowel length would thereby be accounted for, it is not feasible to regard the stem *\*spēk+* as handed down from the Indo-European quantitative ablaut pattern. The vowel length must be a Latin-specific development, but in contradistinction to the customary relative chronology  $e > \bar{e} > \bar{i}$  (which presupposes VHAss), I propose to take up Buck's (1896:270 fn. 1) view that "it seems quite possible that after the analogy of *collēgium* to *legō*, *contāgium* to *tangō*, *exāmen* (from *ex-āgmen*) to *agō*, etc., there arose at a later period to *suspīciō* (from *\*suspeciō*) a noun *suspīciō*". Buck's solution, which presupposes the relative chronology  $e > i > \bar{i}$ , was endorsed to by Vendryes (1902:162f.) [and DELL<sup>4</sup> 670] but plainly rejected by Sommer (1914: 29): "Aber gerade *collēgium*, das man doch neben *collīgō*, nicht neben *lĕgō* zu halten hätte, um eine Vorlage für *suspīciō* zu finden, zeigt gegenüber dem Verbum *collīgō* ein *-ē-* (nach *collēga*), und ich würde auf Grund von *collīgō*: *collēgium* erst recht ein *\*suspēciō* zu *suspīciō* erwarten. — — *contāgium*: *contingō*, *exāmen*: *exigō* können nach meiner Meinung als proportionale Vorbilder für *suspīciō*: *suspīciō* überhaupt nicht in Frage kommen."

Sommer's argumentation is contradicted by the following statement in

Paul.Fest. 102,25f.L.: "*legimus* aut scriptum, aut oleam glandemve et alia quaedam; et addita praepositione dicimus *colligimus*, *deligimus*", which shows that the initially-bound morpheme /+lig+/<sup>4</sup> was perceived as a variant of the initially-free morpheme /leg+/. So, in a pattern such as

$$(3) \quad \text{col} + 1 \begin{array}{|c|} \hline e \\ \hline i \\ \hline \end{array} \begin{array}{l} g + \bar{o} \\ g + \bar{o} \end{array} \quad (+) 1 \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \bar{e} \\ \hline \end{array} g + \bar{i} \quad (+) 1 \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \bar{e} \\ \hline \end{array} c + \text{tum}$$

the morphophonological alternation /e ~ i/ could be converted into a quasi-dynamic process statement by means of the well-known rule of

(4) M(edial) V(owel) R(eduction):

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{c} a \\ e \end{array} \right\} \rightarrow i / \text{PREFIX} + C_0 \_ \text{CV}$$

A similar case can be made for *tango*: *contingo*:

$$(5) \quad \text{con} + t \begin{array}{|c|} \hline a \\ \hline i \\ \hline \end{array} \begin{array}{l} ng + \bar{o} \\ ng + \bar{o} \end{array} \quad \left\{ \begin{array}{c} te \\ con \end{array} \right\} + t \begin{array}{|c|} \hline i \\ \hline \end{array} g + \bar{i} \quad (+) t \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \bar{a} \\ \hline \end{array} c + \text{tum}$$

Cf. Paul.Fest. 490,22—28 L.: "*Tagit*: Pacuvius in *Teucro* (344): *Ut ego, si quisquam me tagit*. Et *tagam* idem in *Hermiona* (165): *Aut non cernam, nisi tagam*, sine dubio antiqua consuetudine usurpavit. Nam nunc ea sine praepositionibus non dicuntur, ut *contigit*, *attigit*". Given the Item-and-Process format, the underlying roots in (3) and (5) are /leg+/ and /tag+/, respectively.<sup>5</sup>

Now, with respect to *suspicio*, a general correction is in order: *suspicio* does not derive from the verb *suspicio* 'to look upwards; to respect', but rather from the verb *suspikor* 'to suspect, mistrust' (cf. DELL<sup>4</sup> 670); cf. Plaut. Pseud. 562 *suspiciost mihi nunc vos suspicarier* 'I have a suspicion that you suspect (that...)'; and Ter. Andr. 359 *mi incidit suspicio* 'I was struck with suspicion' together with Ter. Hec. 874 *tamen suspikor* 'still I have my suspicions'. So, this "transformational" relationship obtaining

<sup>4</sup> Practically all Latin lexical morphemes are finally-bound.

