DIPHTHONGIZATION, MONOPHTHONGIZATION, METAPHONY

STUDIES IN THEIR INTERACTION IN THE PARADIGM OF THE OLD SPANISH -IR VERBS*

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I. Preliminaries

1. Delimitation of the scope. Whether or not he is familiar with the technical terms currently favored, or aware of the actual processes behind these terms, a speaker or student of Spanish, on some undefined level of consciousness, senses (or acts as if he sensed) the existence of such contrastable inflectional models as sent-ir ‘to feel’: sient-e ‘(he, she, it) feels’ vs. ped-ir ‘to ask’: pid-e ‘(he, she, it) asks’. The native speaker may even at some time or other have faced the dilemma of choosing, in the stressed syllable of such a verb form, between ie and i, and the foreign student is certain to have come to grips with such practical difficulties and to have been guilty, upon occasion, of gross errors. Preceptive grammarians and practitioners of language teaching, accordingly, have at all times paid attention to the hazards of the choice between the two conjugational categories. Also, pioneering comparatists lost no time in providing, at least tentatively, a historical background; noticing that certain forms of the paradigm (say, sint-amos ‘let us feel’ beside pid-amos ‘let us ask’) seemed to straddle the two patterns, they focused their attention on the interdependence of rising diphthongs (ie and its counterpart ue) and the raising of monophthongs (e > i and, analogously, o > u), within the compass of conjugation. Conversely, the thought of implicating here a third, less sharply profiled process characteristic of the declining phase of Old Spanish, namely the monophthongization of ie to i (as in sella > siella ‘saddle, stool, chair’ > silla)—quite different, for once, from the vestigial reduction of ue to e—apparently occurred for a fleeting moment (1904) to just one scholar, R. Menéndez Pidal. Yet even he, strange as it seems in retrospect, refrained from exploring this possibility beyond one incidental remark, repeated but neither deepened nor elaborated, and none of his successors has bothered to press the issue any further.

Viewed, then—in all likelihood for the first time on an ambitious scale and in this particular setting¹—as an interplay of three separate forces, the process gains considerably in complexity and interlocks with numerous other changes that affected medieval Hispano-Romance on its way from Latin toward classical

* By polishing this lengthy paper a few weeks before his untimely death, Bernard Bloch rendered me the last in a long series of editorial favors and attentions. The article has further profited from comments and queries by William Bright, Diego Catalán, and Marilyn May Vihman.

¹ Comparable tangles are known to have occurred (some recently) in other corners of the Peninsula, under different conditions and with different results. For one remote parallel see M. J. de Moura Santos, ‘Remarques sur deux systèmes vocaliques anciens du portugais du nord’, BJR 9.5-12 (1964), and its critical summary by P. F. Dembowski in RPh, 19:1 (1965-66).
and modern Spanish. To place the multipronged shift in a suitable perspective, the Preliminaries—delimitative, hence sparingly documented—have here been expanded far beyond their usual length. The kernel of the genetic problem, with its natural emphasis on the medieval record, forms the center of the paper; here full use has been made of copious exemplification with particular attention to the peculiarities of older peninsular dialects. There follows a rather detailed discussion of earlier analyses—a critique which, aside from nuancing the net results so far obtained, serves to show, pathetically enough, that this line of research reached its crest somewhere between 1897 and 1914 and that scholars of later generations bogged down or grew indifferent. Such long neglect is the best guarantee that fresh methods brought to bear on an old, recalcitrant problem may yet break an embarrassing impasse.

To achieve maximum concentration, I use the tags ‘1–6’ in referring to the respective forms of the present indicative, forms which Spanish, significantly, under no circumstances allows to coincide. In the present subjunctive, however, the forms ‘I ...’ and ‘he ...’ are always identical (= Form 7); 8 is used to ticket ‘thou ...’, while 9–11 are assigned to the plural. I have reserved ‘12’ as a label for the singular imperative, which for the most part, but not invariably, matches ‘3’. 

2. Diphthongization. The entire edifice of the Spanish language is characterized by the limitation of its two characteristic diphthongs ie /je/ and ue /we/ to the stressed syllable. Predictably, where in the process of extracting one word

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2 For the state of affairs in Modern Spanish there are many treatments, not infrequently slanted in the direction of purism and with almost pervasive confusion of linguistic and merely orthographic complications (alternation of c and qu, c and z, and the like). One finds ample information in readily identifiable chapters and paragraphs of the Academy grammar throughout its successive editions, and in the standard-setting mid-19th-century grammars by V. Salvá and A. Bello, with weighty comments on the latter in R. J. Cuervo’s Notas and in the same scholar’s masterly Apunaciones críticas, which whet the reader’s appetite for dialectal idiosyncrasies (see in the definitive edition §283 on cern-er/-ir, veri-er/-ir, and obsol. discern-er beside mod. -ir; §284 on hend-er/-ir vs. herv-er/-er; and §300 on desleir, engréir, re- and so-freir, son-reir). Among foreign Hispanists those deserving closest attention are G. Weigand, Spanische Grammatik für Lateinschulen 79–82 (Leipzig, 1922); J. Bouzet, Grammaire espagnole §§228–38 (Paris, 1946); C. Boselli, La grammatica spagnola del XX secolo §§165–8 (Milan, 1948), who refers to radical-changing verbs as ‘semi-irregolari’; and M. M. Ramsay, A textbook of modern Spanish (1894), especially as revised by R. K. Spaulding (New York, 1956). To this day the most thorough guide to dialectal diversifications is A. Rosenblat, ‘Notas de morfologia dialectal’, attached to the author’s annotated translation of A. M. Espinosa, Estudios sobre el español de Nuevo México (BDHA 2; Buenos Aires, 1946), esp. §§220–35. One can also profitably consult several of the books here examined, for the sake of their historical flavor, in the survey of analyses.

3 This powerful pattern of diversification has clearly presided over the Hispanic development of es ‘(thou) art’ beside est ‘(he) is’, two forms which, contrary to expectation, did not collide. The peninsular languages kept them apart at heavy cost: Portuguese by breaking one of its most solid sound correspondences (es < es vs. é < est), Castilian by the unique device of borrowing a single form from the paradigm of the Latin future otherwise near extinction (eres < est vs. es, proto-Spanish also ye, yes, yet < est). The dialects went their own ways, in part preserving the diphthongized (i.e. syntactically stressed) variants; for expertly distilled data see R. Menéndez Pidal, Orígenes del español §73.3 (Madrid, 1950).
from another through some morphological device—inflectional or derivational—the place of the original word stress is shifted, \( ie \) yields to \( e \) and \( ue \) to \( o \), as in hierro ‘iron’ beside herrero ‘blacksmith’ and cuero ‘rawhide, leather’ beside (mass-noun) corambre ‘hides, skins’. Exceptions exist, but they are few and narrowly circumscribed. Yet the reverse is not true: from unstressed \( e \) one cannot predict, even in probabilistic terms, whether its stressed counterpart in a paradigm or a word family will be \( e \) or \( ie \). Thus, error ‘mistake’ flanks yerro ‘error’, while pesado ‘heavy, clumsy’ is compatible with peso ‘weight’. The distribution of stressed \( e : ie \), \( o : ue \) is controlled by historical circumstances alone.

Applied to the particulars of verbal inflection, this basic phonological situation produces important results. For the sake of simplicity, we disregard at this point fairly isolated rhizotonic forms, such as scattered ‘strong’ preterites (1st and 3d sg.) and residual ‘strong’ past participles, e.g. OSp. fíz(e) ‘I did’, fízo ‘he did’, fecho ‘done’, concentrating our attention exclusively on the one solid block of closely enmeshed radical-stressed forms identified as Nos. 1–3, 6–8, 11–12 in our schema. This qualification of our scope leads to the following breakdown:

**Front Vowel**

- **AR verbs**: tentar ‘to tempt, touch, feel (one’s way)’—1. tient-o, 2. -as, 3. -a, 6. -an (vs. 4. tient-amos, 5. -áis, orig. -ades); 7. tient-e, 8. -es, 11. -en (vs. 9. tient-emos, 10. -éis, orig. -edes); 12. ¡tienta!
- **ER verbs**: perder ‘to lose, ruin’—1. pierd-o, 2. -es, 3. -e, 6. -en (vs. 4. perd-emos, 5. -éis, orig. -edes); 7. pierd-a, 8. -as, 11. -an (vs. 9. perd-amos, 10. -áis, orig. -ades); 12. ¡pierde!
- **IR verbs**: mentir ‘to lie, be false’—1. mient-o, 2. -es, 3. -e, 6. -en (vs. 4. ment-imos, 5. -éis, orig. -ides); 7. mient-a, 8. -as, 11. -an; 12. ¡miente!

Whereas the general comportment of the stem vowel in all forms adduced reflects the alternation of monophthong and diphthong (deeply embedded, I repeat, in the structure of the language), the ‘we’ and ‘ye’ forms of the present subjunctive in the -ir class stand apart, displaying neither \( e \) nor \( ie \), but, quite erratically, \( i \): 9. mint-amos, 10. -áis, orig. -ades. We are thus dealing here, within the complex of 12 forms, with a total of three stem variants.

Examples of \(-e/-ie-\) (and of \(-e/-ie/-i-\)) verbs, arranged according to the

4 The exceptions comprise, on the one hand, secondary verbs such as ahuecar ‘to hollow (out)’, from hueco, and amueblar ‘to furnish’, from mueble(s), which have a very low degree of semantic autonomy; and, on the other, certain indefinite pronouns: OSp. otro(e) ‘somebody else’, nadie ‘nobody’, alguien (orig. alguidn) ‘somebody’, which many untutored speakers avoid, no doubt as a result of the conflict between rising diphthong and unstressed syllable, preferring to resort to rival pronouns like ninguno and alguno or to remove the stumbling block through metathesis: dial. naide(s), -en. For a microscopic inspection of the record and a genetic explanation see my two papers in HR 13:204–30 (1945) and in UCPL 1:9.357–442 (1948). Note also certain hypocoristic derivatives such as abuelito ‘granddaddy’ (beside unorchestrated abolengo ‘ancestry’), a thin layer of—predominantly not very old—‘cultismos’: suff. -ie, serie ‘set’, bilingüe ‘bilingual’, exangüe ‘anemic, exhausted’ (structurally as marginal as foreignisms would be), plus a few members of the paradigms of -iar and -uar verbs, e.g. averigüe ‘let him verify’.

5 The traditional division of Spanish verbs into three major classes, on the basis of -ar, -er, and -ir infinitives, is upheld here as one of several possible classificatory schemes.
conjugation class, include:

(a) **alentar** ‘to breathe’, **apretar** ‘to press’, **calentar** ‘to warm’, **cegar** ‘to blind’, **cerrar** ‘to shut’, **comenzar** and **empezar** ‘to begin’, **errar** ‘to err’, **fregar** ‘to rub’, **helar** ‘to freeze’, **plegar** ‘to fold’, **sentar** ‘to seat’; (b) **atender** ‘to pay attention to, take care of’, **cerrar** ‘to shut’, **comenzar** and **empezar** ‘to begin’, **errar** ‘to err’, **fregar** ‘to rub’, **helar** ‘to freeze’, **plegar** ‘to fold’, **sentar** ‘to seat’; (c) **adverir** ‘to notice’, **erguir** ‘to erect’, **herir** ‘to wound’, **hervir** ‘to boil, seethe’, **zaherir** ‘to reproach’.

### Back Vowel


In the last category one encounters again a deviant stem vowel in Forms 9 and 10: *durm-amos*, *-dis* < *-ades*. Mint-amos and durm-amos have this in common: they each contain a nuclear monophthong which involves a vowel one step higher than the one the analyst coming from earlier exposure to the -ar and the -er paradigm would expect to find. For the alternations e : i, ie : i, o : u, and ue : u outside the verbal paradigm Spanish offers its speakers no firm syllabico-accentual guidance.

Illustrations of **-o/-ue** (and of **-o/-ue/-u**) verbs, arrayed according to the conjugation class:

(a) **agorar** ‘to divine’, **almorzar** ‘to have breakfast’, **colgar** ‘to hang’, **costar** ‘to cost’, **forzar** ‘to force’, **holgar** ‘to be idle, ease up’, **hollar** ‘to tread (upon), trample upon’, **mostrar** ‘to show’, **probar** ‘to prove’, **rodar** ‘to roll’, **rogar** ‘to ask (a favor)’, **sotar** ‘to let loose’, **trocar** ‘to barter’, **volar** ‘to fly’, **volcar** ‘to upset, dump’; (b) **cocer** ‘to cook, bake, brew’, **doler** ‘to ache’, **moler** ‘to smell (emit an odor)’, **torcer** ‘to twist’; (c) **dormir** ‘to sleep’, **morir** ‘to die’.

For the native child and the foreign learner the one salient difficulty in handling this sector of Spanish grammar is to discriminate between diphthongizing and nondiphthongizing verbs; e.g. to remember that **defender** ‘to protect’ alternates with **defiendo** ‘I protect’ (-e-/-ie-), while seemingly parallel **ofender** ‘to offend’, unpredictably, demands **ofendo** ‘I offend’ (-e-/-e-). In most instances the language historian can supply the reason for the discrepancy. Thus, the behavior of **defendo** is due to its vernacular status (cf. even more rustic **dehesa** [fenced-off pasture ground, meadow] < **DEPENSA**), while **ofendo** is a fairly late Latinism, perhaps concomitantly buttressed by Italian or French models (the older equivalent of ‘to offend’ was **agraviar**). In other cases inconspicuous features of transmission strictly by word of mouth may conceal the cause of divergent development; thus, the modern relation **llevar** : **llevo** etc. overlays the older relation **adquirir** ‘to acquire’ (OSp. **adquzcerir**) beside **adquiero**, **discernir** (Class. Sp. **discerner**) ‘to make out’ beside **discernamos**, **recibir** ‘to receive’ alongside **conceibir** ‘to conceive’, **jugar** ‘to play’ (OSp. **jogar**) despite **juego** noun and verb. Some of these points will claim our attention later.

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6 To achieve maximum simplicity at this stage I mention but abstain from discussing such familiar marginal cases as **adquirir** ‘to acquire’ (OSp. **adquzcerir**) beside **adquiero**, **discernir** (Class. Sp. **discerner**) ‘to make out’ beside **discernamos**, **recibir** ‘to receive’ alongside **conceibir** ‘to conceive’, **jugar** ‘to play’ (OSp. **jogar**) despite **juego** noun and verb. Some of these points will claim our attention later.
3. Metaphony. The raising of e to i and of o to u before [j]—the chief manifestation of metaphor in Spanish—is meagerly represented on the morphophonemic level, being confined to the syllable immediately preceding the stress, as in sent-i ‘I felt’: sint-ió ‘he felt’ (-iera, -iese, -iendo, etc.), mor-i ‘I died’: mur-ió ‘he died’ (-iera, -iese, -iendo, etc.) It is in general characteristic of the -ir class alone but extends in a few marginal instances to the ranks of the -er class, cf. pud-iante ‘rich, powerful’ (a verbal adjective at the periphery of poder ‘to be able’) alongside the gerund pud-iendo, as against beb-iendo ‘drinking’ (from beb-er) and com-iendo ‘eating’ (from com-er). This narrow synchronic latitude of metaphony is matched by a diachronic scope only slightly broader inasmuch as in this perspective both [j] and [w] enter the picture: jibia ‘cuttlefish’ (orig. xibia) < SÉPIA, vendimia ‘vint’age’ < VINDÉMIA; also ciruela ‘plum’ < CÉREOLA ‘waxen, wax-colored’ (f.), pihuela ‘jess (on hawk’s leg)’, pl. ‘shackles’, from *PEDIA. Diachronic metaphor is operative in stressed and unstressed syllables alike, but has not become part of derivational or compositional machinery. Sintió, murió, pudiendo, jibia, and ciruela are all tied together by the fact that the semiconsonant credited with having provided the stimulus for the process, /j/ or /w/, has been preserved. In other, more elusive instances the prime mover may ultimately have been absorbed by the surrounding sounds. 

For a fuller treatment, with special attention to Asturian, see C. Blaylock, ‘Hispanic metaphony’, RPh. 18.253-71 (1964-65).

Aside from raising e to i and o to u, early metaphony, at the Latin stage, was apt to close /e/ to /e/ and thus to block subsequent diphthongization: VENT ‘come!’ > IBEN! (and, analogically, TENE ‘hold!’ > ITEN!).

In the section of the verbal paradigm here under scrutiny (Forms 1-12) we find traces of e: i operative under narrowly defined conditions. The alternation is restricted to the -ir class, with no exceptions on record comparable to pud-iendo, -iante; the inventory of conjugational suffixes limits the source of metaphony to /j/, to the exclusion of /w/ and /i/; the nuclear back vowels this time
remained unaffected, a situation marking a sharp departure from the symmetry thus far observed;\(^\dagger\) the /j/ whose agency has been posited on the strength of historical and comparative considerations is no longer detectable in the extant forms; and the number of members involved within the paradigmatic alliance is not eight, as in the case of diphthongization, but ten (including two presenting the critical syllable in pretonic position) out of a maximum of twelve. This state of affairs may be exemplified with *pedir*: 1. *pid-o*, 2. *-es*, 3. *-e*, 6. *-en* (vs. 4. *ped-imos*, 5. *-ts*, orig. *-ides*); 7. *pid-a*, 8. *-as*, 9. *-amos*, 10. *-dis*, orig. *-ades*, 11. *-an*; 12. *ipide*! While in the case of diphthongization the distribution of e and ie, o and ue in the paradigm faithfully reflected the pattern of sound correspondences, the situation is more intricate in the domain of metaphony. The direct raising of /e/ to /i/ by a /j/ subsequently submerged is borne out by only six of the ten forms at issue. By substituting Low Lat. *METOIRE* for classical MENTIORE -IRE ‘to measure’ we obtain a base that (if one disregards the troublesome recoil from TX > Ç) at once justifies the i of Sp. mid-o; *-a*, *-as*, *-amos*, *-dis*, *-an*; and *-e*! As for 2. mid-es and 3. mid-e, the underlying models *MET-Is* and *-IT* (class. -IRIS, -TUR) fall short of justifying metaphony; in Form 6 it is doubtful whether we must reckon with *-UNT* or *-UNT* (the latter is more plausible), in lieu of class. -UNTUR, as the immediate predecessor of *-ENT*. The i of midide! could be explained by the direct closing effect of -I, cf. the earlier remark on iven! On balance, of the ten forms displaying the stem var. mid- in the sector of the paradigm under study, a minimum of seven and a maximum of eight may involve metaphony pure and simple; for the remaining forms some inner, analogical diffusion must have been responsible.

4. Interaction of diphthongization and metaphony. Merely on the strength of superficial descriptive analysis (though with an occasional side glance at elementary comparative data), one suspects a modicum of osmosis between diphthongization and metaphony—two processes which we have so far striven to keep apart.

