

native mill: the elder Rossetti insisted that in the Ghibelline *gergo* "il ghibellinismo fu detto *vita* ed il guelfismo *morte*; perciò Dante chiamò la *V. N.* il nuovo corso di sua vita politica, e nascimento l'istante in cui v' entrò!"⁷ We need not mention that grotesque interpretation of M. Clecner (Sinowitz) for whom Beatrice is an allegory of the Talmud and the *Vita Nova* a source book of cabalistic symbolism.⁸

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THE SUFFIXES -ASTER, -IGNUS, ETC., IN NOUNS OF RELATIONSHIP

IN an article on the *Interchange of suffixes -aster, -ignus and -icus* (*Mod. Lang. Notes*, 1909, 241-3), Mr. S. G. Patterson sustains that, in words of step-relationship, in addition to the endings -aster and -ignus (of Lat. *privignus*¹), the termination -icus (of Lat. *vitricus*) survives, not only in Sard. *bidrigu*, etc. and Rum. *vitrigu*, etc., but also in O. Fr. *serorge*, etc. (Godefroy) and in Neapol. *matreye* and *patreye*.

After considering the diffusion of -aster and -ignus, the author summarizes: "Enough examples have been given to show the constant interchange of -ignus and -aster in these words of quasi-kinship . . . in several dialects the same stem is found compounded indifferently with either suffix (cf. Venet.)." He doubtless means rather alternation than interchange; for no real interchange is demonstrated: the diffusion of Ven. *pareastro* is not precisely the same as that of *paregno*; Boerio limits the first to Chioggia.² We need similar light on the Raetian *madrastra, -igna*. We should have documentary proof of Meyer Lübke's citation of "*patrigno, matrigna* refaits à l'époque romaine déjà sur *privignus*." That we have here a case of irradiation (in Bréal's diction) is doubtful, in that the suffix -ineus of *sanguineus, consanguineus, stamineus*,

⁷ Cf. Prudenziario, *op. cit.* p. 33, after Rossetti's *Commento*, vol. II, p. 355.

⁸ Michael Sinowitz, *Schlüssel zu D. A.'s Werke: Das Neue Leben*, Zürich, Clecner, 1905.

¹ Cf. Festus, *De Significatione Verborum*, s. v.

² *Diz. del dialetto veneziano*, Venezia, 1856, s. v. *pareastro*.

has had, especially in words of color, much the same history as *-aster*: *giallastro*, *sanguigno*.³ Nor can we, as regards general method, treat these suffixes as specifically connoting relationship, apart from their broader use with other words as pejoratives or descriptives, like Eng. *-ish*: *marâtre* now actually means "mother." Further the Italian preference for *-igno* forms remains unexplained: it is due to the difficult combination of *-tr- -tr-* in *matrastra*, etc., which the Portuguese, Catalan and other languages have obviated by simple dissimilation, *-dr- -t-*, *-d- -tr-*. It is interesting that some regions have not felt difficulty in this succession of sounds. Only brief reference is made to questions of semantics; but the statement that *-aster* is applied to *frater* for both genders is misleading; *fratellastra* means not "half-sister" but "half-brother's wife." It is not to be confused with the double use of *serorge*. It is the pejorative connotation of *-âtre* that has led to its practical displacement by forms with *beau-* and *belle-*. *Beau* was used to a considerable extent in medieval titles of address: *beaus amis*, etc. M. Thomas has noted⁴ that this mannerism has survived only for the more distant relationships. *Belle soeur*, more courteous and formal than *ma soeur*, was too stately for the home circle, but quite appropriate to kinship by marriage. For the forms cited by the author, we may add that *sorellastra* is quite literary; besides *matrigno* and *patrigno* we have forms with *d*.

Diez' assumption of *sororius* > *serourge* has in its favor the fact that *sororius*, as Mr. Patterson has noted, is an early Latin word. The development *-rj-* > *ge* is indeed exceptional in the Ile de France, but certainly not in the eastern dialects. Groeber has already designated *serorge* a *lehnwort*.⁵ Middle Latin *sororius* may represent a true Vulgar Latin semantic change and be of a nature quite different from that of *serorgius*, which Mr. Patterson correctly interprets. There is no difficulty with the thought transference, which is exactly parallel to that of *fratellastro*, etc., sister like, brother-like; the doubling of gender is paralleled in *figli* "son

³ Cf. Pianigiani, *Diz. etimologico della lingua ital.*, Roma, Albrighi-Segati, 1907, s. v. *matrigna*; and Cohn, *Suffixverwandlung*, Halle, 1891, p. 168; and cf. Morandi's *Grammatica*, p. 344.

⁴ *Dict. Gén.*, s. v. *beau-frère*.

⁵ *Archiv für lateinische lexicographie*, V, 473.

and daughter." Its vitality was assisted by the avoidance of pejorative *-aster*. The evidence for the survival of *-icus* is of no value: Sardinian and Rumanian represent archaic forms of Latin; they cannot serve as proof of the condition of continental Vulgar Latin posterior to the third century.⁶ Surely the Slavic and Celtic parallels are totally irrelevant unless supported by some evidence that these appearances are directly due to Latin influence.⁷ The forms cited for Huy and Liège by Godefroy may all be explained by *sororius*. We need to know more of the environment and history of *serouque* before we draw any general conclusions from it. This applies as well to the Neapolitan *matreye* and *patreye*. The theory of Greek influence has great probability from the fact that Greek was spoken in the Napoletano till the latest period of the Empire.⁸ Far from being incredible that *-icus* should have disappeared from words of this class, its ready failure may be explained, first because it is unaccented, and then by its frequency in other words of different meaning.

In spite, therefore, of the acute reasoning by which this interesting suggestion is supported, we are inclined to the traditional view of *serourge* < *sororius*. We may add that the orthographic scheme adopted by the author for dialect forms is open to some criticism: his rendering of Ven. *-gn-* is unnecessary and that of the Neapolitan and Albanian off-glide, unclear. Important dialect forms should be cited from documents, and need careful definition as to time and place.

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⁶ Pušcariu, *Tj, Cj, im Rumänischen, Ital. und Sard.*, Halle, 1904, pp. 5-18. Reservation must here be made for Christian missionaries, who, however, introduced only words of ecclesiastical nature.

⁷ I am told that Slavic *-ka* is usually diminutive; that it appears in relatively few words of step-kinship, which are frequently rendered by circumlocutions. Slavic *polnica* sometimes means 'step-mother'; some of the examples cited have *-ca* but with the sound *tca*.

⁸ Budinsky, *Die Ausbreitung der latein. Sprache*, Berlin, 1881, p. 44.