<sup>5</sup> I here omit the detail, irrelevant to the present point, that the allomorph /+ting+/ is not derived by means of MVR(4). The closed-syllable version of this rule changes an *a* to *e*, and the latter, in turn, is changed to *i* by the rule *e* → *i* / \_\_\_ng (cf. Leumann 1977:83).



between *suspīcor* and *suspīcio* suggests that the latter has been formed from the former.<sup>6</sup>

Now, let us compare the verb *suspīcor* with *colligo* (3) and *contingo* (5):

$$(6) \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{**sp} \\ \text{susp} \end{array} \begin{array}{|c|} \hline e \\ \hline i \\ \hline \end{array} \begin{array}{l} c+or \\ c+or \end{array} \quad \text{susp} \begin{array}{|c|} \hline i \\ \hline \end{array} c+\bar{a}tus\ sum$$

There is no evidence for the simplex verb *\*\*specor*. Consequently, the upshot is that the underlying stem of *suspīcor* is /suspik+/,<sup>7</sup> whereas *colligo* and *contingo* have the respective underlying stems /kon+leg+/ and /kon+tag+/.

Those not fond of underlying forms and the IP model might consider the matter as follows: *colligo* can be related to *collēctum*, *collēgium*, *collēga* (cf. Varro, ling. 6,66 "collegae qui una lecti") and *contingo* to *contāctum*, *contāgio* according to the respective patterns:

$$(7) \quad \begin{array}{cc} \text{a.} & e-\bar{e} \\ & | \\ & i \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{cc} \text{b.} & a-\bar{a} \\ & | \\ & i \end{array}$$

Sommer argued that, given Buck's hypothesis, the expected formation should have been *\*\*suspēcio*, in accordance with (7a). This would indeed be the case, if *suspīcio* were derived from the verb *suspicio* (as Buck erroneously viewed it to be). But in the case of *suspīcor* the pattern is simply

$$(8) \quad i-\bar{i}.$$

Besides *suspīcor*: *suspīcio*, this pattern is also exemplified by the noun *praestīgia* 'trick, deceit' < *prae+strīg+ia* (Kent 1932:21), which is a

<sup>6</sup> Pisani (1980:185) would see a folk-etymological association here. He proposes to connect *suspīcio* to *spīca* in the meaning of *spīculum* 'pointed stick'.

<sup>7</sup> It is true that there exists *specio* 'to look', but we could not say "suspicio est specio" in the same vein as Nonius (268 M.) says "contingere est tangere". It is true, furthermore, that *suspectus*, the pass.pf.part. of *suspicio*, means 'suspect(ed)', but despite the meaning *suspectus* was associated with *suspicio*, as appears from Sall.Iug. 70,1 *suspectus regi et ipse eum suspiciens* 'suspect to the king, and himself suspecting the latter', where we would expect *suspīcatus* instead of *suspiciens*. Here the semantic interpretation of *suspiciens* is to be made through the syntactic configuration, not on the basis of the inherent, lexicalized sememic composition of the verb *suspicio*.

derivative of *praestringo* (LEW<sup>3</sup> II 356), underlyingly /prai+strig+/. A third instance may be given. In an insightful but curiously neglected etymological note, DeWitt (1918) gives good reasons for reconstructing a prehistorical verb *\*licio* 'to lead, drive',<sup>8</sup> the function of which was taken over by *duco*, *traho*, *ago* at the post-MVR period [MVR = Medial Vowel Reduction], when this verb was confused with the verb *lacio* 'to entice, allure' (cf. *illicio*). As one reflex of *\*licio* DeWitt cites the noun *līcium* 'leash', which could be construed as a parallel of *suspicio*.

2.2.5. Phonetic naturalness. We have been considering some structural evidence that is apt to contradict VHAss(2). Let us conclude with a bout in phonetics. VHAss(2) is an anticipatory distant assimilation in type. Schopf (1919:68f.) wrote: "Ganz besondere Vorsicht in der Annahme von Fernwirkung ist dann am Platze, ...wenn die betreffende Form, die jene Annahme gestattet, rein hypothetisch ist und erst ad hoc konstruiert werden muss, oder wenn zwei Formen, die man historisch miteinander verknüpfen möchte, durch Annahme von solchen Dissimilationen, Assimilationen oder Metathesen verbunden werden, die man kaum durch Vergleichung mit einwandfreien Beispielen rechtfertigen könnte". This prompts the additional consideration that it is not easy to justify VHAss(2) in phonetic or psychological terms. An anticipatory assimilation of the type X → Y / \_\_\_ ... Y presupposes that Y is relatively more prominent than X. But I doubt that the unstressed *i* in *suspicio* etc. was prominent enough to bring about an anticipation in the nucleus of the preceding syllable.

I agree with Pisani (1980) that VHAss has to be dropped from Latin diachronic grammar.