Under the rubric of diphthongization we found an almost perfectly symmetric arrangement of the two sets of twelve forms pertaining to the -ar and to the -er class, while the third set, belonging to the -ir class, stands apart in that Forms 9 and 10 exhibit a separate stem variant with -i-: mint- beside ment- and mint-. The abnormality is driven home by the contrast with Tuscan (otherwise morphophonemically germane to Castilian), where the stem vars. muor- and mor- ‘to die’, od- and ud- ‘to hear’, esc- /esk, eš/ and usc- /uš/ ‘to leave’, from morire, udire, and uscire respectively, are distributed alike in pres. ind. and pres. subj. This i variant the Spanish verbs so conjugated share, in these two forms, with those of the purely metaphonic category (say, mid-amos, -dis), into whose para-

\(^\dagger\) True, many normative grammars cite the paradigm of podrir ‘to rot’ as a reputed parallel of mentir: 1. pudr-o, 2. -es, 3. -e, 6. -en, 4. pudr-imos, 5. -is, 7. pudra, etc. But there is little reality in this schema. Finite forms in actual use, plus infinitive and gerund, to all intents and purposes, show only the pudr- stem; the former p. ptc. podr-ido ‘rotten’ stands apart as a semi-independent verbal adjective (receiving the support of the stereotyped phrase and famous book title olla podrida ‘Spanish stew’). Note the inroad of podr-ecer, parallel to OSp. nodr-ecer ~ -ir ‘to nourish’ (Miseria 34d, 35c vs. 48c).
digms the -i- has, of course, cut a much deeper wedge. It would seem plausible to assume some genetic connection; thus, the -i- may have been analogically transferred from 'midamos' to 'mintamos'; or, if we view the diphthong in the paradigm of mentir as a fairly late intruder, arguing that the -ie- has dislodged an older monophthong, it is conceivable that in the pres. subj. the monophthong was an i produced through metaphony and sufficiently resistant to have withstood, in unstressed position, the pressure of ie (as in 7. mienta) and of e (as in 4. ment-imos). In terms of temporal sequences, then, the rise of the -i- of mintamos, -ís seems to be noncontemporaneous with the genesis of the -ie- of mient-o etc.

One major interference in the reverse direction is also plausible. The distribution of the i in the pres. ind. of medir struck us as disturbing because Romance metaphony is not, generally speaking, controlled by word stress, and in Spanish tends to appear with distinctly greater frequency in the pretonic than in the tonic syllable. On the other hand, alternation of e and i in mtd-o, -es, -e, -en vs. med-imos, -ís affords a perfect parallel to the distribution of e and ie in mient-o, -es, -e, -en vs. ment-imos, -ís. One wonders whether what spread from the diphthongizing to the metaphonizing -ir verbs was not, rather than any specific sound feature, the distributional formula for the schema marked (new) vowel or diphthong (Forms 1, 2, 3, 6) vs. unmarked (old) vowel (Forms 4 and 5). In this context both i and ie qualify for the label marked synchronically (because the forms containing them are by this very fact sharply set off from the bulk of the paradigm) and for the label new diachronically (because they marked innovations, not necessarily simultaneous, vis-à-vis the older e).

In this section we had to limit ourselves to the front vowels because, through a strange twist of asymmetry, Spanish offers an -o/-ue/-u- counterpart of 'mentir', namely dormir 'to sleep' and morir 'to die', but (if one disregards unauthentic podrir) no back-vowel equivalent of 'medir' at all. This is one of the few loose ends so far encountered; another was the sporadic extension of metaphony to the -er class (pud-iendo, -iende).

5. Monophthongization of rising diphthongs. The monophthongization of the old falling diphthongs, whether it pertains to the pre-Romance period (like oe > /e/ and ae > /e/ or /e/11) or can be assigned to some recognizable stage of Hispano-Romance (like au > ou > o), is obviously of no concern to the student of Old Spanish conjugation.12 The situation may be radically different with the reduction of the two rising diphthongs ue and ie to monophthongs, at a distinctly later date; these processes, then, bear closer inspection. Of the two diphthongs involved the former may, under certain circumstances, yield e, as in OSp. (h)uest antigua ‘procession of phantoms’, lit. ‘old army’ > estantigua

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11 On the latter problem—for many years a notorious crux—there is now available the refreshingly original study by C. Blaylock, ‘The monophthongization of Latin ae in Spanish’, RPh. 18.16-26 (1964–65).
12 Except in piecing together details of the trajectories of individual verbs, such as audire ‘to hear’ (> Ptg. ouvir), gaudere ‘to rejoice’ (> Ptg. [obs.] gouv-er, -ir), and traducere ‘to carry over, lead over, bring over’ (> OSp. trocir ‘to pass’ cf. NRFH 10.385-96 [1956]).
‘hobgoblin, phantom’, coll. ‘old person, museum piece’, fruente ‘forehead’ > frente (f.)—as against the camouflage Gallicism frente ‘front’ (m.)—, flocco ‘lock of wool’ > OsP. flueco > fleco ‘fringe, ragged edge’; this shift holds out little promise of relevance to our main issue.\(^{13}\) The diphthong ie is subject to reduction to e or i in stressed syllables, quite apart from its vicissitudes when forced into some other position (e.g. through composition, as in di(e)cisiete ‘seventeen’). The change ie > e occurs, within Old Spanish, after such palatal consonants as l /ʎ/, ñ /ɲ/, and x /ʃ/: suff. (adj.) -iento, but amarill-ento ‘yellowish’; suff. (3d pl. pret.) -ieron, but tañ-eron ‘they touched, played (an instrument)’, dix-eron ‘they said’.\(^{14}\) The alternative monophthongization ie > i occurs under a number of conditions, some well defined (as when the diphthong precedes a palatal consonant: Ennicu > Yéñego > Íñigo, dimin. suff. -ELLu > -iello > -illo), others ill defined (as in Merula ‘blackbird’ > mierla > mirla beside servu ‘sirf’ > siervo; reste + a ‘rope, cord’ > riestra > riistra ‘string, row, file’ beside testu ‘earthen pot’ > tiesto ‘flowerpot’\(^{15}\)), still others submerged and open to question (as when some scholars reconstruct intermediate *-ieu(s) forms between Deus ‘God’, Iúdaeu ‘Jew’, and meu ‘my’ on the one hand and Sp. Dios, judío, mio on the other).

Clearly, the assumed spread of i from mido to mid-és, -e, -en—a propagation which, paradoxically, would fit the groove of a diphthong, but falls in line with no established pattern where a monophthong is at issue—would at once gain in verisimilitude if it could be demonstrated that in some of the oldest members of this group, at least, it received support from a nuclear i going back to an older -ie-. The contradiction between the character of the marked sound and its dis-

\(^{13}\) For the best formulation, and a digest of earlier statements by C. C. Marden (1896), F. Krüger (1914), and G. Millardet (1923), see R. Menéndez Pidal, Manual de gramática histórica española\(^*\) §13.2 (Madrid, 1941), in reference to fl(u)eco, fr(u)ente, Bur(u)eva < Borovla and cul(u)ebra ‘snake’ < col(u)ebra. *-ebra: ‘Ocurre la reducción a e después de una l o r precedida de un sonido labial. Estantigua está apart: para storea ‘rush mat’ > estera y suff. -TÓRru > -d(u)ero the author correctly reckons with the interference of suff. -ÁRru > -ero; to account for postorejo ‘back of the neck’ (post + auricula ‘little ear’) he could have pressed into service the dissimilatory formula underlying rotundu ‘round’ > redondo (cf. HR 14.130-7 [1946]), the more properly as unstressed post yielded OsP. pos (cf. en pos de, etc.) rather than pues.

\(^{14}\) After stem-final j /x/ going back to x /ʃ/, -ieron to this day yields to -eron: conducieron ‘they led’, iu-, diaL. tru-ieron ‘they brought’, etc. Not so in learned -gir verbs: fingieron ‘they feigned, pretended’, surgieron ‘they arose’.

\(^{15}\) For further details see ffn. 22 and 112. The problem is complicated by numerous side issues. Pessa ‘pressure’ > OsP. priesa prisa ‘haste’ seems to conflict with gyspu > yeso ‘chalk’ and tensu > tiesto ‘taut, tight’, given the affinity of -ss-, -ts-, and -ns- (the second with tendential compensatory lengthening of the s). On the one hand, in pri(e)sa the r may have acted as a concomitant and accelerator (cf. mirlo, riistra); on the other, the y /ʃ/ of yeso may be a reflex of /g/ before /e/, while what is usually called the loss of g before a front vowel in words like germán ‘brother’ > ermano, gingiva ‘gum’ > enza may, in the last analysis, represent the monophthongization of secondary /je/ in pretonic syllable. Finally, tiesto ‘stiff, tight, tense’ seems a mere elaboration on teso ‘id.’ under the influence of tender ‘to stretch’ / threshold, while tiesto ‘stiff, tight, stubborn’ shows additional contamination with testatudo ‘Stubborn’, cf. Fr. entêté. On the peculiarities of the representatives of gyspu: Sp. yeso beside Arabized algex, Cat. gjix, Leon. yelvo, see E. Alareos Llorach, ‘Resultados de Gª', in la Península’, Arch. 4.330–42 (1954), esp. 339–40.
tribution would then disappear, and the analyst could safely assign to such isola-
table key verbs as involve, in their rhizotonic forms, a monophthongized diph-
thong, a mediating role between the larger groups displaying the effects of
straight diphthongization or straight metaphony. In his search for unadul-
terated specimens of the latter group the Hispanist will be well advised to turn
first, as he has learned to do on many occasions, to the testimony of Portuguese.

shows a system and diachronically a pattern of transmission sharply divergent
from Castilian as regards both diphthongization and metaphony.\(^\text{16}\) The charac-
teristic diphthongs, whether oral (e.g. ei, eu, ëu, oi, òi, ou) or nasal (e.g. ãi, ão,
ðê), are all falling—not predominantly rising, as in Castilian; they seem, by and
large, independent of the position of word stress and do not alternate with
monophthongs in any kind of morphophonemic arrangement. Portuguese con-
trasts /e/ and /o/, /o/ and /a/, in excess of the oppositions provided by Castil-
lian; the distribution of these four phonemes is controlled by the specific source
of each, e.g. cabeça ‘head’ < CAPITIA, cabelo ‘hair’ < CAPILLU, cedo ‘early,
soon’ < CITÔ, verde ‘green’ < VIRIDE, fez ‘(he) did, made’ < FÎCIT, all five with
/e/, vs. rëdea ‘rein’ < *RE-TINA, cego ‘blind’ < CAECU, sete ‘seven’ < SEPTE(M),
dez ‘ten’ < DECE(M), all four with /e/. (These examples show complete inde-
pendence from the configuration of the syllable and from the final vowel, both
at the earlier and at the later stage of the evolutionary trajectory.) But instances
of morphophonemic alternation—nourished, at its roots, by equations such as
the aforementioned, but later congealed into a rigid system of its own—also
abound, especially at the modern stage, amenable to observation; cf. todo
‘every’ ~ tudo ‘everything’; suffix -osa (m. sg.), with /o/, ~ -osa (f. sg.), -osas
(m. pl.), -osas (f. pl.), all three with /o/; cerco ‘circle’ (n.), with /e/, ~ cerco
‘(I) circle’, with /e/; torno ‘turn’ (n.), with /o/, ~ torno ‘(I) turn’, with /a/.
Within the conjugational domain, in the sector of the paradigm under ob-
servation, sharp distinctions can be drawn between the three conjugation classes
(for simplicity, I am focusing attention on Lisbonese speech).\(^\text{17}\) In the -ar class,
the stressed syllables favor /e/ and /a/, alternating with unaccented [a] and
[u] respectively, regardless of the vowel’s historical provenience; if /e, o/ appear
instead of dominant /e, a/, this departure is controlled by surrounding sounds
(for instance by a following nasal) and must be totally divorced from any an-
terior state of affairs, especially at the level of Latin.

In the -er class the situation is more intricate. The unstressed syllables show
the expected [a] and [u], but among the eight radical-stressed forms there is a
split: Forms 2, 3, 6, and 12 demand /e/ and /a/, while Forms 1, 7–8, and 11 re-
quire /e/ and /a/. Since historically this class shelters remnants of the Latin
classes in -ERE (TENÊRE ‘to hold’ > OPtg. têer > ter), -ô / -êRE (BIBÊRE ‘to

\(^\text{16}\) Since Portuguese occupies an ancillary position in this paper, the information offered
does not transcend the scope of a standard manual like E. B. Williams, From Latin to

\(^\text{17}\) For the purpose of this article I disregard the fact that Ptg. pôr ‘to put’ < OPtg.
pôer < pôNERE cannot be fitted into any slot of the traditional triadic array of conjugation
classes.
DIPHTHONGIZATION, MONOPHTHONGIZATION, METAPHONY

drink’ > *beber*, and -tô / -ôre (*facere* ‘to do, make’ > *fazer*), it is customary to contend that initially the closure of the vowel in 1 was due to the pressure of /j/ in -ôô, -tô, while its closure in 7–8 and 11 is attributable to the same pressure applied by the opening segment of -e-am, -eôô... -iam, -iôô... This analysis is plausible; but the salient point of the present-day situation is that the distribution of /e/ and /ɛ/, /o/ and /ɔ/ is no longer etymologically controlled: the i of 1. BIB-ô, 2. -is, 6. -UNT, 7. -AT should, on phonological grounds, have invariably yielded /ɛ/, while the actual forms are bíbe, bíbes, bíbeôm, bíbea.

The lesson taught by the -ir verbs is even more noteworthy; here again it is the radical-stressed forms that matter. Within the majority group (the verbs conventionally called ‘regular’) the paradigm of those with an e in the stem syllable (e.g. serv-ir ‘to serve’) shows a neat cleavage between /i/ in 1, 7–8, and 11 and /ɛ/ in 2–3, 6, and 12, thus: sirv-o, -a, -as, -am; serv-es, -e, -em, -e! Dorm-ir shows perfect parallelism; so does acud-ir ‘to rush to help’, despite a different spelling of the key vowel in the infinitive: durm-o, -a, dorm-es; acud-o, -a, acod-es. Special complications arising from western nasalization (as in mint-o, -a, ment-es) are of strictly local concern.

The Hispanist learns two important facts from the array of Portuguese material. The rarity of metaphony in the -er class which makes Sp. pud-iendo, -iente so exceptional is echoed in Portuguese not by any comparable infrequency but rather by the lack of sharpness in the polarization /e/ ~ /ɛ/, /o/ ~ /ɔ/ (as against such a neatly profiled contrast in the -ir class as /i/ ~ /ɛ/, involving phonemes separated by two degrees of aperture).

The second lesson: Portuguese suffers from no such asymmetry as is found in the Spanish pedir/pido type, hardly counterbalanced on the side of back vowels. The West exemplifies both the e/i and the o/u metaphony; the representatives of the latter have equivalents in Spanish that exhibit either diphthongization beside metaphony (durm-ir ~ duerm-ô ~ durm-amos) or, more important, complete leveling (acud-ir ~ acud-o).

Under stress and pretonically, Portuguese sporadically shows i from Lat. /je/ and /ɛ/, with metaphony and adjoining heavy consonant groups lending yeoman’s services: iguaria ‘tidbit’ < IECUXRIA ‘(chopped) liver’, 伊朗o < GER-MÂNU, piertiga ‘pole, shaft’ < FERTICA.18

7. Basic patterns of stem variants. The conflicts, mutual attractions, and overlaps between diphthongization, monophthongization, and metaphony so far haphazardly identified as parts of the conjugational mechanism can be viewed in a broader and bolder perspective. It seems legitimate to divide all Spanish verbs, with regard to the twelve forms here under scrutiny, into two large groups cutting across the three conventional conjugation classes: verbs exhibiting a single, invariably stem (e.g. cant- ‘to sing’, com- ‘to eat’, part- ‘to divide, share, split, depart’) and those displaying two or more stem variants. Among the latter,

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18 On the provenience of iguaria and OJud.-Sp. yegueria ‘mess, dish’ see my papers in Lg. 20.108–30 (1944) and 21.264–5 (1945) and the various comments that these contributions provoked in the mid-forties. As regards the descendants of FERTICA, note the unexplained replacement of OSp. piertega—a perfect match of Fr. perche—by mod. prêtiga ‘rod, staff’.
those with at least three variants, except for the sizable "ment-/mient-/mint-" group, form a very small minority of extremely frequent verbs, like ser, haber, tener, saber, decir, dormir, etc. The remainder, with two allomorphs each, fall into two major categories:

(a) Verbs contrasting Forms 1–3, 6–8, 11, 12 (var. 1) with Forms 4, 5, 9, and 10 (var. 2). Here one would place, giving precedence to the allomorph underlying the infinitive, the very numerous diphthongizing verbs (some of them of high frequency) of the -ar and -er classes: neg-/nieg-, perd-/pierd-, rog-/rueg-, pod-/pued-.

(b) Verbs contrasting Forms 1 and 7–11 (var. 1) with the rest (var. 2). Among the rather numerous subcategories, those involving the velar insert, or /g/ as a substitute for /θ/ or /s/ (according to the speaker's dialect), occupy a prominent rank: (a) cab-/quep- 'to fit, have enough room'; (b) hac-/hag- 'to make'; (c) pon-/pong- 'to put', val-/valq- 'to be worth'; (d) ca-/caig- 'to fall', tra-/traig- 'to bring'; (e) luc-/luzc- 'to shine'. At the medieval stage, crucially important to us, the number of these verbs was even higher, because many if not most speakers then conjugated de-, di-zir and otr thus: digo, dizes, diz(e), dizimos... diga...; oyo, oes, oe, oimos... oya...

The fundamental abnormality of the biradical serv-/sir+, vest-/kst- group shows up in that the critical segment of its paradigm matches neither of these two moulds. As regards phonic substance, the interchange of -e- and -i- bears a faint resemblance to -e-/-ie-: in both instances the vocalic nucleus alone is affected, but the respective ranges of the alternation do not dovetail. With the equally powerful cab-/quep-, hac-/hag- group the verbs at issue share the commitment of the entire subjunctive to var. 1, an accord weakened by a clash between the two alliances as regards the comportment of Forms 2, 3, 6, and 12: "serv-ir" assigns them to var. 1, "cab-er" to var. 2.

Portuguese offers a more motley picture: here virtually every verb stem displays allomorphs, the main point to remember being the distinction between those that are readily predictable, hence trivial ([bev-]: [bev-]: [bav-], from beb-er 'to drink'), and those that truly carry weight. The many cases peculiar to Portuguese do not merit discussion at this juncture, but it is remarkable that pure metaphony undisturbed by diphthongization, which Spanish no longer shows in isolation, in the West yields a sequential pattern similar to that involv-

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19 Some illustrations of the wealth of possibilities within the confines of the (a) -er and the (b) -ir class: (a) caib-/cab- 'to fit', requier-/requer- 'to demand', fac-/faz- 'to do', poss-/pod- 'to be able', vej-/ve- 'to see', perc-/perd- 'to lose', valh-/valq- 'to be worth', OPtg. moir-/morr- 'to die'; (b) ca-/ca- 'to fall', venh-/vθ-, vi-, vi- 'to come', etc. As shown by Ptg. morro vs. OPtg. moiro and by Sp. puedo, miento, and siento vs. Ptg. posso, minto, sinto, the ever-present leveling trend in Hispano-Romance usually sacrifices Forms 1 and 7–11 to a consensus of the others; but occasionally, on the level of dialect speech, the reverse hierarchy prevails: cf. the situation in the Asturo-Leonese subdialect of Sisterna as analyzed, on the basis of J. A. Fernández's Madrid dissertation, by Marilyn May in RPh. 19.54 (1965–66). Where the subjunctive en bloc is opposed to the indicative, as is true of Sp. sea. Ptg. seja < SEDEA(M) and, in its wake, Ptg. esteja, as a rule suppletion has been at work (ESSE + SEDÈRE).
DIPHTHONGIZATION, MONOPHTHONGIZATION, METAPHONY

ing the adventitious velar; compare digo, dizes, diz, dizemos..., dig-a... -amos (g ∼ z) with sirvo, serv-es, -e, -imos..., sirv-a... -amos (i ∼ e).