2.3. Morphology. The above discussion establishes *\*\*eks+ag+slis* as a non-source of *exilis*. It is true that the phonological problem can be dodged by positing, with Regula (1957:190), *\*eksig+slis* as the original form; i.e., by assuming that (the original representation of) *exilis* was formed by attaching the suffix /+sli+/ to the lexicalized verb stem /eksig+/.

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<sup>8</sup> DeWitt proposes to connect *\*licio* with Skt *likhāti*, *rikhāti* 'to scratch'. This is a better connection than the customary one with Gk *ῥείνω* 'to rend' (see e.g. Mayrhofer III 58).

This proposal actualizes the problem of the suffix variant  $+slis$ . In morphological operations as recent as this, the suffix  $+slis$ , if it ever existed as a linguistic reality, had certainly been ousted by the variant  $+ilis$ , attached to consonant-final stems. So, given the lexicalized  $/eksig+/$ , we are entitled to expect the formation  $*exigilis$  (cf. *agilis*). But more importantly, I have strong misgivings about the suffix variant  $/+slo+$ ,  $+sli+/$  beside  $/+lo+$ ,  $+li+/$  (and the same holds for  $/+sno+$ ,  $+smen$  (etc.)/ as well). Consider some typical instances (Leumann 1977:207f.):

- (9) a.  $*prem+slo-$  (cf. *premere* [pf.part. *pressum*] 'to press')  $>$  *prēlum* 'press';  
 b.  $*scand+slā-$  (cf. *scandere* [pf.part. *scansum*] 'to climb, ascend')  $>$  *scālae* 'stairs';  
 c.  $*mand+slā-$  (cf. *mandere* [pf.part. *mansum*] 'to masticate, chew')  $>$  *mālae* 'chops, jaws';  
 d.  $*quat+slos$  (cf. *quaterere* [pf.part. *quassum*] 'to shake')  $>$  *quālus* 'basket' (dim. *quasillus*);  
 e.  $*am(bi)+ciad+sli$  (cf. *caedere* [pf.part. *caesum*] 'to cut')  $>$  *ancīle* 'oval shield';  
 f.  $*man+terg+sli$  (cf. *tergere* [pf.part. *tersum*] 'to wipe')  $>$  *mantēle* 'towel'.

All of the underlying forms in (9) bring out the premise that the morphological operation of  $/+(s)lo+$ ,  $+(s)li+/$  attachment must have been performed on the present stem of the verb, viz.  $prem+$ ,  $scand+$ ,  $mand+$ ,  $quat+$ ,  $caed+$ ,  $terg+$ . But this is an unfounded assumption. To be sure, e.g. *scansum* comes historically from  $*scand+tom$  (cf. Leumann 1977:197; Kent 1932:22f.), but in all probability the lexeme *scandere* was restructured in the lexicon. In other words, after the change  $d+t > ss$  the verb *scandere* consisted of two allomorphs, viz.  $/skand+ \sim skans+/$ , quite analogously with Italian *scendere*, which consists of  $/scend+ \sim sces+/$ . And there is no compelling reason to assume that the words listed in (9) were formed before the change  $d,t+t > ss$ . In the same vein, the lexeme *tergere* had the two lexicalized allostems  $/terg+ \sim ters+/$ , which differed in semiotic function in that the former signalled the grammatical category of Present, and the latter, Past Participle. (I do not take a stand in the present context

to the question, whether the Act. Perfect form *tersi* was synchronically /terg+s+ī/ or /ters+ī/; cf. fn. 9 below.) Accordingly, I propose the following underlying representations:

- (10) a. \**press + lom* > *prēlum*;  
 b. \**scans + la* > *scālae*;  
 c. \**mans + la* > *mālae*;  
 d. \**quass + los* > *quālus*;  
 e. \**am + cais + li* > *ancīle*;  
 f. \**man + ters + li* > *mantēle*.

This proposal involves an explanatory generalization, because now the double series /+lo+ ~ +slo+/, /+li+ ~ +sli+ / (etc.) can be dispensed with.<sup>9</sup>

The suffix variant /+slo+, +sli+ / is thus likely to be an artifact of historical grammarians. In the case of \**eksig + slis* (as well as \**eks + ag + slis*), its sole function consists in creating such a structure that could be fed to the rule block Consonant Cluster Reduction & Compensatory Lengthening.