In the light of this evidence the conjugational pattern of Sp. 'serv-ir' illustrates a strange overlap: in most forms it resembles, in the distribution if not in the substance of its variants, the schema of diphthongizing verbs, but in Forms 9 and 10 it neatly fits the contour of the group now dominated by the velar insert and once, judging from the situation observable in Portuguese, preponderant also in the case of pure metaphony.

Translated into genetic terms, an overlap usually points to transition or compromise. In proto-Castilian, 'servir' may very well have been a metaphonic verb, and erratic OSp. sirv-amos, -ades might indeed hark back to that oldest stage. We next witness that, in consonance with the explosive character of spontaneous diphthongization, forms like sierve come into existence (for details, see §13); these in turn tend to produce, for phonological reasons, variants like sirve (cf. SELLA 'saddle' > OSp. siella > silla 'saddle, stool, chair', for which -iella may be made responsible, and SAECULU > sieglo > siglo, which cannot be so explained). The i of sirve proceeds, then, from an ie which TENDED to be monophthongized under the stimulus of s-; the i of sirvamos (distinctly older?) reflects an e metaphonized under the influence of /j/ in -i&US. At a fairly late date, through a historical accident, the monophthong extracted from ie and the monophthong obtained from metaphonized e, both being i, coincided in Spanish. This unique coincidence yields the key to the otherwise incomprehensible paradigm of 'servir' and explains why SERVU > siervo, SERVA > sierva remained aloof.

8. Philological clues to a submerged conjugational pattern. The few statements so far ventured on possible sequences of events are all based on a tenuous supply of facts. Just as even cursory consultation of Portuguese sources suffices to place certain puzzling features of Castilian development in a meaningful perspective, so microscopic inspection of the oldest deposits of the Spanish vernacular, extracted from texts that preceded the crystallization of the earliest literary standard ('Alfonsine Spanish'), may cast light on some hidden phases of the evolution. At this stage only random samples can be produced, by way of anticipation.

One 13th-century Leonese text, Elena y María, crudely Castilianized by the copyist (fortunately, not beyond recognition of its pristine shape), is particularly enlightening in this respect.20 This short disputation in verse contains the forms sierue (line 184) 'he serves' beside siruen 'they serve' (line 76),21 and vieste beside viste 'he wears' (lines 180, 175). Against the background of textual transmission,

20 See 'Elena y María (Disputa del clerigo y el caballero); poesía leonesa inédita del siglo XIII', ed. R. Menéndez Pidal, RFE 1.52-96 (1914), esp. Section 5: 'Lenguaje' §1. The editor reports (78 f.), on the evidence of faulty rhymes, that the poet, as distinct from the scribe, failed to diphthongize 6; he may or may not have diphthongized 8.

21 At this point I note a regrettable contradiction; the text, as established by Menéndez Pidal, reads: E siruen los escuderos (p. 57, line 76); but in his grammatical sketch (83) the editor—inadvertently, I suppose—attributes to this passage the reading sieruen.
one may assume that sierue and vieste represent the local East Leonese forms (author's idiolect), while sirven and viste mark adjustments to the rapidly expanding Castilian norm (scribe's innovation). If this argument holds water, the full paradigm of servir and vestir, by the year 1200, may have had this appearance: *sirv-o, sieru-*es, -e, -*en, serv-imos, -ides; subj. sirv-a, etc.; *vist-o, viest-*es, -e, -*en, vest-imos, -ides; subj. *vist-a, etc. Paradigms so contoured have been found in other conservative Romance languages; the Old French offshoot of Lat. *mor(i)re* 'to die', for one, was conjugated ind. *muir*; muer-s, -t, -ent; mor-ons, -ez; subj. *muire*, ...

The advantage of this reconstruction is that it enables us to subsume under a single formula the archaic paradigm of the west-central dialects (partly hypothesized, partly documented) with its superbly preserved Portuguese counterpart, characterized by the same tripartite structure: sirv-o (i) ... serv-es, -e, -em (e) ... serv-imos, -is (a); vist-o ... vest-es, -e, -em ... vest-imos, -is. We recall the two alternative (or complementary) explanations of the change that eventually produced sirv-o, -es, -e, -en; vist-o, -es, -e, -en: spread of the i from Forms 1 and 7-11, or monopthongization of ie. A telling parallel to the former hypothesis is furnished by the spread of metaphonic -i- and -u- from the 1st sg. of certain preterites to other forms of the tense, as happened with *fis(e)* 'I did', *vine* 'I came', pude 'I could', and puse 'I placed'.

The second hypothesis demands an inquiry into the more elusive conditions surrounding the change -ie- > -i-. Significantly, the Elena y María fragment contains one instance of prista < PRAESTAT instead of expected priesta (line 224). It would seem that two contiguities—the vicinity of an s (preferably s + cons.) and the adjacency of an r (also of an ʔ?), or some combination of these elements—jointly produced the optimal environment for the monopthongization of ie. This complex condition would account for apriscar 'to gather into the fold' < *APPRESSICARE, nisp(e)ro 'medlar' < MESPILU, prisa < PRESSA, OSpt. prista < PRAESTAT, prisco 'cling-peach' < FERSICU, ristra < RESTE + a, and vispera 'eve' < VESPER(Á) 'evening (star)'). Where only a single condition obtained, the prediction of results is less certain: fiesta 'festival, holiday' < FESTA, hiniesta 'Spanish broom' < GEN-ISTA, *esta, siesta 'rest after eating' (lit. 'sixth hour') < Sexta, and tiesto < TESTU clash with avispa 'wasp' < VESPA (influenced by vispera?) and mirlo < MERULU 'blackbird', both involving i < ie. This explanation resembles the one traditionally adduced for FLOCCU > flueco > fleco; it casts a bridge to Ptg. irmão < GER-MÄNU, whose i has never been satisfactorily analyzed; it gives prominence to the impact of r on front vowels, for which the situation in Rumanian should long ago have prepared us; and it...

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22 F. de B. Moll's conjecture ('Suplement català al REV', 1928-30), supported by the contrast between Sp. aprisco and Cat. (Mall.) après 'sheepfold', found its way into REV's §554a. I have tried to provide analyses of pri(e)x(s)a in 'Apretar, pr(i)eto, perto: Historia de un cruce hispanolatino', BICC 9.103-5 (1953-55); of prisco in 'The Hispanic suffix -(i)ego', UCPL 4.3.164-6 (1951); of ristra in 'The etymology of Hispanic restolho, rastrojo, rostoll', RPh. 1.209-34, esp. 228-9 (1946-47).

23 Thus, H. Tiktin, Rumänisches Elementarbuch §47 and §82 (Heidelberg, 1905), cites r + -ine (inf.) > -ře, RIMA 'worm' > řimá, RIVU 'river' > rřů, RIDO 'I laugh' > rřz, TERRA + -ina > řárma 'realm of earth'; also pretonically: řárgarid, dim. of řár 'land' < TERRA.
makes it very plausible that *servir* and *vestir* were actually among the leader words which, by allowing the -ie- of certain forms to be reduced to i, contributed to the crystallization of the 'mediir' type. The acceptance of this hypothesis makes it dubious whether Forms 1 and 7, etc. were initially *sirv-* or *sierv-*.

The decision as to whether the shift *sierve* > *sirve*, with its consequences, in the last analysis represents (a) an internal morphological adjustment (surrender of one radical variant to another) or (b) the result of phonological pressure in a few key words, with subsequent partial generalization of the patterns (mide, but miente), hinges on further philological spadework. If texts come to light—preferably texts little tampered with by copyists—which distinctly favor, say, *sirv-o, -a(n) beside sierve(s, -n), then Alternative (a) will be greatly strengthened. Conversely, if the available material should place *sierve* > *sirve* in the context of other monophthongizations, this fitting would support Alternative (b), especially if the archaic paradigm can be shown to have run thus: *sierv-o, -es, -e(n), sierv-a. There are also several possibilities of interaction.24

9. Reexamination of relative chronology. Every available scrap of direct evidence and every legitimate avenue of oblique approach militates in favor of late dating of the diphthongization of Lat.  three arguments.


(b) Pre-Alfonsine Spanish, known for its strong dialectal tinging, wavers between three forms of the diphthong supplanting o, namely *uo, *ua, and (eventually victorious) *ue; similarly, *e yields predominantly *et, but numerous traces of *et are on record.26 The volume and intensity of fluctuation as well as the near-parallelism of these two curves point to an upheaval so recent that no new equilibrium had been reached at the dawn of the earliest vernacular literature.

(c) Certain lexical equations of Latin bases and Hispanic products presuppose successes of sound shifts or analogical adjustments in which the diphthongization is most cogently treated as the final rather than the initial step. Thus, for *maxilla 'jaw' > OSp. *mezella 'cheek', the rare derivational suffix *-illa must first have yielded ground to more common *-ella; for *mobile 'movable' > *mueble, the closed stressed vowel must previously have been replaced by *-b through association with *movet 'he moves', etc.; for *tenebrae (pl.) 'darkness' > *tiniebras, *-blas, the word stress, after a period of wavering, must have been

24 There exist two more marginal possibilities: (c) *sierve, vieste may be strictly dialectal forms and thus make no links in the chain stretching from L. *servit, vestit to Mod. Sp. *sirve, vieste; and (d) *sierve, vieste may represent temporary highwater marks of a vigorously expanding diphthong, of which, through a twist of circumstances, we happen to catch a glimpse through the sparse corpus of early 13th-century texts.

26 On the incubation period of Spanish rising diphthongs see Menéndez Pidal, *Orígenes del español* (Madrid, 1950).
assigned to the second syllable; for TÉPIDU > Leon. tebio, Sp. tibio, the early loss of -d-, the reduction to a two-syllable structure, the transformation of ̣ into [j], and the closure of ̣ must all have preceded the period of diphthongization; for FÓLIA ‘leaves’ > Old Castilian foja ‘leaf’ (a point at which that dialect parts company with Old Astur-Leonese and Old Navarro-Aragonese) and for MÉDIU ‘half’ > vernacular me(y)o, /lj/ and /dj/ must have had time to close the preceding vowels. (The fact that both free and checked syllables, in contrast to French and Italian, invite the diphthongization of the accented vowel in Spanish narrows the scope of such chronological observations.)

In contrast to diphthongization, metaphony had no single sharp impact on Hispano-Romance, but rather produced a long-drawn-out succession of jolts, of which the first and presumably most consequential came during an early evolutionary phase, thus preceding diphthongization by half a millennium or more. Aside from this delayed conclusion and a certain diffuseness of results, demarcation of metaphony from the assimilation of certain obstruents exposed to [j] is not always possible.

Take the situation in Portuguese. The paradigm of the ‘regular’ -ir verb involves, under conditions already specified, a controlled alternation of /i/, /e/, /o/ and /u/, /a/; as in sirvo, serv-e(s), serv-imos, ... sirva(s) ...; durm-o, dorm-e(s), dorm-imos ... durma(s) ...; similarly with desp-ir ‘to strip’, ferir ‘to wound’, frigir ‘to fry’, segu-ir ‘to follow’, ment-ir and sent-ir, also fug-ir ‘to flee’. But not all -ir verbs follow suit; some of those quite frequently used show, in Form 1, an assibilated stem-final consonant and a stressed vowel identical with the vowel of 2, 3, 6, and 12, i.e. /e/. Thus, ped-ir displays this set of forms: peço-o, ped-es, -e, -em; peça ...; med-ir chimes in, closing ranks with ow-ir ‘to hear’: ouç-o, ouve(s), ...-em, ouc-a ... Using the metaphor of economy, one is tempted to say that the /j/ of MENT-IO(R), SENT-IO, SERV-IO, DORM-IO, FUG-IO (and, in the subjunctive, MENT-IAR, SENT-IAM, etc.) has spent all its energy on the raising, inside the radical, of e to i and of o to u; conversely, the /j/ of MÊT-IO and AUD-IO

26 E. Alarcos Llorach, Fonología española3 212-5 (Madrid, 1961), recognizes the roots of the contrasts /e/ : /e/, /o/ : /o/—at the outset possibly restricted to the free syllable—in Late Latin conditions, but credits the extension of the contrast to the checked tonic syllable as well as the transformation of ̣ to ị and of ̣ to ụ to a period of substratal and Latin bilingualism, especially after the historical ties to the metropolis had been cut. The passage also contains critical references to differently slanted writings by G. Straka, F. Schürr, and H. Weinrich and to some of the author’s own parallel researches.

27 Among the Latinisms there is a neat cleavage: some have been cast in the mold of vernacular verbs, e.g. aderir ‘to adhere’, adverdir ‘to notify’, repetir ‘to reiterate’ (all three behave like servir); others, including agredir ‘to attack’ and transagredir ‘to trespass, trespass’ (also denegir ‘to blacken, revile’, prevenir ‘to forewarn, anticipate’, progredir ‘to thrive’), follow the Castilian pattern of pedir—a residue of 16th-century bilingualism on the level of grammar, the more startling here as lexically Castilian either favors different slices of material (atacar or acometer, denigrar, progresar, etc.) or, where it makes use of the same word (as is true of prevenir), has recourse to a totally different inflectional model. Ptg. remir ‘to redeem’ < REDIMERE, obviously not a straight Latinism, has been added to the agredir group, possibly in tribute to the learned garb of Sp. redimir (beside vestigial vernacular rendir; see Corominas, DCELC 3.102b, s.v. lindo).
has consumed its strength on the assimilation of the preceding dental consonant, leaving the central vowel intact.\footnote{It is doubtful that the \textit{g} of \textit{ougo} $<$ \textit{AUDIÎ} represents a phonologically normal reflex of \textit{/dj/}, but discussion of the point might lead us far afield, especially since it would have to include the status of OSp. \textit{gozo} $<$ \textit{GAUDIU} ‘joy’.} A simultaneous attack of the /j/ on vowel and consonant is not part of the Hispano-Latin tradition; \textit{nastur-ciu}, \textit{-tiu} ‘kind of cress’ $>$ OSp. \textit{mas-}, \textit{mes-tuerço} ‘(pepper)cress’ $>$ mod. ‘simpleton, dolt’ and \textit{VERECUNDIA} ‘shame’ $>$ OSp. \textit{verguê-ña}, \textit{- nga} beside OPtg. \textit{vergo-nha}, \textit{-nga} are exceptions rather than the rule. It seems impossible to predict, in Portuguese, from such arrhizotonic forms as the infinitive or Form 4, which of the two available mechanisms will be set in motion—the one generating \textit{sinto} from \textit{sent-ir} or the one generating \textit{meço} from \textit{med-ir}. The records show that \textit{sentõ}, in fact, originally produced \textit{senço} and \textit{ment-ior}, \textit{*-iô > menço}; these, as late as the 15th century, retreated before \textit{sinto} and \textit{minto}, coined on the analogy of the proportion \textit{siro} : \textit{servir}.\footnote{E. B. Williams, \textit{From Latin to Portuguese} \textsuperscript{3} §176.8B. Given the specific conditions of Portuguese morphophonemics, it is, in general, a matter of very minor concern whether in the arrhizotonic forms \textit{e} or \textit{i}, \textit{o} or \textit{u} is favored in conventional spelling: \textit{affigir} ‘to sadden’, \textit{corrígir} ‘to correct’ (as against Sp. \textit{corregir}), \textit{dirigir} ‘to direct’, \textit{fíngir} ‘to invent’ go with \textit{agredir}; \textit{frigir} with \textit{servir}; \textit{acudir} and \textit{fugir} with \textit{dormir}. Ordinarily the contiguity of \textit{-g-} /\textit{g}/ seems to favor pretonic \textit{i} over \textit{e}, bidding us expect \textit{*eligir} ‘to choose’ as the equivalent of Sp. \textit{elegir}; but here, for once, the thread snaps, since the form actually encountered is \textit{eleger}, probably influenced by \textit{ler} $<$ \textit{LEGERE}.} The records of Old Spanish also adumbrate a step-by-step development of metaphony; but, provided we keep the \textit{pid-o/ped-ir} pattern in abeyance so as to avoid circularity, the stage actually witnessed is one of stabilization and incipient decay rather than of breakthrough. Perhaps the clearest symptom of approaching weakness, observable in pretonic syllables, is the fact that the demands of metaphony were overridden by those of hypercharacterization of conjugation classes, making it possible for speakers, after a period of wavering, to contrast \textit{beviendo} from \textit{bever} and \textit{comiendo} from \textit{comer} with \textit{pidiendo} from \textit{pedir} and \textit{muriendo} from \textit{morir}. Also, in the radical-stressed forms of the preterite, the rise of \textit{vêcê} $>$ \textit{fiz-(e)}, \textit{POS(u)} $>$ \textit{pus-(e)} and the diffusion of the newly obtained nuclear \textit{i} and \textit{u} to the other forms of the tense certainly antedate the advent of vernacular literature, except for the sporadic preservation of the original stem vowel \textit{e} in a few 3d sg. forms: \textit{fezo} ‘he did’, \textit{veno} ‘he came’.$^{29}$ The gradual replacement of \textit{fezo} (cf. Ptg. \textit{fez}) by \textit{fiz} and of \textit{veno} (cf. Ptg. \textit{veio} $<$ \textit{Vêo}) by \textit{vino} testifies not to the continued working of metaphony but to an analogical inflectional adjustment provoked by a much earlier metaphonic effect. Similarly, in such \textit{-ir} verbs as contain a back vowel in the critical syllable one observes, throughout Old Spanish, the gradual abandonment (in the ‘weak’ preterite, say) of such contrasts as \textit{escop-ô} ‘I spat’ : \textit{escup-ô} ‘he spat’, \textit{recod-ô} ‘I retorted’ : \textit{recud-ô} ‘he retorted’, through the wholesale shift of the respective paradigm.
to the -u- class: \( \text{EX} + c\tilde{o}(\text{N})sp(u)\text{ERE} > \text{escopir} > \text{escupir}, \text{RECUTERE} > \text{reco-dir} > \text{recudir} \), a process which in the end deprived the language of the o/u metaphor as a conjugational device\(^{21}\) (to this day operative in Portuguese: \( \text{cuso} < c\tilde{o}(\text{N})sp(u)\tilde{o}, \text{cospe(s)}, \ldots \)) and thus produced that striking asymmetry—no back-vowel counterpart of "sirvo/servir"—pointed out toward the beginning of this article.