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<sup>9</sup> This analysis has certain implications to the conception of how the pf.participle was signalled in historical Latin (and even at a later period of prehistorical Latin). In his Artificial Intelligence approach to Latin phonotactic structures, Janson (1979:60—89) reaches the interesting conclusion that normally suffixes (should) begin in a vowel (68). He also points to certain developments that vindicate this as a real tendency. By way of a corollary Janson proposes the constraint that "there is not normally a C+C juncture between root and ending" (69; cf. 75). According to Janson (78) there is one important exception to this constraint; viz, the pf.participle of consonantal stems, e.g. *dic + tum*. Janson is certainly right in implicitly ruling out the analysis *dict + um*. But in cases such as *scansum* the best (synchronic) analysis is in my opinion *scans + um*. Accordingly, I propose that when the pf.part. was not overtly signalled by *-t-* (*voc + āt + um*, *dic + t + um*), the signalling function was, as it were, encapsulated in the lexical stem; i.e., *scans +* denoted, in a portmanteau fashion, the lexical meaning 'to ascend' as well as the grammatical meaning "Pf.Part." (or perhaps rather *scans +* was taken as a nominal stem for signalling various deverbal meanings, cf. *scans + iō*, *scans + um*, etc.).

### 3. *Exīlis* and semantic explication

It is not feasible to relate *exīlis* to *\*\*eks+ag+slis* or *\*\*eksig+slis*. This being the case, the semantic relatedness of *exīlis* and *exiguus* tells nothing about their etymological relatedness. It may very well be the case that that part in which the semantic field of *exīlis* overlaps that of *exiguus* represents a later development. For etymological purposes it may be more feasible to assume that 'thin' is the original meaning of *exīlis*.

In modern textual criticism semantic exegesis often outweighs formal normalization. In etymology this is paralleled by the shift of emphasis from the Lautschieber attitude to semantic explication. It is evident in many studies (e.g. Benveniste 1954; Maher 1977) that plausible etymological solutions are often to be reached by converting homonymy into (pan-chronic) polysemy by means of a careful semantic explication that pays heed to situational contexts, and the like. That is also what I set out to carry into effect in Nyman (1980). The remainder of the present paper will be devoted to showing that what the etymology of *exīlis* needs is a semantic explication, because *exīlis* has no formally different antecedent representations. The correct solution will be found among those grouped under III (Table 1).

3.1. Isidor's explanation (1e) must be rejected as sheer popular etymology. It is probable, though, that *exīlis* was synchronically felt as somehow related to the verb *exīre*; cf. the figura etymologica in Cic. de orat. 3,41 *nolo verba exiliter exanimata exire* 'I do not like that the words come out chokily with forced-out breath'.

Corssen's (1c) and Pisani's (1d) solutions have common properties. As far as morphology goes, both solutions assign *exīlis* to the following general pattern of adjective formation:

$$(11) \quad ex + \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{---} \\ + \text{Noun} \end{array} \right] + is \quad (= \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{---} \\ + \text{Noun} \end{array} \right] + less);$$

e.g., *ex + anim + is* (*anima* 'breath') 'breathless'; *ē + nerv + is* (*nervus* 'sinew; vigor, energy') 'powerless, weak'; *ex + sangu + is* (*sanguis* 'blood') 'bloodless, pale'. Accordingly, *exīlis* must be preliminarily glossed either as 'lacking the *hīlum*' (Pisani) or 'lacking the *īlia*' (Corssen).

3.2. "Exīlis from *hīlum*". Pisani (1940:128) invites us to understand the semantics of *\*eks+hīlis* in terms of It. *sfilacciato* 'frayed-out' (cf. Lat.

*extenuatus* 'thin'). This is not implausible, given our semantic premises. However, this solution of Pisani's — which he, incidentally, now seems to have given up; cf. Pisani (1975:300) — presupposes that *hīlum* = *fīlum* 'fibre', but this connection is rather tenuous; cf. Hiersche (1965: 111): "Nicht zu sichern ist ... die bereits antike Verknüpfung von *fīlum* "Faden" mit *hīlum*, der Negationsverstärkung in alat. *nīhilum*, jünger *nīhil*, *nīl* — — —. Die Bedeutung was nämlich den Alten schon nicht mehr bekannt, daher ist sie so unterschiedlich überliefert; "Faden" ist nur ein Interpretamentum unter anderen. — — — Da aber die ursprüngliche Bedeutung von *hīlum* nicht genau zu ermitteln ist, lässt sich die Annahme, es sei Dialektform von *fīlum* mit *h* statt *f* < *g<sup>u</sup>b* nicht weiter erhärten".

3.3. "*Exīlis* from *īlia*. This proposal has been emergent for some time. Though Regula finds *\*\*eksig + slis* unobjectionable in itself, he nonetheless feels that *exīlis* "kann aber mit gleicher Berechtigung als Zusammensetzung von *ex-īlia* "Weichen" erklärt werden" (1957:190). Also Leumann (1977: 398) introduces *ex + īlis*, though in another place (347) he quotes Pisani's (1940) proposal.