If, then, the period 900-1200 in the history of Spanish is characterized by an almost cataclysmic surge of rising diphthongs and by a gradual standstill of metaphor (except for a few secondary repercussions), any rivalry between the type mido, mides(s) ... and the type sient-o, -e(s) ... could only have led to the encroachment of the latter, and any leveling within the mixed type *sirv-o, sierv(e(s)) ... should have been in favor of -ie- rather than of -i-. If competition between diphthongization and metaphor were alone at issue, the aggressive diphthongizing verbs might have entirely absorbed or should at least have appreciably pushed back the stagnant metaphorizing verbs; the only plausible alternative was for the -e/-i- verbs to undergo the type of leveling previously observed in the ranks of -o/-u- verbs (shift to siguir, pidir, yxir, etc., of which isolated traces are actually found in late Old Spanish).

None of these possibilities has in fact materialized: the pendulum swung in the opposite direction; in the 13th century sierve yielded to sirve and vieste to viste more rapidly in Castilian proper than in the adjoining dialects. Conclusion: these changes must have ridden the crest of a vogue, even more recent than diphthongization and hence more vigorous. The only tendency matching this dating and description is the monophthongization of -ie- to -i-. We may thus be sure that sierv-e > sirv-e, viest-e > vist-e (also exit 'he goes out' > OSp. yx-e > yx-e, and other lexical items yet to be introduced) exemplify the same process as the familiar reduction of the suffix -ielo to -illo\(^{22}\) and must thus be genetically divorced from metaphor.

This partial replacement in our reasoning of metaphor by monophthongization renders yet another service: it accounts for the asymmetry of the -e/-i- and the -o/-u- verbs. True, we recall isolated instances of the reduction of ue to e; but these appear in very narrowly defined contexts not applicable to inflectional conditions. Moreover, the -i- of sirve, extracted from an earlier -ie- (monophthongization), and the -i- of sirv-amos, -iê, -iô, -iendo, -iente presupposing no such antecedent diphthong (genuine metaphor), supported each other until they merged into a single element. Since the sporadic monophthongization of ue led to e, not to u, while metaphor tinted the o as u (cf. durm-amos), any possibility of comparable alliance and ultimate amalgamation between monophthongization and metaphor was cut back in the case of back vowels.

\(^{21}\) The mueo/morir group also suffered losses, including toll-ô/-ERE 'to take away' > tuelllo/-or, tu-llir, for which the Gallicism guitir (in a sense alien to Modern French) was at length substituted; cf. the remnant dullio 'cripple'. Menéndez Pidal, Manual\(^{4}\) §114.2, ascribes to Old Leonese and Old Aragonese alone comparable forms of (en)cobrir 'to cover' < co(o)PERIRE, descobrir 'to discover', and nozir 'to harm' < NOCERE.

\(^{22}\) See the classic treatment of this problem by Menéndez Pidal in Orígenes del español\(^{5}\) §27.
10. Two further complications. As if the facts so far traced were not complicated enough, there have been superadded to the main course of events two interferences that blur the picture.

One disturbance is rooted in the fact that the reshuffling of the Latin conjugational classes -ERE, -ERE (including -ō and -ō verbs), and -IRE into Hispano-Romance -er and -ir proceeded neither evenly over the entire Peninsula, nor in one wave, but rather as a succession of tremors and adjustments differently scattered over the territory and tapering off in intensity. Where preferences were split, the West basically favored -er,33 while the Center's leanings toward -ir, by no means inconsiderable, were surpassed by those of the Mideast (Navarre and Aragon). In a nutshell, this situation is exemplified by Ptg. ferv-er: Sp. hew-ir 'to boil, seethe' < FERVÈRE, while Ptg. colher, Sp. coger jointly clash with hag. cull-ir (reminiscent of Fr. cueillir) < COLLIGERE. The range of the contrast between West and Center has been sizable over many centuries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>Etymon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arrepender</td>
<td>(a)repentir</td>
<td>re + poenitère</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bater</td>
<td>batir</td>
<td>battuere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ceber</td>
<td>-cebir, -cibir34</td>
<td>-ciperre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changer (obs.)</td>
<td>plañir</td>
<td>plangere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constranger</td>
<td>constreñir</td>
<td>conststringere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>derreter</td>
<td>(de)retir</td>
<td>? ('to melt')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>descer</td>
<td>de(s)cir (obs.)</td>
<td>discèdere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dizer</td>
<td>decir &lt; de-, di-zir</td>
<td>dicerere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eleger</td>
<td>elegir</td>
<td>éligere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encher</td>
<td>f- &gt; h-enchir</td>
<td>implère</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>erguer</td>
<td>erguir (obs. erzer)</td>
<td>ér(ig)ere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ferver</td>
<td>f- &gt; h-ervir</td>
<td>fervère</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gemer</td>
<td>gemir</td>
<td>gemere</td>
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<tr>
<td>morrer35</td>
<td>morir</td>
<td>mori(re)</td>
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<tr>
<td>premer</td>
<td>premir36</td>
<td>premere</td>
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<tr>
<td>reger</td>
<td>regir</td>
<td>regere</td>
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<tr>
<td>render</td>
<td>rendir</td>
<td>reddere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sofzer</td>
<td>so- &gt; su-frir</td>
<td>sufffrere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vixer</td>
<td>vi-, ve-vir</td>
<td>vívere</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To these must be added numerous compounds on whose adjudication to the competing paradigms the speakers of the two languages are divided; thus, Ptg.

33 The two well-known modern examples of reverse distribution, Ptg. cair : Sp. caer 'to fall' < cadère and Ptg. possuir : Sp. poseer 'to own' < possidère, have no bearing on Old Portuguese. Ptg. tosair 'to cough' reflects tussire; Sp. tossier seems to move in the wake of coser 'to sew' < cons(u)ere, while Fr. touss-er beside older touss-ir (Rutebeuf) shows an even stranger deviation.

34 The contrast between concebir 'to conceive' and recibir 'to receive' < OSp. recebiry (also percibir 'to perceive, collect') is one minor rough spot which has not been removed from the standard. Hispano-Romance lacks any counterpart of Fr. dé-cevoir (> E. deceive).

35 For details see ‘Español morir, portugués morrer’, BH 57.84-128 (1955).

36 Cf. premidera ‘treadle of a loom’. On OSp. (a)premer vs. (a)premir, all four later replaced by aprem(i)ar, see fnn. 372, 375-6, 402, 405, 408, 420 to my article in BICC 9.1-139.
con- and re-correr, con-verter, inter-romper, and re-guerer have Spanish counterparts ending in -ir.\(^{37}\)

While Portuguese, in this respect, has shown a certain stability (except for the percolation of Latinisms and Castilianisms), Spanish has gone through a series of convulsions. The protracted rivalry of cern-er and (less-successful) -ir 'to sift' < cernere is well known. Medieval texts show a gradual transition from gem-er to -ir and from plañ-er to -ir (a single process, given the high degree of semantic affinity), also from render 'to (sur)render' to rendir and from toll-er (via toll-ir?) to toll-ir (coincident with the general decline of this verb, evicted by quitar), while the assault of trem-ir 'to tremble' on -er < tremere was halted by the growing appeal of inchoative estremecerse and of l(ir)embrar < tremular 'to shiver (gently)'.\(^{38}\) In the two cases of eñader > añadir 'to add' (from in + addere) and con(n)fonder > confundir 'to confound, confuse' (from confundere) the transformation, in the same general direction, involved several features, radical and suffixal, and consequently gave rise to numerous variants. The shift from erz-er (erc-er) 'to raise' < ir(ger)e to ergu-ir significantly shows that the prevalence of the younger stem variant (erg-, extracted from yerg-o, -a) goes hand in hand with a switch of allegiance from -er to -ir.

To what extent does this side issue affect the main problem under study? Had cernir and tremir (two tentative innovations) entrenched themselves, they might have joined the -e/-ie-, not the -e/-i- group, as is made plausible by the paradigms of cerner (cierno) and OSP. tremer (triemo). At the crucial juncture the -e/-ie- group within the -ir class, blocked as it was by its powerful rival -e/-i-, was already passing through the incipient phase of fossilization, and newcomers to it were apparently no longer welcome to the speech community. This hypothesis, if validated, would for the first time explain the seeming contradiction between the success of the new verbs built around the skeletons a-ir, u-ir (añadir, plañir; confundir, tullir) and the eventual failure of those temporarily draping the skeleton e-ir (cern-ir, trem-ir) or eligible for doing so, such as heder (-ie-) 'to stink' < foet-, fet-, faet-ere and hender (-ie-) 'to cleave, split' < findere, which under favorable circumstances might have advanced to *hedir and *hen-

\(^{37}\) Portuguese shares with Spanish many Latinisms in -i-ir, -u-ir (say, distribuir, com-, o-, and re-primir, presumir, resurgir) and occasionally exceeds Spanish in its openness to their infiltration; contrast Ptg. corrigir, divorced from regir, with Sp. corregir, subordinated to regir. On the whole, it has fewer of such erudite inlayings: Ptg. recorrer semantically matches both Sp. recorrer 'to traverse, go over' and recurrir 'to resort, have recourse'. In all probability, the Portuguese compounds in -mitir (rather than -meter) etc. were suggested by Spanish models during the century of cultural connubium.

\(^{38}\) In Pero López de Ayala's Rimado de palacio (ca. 1400), two key passages display gemer (inf.) in rhyme: N 23d and E 1523c; less conclusive as to conjugation class are N 1022a: gemiera, and E 1763c, 1769d: gemiendo (gem and gemido, found elsewhere, are inconclusive). Planga in E 1472a, 1477d proves nothing, but in N 1465b verse-medial plañir is good evidence, and two forms which that MS exhibits in rhyme—plañir (819a) and plañed (969c)—provide the clinching argument. MS E offers toller only in verse-medial position (914d); it also favors tremer where N prefers tremir (143c: tremirá). It is hazardous to posit, with M. A. Zeitlin (unpublished Vocabulary, 1931), sumer rather than -ir on the strength of sumió and sumería (N 40a, 1086d), especially in view of Ptg. sumir.
It also explains the tendential drift of *yergo* and *hiervo* in the direction of *irgo* and substandard *hirvo* as another avenue of escape.

The second disturbance of concern to us is the penetration of the inchoative pattern (-ecer) into the ranks of the -ir class. This penetration lacked the character of a clear-cut breakthrough; rather it gives the impression, not unlike the monophthongization -ie- > -i-, of a gradual filtering-through or of a succession of spurts. At any given moment, then, various phases of the protracted process seem to coexist. To select a test case, the Rimado de palacio (ca. 1400) shelters:

(a) *aborr-ir* ‘to abhor, hate, shun’ (not yet split into *aburrir* ‘to bore’ ~ *aborrecer* ‘to hate’), *guarn-ir* ‘to adorn, furnish, supply’; (b) *adorm-ir/-escer* ‘to fall asleep’, *podr-ir/-escer* (MS E has also *pudr-escer*) ‘to corrupt’ (tr.), ‘to rot, decay’ (intr.)—both verbs important milestones in the history of the -o/-u- paradigm, plus *fall-ir/-escer*, *guar-ir/-escer* ‘to heal, recover’, *escarn-ecer* ‘to mock, laugh’ beside *escarn-idor* ‘scoffer’ implying *escarn-ir*; (c) *gradecer* ‘to acknowledge, thank (for)’ and the adjectival verbs *en-dur-e~er* ‘to harden’, *en-flau-ecer* ‘to weaken’, *es-clar-e~er* ‘to shine, give light’, etc., no longer flanked by doublets in -ir.

One of the earliest examples of wholesale transfer to the camp of -ecer was *per-ecer* ‘to perish’ < *PERIRE* (cf. Fr. *pér-iss-ons* ‘we perish’). We need not worry whether that verb, before being shunted off, was heading in the direction of -e/-ie- or -e/-i-.

II. THE KERNEL OF THE GENETIC PROBLEM

11. Varying sharpness of contours. In scrutinizing the medieval record, one notices before long the varying degrees of sharpness with which diphthongizing and metaphonizing forms were delineated in speech and script. Aside from the oldest texts in the vernacular (such as the Auto de los Reyes Magos), traceable to a period when inexperienced scribes were groping for an apposite representation of ie and ue, the observer has no difficulty in discriminating graphically between monophthong and diphthong and further recognizes that each speaker or writer consistently favored, in the stressed syllable of a given form, either e or i or ie; only the leveling of the "cobrirl" type was so slow that the same hand, in the same manuscript, would waver between, say, 2 cobres and cubres, or "conples and "unples." The fact that front vowels are apt to be distinguished more neatly than back vowels, in articulatory and auditive terms, has long been known to phoneticians.

On the other hand, pretonic e vs. i and o vs. u before the /j/ of -iendo, -iera, -iesse, etc. were not at all sharply profiled throughout this protracted period; neither were (a) *dizir* vs. *dezir*, *bivir* vs. *bevir*, (b) *pedir* vs. *pidzr*, *nozir* vs. *nuzir*, nor, for that matter, *sint(i)rd* vs. *sentird* ‘I shall feel’. A modicum of stabiliza-
tion in these respects occurred at the postmedieval stage, sometimes quite late and in erratic patterns (as with ad- and in-quirir vs. re-querir, per- and re-cibir vs. con-cebir). Historically, then, one can set off different layers of standardization, as distinct from genesis, in the deposits commonly known as radical-changing verbs.

12. Etymological side issues. The percentage of etymologically obscure verbs in Spanish, in particular of those pertaining to the -er and -ir classes, is on the whole refreshingly small and is steadily receding, witness the successful mooring of asir 'to grasp' to asa 'handle' (of jug, basket, etc.) < ÅNSA and its separation from deceptively similar Fr. saisir.41 Unfortunately, within the small precinct here under investigation, the testimony of some verbs frequently adduced has been supported by dubious or downright untenable etymological bases; on the other hand, experts have to this day been very slow in recognizing obvious bonds between certain dyads and triads of genetically opaque verbs. Thus, many rash solutions were tried out before discéderere 'to go away' suggested itself as the source of Ptg. descér, OSp. deçir 'to come down';42 deçir, in turn, is very likely to have intervened as a major factor in the evolution of OSp. troçir 'to pass' from tráducere, a development disturbingly different from those of aduzir < addúcer and enduzir < induçere.43 Arrezido 'benumbed by cold' seems to stem from reçio 'stark, severe, stiff' < rigidu, and aterdido 'stiff with cold' beside ater-ir, -ecer 'to become stiff' has been alternatively connected with enterizo 'solid, in one piece' (from integru), with tericia 'jaundice' < Gr.-Lat. ictericia,

41 The derivation of asir is understandable only on the assumption that the rights to the sound sequence asar were, so to speak, preempted by the semantic nucleus 'to roast' < assare (Apuleius), a racy frequentative verb based on assus, in turn related to ÅRSUS, the p. ptc. of ÅRSERE 'to burn'. See Ernout-Meillet, DÆLLÁ 51-2 (Paris, 1959-60), and J. Corominas, DCELC 1.295-6 (Madrid, 1954).

43 In siding with Menéndez Pidal's original verdict (1911), discéderere 'to fall down', H. B. Richardson, An etymological vocabulary to the 'Libro de buen amor' 76 (New Haven, 1930), briefly recalls G. Körting's deséderere 'to sink down, subside' (1907), Meyer-Lübke's desécerere 'to throw, hurl down' (1911-20), and V. García de Diego's *discedere 'to fall apart' (1923). Menéndez Pidal's subsequent endorsement of discéderere 'to walk away' seems all the more felicitous as séderere discernibly broadened its meaning in Late Latin: 'to go, walk'; see ed. Caniar de Mio Cid 1222-3 (Madrid, 1944-46), with special credit given to J. Vallejo and A. Magaríños. For additional comments and decisions by other grammarians and etymologists see below, fnn. 43, 69, 83, and 90.

44 Aduzir was very common in Old Spanish; J. Ruiz apparently favored enduzir (1490a: enduzco), a variant on which all three manuscripts agree, but S, the latest, also admits induzir (223c). For all its uncommonness, the blurring of the boundary between prefix and stem implicit in the loss of -d- in tráducere has a parallel in the dual transmission of benécrire 'to bless' in Old Spanish (bendezir) and elsewhere; cf. the p. ptc. bendi-cho, -to beside the proper name Ben(e)ito and cf. Ptg. benzer, Fr. bénir and Benott, It. (borrowed) Benito alongside (native) Benedetto. The same blurring, with no equal loss of consonant, characterizes the growth of deçir < discéderere, the one verb in which, genetically, not the stem vowel but the vowel of a former prefix became subject to metaphony (OSp. deço 'he descends', diciendo 'descending'). Troçir probably owes its ç, rather than -z-, to the co-existence of deçir; early loss of -d- and rapid consonantization of u (trawêcre) may have been contributing factors. The change -sc(e) > -ç- was normal; cf. pisces 'fish(es)' > peçes, dis + cingere > deceñir 'to ungird' (Ruiz, 1114d).
and with an onomatopoeia, but the real point is that the two trajectories intertwine. De(s)leir ‘to dilute, dissolve’ may, in a roundabout way, reflect DELERE, while Sp. (de)rretir, Ptg. derreter ‘to melt, thaw’ is most unlikely to relate to DE- or RE-TERERE ‘to rub off, wear away’, despite the numerous endorsements of this line of descent; in any event, heavier emphasis will henceforth have to be placed on their affinity. Engreir ‘to make vain or conceited’, again and again traced to INGREDI ‘to go in, enter’, is most unlikely to be the reflex of that deponential verb; whatever the ultimate base, some line of the family of Ptg. ingreme ‘steep, sheer’ may have exerted influence on the core, while association

Juan Ruiz used the forms arre-zido, -$id0 ‘stiff with cold’ (954c, 966a, 982b), aterida ‘id.’ (1349c: S, T; G: atordida), desatyriziendo ‘getting over numbness, thawing up’ (970a). The upshot of the difficulty is that rezio itself presumably owed its -z- to association with OSp. suzio ‘dirty’ < sCICU ‘juicy’; in Portuguese a pressure in the reverse direction seems to have moulded sujo after rijo. Corominas, DCELc 1.318b-319b, supports INGREI, capitalizing on OSp. encrecer, explaining OSp. ter[r]ecerse ‘to be jittery’ through contact with the family of TERERE ‘to frighten’ and declaring OArag. atelerido, Cl. Sp. entelerido ‘in the throes of fright and cold’, etc. to be mere ‘ampliaciones fonéticas’, which I take to correspond to the more precise label ‘interfix’ (cf. fn. 61 below). The choice of the intercalary segment -el- awaits clarification, as does the possibility of contamination by tericia, a sickness prominently mentioned in the older literature.

For an excellent semantic analysis of OSp. de(s)leir, Ptg. delir, based in part on earlier researches by R. J. Cuervo and L. Spitzer, see J. Corominas, DCELc 2.143b-145a [1955]; the original meaning was ‘to weaken, soften, extenuate’, refl. ‘to languish’. The connection with DELERE ‘to destroy’ is indeed more plausible than the links to DILUERE ‘to dissolve’ or DISfLIGERE ‘to untie’, previously posited. But Corominas’ idea (reiterated in his BDE) of explaining the segment -eir through reference to details of the preterite of DELERE is nothing short of bizarre, since that tense is not otherwise known to have influenced the shapes of Spanish infinitives and the choices of conjugation classes. RETERERE has been pressed into service as the alleged base of OSp. (de)rretir and of OPtg. (de)rreter ever since the days of Diez, and a controversial passage in Villasandino (Canc. de Baena, No. 174: Si el sol rretiere el plomo) has figured prominently in the successive elaborations on this conjecture by C. Michaelis de Vasconcelos, Garcia de Diego, and Corominas (DCELc 2.129a-130a). The latter was commendably restrained in accepting RETERERE, but uninspired in preferring to operate with the ad-hoc reconstruction *RETR~RE. He did, in passing, draw the reader’s attention to the Catalan and Provençal offshoots of DELERE, but only for the sake of the semantic analogy. I visualize a divergent solution (to be presented elsewhere) which bypasses TERERE in any of its guises.

In view of the monotony with which one Hispanist after another has endorsed Diez’s utterly implausible *INGREDI, it is refreshing to watch Corominas, DCELc 2.285a-286a, attack the problem, for once, from a different angle. Observing in Calila e Dimna (orig. ca. 1250) the vacillation between 3 engre and engree and, independently, the attestation of inchoative engreycer in a 14th-century Pentateuch, Corominas argues that the verb was initially engre-er, not -eir, and represents a distortion of OSp. encreer ‘to lend’, refl. ‘to trust’ parallel to CANCRICULU > cangrejo ‘crab’ and to Cat. Prov. concriar > congriar. The phonetic analogy is palpably weak, the record of encreer spotty, and the appeal, on the semantic side, to mod. dial. creido ‘pampered, vain, presumptuous’ (Albacete, Almeria; also, I understand, Madrid) less than convincing; but as a first attempt to loosen engreir from the grip of INGREI, Corominas’ entry is impressive.

On Ptg. ingr-eme, -eme ‘steep, craggy, isolated’ > Amer. Sp. ingrino ‘quite alone’ the opinions of etymologists clash violently; for an analysis of the views of J. Leite de Vasconcelos, A. d. R. Gonçalves Viana, Toro Gisbert, E. Gamillscheg, and L. Spitzer see Corominas, DCELc 3.999a–1000b (1956) and 4.1027ab (1957), who reckons with the cross of two borrowed Old French words, encr(e)me ‘wicked, perverse’ (Gallo-Latin) and engremi
with retr 'to laugh' < RIDERE, so(r)- and son-retr 'to smile' < SUR-, SUB-RIDERE 'to smirk' may have moulded the concluding segment. None of these etymological puzzles can here be more than briefly identified. But, in examining and analyzing the medieval records, we must use the greatest restraint in drawing inferences from controversial or indefensible equations. We must further draw a line between extremely frequent verbs like pedir and others, quite uncommon, like engreir, which must not be treated on a par as possible pace-setters and sources of pressure; and we must be alert to the possibility that speakers may have tended to avoid uncomfortable rhizotonic forms of certain verbs.48

13. The lexical nuclei of the -e/-i- group. Except for incidental references to deviant forms like serve and vieste, archaic and dialectally colored, we have not yet inventoried the stock of Old Spanish verbs displaying the -i/-e- alternation, the crux of the multifaceted problem here examined. The texts exemplifying medieval Spanish at its peak, the Libro de buen amor (ca. 1330) and the Rimado de palacio (ca. 1400),49 contain much pertinent material. The verbs involved can be provisionally divided into several subgroups:

(1) Those having their last stem vowel (< E) followed by s + cons.; they seem to fall in line with vespas > avispa rather than with vesta > fiesta, sexta > seisla;
(2) Those having s- before the vowel, again < E (cf. saeculu 'world' > OSp. sieglo > siglo, with OFr. siegle conceivably acting as intermediary);
(3) Those displaying an /n/p/ immediately after the last stem vowel, this time I > e;
(4) Miscellaneous items, some vernacular, others learned or semilearned, exhibiting a vowel traceable either to E, I, or to e;
(5) Verbs whose underlying stem vowel was I.

Here is the documentation:

(1) vestir 'to clothe' < VESTIRE;
(2) seguir 'to follow, pursue' < SEQU-I, *-IRE (and its satellite persguir 'to pursue, persecute, oppress, torment'), servir 'to serve, obey' < SERVIRE (and its satellite deservir 'to disserve, do harm, injury or mischief to');
(3) geiiir 'to gird (on, up), wear' < CINGERE (and deceiiir 'to ungird'), costreiiir 'to bind fast, restrain' < Constringere, estreiiir 'to restrain' < STRINGERE, restreiiir 'to hold back, restrain' < RESTRINGERE, leiiir 'to dye' < TING(U)ERE 'to wet, moisten, color';
(4) (a) con-cebir 'to conceive' < CONCIPERE (and other remnants of this acephalous word-family: apercebir 'to prepare, warn, advise', recebir 'to receive'), descir 'to descend, proceed from' < (probably) DscdEERE 'to (de)part, go away', fenchir 'to fill' < IMPLI~RE (plus F- variously explained), medir 'to measure' < METIRI (flanked by comedir 'to consider, think, meditate' < COmMETERI), redemir 'to redeem' < REDIMERE; (b) pedir 'to ask (for), seek, beg, pray (for)' < PETERE (flanked by learned repetir 'to repeat, say' and linked with des-, es-pedir 'to take leave'), regir 'to rule, govern, manage' < REGERE (with which one should 'angry, irritated' (Gallo-Frankish). Whichever genetic hypothesis is correct, an early contact of ingrime and encreido somewhere in Western Spain would best account for the aberrancy of engreir(se).

48 I have casually observed this avoidance of radical-stressed forms in the case of enxerir (Ruiz).
49 I owe many definitions to M. A. Zeitlin's unpublished University of California (Berkeley) dissertation, A vocabulary to the 'Rimado de palacio' of Canciller López de Ayala (1931), and have also occasionally profited from his comments and textual emendations.
DIPHTHONGIZATION, MONOPHTHONGIZATION, METAPHONY

class, by virtue of recomposition, *corregir* ‘to correct, reprove, admonish’, despite the I of Cl.-Lat. *corrígere*;\(^{46}\)

(5) *bevir* ‘to live’ < *vivere*, *escrevir* ‘to write’ < *scribere*, *rejir* ‘to laugh’ < *ridere*

(and, in some of its forms, *dezir* ‘to say’ < *dicere*, also *bendezir* ‘to bless’, *contradezir* ‘to gainsay’, etc.)

Over against these five genetic categories of the *e-/i-* alternation one must place the very close-knit group of *e-/ie-* verbs. In their ranks, the source of the vowel, with impressive consistency, is Œ; with this Œ it is permissible to equate the AE of *paenitère* ‘to experience displeasure, regret’, a verb which underlies (a) *r-repenti~* .\(^{43}\)

The following list illustrates the scope of diphthongizing verbs, all of them, significantly, vernacular, with an occasional intrusion of a single ‘learned’ feature—typically, an example of retardation.\(^{52}\)

*a*premir ‘to oppress, confine’ < *premere*, *(a)*repentir ‘to repent’ < *paenitère*, with the prefix of *remordère* ‘to annoy, disquiet, harass’; *convertir* ‘to convert’ < *convertere*; *erguir* ‘to raise, erect’ < *er(I)gere*; *ferir* ‘to hit, strike, smite, wound’ < *ferère* (and in its wake *malferir* ‘to smite, strike down’); *for-vir*, *-bir* ‘to boil’ < *ferère*; *mentir* ‘to lie’ < *mentir* (and *desmentir* ‘to contradict, go against’);\(^{63}\)

pesquerir ‘to inquire, investigate, search’, a cross of *ex-querère*, *-quaerère* to ‘seek out, inquire’ and *per-querère*, *-quaerère* to ‘inquire earnestly, search for eagerly’\(^{64}\) beside *conquerir* ‘to conquer’ and

\(^{46}\) Some of these verbs pose serious etymological problems. The unorganic *f- of fenchir—of *f-inchar* ‘to inflate’ < *inflārē—has been traditionally explained through contamination with *fartar* ‘to stuff’. I once subscribed to this conjecture; see ‘La F inicial adventicia en español antiguo’, *RLiR* 18.161-91, esp. 164 (1954). But the violent distortion of the *-l- and -PL- clusters at the confluence of two currents, I now recognize, may have been a powerful contributing factor; see ‘The interlocking of narrow sound change, broad phonological pattern, ...’, *ArL* 15.144-73 (1963) and 16.1-33, esp. 27 (1964). On *trocir* see my study in *NRFH* 10.385-95 (1956); cf. fn. 43 above. I am now more than ever convinced, despite widespread indifference or opposition to this hypothesis, that OSp. *(d)*espedir must not be divorced from Gal.-Ptg. *(d)*espir ‘to strip’, representing as it does a blend of the *petere* and *ex-pedere* families; for old and new arguments see ‘The coalescence of *expedere* and *petere* in Ibero-Romance’, *UCPL* 11.40-54, 155-69 (1954), and the forthcoming article ‘Two semantic ingredients in etymological analysis’, to appear in *RPh.*

\(^{52}\) Poemterâ, the Late Latin (particularly Church Latin) spelling, through rapprochement with *poenā* ‘punishment’, has influenced spoken Hispano-Latin as little as (judging from Sp. cielo) *coelum* ‘sky, heaven’, favored by the same circles, *caelum*.

\(^{43}\) This remark applies to the *-l- of *(a)*repentir, as against its voiced counterpart in Ptg. *arrependêr* and ORio. *(Berceo)* *arrepender*. We cannot yet accurately assess the reasons for the split between *quer-er* and *ad-*, *per-* (pes-), and *re-querir*. Whatever the channels of transmission, the compounds unquestionably had a more erudite flavor, thus setting the pace, in postmedieval Spanish, for the characteristic cleavage of such racy primitives as *correr* ‘to run’, *meter* ‘to put’, *romper* ‘to break’, *verter* ‘to pour’ and certain compounds: *incurrir* ‘to become liable’, *permitir* ‘to allow’ (beside older *olotar*), *interrumpir* ‘to interrupt’, *invertir* ‘to invert’, etc. In the process, *adquerir* was allowed to adopt an ultralearned shape: *adquirir* (with the vocalic orchestration of *jīgir*, *resitir*, etc.), while *conquerir*, unlike its French cognate, gave way to *conquistar*, based on the nominalized p. ptc. *conquisita*. Italian goes even farther in its recoil from *-quirère*: *ac- and con-quisaire*.

\(^{63}\) For a full biography of this verb and its offshoots see *RPh.* 6.121-72 (1952-53).

\(^{42}\) The reconstructed forms are due to the agency of recomposition. This tendency has been rife in the ranks of *ERE* verbs (cf. Sp. *alañer* ‘to concern’ beside *attingere* ‘to touch, reach to, have to do with’, through the catalytic interference of *tañer < tangere*) and has,
requerir 'to require, search after, look into, solicit, watch over' < RE-QUÆRERE, *QUÆRERE 'to feel the want of, deem necessary'; sensir 'to feel, perceive, notice' < SENTÆRE flanked by consentir 'to agree, be tolerant (of), permit' < CONSENTÆRE. Surprisingly old (Ruiz, 979d) is (refl.) coherir 'to cling together' < COHAÆRERE, possibly influenced by ferir, then on its way to herir; equally old, but occurring only in arrhizotonic forms, is enzerir 'to insert, graft' < INSERÆRE (Ruiz, 45b, 276b, 1280b).

Just as dezir, without quite belonging to the -e/-i- group, lends it partial support (see above), so venir 'to come' < VÆNÆRE and its satellites (avenir 'to happen', refl. 'to come to an agreement' < ADVÆNÆRE 'to come near consensus', convenir 'to meet, be to the purpose, be necessary' < CONVENÆRE 'to come together, be congenial to, be fitting', etc.), without actually pertaining to the -e/-ie- group in its purest form, nevertheless buttress it through far-reaching agreement.

On the other hand, only arrhizotonic forms of arrezir and aterir seem to have had any vogue, so that for all practical purposes we must subtract them from our record, while in the case of contecer 'to happen' (from CONTÆNGÆRÆRE) the radical is reduced to -t-.

This breakdown confirms the earlier suspicion that the -e/-ie- group is essentially an amalgam of (a) verbs with an ᾖι or, to use a later cut-off point, an /e/ in the critical segment of the stem—verbs among which, for semantic reasons, the -air molecule is likely to have played the decisive role; and (b) verbs with an ᾖ > ie in the stem so placed as to adjoin a consonant palatal or palatally tinged, hence subject to monophthongization by virtue of the same trend that reduced -iello to -illo (ex-ir, segu-ir, serv-ir, vest-ir). These latter words shifted allegiance from diphthongization via monophthongization to metaphony, under conditions often amenable to direct observation. The -e/-ie- verbs constitute the remainder of ᾖ verbs, immune from the interference of neighboring palatal consonants. (Co)rregir and redimir exemplify early 'cultismos' absorbed into the -e/-i- stock, as against comparably old coherir (attracted by ferir) and convertir (linked with verter), assigned to the -e/-ie- group; they must have paved the way for elegir 'to elect' (a substitute for older esleer, the choice of Pero López de Ayala) and the like, while pedir acted as a wedge for repetir. Paradoxically, while metaphony in the nominal domain (where it functioned in isolation) was stagnant, metaphony in the verbal domain began to ride the crest of a vogue. Since our evidence of unretouched pre-Alfonsine usage is woefully fragmentary, we do not know whether before the merger the paradigm of, say, servir ran siervo, sierve(s) ... sierva or, in quasi-Portuguese fashion, siruo, sierue(s) ... sirva; if the former, then 9 sirv-amos, 10 -ades are clearly due to the analogy of estreriir, feriir, and other purely metaphonic verbs. Another admission of ignorance: it is doubtful whether PÆT-ES, -ET, etc. ever yielded *piedes, *piede except in Old Leonese. The oldest glosses (10th century) already show pi- under stress, and an occasional trace of piede turns out to be a scribal slip for pie[r]de.65 Upon occasion, led to striking hypercorrections (Ptg. constranger 'to force' and Fr. contraindre [whence E. constrain] < CONSTRÆNGÆRE 'to fetter, restrain', from STRINGÆRE 'to draw tight together, bind', recomposed on the 'false analogy of TÆNGÆRÆ/E/TÆINGÆRÆ.)

65 The telltale occurrence of pient in the Glosas Silenses (No. 196) will be commented upon in the concluding paragraphs of this section. On the emendation pie(r)de su sen in
The example of *rei(r, far from isolated, teaches us another lesson: the locally powerful trend toward vowel dissimilation added one more streak to the -e/-i- group, namely verbs with -i- in the stem that happened to belong to the -ir class from time immemorial or were secondarily squeezed into its mold, like ri-ir (morphological change) > re-ir (phonological reaction to a new situation). Since Hispano-Romance at no time had either *-ur infinitives or such present-tense endings as *-amos, no back-vowel setting crystallized comparable to the rt-o/re-ir model. As a result, the gradual disintegration of metaphony as a force operative in the ranks of co- or cu-brir, com- or cum-plir, etc. was not scotched.

The following inventory highlights the embryonic phase of the process here studied:

**Seguir:** sieguen has left sporadic traces to the west and to the east of Old Castile; cf. Alexandre, O 1162d (= P siguen), and J. A. Brutail, *Documents des archives de la Chambre des Comptes de Navarre* 129 (Paris, 1890). But siguen (Loores 220a) marks Berceo's preference, along with *sigue* (Domínguez 471c), and rhizotonic sig- and consig- forms occur in the Cantar de Mio Cid, the Ordenamiento de las Cortes de León (A.D. 1208), the Revelación de un ermitaño, the Tractado de la doctrina (see Gasner, *Verbun* 25), and countless other texts. Pretonically *sigamos* (Apolonio 628c), *sigades* (Alexandre, O 926b), and *seguide* (Alfonso XI 1686a) are closer to the modern standard than are *siguimos* (Alexandre, O 2117d; P: *seguimos*) and *siguir* (Millán 82b).

**Servir:** radical-stressed forms displaying a diphthong were particularly frequent and harmonized with the nouns *siervo* and *sierva*; cf. *sierve*: Elena y María 184 (on v. 76 see fn. 21, above); *sierven*: Fuero Juzgo 79 (ed. 1815) beside Alexandre, O 1162c (= P sieruen), in the West, and Glosas silenses, No. 49 (ben), beside El libro de Marco Polo 26.15, eds. H. Knust and R. Stuebe (Leipzig, 1902), in the East; *dessierven*: Milagros 73d; *siera*: Concilio de León §51 (A.D. 1020); included in T. Muñoz y Romero’s *Colección* [Madrid, 1847] and text from Valladolid, A.D. 1228 (as against one from Sahagún: *sieru*, both cited by Hanssen in 1896), in the West, and María Egipciaca 508, Apolonio 325b in the East, also España Sagrada 36.221, while Domingo 185d offers *sieru*; *siervan*: Fuero Juzgo 84. Yet *sirv-* alone in the radical-stressed forms throughout the Cid, *sirve* in Sacrificio 283a (portion of the text available only in Ibarreta’s transcript), also *sirv-amos* (Loores 187c), *sirv-ades* (Cid 254, 2581). The form *siervien* (imperf. ind.) mentioned by V. Fernández Llera, *Gramática y vocabulario del Fuero Juzgo* 44 (Madrid, 1929), seems to be due to scribal garbage; otherwise, as Hanssen established in 1896, the Murcia MS favors *sieru-*, the Bibl. Real-2 MS offers *sirv*- (5.3.2).

**Vestir:** Diphthongal forms, though few, show the expected territorial spread, cf. *vieste*

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the Razón de amor, line 48, see G. H. London, *RPh.* 19.28-47, esp. 36 (1965-66); the meaning is ‘loses her head’.

45 Significantly, *vivere ‘to live* (which has in general preserved its high front vowel in Romance: Fr. *vivre*, OProv. *vire*, It. *vivere*, Pug. *vivere*, etc.) came perilously close to changing from *vivir* to *vivir* in Old Spanish; in Pero López de Ayala’s poem the spellings *biv-* and *bev-* are used almost interchangeably. The dissipatory nature of the shift can best be gauged through comparison of (a) *FIN-IRE ‘to end*, which before long yielded *fenecer ‘to finish, bring to a close, (come to an end)*, via *fen-ir* (the stage which alone justifies radical -I- > -e-); and (b) *FIN-AIRE ‘to (come to an) end, die’ (a Late Latin circumlocution for *morir* > OsP. *finar*, never *fenar*. There is on record the exceedingly rare compromise form *fin-e(s)cer*. Freir ‘to fry’ (which no doubt superseded *friir*), from *frigere*, provides a further, almost perfect parallel to *rei(r* < RIDERE and *son-reir* ‘to smile’ < SUB-, SUB-RIDERE.

46 On the intricate resolution of the sequence o-δ (either > a-δ, or > e-δ) see my paper ‘The word family of Old Spanish recudir’, *HR* 14.104-59, esp. 130-7 (1940).
Common to these three verbs is the scattering of vestigial -ie- over Leonese and Navarro-Aragonese alike. Conversely, pedir has left traces of the diphthong only in the West (affecting medir, in contrast to the direction of analogical influence in Castile: medir → pedir), while in the archaic Navarro-Aragonese Glosas Silenses pitent 'piden' (No. 196) is as old as tingen 'tīfen' (No. 261).