*īlia* denotes the fleshy abdominal part extending from the lowest ribs down to the pubic region (cf. Celsus 4,1,13). To this general definition, there is embedded the following polysemy, based on metonymy (for details, see TLL VII, 325,7—326,32):

- (12) a. Outer part ("shape"): 'loins, flanks; groins' (e.g., Verg.georg. 3, 506—7 *imaque longo / ilia singultu tendunt* 'and with long-drawn sobs their flanks heave down to the bottom');
- b. Inner part ("contents"): 'guts, intestines' (e.g., Ov.ibis 169 *trahet ilia vultur* 'the vulture will tear your guts');
- c. Bottom part: 'genitals' (e.g., Catull. 81,17).

Which one of the above semantic readings is likely to hide in the adjective?

Corssen construed (12b) as the original sense: "Eingeweide heraus", hence "schmächtig in den Weichen". This sense would be directly attested in Lucil. 333 Krenkel (= 332 Marx): *quod mancus miserque, exilis, ramite magno* [sc. *est senex*] 'because (that old man is) crippled, wretched, emaciated, and has a severe rupture'. If the comma is deleted after *exīlis*, then

*ramite magno* would depend on *exilis* as an "ablativus causae": 'he is a gutted wretch because of the grave rupture'. Though such a powerful expression would scarcely be alien to Lucilius diction, I believe that the following considerations will clinch the case for the relevance of outer shape (12a): Firstly, a perusal of the loci quoted in TLL reveals that *ilia* is most often used in this sense.<sup>10</sup> Secondly, the sense (12a) of *ilia* refers precisely to that part of the body in which obesity and leanness is most conspicuous.

The second point can be nicely elaborated in terms of a heuristic parallel from French that has ever since the first edition (1932) figured in DELL, though the authors have not been too sales-minded in marketing this idea. In Corssen's solution, "le sens initial [de *exilis*] aurait été "efflanqué"; mais la dérivation fait difficulté, comme le sens" (DELL<sup>4</sup> 206). But we have seen that morphological derivation involves no problem, and it seems quite clear that *efflanqué* "flankless" is the right key to unriddling the semantics of *exilis*.

In French a lean, scraggy man can be characterized as *un homme efflanqué*. The same adjective also denotes dryness, thinness of style: *il écrit dans un style efflanqué*. Such uses are characteristic of *exilis* as well, and it would be possible to latinize the above French expressions as *vir exilis* (cf. Lucil. 333 K.) and *exiliter scribit* (cf. Cic.Brut. 106), respectively. Very often *efflanqué* is colligated with nouns denoting animals, esp. horses (like It. *sfiancato*); e.g., *un cheval efflanqué* denotes a thin-flanked horse, a horse the sides of which are hollow (as a consequence of over-exertion, undernourishment, and the like). In Latin this would be *equus strigosus* or in all probability *equus exilis*, though the latter expression is not attested. It seems to be the case that French *efflanqué* relates to hunting (as does Latin *strigosus* as well), whereas *exilis* selects words denoting livestock, esp. swine as its syntactic partners (cf. Varro, rust. 2,2,4; 2,2,13; 3,2,12). But in both cases we can witness a semantic development by extension from a concrete, visually verifiable situation of everyday experience to a more abstract sense.

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<sup>10</sup> Some of those instances exemplifying (12a) are in TLL interpreted as belonging to (12b): e.g. Verg.Aen. 10,777 (*hasta*) *Antoren latus inter et ilia figit* does not specifically refer to the guts, but rather localizes the affected part of the body. Incidentally, the expression *ilia rumpere* (e.g. Verg.ecl. 7,26) may be compared with the Italian expression *rompere i coglioni*.

*Efflanqué* is also a close morphological parallel of *exilis* (cf. also *exiliatus*). The etymological link-up between *efflanqué* and *flanc* 'flank; inwards; womb' is quite obvious:

$$(13) \quad \text{ex} \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \bar{i}li \\ \hline \bar{i}li \\ \hline \end{array} \begin{array}{l} a \\ s \end{array} \quad \text{ef} \begin{array}{|c|} \hline flanc \\ \hline flanqu \\ \hline \end{array} \begin{array}{l} \\ \acute{e} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{'flank'} \\ \text{'hollow-flanked'}. \end{array}$$

In view of the above presentation, it is quite evident that *exilis* derives from *ilia* with the same probability as *efflanqué* is related to *flanc*.

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