**Pedir**: pieden in Alexandre, O 2183c (= P pidien; in the following line sieglo and siglo contrast analogously), otherwise radical-stressed pid- in the Cid, Berceo, Apolonio, etc. Pretonically pedimos (Cid 2594) and pedides (Apolonio 412c) contrast with pidimos (Cid 1885, Millán 327d).

**Medir**: visibly analogical mieden in Alexandre, O 1635d (P: miden), and miedan in Fuero Juzgo 140 clash with tonic (co)mid- in the Cid, Berceo, Rimado, etc.

The record of rendir is checkered, in part because this verb, in (or shortly after) switching from the -er to the -ir class, also exchanged its -ie- for an -i-; in part because, conceivably as an old borrowing from across the Pyrenees and traditionally a companion of prender, it shows in some of the most venerable texts an invariable e, as in French, except for the lack of nasalization (reends, rendons, etc.) Add to this some sporadic interference from the homonym rend- < redimere.

**Rend-er, -ir**: Berceo rendemos (Domingo 279b), rend-ie, -ia (ibid., 66c), rendió (ibid., 608c and Oria 177d) and rendamos (Loores 118c, Milagros 582a) point clearly in the direction of render (Domingo 551b, in rhyme with correr, also Milagros 640d, in rhyme with aver, and 818d); rinde (Sacrificio 44a) implies -ir; r(i)end-o (Domingo 588d) and renda (Alexandre, O 171; Concilio § 86) fit -er better than they do -ir; riendo (Domingo 757d), -es (Alexandre, O 397d = Priendes), -a (Ordenamiento de las Cortes de León, A.D. 1208) are compatible with -er and -ir, with the former slightly more plausible. As a rhizotonic noun renda appears in Berceo (Milagros 373d), as in Portuguese, while Spanish has settled on renta.

From this breakdown it follows that pedir < pētere, pulled by medir < mētīn, succumbed to the lure of the -e-/i-schema very rapidly in the East, yet with some delay in the West; that the resistance was stiffer in the case of seguir, servir, vestir, and that servir exceeded its companions in the degree of this recalcitrance; while two or three special circumstances make the status of rendir less easy to describe on an early temporal level and far less easy to analyze in diachronic perspective. Dialectologically, Asturo-Leonese surpassed Navarro-Aragonese as a hold-out, while Castile, the least tradition-ridden of the old northern kingdoms, acted again as chief innovator.58

58 I owe many data to the books, to be discussed later, by A. Gassner (1897), R. Menéndez Pidal (1908, 1926–50), and F. Hansen (1913); but I have checked the passages, wherever possible, against superior modern editions.
14. A three-way conjugational pattern embedded in the oldest layer. In at least one key verb (doomed to extinction ca. 1300<sup>69</sup>), namely exîr ‘to leave, go out’ < exîre, one observes, for a few decades, rivalry between three radicals, ex- /eβ/, yeex- /jeβ/, and yx- /iβ/; as if this degree of complexity were insufficient, the situation is further obscured by the wavering between -x- /β/ and -ss- /s/, an oscillation known from a few other verbs,<sup>60</sup> and by sporadic intrusions of the velar interfix in its voiceless and its voiced variants,<sup>61</sup> i.e. of an element exhibiting a dual link with the inchoative verbs and with the molecules digo/ago, pongo/ salgo. Quite possibly it is this welter of inflectional intricacies that doomed the verb, once firmly entrenched as part of the core vocabulary. The following breakdown may serve as a guide:<sup>62</sup>

(A) Ex- stem
   (a) Without velar interfix: pres. ind. eze Cid 1091; Sacrificio 32b; eximos (Menéndez Pidal, ed. Cid, §83.2); ezen Sacrificio 191d, Alexandre, O 1163a (P: sullen); ex (Menéndez Pidal, ed. Cid, §78.2); 
   (b) With velar interfix: ezco Cid 156; ezca F. de Brihuela 125, 128;

(B) Yeex- (yess-) stem
   Yesse Docum. a.d. 1242 (Arch. Hist., San Millán); yeex (Alexandre, O 1166b; P: salle);
   yezen Alexandre, O 217c (P: yzen), 1166a (no counterpart in P).

(C) Yz-, yz[s]- stem
   (a) Without velar interfix: yze F. de Teruel, fol. 84c, beside yse F. de Navarra, fol. 61a; yyz-te! (Alexandre, O 1108b; P: jsal!).
   (b) With velar interfix: isca, yscan F. de Navarra, fols. 47b, 67b; yscamos Cid 685.

Menéndez Pidal in 1908 declared both yeex- and yx- dialectal, while ruling ex-genuinely Castilian by virtue of its conservative monophthong controlled by the following palatal, i.e. /β/. This analysis, defensible but not uniquely correct, would class EXIT > exe with TECTU > tech0 ‘roof’ and FOLIA (pl.) ‘leaves’ > foja ‘leaf’. The alternative here favored would liken yeex to sierve and viste, and yxe to sirve and viste, i.e. would assume not regionally differentiated regular sound correspondences (except in the case of ex-), but successive segments along the same evolutionary line. As a fairly rare phoneme in medieval Spanish, /β/ is all the likelier to have shown a slightly erratic influence on its environment,<sup>63</sup>

<sup>69</sup> The obsolescence was no doubt gradual, with the unpredictable radical-stressed forms preceding by a margin of (say) a century their less perplexing suffix-stressed counterparts. After the elimination of the latter, there remained one isolated remnant, the nominalized p. ptc. ejido ‘commons, public land, communal farm’; on And. lejio see A. Castro, RFE 1.181 (1914).

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Ptg. disse < dîx-I, -IT (with counterparts in Berceo’s Old Riojan subdialect) and, in pronunciation if not in spelling, trouze < *TRAXU-I, -IT. Tanso and tanxo ‘he touched’ also coexisted in Old Spanish; cf. Lg. 36.313 (1999).

<sup>61</sup> For the definition of interfix, brought in here for the sake of its conjugational implications, see my article ‘Los interfijos hispánicos: problema de lingüística histórica y estructural’, Estructuralismo e historia 2.107-99 (La Laguna, 1988; ed. D. Catalán), and the various reactions to it. Cf. fn. 44 above. In Old Navarrese (ss) could have represented /ß/.

<sup>62</sup> I owe much information and my initial impetus at this point to Menéndez Pidal, ed. Cantar de Mio Cid 1.269 (Madrid, 1908), but in elaboration and analysis I have followed my own bent.

<sup>63</sup> A similar situation obtained in the case of the cluster fl-. It was infrequent in terms
now recalling the behavior of /ć/ and /ź/ with which it shared important distinctive features (hence *ex- beside *yex-), now resembling the performance of s plus consonant (hence *yxe < *yexe, like *viste < *vieste), a direction doubly understandable in phonetic terms, on account of the well-known apico-alveolar character of Sp. s, which places it acoustically between [s] and [ç].

One peculiarity of this triple set of paradigms is that exe(n) etc. exemplify a conjugational possibility later altogether banished from Spanish (except marginally in a few isolated ‘cultismos’): from the peak of the medieval period to this day an -e- ..., ir verb may exhibit ie or i, but no e, in rhizotonic forms.64 Judging from the record of *exir, this restriction did not hold in far less rigidly and tightly structured pre-Alfonsine Spanish.

III. RECORD AND ANALYSIS OF EARLIER RESEARCHES

15. The pioneers. Active curiosity about the problem here outlined stretches over a period of more than a century and a quarter. On at least three occasions (1838, 1858, 1871) F. Diez attacked it, with only slightly different results. Within the -ir class he clearly recognized two radical-changing categories. For the -e/-ie- group he laid down the rule that in arrhizotonic forms e changes to i (and analogically o to u) except where the following syllable contains i, a qualification (he argued) dictated by euphony.65 The core of the verbs in the -e/-i- group was formed by those which, to begin with, had I (the reader is left wondering whether I or E was meant).66

In his unprecedented panorama of Romance metaphony W. Förster declared that the presence of I or E in the radical was irrelevant to the speakers’ choice between the -e/-ie- and the -e/-i- patterns.67 What mattered was the following consonant or cluster: -r- and -nt- allied themselves with a diphthong, any other

of incidence and lexical representation, and involved a word-initial consonant which, alone among those preceding Lat. L, was not obstruct. As a result FL- oscillated, in its transmission into Hispano-Romance, between joining FL-/CL- or else BL-/UL-, both courses being clearly delineated and copiously represented. For details see my article in ArL 15. 144-73 (1963), 16.1-33 (1964).

64 The assignment of *impeIère ‘to drive on’, absorbed as a Latinism, to impeIer rather than (as might otherwise have been expected against the background of learned transmission) to *impelir may be due precisely to the speakers’ reluctance to experiment with such forms as *impIelo or *impilo, which ‘Systemzwang’ would have foisted on them. The preexistence, in Old Spanish, of vernacular impeIer < impeIère may have been a potent concomitant.


66 In 1838 Diez was in doubt as to the accuracy of heñir < fingere, supplied no etymon for derretir, and inadvertently operated with absol. ad-, in-querir. The second edition shows some progress: the earlier doubt has been dissipated, derretir is traced to déterre, adque-rir is paired off with inquirir (‘das einzige mit radikalem i’), OSp. con-, con-tir < Contr(x)-gere and no-, nu-cir < nocère are thrown in for good measure on the side of dormir and morir. In the final revision the author ends the section by remarking that the late medieval paradigm of the strong preterite shows sporadic extensions of the -e/-i- alternation: dize, deziste; fæcæ, feciste [sic]; quise, quesiste. (What one actually witnesses here is varying degrees of resistance to the inroads of the -i- from the 1st sg. and from the plural.)

67 Beiträge zur lateinischen Lautlehre: Umlaut (eigentlich Vokalsteigerung) im Romanschen, ZRPh. 3.481-517, esp. 507 (1879).
consonant with a monophthong.\textsuperscript{68} Förster's article, immediately recognized as trail-blazing, sparked a lively discussion, in which some participants neglected the facet of the problem here at issue (thus, G. Paris focused his attention exclusively on \textit{-ARU} \textsuperscript{Fr.} \textit{-ier}). Restating two points he had been making in his lecture courses ever since 1872–73\textsuperscript{69}—first, that \textit{j/} had greater metaphonic strength than \textit{j/}, hence \textit{durm-t} beside \textit{durmi-o}; second, that the power of symmetry had blocked \textit{[durmt],} phonetically tolerable, in deference to the exclusion of \textit{[*]sinti,} phonetically inadmissible—H. Schuchardt showed an astonishingly early grasp of linguistic structure. J. Cornu, despite his superb command of Old Portuguese,\textsuperscript{70} confused the source of \textit{ue} in \textit{muero} (< \textit{du}, cf. \textit{coru} 'leather') > Sp. \textit{cuero}, Ptg. \textit{coiro}) with its source in \textit{muere} (< \textit{s}), even though the contrast OPtg. \textit{moiro} : morre might have sensitized him to this dichotomy. His treatment further suffers from a misconception about the scope of Hispano-Romance metaphony: he attributed to \textit{-i +} consonant a power not invested in that sound-sequence. His reconstruction of the ‘ideal’ paradigm of \textit{pedir—*peço, *pides, piede, pe- or pi-dimos, pe- or pi-didies, *pieden—} is thus unacceptable in reference to the 2d sg. Candidly and dramatically, Cornu stressed his generation’s inability to reconcile \textit{vendió} ‘he sold’ (from \textit{vender}) with \textit{sintió} ‘he felt’ (from \textit{sentir}), a point clarified by Menéndez Pidal a quarter-century later: membership in a conjugation class may override the demands of metaphony.

G. Baist’s first frontal attack on the problem led to these statements: metaphony in pret. \textit{sintió, durmió} initially affected the subj.: \textit{sint-amos, -dis} (splitting it off from the ind.: \textit{sent-imos}, with the vowels distributed in accord with Diez’s formula); \textit{durm-amos} \textit{~} \textit{dorm-imos} followed suit; the combined strength of \textit{I} verbs (\textit{decir, freir, reir}) formed a magnet which attracted certain \textit{e, e/i} verbs, hence \textit{pido, mido, concibo}; ‘warum ein Teil zurückblieb ist unklar’.\textsuperscript{71}

In the grammatical prospectus appended to his Old Spanish chrestomathy A. Keller erroneously divided all Old Spanish verbs into ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ (i.e. into categories

\textsuperscript{68} For early criticism note Meyer-Lübke’s remark in his comparative grammar: ‘Allein damit ist keine Erklärung gegeben und, wie Förster selber bemerkt, auch das tatsächliche Verhältnis wenig treffend dargestellt, da servir trotz \textit{r} zur zweiten Klasse gehört.’

\textsuperscript{69} (Zu W. Förster’s romanischer Vokalsteigerung’, \textit{ZRPh.} 4.113–23, esp. 121. That same year P. Förster, \textit{Spanische Sprachlehre} 325, 328–9 (Berlin, 1880), touched upon the subject with scant originality, except that he questioned the derivation of \textit{engreir} from \textit{INGREDI} and brought in \textit{desleir} ‘to dilute, dissolve’, [Ast. Leon. Pal. Sant.] \textit{espurrir} ‘to stretch out (one’s limbs) < \textit{EXPORRIGERE, mutr ‘to milk’}. P. Förster, probably the first Hispanist to recognize the genetic link between Ptg. \textit{despir} and Sp. \textit{despedir}, went astray in etymologizing \textit{desleir} (\textit{LIQUERE ‘to be fluid, clear’}) and OSp. \textit{decir} (\textit{DÉSIDER E ‘to sink down, subside, settle’}).

\textsuperscript{70} ‘Mélanges espagnols: Remarques sur les voyelles toniques’, \textit{Rom.} 13.285–97, esp. 290–7 (1884). J. Wiggers’s \textit{Grammatik der spanischen Sprache} (Leipzig, 1884) was not particularly impressive on the side of inflectional analysis (148–52), but proved strikingly original and ahead of its time in details of etymological classification; see the remark (150) on the contact between \textit{ingerir < INGERERE and inserir (enjerir) < INSERERE and the derivation (151) of (d)espedir from \textit{EXPEDIRE}, in harmony with P. Förster’s hunch.

\textsuperscript{71} ‘Die spanische Sprache’ §72, in G. Grober’s \textit{Grundriss der romanischen Philologie} 1 (Strassburg, 1888). For the diphthong in \textit{hied- < FOET-}, \textit{hiend- < FIND-} Baist implicated the \textit{f-} > \textit{h-} series: \textit{herir, hervir, herrar ‘to shoe, brand’}. In 1894 Meyer-Lübke took exception to several of Baist’s claims. Can one maintain, he argued, that \textit{sintamos} shows influence of \textit{sintió} if the only possible corollary is that \textit{temió} ‘he feared’ shows influence of \textit{temamos}? If
applicable, at most, to the preterite and past participle), then observed the striking fluidity of usage ('grosse Unregelmässigkeit') at the medieval stage, when *piden*, *sufrés*, and *vino* were pitted against *piden*, *sufrés*, and *vino*. Four years later, the same delight at unearthing odd variants (though he was unable to hierarchize them) characterized Keller's historical treatment of Spanish inflection. What excited him most was the pervasive duality of usage, the proliferation of by-forms (*vistió ~ vistió, pedido ~ pidido*, etc.) before long, for all the trees newly discovered he lost sight of the forest. On the other hand, we owe to his almost forgotten book the first specific mention and broad localization of such wavering as *repí(e)nente, pt(e)den, si(e)guen, si(e)rvien*. One final merit: he explicitly posited a large-scale migration of verbs from the -e/-ie- to the -e/-i- camp.

16. The crest of the debate. That same year saw the publication of W. Meyer-Lübke's *Romantishe Formenlehre*, a milestone of a work if only because, for the first time in decades, the Spanish development was envisaged as part of a broad evolution. Unfortunately, this particular chapter of the revolutionary book turned out to be less than happy. The author, admitting that the vicissitudes of e-stems in the -ir class were 'viel verwickelter' than any other aspect of radical-changing verbs, launched or revived a number of ideas. He correctly observed that the -e/-ie- group, except for *érígere*, centered around *e* stems, without asking himself whether syncope and stress shift (*érígere > érígere*) could possibly have affected the quantity of word-initial *e*-.

He joined Diez and Keller in surmising that all *e* verbs of the -ir class were originally diphthongized, adducing one instance of late OSp. *rienda* 'may render' as evidence. The *e* > *i*...
shift in a pretonic syllable was ranked as regular, and *pidiendo, [M]pidiamos were equated with OSp. hiniestra 'window' < fenestra; but the reader was left wondering why -iendo had been preserved intact in the face of [*]tamos > -amos. At the core of the process, the author assumed, lay the crystallization of two parallel series: [*]con-cibio, -cebe(s), for e stems, and [*]servio, sierve(s), for e stems, then such levelings as were apt to transform [*]servio into [*]siervio, still later into [*]sirvio, whence eventually sirvo and analogically sirves, while the pressure exercised by concib(i)o produced, with fewer intermediary stages, concibe(s). To validate this train of thought the transformation of -io into -o and of -ia into -a must figure as the concluding links in the posited chain of events.

 Barely three years after the publication of Meyer-Lübke's volume, A. Gassner presented his monograph on the Old Spanish verb, to this day not entirely superseded. The book contains a number of neatly distilled examples and many analytical observations, some adequate, others gauche even by the standard of the time. The astonishing thing is that, as a parallel Meyer-Lübke adduces tepidu 'lukewarm' > [M]tievio > tivio (sic), for which he refers the reader to his Lautlehre (1890). The point, however, is that recorded Leon. tebio marks the actual midway point of the trajectory tepidu > Sp. tibio: the early loss of -d- reduced trisyllabic *te-bi-o to /tebju/, with /e/ concomitantly closed to /e/, and since /j/, unassimilable to the preceding labial, failed to disappear in the process, it could again, at a later date and originally in a narrower zone, act on /e/, raising that vowel to /i/; cf. Berceo's Latinism tedio beside mod. tedio. For details see my analysis in Rom. 74.145-76 (1952). There is no compelling reason for reconstructing any underlayer with a rising diphthong.

Over against -e-/-ie- Meyer-Lübke places -0-/-ue- (dormir/duermo), pitting on the other hand -0-/-u- (as in po-, pu-drir/pudro) against -e-/-i-; but he refrains from explaining the asymmetry of the ensuing rearrangement. The author misses any trace of -e-/-i- before -ll-, a point at which he unwittingly comes nearest to implicating monophthongization. He concludes on an anecdotal note, correctly interpreting the evolutionary vagaries in the Spanish offspring of levare 'to lighten, lift up': liev- (> llev-) / lev-, then generalization of lve- 'to carry'.

Thus, it seems gratuitous to aver (§43) that the original distribution of e and i vars. in the paradigm could not, for some inherent reason, survive indefinitely (for evidence to the contrary cf. Portuguese). Not only is Gassner's etymology of deñir (décidere) untenable, but, worse, he states quite hazily (§45) the relation of that doomed verb to deñir < dicere. Reñir < réñere should, for consistency's sake, have elicited a comment in §56, not in §46. ORioj. impie 'fills' < imple is anything but Latinizing (§46). Being a late learned importation makes fangir 'to feign, fake'—in contrast to its rustic counterpart henir 'to knead' (brought in belatedly in §58)—ineligible for the company of ceñir, co(n)strñir, reñir, and teñir; distinguir, on all counts, stands even farther apart (§48). From the strictly learned group -mitir, -sisir, dividir, ezmir, im- and reprimir, the author might here have advantageously segregated ORioj. red-emir, -imir, especially in view of Ptg. remir (§49). For learned impedir < im-pedere (behind which he fails to sense the vernacular near-doublet empecer), Gassner posits the influence of pedir < petere (§50), a situation paralleling the impact of ferir < ferere on in-, re-ferir, from ferre. If this is so, why not go one step further and account for certain idiosyncrasies of the paradigm of pedir (Sp. pido, Ptg. peço) by invoking the influence of medir and, independently, positing an early contact with ex-pedere (cf. des-, es-pedir) rather than charge the erratic behavior of pedir solely to the
disposing of an arsenal of materials never before assembled on such an ambitious scale, the
author should not once have used it to challenge Meyer-Lübke's often faulty grand strategy;
instead he struck an attitude of unquestioning loyalty to the master's authority—to the
point of subservience, particularly as regards the two series *recepio, -cepis, etc. and *servio,
sierva(s), etc. (§43 and §50). Of unusual potential promise was Gassner's haul of neatly
pinpointed -se- forms for expected -i-: 6 sierven, 11 sierva(n), 6 viesten, 6 piden, 6 sieguen.
Yet he failed to grasp the unique chance to cut through to the kernel of the problem, brush-
ing aside, simply because it did not fit Meyer-Lübke's schema, a telltale form like (subj.)
sierva(n) as merely due to the interference of siervo 'serf', then arbitrarily calling (ind.)
viesten 'correct' and viesten 'analogic'.

The first decade of this century witnessed the climax of the debate, with new
experts steadily chiming in and some old masters still making their continued
presence felt.

Baist's final attack on the problem was characterized by judicious caveats
rather than by any breakthrough. Accepting the standard explanation of 3d
sg. pret. sintió, durmió, he refused to apply it as a wedge in grappling with the
present tense. If [*]siengo < sentiō and [*]sençamos < sentiámus represented the
ideal forms, why should the analogical substitutes be neither siento, [*]sent-
tamos nor [*]sinto, sintamos, but the bizarre compromise siento, sintamos? Also,
the relation of sentir : sintió to temer : temió 'he feared' was far from transparent
(at this juncture he echoed Cornu). For serví > servio Baist accepted Meyer-
Lübke's verdict, endorsed by Gassner, down to the detail of his mistaken appeal
tibo. The t of pido he persuasively attributed to the pressure of conçibo and
especially of mido, adding one flourish to the emerging picture: the parallelism
of the collision of dícere with e e stems and of the tangle of -ducere with the
q q stems (Sp. bullir, subir).84

pressure of its near-synonym curió -ERE, unproductive in Hispano-Romance? In the ar-
chaic eastern Glosas Silenses siegat = Sp. sea (Nos. 9, 11, 36) unmistakably reflects sedeat,
not sequiá (§50); reverberations of Gassner's error reach as far as Pellegrini's text-
book (1950). Regir, in the company of corregir, should chronologically be placed at the very
head of learned words attracted into the orbit of the -e-/i- group (§51). Ffirió (imp. pl.)
does not plausibly owe its pretonic i to association with ffrades (§53); it is reminiscent,
rather, of (ben)disir, dis-imos, -ides, -it which Gassner inexplicably declares 'wahrscheinlich
halbgelehrt' (§56) and should also be classed with pídimos, siguimos (§80): -iz-, -quis-, and
vis-, with their etymological i, clearly preceede the dez-, -ques-, cev- variants throughout.
In yscamos 'let us leave' the intrusion of the inchoative pattern (or simply of the velar;
cf. fir-g-amos) has been overlooked; exéamus falls short of qualifying as a starting-point
(§54). For OSp. fiedo/feder faet- furnishes a smoother base than faet-ERE (§55). Why
should derretir and desleir, of all verbs, rank as nonvernacular (§58), while patently erudite
formations like adherir, di-, in-, su-perir and con-, dis-cernir are far too hesitantly labeled
'nicht ganz volkstümlich' (§59)? If the shift gem-er > -ir required collateral semantic sup-
port, plañ-ir would have provided a more suitable partner than the fairly remote reír and
reír (§58); above all, why grammatically separate gem-er > -ir from rend-er > -ir (§51)?
The whole treatment abounds in such qualifiers as 'natürgemäss', 'selbstverständlich' and
in platitudinous passages: 'Dass sich *RÈNDERE zu dieser Klasse geschlagen hat ist bei der
im Altspanischen herrschenden Zerfahrenheit gleichfalls verständlich' (§58). Further de-
dtails are set straight in Cornu's devastating review, LGRPh, vol. 18, cols. 202-6 (1897).

84 As regards dipthongization in the ranks of other conjugation classes, Baist credited
friego 'I scrub', pliego 'I fold', and riego 'I water' (from frigó, pligó, and rigó respectively)
to the pressure of ciego 'I blind', niego 'I deny', and siego 'I mow', while estr(i)ego 'I rub
hard' (from strigó 'I draw furrows, make a halt' [in ploughing]) and entr(i)ego 'I deliver'
From its first edition, Menéndez Pidal’s historical grammar, which came to grips with our problem at two points (§§104–5 and §114), abounded in fresh observations and incisive formulations. Among other accomplishments, the author dramatically contrasted the -er class (antimetaphonic) with the -ir class (metaphonic), pitting competer ‘to be incumbent’, verter, and ferviente ‘fervent’ (from obs. ferver) against competir ‘to compete’, advertir, and hirviente; he saw the peaks of general currents hidden in folk speech (remetir ‘to remit’, hervir/hirvo); and he stressed the uniqueness of pudiendo, from poder (concomitant pressure of strong preterite?), and of oir ‘to hear’ < AUDIÉRE, instead of the expected *podiendo and *utr, etc. With reference to the kernel of our problem, he isolated the seven verbs DETER, INGREDIOR, PET, RED-, *REN-DÓ, SEQUOR, and VESTI beside INVER as the vernacular representatives of those Ε stems in the Spanish -ir class that display, contrary to expectation, the -e/-i-pattern (being guided by current etymological preferences and omitting, no doubt inadvertently, EXEΩ), noted incidentally the siervo/servimos/sirvamos model as characteristic of both Old Leonese and Old Aragonese (two noncontiguous dialects which also preserved cuebre ‘he covers’ < CO(O)PERIT and nuezen ‘they harm’ < NOCENT), and very cautiously offered two possible reasons for the transfer of ‘pedir’ from the -e/-i- to the less complexly structured -e/-i-class: the monophthongization -ie- > -i- and the coincidence with the stems in certain sections of the paradigm (e.g. 1st pl. indic. and subj.).

(From metathesized INTEGRÒ ‘I renew, begin afresh’) wavered throughout the waning Middle Ages. We find here heder traced to FÆTÈRE, hender attached to defendere, and nevar associated with l(UD)ear.

* Manual elemental de gramática histórica española (Madrid, 1904).

* Particularly commendable is Section (b) of §114.1, in which the author sets off (a) ō ο stems: BULLIRE ‘to well up, bubble up’, CONFUNDERE ‘to flow together, mingle’, EXCURRERE ‘to run out’ (> Sp. escurrir ‘to drain, ooze, trickle’), FUGERE ‘to flee’ (> OSP. foigr), ÓRDIRE ‘to warp (cloth before putting it on the loom), begin (weaving)’, FUTÈRE ‘to be rotten, decayed’, RECUTERE ‘to strike back’, SUBÈRE ‘to go, come, dive under’ beside ‘to approach, advance, mount, climb to’, SÜFF-FERERE, -*FERERE ‘to suffer’, from (b) ō stems: ABHORRERE ‘to shrink back from’, COMPLEÈRE ‘to complete, (ful)fill’, CÔDÈPÈRE ‘to cover entirely, envelop’, EX + CÓ(n)SP(U)ERE ‘to spit’, MOLLÈRE ‘to soften, make pliable’, MÔNEÈRE ‘to admonish’ (> Sp. muñir ‘to summon’) and (c) ū stems: ADDÈCÈRE ‘to draw to oneself, bring’ and MÜGÈRE ‘to bellow, low, roar’ > mugiè (as against MÜGÈRE ‘to milk’) > Arag. muir). But note that PÆTHIDUS and PÆTHRÈ coexisted on the level of Latin and that cōp-must, on that same level, have been contracted to *cōp-, as cōnsp-was to [*] cōsp-, so that the blurring of borderlines started long before the crystallization of proto-Spanish. The author speaks as witness and participant in noting the growing prevalence of u in pudrir and particularly in repudrir ‘to rot completely’, (coll.) ‘to vex, irritate’. The conspicuous failure of oir to advance to *utr, an aberrancy on which he rightly insists without offering any explanation, may have been caused by avoidance of the homonymic collision with (h)uir < FUGERE, the more so as in substandard speech huigo ‘I flee’ (= stand. hugo) drew perilously close to oigo ‘I hear’.

* The etymologies of (de)rretir and engreir have been cursorily examined in §12 above.

* Yet in §104 Menéndez Pidal contrasts vistas, vistamos with sientes, sintamos merely to exemplify the leveling vs. the diversification of the verb stem. Among the reviewers of the original Manual A. R. Gonçalves Viana, RH 10.608-14, esp. 612, noted that ei, not unlike ie, was occasionally reduced to i, citing ar(e)isco ‘churlish, surly, shy’ and iglesia ‘church’ beside Ptg. eigreja (but neglecting OSP. iglesia); while A. Morel-Fatio, Rom. 33.270-2 (1904),
Perhaps the very excellence of this first presentation of the problem accounts for Menéndez Pidal’s disinclination to revise the analysis in several subsequent editions of his handbook. The monumental Cid edition, however, gave him an opportunity to grapple less schematically with diphthongization vs. metaphony in the verbal paradigm. It was on this occasion that he put to such good use the evidence of exir forms (see §14, above). He also gathered information on archaic members of the -er class, such as cofonder (p. 268, fn. 1), enader, premer, render, toller, observed the wavering of bat-er/-ir ‘to strike’ (§80), and collected stray data on the sporadic spread of pres. subj. -ga from pon-er and sal-ir to fer-ir and prend-er (§82.1), on (a)deñir ‘to descend’ (§82.4), and on osca ‘thou mayest hear’, reminiscent of Ptg. ouças and even more so of certain comparable forms of exir. But while a reader’s grasp of background and surrounding circumstances profits immensely from all this documentation, he cannot help observing the author’s retreat from the appeal to monophthongization: pid-, sirv-, and vist- are now left unexplained (§83.1). The mosaic-like arrangement of concomitants at the fringes of the discussion, without any simultaneous revision of the nuclear problem, was carried over into Menéndez Pidal’s later writings, strengthening the impression that his analysis, once fluid, was growing stable around 1905. The author’s definitive Orígenes del español did, however, include new data and ideas on -ie- > -i-, cut loose from the treatment of conjugation.

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88 In the 2d ed. (1905), the 3d ed. (1914), and the 4th ed. (1918) only the introductory remarks in §114 were somewhat expanded, despite the author’s new exposure to the highly idiiosyncratic language of Elena y María. Among the reviewers of Manual J. Ronjat, RLAR 62.435-6 (1923–24), commented on analogical duerma vs. ideal *durma, while J. Jud and A. Steiger, Rom. 48.137-49 (1922), mistakenly denied the learned status of jingir (139), attributed flocce to recoil from near-homonymy with *clocca > llueca ‘brooding hen’ (142), and traced OSp. cuntir to pret. CONTIGIT, alleging the inordinate frequency of that tense (148).

89 Cantar de Mio Cid 264–9. In the revised ed. (Madrid, 1944–46) the etymon of deñir, I repeat, was replaced (1229-30): DISCEDERE instead of DICEDERE.

90 Thus, Manual (1925; reprinted in 1929) adds to Leon. Arag. cuebre the compounds descuebre and encuebre ($114.2). Manual (1941; frequently reprinted) emphasizes, in the preamble to §114, the contrasting treatment of -ti- in nouns (vitii ‘fault, blemish’ > OSp. teso ‘custom’, POTEU ‘well, fountain’ > pozo) and verbs (METIO > mido, RECUTIO > recudo), explaining it by discrepant degrees of analogy involved, not by two dissimilar sets of rules for actual sound change; on the theoretical possibility of the latter course see W. S. Allen, RPh. 17.173-4 [1963–64], on W. P. Lehmann, Historical linguistics: An introduction. Also, the author stresses (§114.4) the late consolidation of preferences currently valid (A. de Nebrixa’s 1492 grammar, we are reminded, still favored nonmetaphonic variants in pretonic position: recibir, regieron, sentiendo, seguiuente, soñir). The masterly Orígenes del español (1926) documents early shifts of conjugation class (implir) and vestiges of weakening resistance to such shifts (top. Benbiber [A.D. 978], Benvivre [A.D. 1125] = mod. Belbimbre < BENE VIVERE), traces to proto-Spanish 10th-century glosses and to other archaic texts such salient verb forms as 6 sierben, I1 bestan, 6 piten, and 6 tingen, follows the velar interfix /k, g/ in its inroads, and supplies many other details (§72.1, §73.1-2), yet stops short of deepening the author’s own earlier analyses (1904, 1908) of the key problems; the revised editions (1926, 1950) supply no remedy in this respect.

91 While in his early monograph ‘El dialecto leonés’ the author merely exemplified the
Before writing the German version of his grammar, F. Hanssen went so carefully over the inflection of several dialectally colored Old Spanish texts that he acquired a unique command of the facts. To this knowledge he added a flair for organization: instead of reserving separate pigeonholes for Latin front and back vowels or for Hispanic diphthongization, metaphony, and preservation of the older stage, he squeezed all reflexes into a single pattern, a model of its kind, starting consistently from the Latin root vowel as the variable. Here is the skeletal survival of -ie- (RABM 3:14.146 [1906]), his Orígenes §27.3 (starting with the 1926 ed.) supply important paleo-toponymic data: Liestra ~ Lista, Asieso ~ Asiso, Agirbe ~ Agirbe (with /j/), Xavierre ~ Scavierri ~ Ezavirr, beside mod. Javierre, Espierre, Espierlo, perhaps not going far enough in affirming the authenticity of -i- spellings.

In view of the importance of these ‘Vorstudien’ (in part merely descriptive, in part explicative as well), and because, being difficult of access, they have—unlike Gassner’s inferior monograph—been virtually ignored by all successors except Menéndez Pidal, it may be useful to extract some points from them. In ‘Sobre la conjugación de Gonzalo de Berceo’, An. Chile 90.231-80 (1895), Hanssen sees rend-er torn between the models of vend-er (-e-) and defend-er, entend-er (-ie-), quite apart from the pressure exerted by -ir (244); reconstructs the asymmetric paradigms (a) 1 sirvo, 2-3 sirve(s), 6 -en, 7 sirva, 12 *servi (?) beside (b) duermo, duerm-e(s), -en, duerma, duermi (246); discovers traces of -ie- in the present tense of (des)servir and vestir (248); notes fluctuations such as pe-, ~ pi-dimos, se- ~ si-guir, ve-, ~ vi-stir (249); precedes others in attributing the adventitious u of pudiendo to imitation of pudieron (252); and posits a regression, ingeniously, to account for *sentíamos > [sentíamos] > [sentíamos] > sintamos (288). But, in analyzing metaphony, which he unaccountably calls ‘suavización’ (251-8), he stumbles, like other experts before him, over the reputed contradiction debiendo, pidiendo and, by way of emergency solution, offers an untenable hypothesis. The ‘Suplemento a la conjugación de Berceo’, ibid. 90.773-81, contains an unrealistic reconstruction of the paradigm of vestir in proto-Castilian (*vezo, viest-es, -e, -en, vestimos, *veza, etc., in criticism of the author’s own earlier [*vezeo, p. 257, equally implausible] alongside a well documented comment on OSP. es = eres (779-80; cf. fn. 3, above). ‘Sobre la conjugación del Libro de Apolonio’, ibid. 91.637-65 (1895), barely inventories forms extracted from a mediocre edition later superseded by C. C. Marden’s; from the survey of the key verbs: pedir, seguir, vestir, complir, nozir, etc. (648-52) one gathers the early ascendency, in the underlying Old Aragonese subdialect, of i and u; requerir is flanked by 1 requiro, from which mod. requiero may have sprouted through contamination with quiero. ‘Estudios sobre la conjugación aragonesa’, ibid. 93.391-409 (1896), parade noteworthy -ir infinitives, some of them characteristically eastern: complir, con- and re-querir (again 1 requiro), constreñir, enclodir, ezir (7 esca), posedir, and reir (402-3). In the finest of the five monographs, ‘Estudios sobre la conjugación leonesa’, ibid. 94.753-807 (1896), Hanssen inspects with microscopic precision the rivalry of such typically western -er verbs as aduzer, changer < flanger, combater, costrener, oncher, escrire, erger, morrer, parter, premier, refuer (but fahir), rier, viver with their respective -ir variants (including both rustic constrenmir and learned constrinir), reconstructs such sets—placing them at the threshold of the literary tradition—as sigo, siegu-es, -e, -en, seguismos, siga, isiguel beside si(e)ervo, sierv-es, -e, -en, servimos, si(e)ervo, isierve!, and pieces together for sof-er/-ir (781) a triple development almost as complicated as that of ezir (779): 1 su-, sue-, so-fro, 4 sofr-imos, -emos, 7 su-, sue-, so-fra, etc.
ton of his schema:

(a) Root vowel i: *dezir, reir* (-e/-i-, on the model of vícínu > vezino). This group tends toward conflation with (b); it has been reinforced through early transfers from (c), such as *seguir, servir, vestir*, but in the end suffered losses through generalization of the -i-: *escribir, vivir*.

(b) Root vowel f: *concebir, medir*, a group tending toward amalgamation with (a); since *cingis > ciñes, tíngis > tiñes* rank as phonologically normal, they must have acted as leader words.

(c) Root vowel $: *herir* etc., also the learned compounds in -ferir, -gerir, -vertir. There are cases of vacillation between (b) and (c): *exquir*, and others of slow and hesitant leveling: *adquirir > -quirir*.

(d) Root vowel a: subject to no change (cf. *partir*).

(e) Root vowel $: -o/-ue/-u-, as in *dormir, morir*.

(f) Root vowel ð, as in OSp. *fai*rt, *ordir, recodir, sobir, sobollir* 'to bury' < SEPÉLIRE, with attraction of several items from the ranks of (e): *aborrir, cobrir, complir, nosir, ofrir*, and with eventual standardization of the -u-.

(g) Root vowel v: remains steady as in *luzir*, though a few verbs, as a result of fluctuation, have been dragged into the orbit of (f): *ado- ~ adu-zir*.

(h) Stem vowel $u > o$: not subject to change, as in *otr*.

(i) Stem vowel $i > e$: is either exempt from change or joins (c), as in *exizir*.

Aside from offering this unified picture, Hanssen injected into the discussion several new ideas. The 1st and 2d pl. of -ir verbs claimed his special attention: he saw in *hiramos* the normal outgrowth of *FERIÁMUS* with metathesized /j/, arguing that pretonic *ei* yielded a monophthong. In a similar way he explained *muramos* < *MORÍAMUR* with a side glance at OPtg. *moiramos* and at the hapax legomenon OSp. *mueramos* (Prim. Crón. Gen. 417a20); yet he declared *duramos* analogical and joined Meyer-Lübke in tracing *hirvamos* to *FEREÁMUS* via *firvia-mos*. Though in other particulars he drew heavily on Menéndez Pidal's *Manual*, he abstained from developing his predecessor's hint as to the rise of *sirvo* and *visto* through monophthongization, and for once neglected the Old Leonese and Old Aragonese -ie- forms. In translating and revising his grammar three years

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85 Hanssen here refers the reader to an earlier passage in his book (§10.2) in which he adduced *tīnea* 'moth, bookworm' > *tiña* 'beehive spider, ringworm; stinginess' and *cōñeu* 'wedge' > *cuño*, but seems to forget his own important qualification: 'Veränderungen ... welche jedoch schwer in Regeln zu fassen sind und dialektisch schwanken'. What we are facing here is plainly a weak phonetic change, as defined in *Língua* 11.263–75 (1962) and in *Íbérica* 6.127–71 (1961–63), in part on the basis of findings originally presented in Língua 36.284–91 (1960). But this time the cause of the weakness is hardly to be sought in dialect mixture; it is not impossible that, contrary to Hanssen's surmise, the change occurred first, analogically, in the verbal paradigm (*tēñe > fāñe*), then spread haltingly to other form classes.

86 This rubric marks the one inconsistency in Hanssen's otherwise almost flawlessly executed design: to begin with, there is no evidence of any earlier *ei* in the progeny of *EXIR*, and further, even if the existence of the falling diphthong were demonstrated, there would be no safe way of projecting it onto the phase of Latin to which the remaining root vowels invariably refer.

87 No subsequent monographic treatment of this side issue has come to my attention. A quarter-century ago M. A. Zeitlin wrote a splendid note, 'Unstressed ascending diphthongs in Spanish' [pretonic ie, ia, io, and iu reduced to i], *MLF* 24.84–90 (1939), a paper which unfortunately contained a misleading incidental statement on *s(i)ego*. Note OFr. *siegle*, the variant favored by Chrétien de Troyes (Perceval 1669).
later, Hanssen upheld his elaborate schema, but introduced two minor changes intended to profile the Old Navarro-Aragonese paradigm more neatly. One of these addenda bore on such local verb forms as sieguen = Sp. siguen and siemren = Sp. sirven and thus briefly developed the theme of Menéndez Pidal’s dormant hypothesis (1904). But, failing to recognize the potentialities of this discovery, Hanssen did not press the issue.

On balance Hanssen emerges again as the founder of paleo-Hispanic dialectology. The proof he supplied (1895) of the frequency of Old Leonese siegue, sirve, etc. blends with K. Pietsch’s demonstration of the proclivity of the old peripheral dialects (surrounding Castilian) toward rhizotonic -ie- and -ue-, even in excess of the phonological norm; nor does it contradict E. Staaff’s independent discovery that arrhizotonically (e.g. in 3d pl. pret.) many varieties of Leonese leaned toward -tron or -(i)oron rather than -ieron, thus shying away from -ie-.

The modest format and comparativistic slant of A. Zauner’s Romanische Sprachwissenschaft (1900) did not invite any detailed examination of processes confined to a single language; later, however, that author’s introductory grammar of Old Spanish gave him a chance to state his view of our problem. The result was less than satisfactory; the remark that there were cases of indecision between -ie- and -i- was dropped without force.

The severe criticism that has greeted most of V. García de Diego’s recent and fairly recent publications must not prevent us from recognizing the merits of his early inquiries. By heeding the evidence of North Castilian untutored folk speech, and, at the same time, of out-and-out learned formations, he brought his analytic skill to bear on two neglected

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98 Gramática histórica de la lengua castellana §200 (Halle, 1913).
99 He extracted sieguen from Brutail’s collection of Navarrese charters and sierven from El libro de Marco Polo; see §13 above. The other addendum, constrengia = Sp. constriña, which now flanked OLeon. receba = Sp. reciba, was a philologist’s reward for scanning the Documentos para el estudio de la historia de Aragón.
100 From our angle it is regrettable that Hanssen’s Gramática (and the monographs underpinning it) should have elicited major critiques in a frame predominantly either phonological (A. Castro, RFE 1.97–103, 181–4 [1914]) or syntactic (O. J. Tallgren, NM 18.138–56 [1917], and F. Krüger, RFE 8.311–8 [1921]); even L. Spitzer, while recognizing, in the wake of E. Staaff (RDR 2.427–8 [1911]), the chapter on inflection as Hanssen’s most meritorious, centered his attention on syntax and stylistics (LGRPA. 35 [1914], cols. 206–12).
102 Étude sur l’ancien dialecte léonais d’après des chartes du XIIE siècle 298–302 (Uppsala, 1907). The author omits the present tense from his purview, but incidentally discusses the conjugation class of constrener, contradicer, and corregir (314–5).
103 Allspanisches Elementarbuch §§130–31 (Heidelberg, 1908). Though the book is dedicated to the author’s direct teacher Meyer-Lübbe, the paragraphs at issue show estrangement from the latter’s doctrine where it was indefensible (1890) and adherence to Menéndez Pidal’s trail-blazing Manual elemental. The 2d, revised ed. of the Elementarbuch (1921) shows the transfer of the discussion to §§124–5, but no reappraisal of the substance of the problem.
104 The two paragraphs are marred by several blemishes. Unless ‘analogy’ means simply ‘extension, diffusion’ without any intervening change in circumstances, I find no excuse for applying it (§130) to the effect of metaphony in the 3d sg. impf.: sentié, murité, udité. Confusingly enough for the tyro whom the book purports to guide, the following paragraph mentions only the less frequent variants unaffected by metaphony: sentié, pedié, complié. If tondir hints at the predecessor of tundir ‘to shear’, the base is TONĐERE, not TUNDERE. An inaccurate etymon is supplied for arrepentirse.
extremes of the social spectrum.106 The reward was the detection of several excessively sweeping assumptions in the schemes of Menéndez Pidal and Hanssen. García de Diego emphasized these loosely connected points: a few bookish -e- verbs of the -ir class (a- and trans-gredir; sumergir beside emergir) are subject neither to metaphony nor to diphthongization, keeping their radical -e- intact throughout the paradigm; one pattern of vowel dissimilation in substandard speech (i-i > i-e) affects the stems of certain verbs introduced by di- and in-: digerí, diverti2on, infe-isen; the borderline between the -er and the -ir class is hazier than scholars have hitherto surmised, because metaphony of the pretonic vowel, to this day observable in pudriendo, over certain periods of time engulfed also Cl.-Sp. quiriendo (a change facilitated or provoked by the coexistence of pret. pude, quise?) and, occasionally, trimió, (con)ti2iendo, virtió;108 the relation of hirvi2ente to conveniente (OSp. -vii-nt-) must be described in other terms than those of -er vs. -ir; in pretonic syllables current usage steers a middle course between two radical solutions well attested down to the 16th century: (a) resistance to metaphony: pedió, feríó, arrepenti2ere, venieron, (b) over-indulgence in metaphony: viñita, di¿a, sir2ita, pidimos, siguimos; on the modern colloquial level muriera, for many speakers, is compatible with dormiera, an irreversible distribution of -u- and -o-.

While the earlier categorical statements now appeared nuanced by well-documented qualifications, no fresh light was shed on the central problem, that of metaphony vs. monophthongization operative in *stems. Garcfa de Diego was aware of OSp. (dial.) sirven beside sirvo, but conservatively regarded MÉTOR > mido as the sole nucleus of the group, brushing off *PETIIO, SERVIIO, and VESTIO as mere accretions and, consistently enough, declaring the i of mide(s), miden strictly analogical.107

17. The declining phase of the debate. It is disappointing to report that the last fifty years have witnessed little progress in the elucidation of the problem; in fact there have been retreats from earlier approaches to excellence.108

Shortly after the First World War, P. Fouché, in a study ostensibly devoted to the present tense in Spanish,109 but actually amounting to a mere torso, ushered in an era of stagnation.

105 Elementos de gramática histórica castellana §166 (Burgos, 1914).

106 The author traces quiiriendo to Álverez Gato, Santa Teresa, and Cervantes (citing the var. quisriendo as proof of contamination with the preterite); trimió to Hernán Mexia; tiniendo to Santa Teresa, arguing that mod. coll. virtió may be due to the pressure of the compounds in -vertir. In his analysis of adquirir and conveniente he underrates the power of Latinization.

107 As expected, the treatment of the problem in García de Diego's Gramática histórica española 197-208 (Madrid, 1951; reprinted 1963) shows a lamentably retrograde attitude. The collateral pressure of such 'strong' preterites as pude, quise is now brushed aside, and appeal is made instead to a 'weak' (i.e. subphonemic) metaphony to account for pudriendo—an inopportune retreat, by implication, to the stand of M. A. Colton (1909), impugned with such vigor by T. Navarro (RFE 10.26-56 [1923]) and made even more vulnerable by the advent of structuralism. García de Diego reconstructs the proto-Castilian paradigm sirvo, sierv-es, -e, -en, servimos, etc. (200), allows for agregió ~ agridió, su-mergió ~ -mirgió as coexistent standard forms, and credits the e of concerniente, from concernir [as against the -i- of (say) sirviente, from servir], to the old wavering cern-er ~ -ir.

108 Nothing better characterizes the prolonged spell of apathy than the fact that É. Bourciez's superficial statement in his Éléments de linguistique romane §390 (Paris, 1910)—to the effect that mido spread from mid-tendo, at length causing mido to replace *miedo < *METO (sic)—was left unchanged in the 2d ed. (1923), the 3rd (1930), and even the 4th (1946; reprinted 1956), the last revised by J. Bourciez. Yet our ignorance, in the author's own words, cried out for remedy: 'Toutefois, pour des raisons qui restent obscures, cette influence n'a pas uniformément prévalu'.

109 'Le présent dans la conjugaison castillane', Annales de l'Université de Grenoble 34.339-
Devoid of precise references to manuscript readings, to modern dialect forms, to preferences of academicians and tone-setting writers, and to most interpretations by previous analysts, his prolix and facile treatment abounded in unverifiable reconstructions, and fell short in every respect of the standards set after the mid nineties. Six years later he presented a twenty-page historical account—presumably the longest and most ambitious ever attempted—of the paradigms of miento, visto, duermo. One half of this second paper was given over to an excursion on the five isolable situations favoring the reduction of -i-e- to -i- in Spanish; while this digression, despite errors of detail, was fundamentally sound, the principal subject of the investigation fared not nearly so well. Aside from the general untidiness—the starring of forms on record and failure to star others that are hypothetic—Fouché showed no flair for relative chronology, assuming again and again (to cite just one example of an untenable tacit presupposition) that the [i] of -n6 and -TIA(M) maintained its separate existence at a time when the -i-e- diphthong had already crystallized; the reverse sequence of events is plausible, at least outside the Leonese domain. Fouché's basic contention, in regard to -e- stems within the -ir class, was that -e/-i- (pedir) marked the norm, while -e/-ie- (erguir, hervir, mentir) represented a lag behind that norm, a retardation for which miscellaneous explanations, some of them far-fetched and practically all fabricated ad hoc, had to be adduced. Special reasons for Fouché's indefensible hy-

66, esp. 352–62 (1923), a paper apparently left incomplete except through its link with the author's later Études (1929); see fn. 111 below.

111 The monograph operates throughout with modern instead of medieval spellings (Gibia 'cuttlefish', lucio(llo) 'tomb', rubio 'blond'); indulges in unwarranted reconstructions (*IMPLÖ, *CÖMLIÈRE, *[RECUTIRÈ, *RUBBRIUM, *[CONCPÍO, etc.); leaves out of the reckoning, in establishing chronological sequences, the ever-present possibility of wholesale replacement, under analogical pressure, of individual forms and partial sets (thus, VLat. *MTÖ for MÉTÖ is superfluous: 353); and misses or, worse, glosses over all critically diffi-

At the very least, the documentation available for dialectally colored forms like vieste(n), highlighted in the earlier treatises by Keller, Gaasner, Menéndez Pidal, Hanssen (1895, 1913), etc., did not prevent Fouché from having recourse to a gratuitous asterisk.

114 In mentir and sentir, for example, syllable-final n was credited with the braking power
pothesis were, first, his overestimation of -I- and -J- as stimuli of metaphony (which they are on a more generous scale in Gallo- than in Hispano-Romance); and, second, his etymological helplessness (evident in the case of engreir and derretir115), which diluted the core comprising exir, seguir, servir, and vestir/embesiir—-x-, -st- and -s- flanking E.

It would be tedious to digest, in comparable detail, fleeting references to metaphony vs. diphthongization in the ranks of Spanish -ir verbs in most manuals, reference books, and monographs published in the last half-century: all progress was stalled by the prevalent indifference in Romance quarters to the study of inflection, temporarily overshadowed by more appealing disciplines. Such desultory hints as one ferrets out add little or nothing to the elucidation of the nuclear problem.116

IV. CONCLUSIONS

18. If we agree to limit our conclusions to the core of the problem and to disregard the numerous side issues, the results of this inquiry lend themselves to (without any independent corroboration); for the -ie- of fier- the metathesis of [rj] in FERIÓ was made responsible; erguir and hervir were declared analogical, etc.

115 It is amusing to read Fouché's hair-splitting insistence on *engriedio rather than *engried(d)io as the inferred midway point between Sp. engrio and VLat. *INGREDI~ if the underlying derivation itself is worthless, as Corominas rightly observes. For derretir 'to melt' Fouché relies on García de Diego's desperate attempt (RFE 9.152 [1922]) to salvage an old hypothesis weak beyond recovery (DETERERE 'to rub off, wear out' X RETERERE 'to rub again and again').

116 Straight historical grammars, from J. Alemany Bolufer, Estudio elemental de gramática histórica de la lengua castellana3 §§225-7 (Madrid, 1911), to G. B. Pellegrini, Grammatica storica spagnola §149 (Bari, [1950]), have been quite unenlightening; the latter follows in Gassner's footsteps, to the point of repeating the erroneous analysis of siegat, and throws in a few misprints for good measure: r. rijo, erguir. Even B. Pottier, Introduction à l'étude de la philologie hispanique: 2. Morphosyntaxe 87 ([Bordeaux], 1958) is satisfied with declaring that mentir, dormir probably split off from pedir, escopir on account of the heavier use of radical-stressed forms, a peculiarity not only undemonstrated but unlikely, if proved correct, to have acted in isolation.

The authors of even the best-known language histories—a genre traceable to the thirties—tend to sweep the problem under the rug; this is especially true of W. J. Entwistle, The Spanish language together with Portuguese, Catalan, and Basque 164 (New York, 1938; orig. London, 1930), and of R. K. Spaulding, How Spanish grew 84-5, 111-2 (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1943). R. Lapesa, in his monograph Asturiano y provenzal en el Fuero de Ávila §35 (Acta Salm. 2:4; Salamanca, 1948), has assembled carefully distilled data on the local pres. subj. (sparring use of metaphony: compia; preservation and spread of -ia: feria, partian, podia; extension of the velar interfix: esca, perga); he gives the barest minimum of attention to the fringes of our problem, and apparently none to its kernel, in the five successive editions of his Historia de la lengua española (Madrid, 1942-62). Equally disappointing, if not more, is V. Šišmarév, Ošerki po istorii jazykov Ispanii 105-6 (Moscow and Leningrad, 1941).

Among the monographic treatments one might have expected M. Křepinský's Prague dissertation (1918; translated and annotated by García de Diego: Inflexión de las vocales en español [Madrid, 1923; reprinted 1962]), to shed light on the development at issue. But while many of its pages are devoted to an adjective like te-, ti-bio, and to the stems of certain verbs (on exir see 85), the all-important interplay of stem and conjugational suffix elicits no comment worth noting. The same bias has spilled over into the attitude of D. Alonso, La fragmentación fonética peninsular 105-54 (Madrid, 1962).
Diphthongization, Monophthongization, Metaphony

the following ten-point summary:

1. The paradox of the -e/-i- verbs (like ceñ-ir/ciñ-o) is that the range of i in the singular indicative (1, 2, 3, 6) would better fit a rising diphthong (ie or ue) than a monophthong reputedly arrived at through metaphony. Such diphthongs depend on stress; metaphony emphatically does not.

2. The difficulty is smoothed out if we posit two initially unrelated major sources for -i-: (a) genuine metaphony, operative chiefly in I ë stems (concebir, constreñir, feñir, medir, etc.), and (b) the monophthongization of the diphthong -ie- stimulated by the contiguity of s-, -s (+ cons.), -x and the vicinity of r-, cons. + r, cons. + l, etc. (say, exir, seguir, servir, vestir beside embestir).

3. Forms like siegue, vieste, identifiable at the threshold of the literary period in Leonese and, on a minor scale, in Navarro-Aragonese, may be safely projected onto the level of proto-Castilian as well, on the analogy of other instances of greater conservatism of peripheral dialects. At the critical evolutionary stage, Castile was the great innovator, both in actual change and in bold leveling.

4. The assumed merger of the two sources (a) and (b) explains many issues heretofore left in abeyance; e.g. why SERVU > siervo remained unaltered, while SERVIT > sierve became sirve (in SELLA > siella > silla it was the /s/ that produced the chief pressure, in conjunction with /s/). The metaphonic ingredient accounts best for Forms 9 and 10: mid-amos, -dis; durm-amos, -dis. Conversely, monophthongization of -ie- yields the clue to the spread of i to rhizotonic forms.

5. Some details of the merger escape us; it is, for instance, not clear whether in the original paradigm Form 1 was sigo or siego. The safest conjecture is that -i- and -ie- forms coexisted, with subdialectal or idiolectal differentiation, as is demonstrably true in the case of exir (which upon occasion tolerated even rhizotonic e). The picture was further blurred through differently directed lexical attractions and repulsions (a game played by medir < MÉTIRI and pedir < PETERE, possibly with a measure of additional interference from EXPEDIR), through the erratic appearance of the velar increment /k/ or /g/, as in i(e)sca, i(e)xca, through false regression and dialectal hypercharacterization, etc.

6. The eventual diachronic asymmetry in the ranks of -e/-i- and -o/-u-verbs is principally due to the fact that there has at all times been a conjugational -ir class in Hispano-Romance, but no corresponding *-ur class: the generalization of pid- could be blocked, in deference to dissimilatory tendencies, by -imos, -ides, but there was no *-umos, *-udes to scotch the gradual diffusion of -u- all over the paradigm at the expense of shrinking -o-. It is also true that the less clear distinction (in articulatory and auditive terms) of back vowels as compared to front may have contributed to the discrepancy. One further concomitant: the occasional monophthongization -ue- > -e- (as in culebra, fleco, frente) could not produce nearly the same effect as -ie- > -i-.

7. Nevertheless, there were long stretches through which the set (say) pid-o, pid-e(s), but ped-imos (phonetically motivated) was flanked by the set cumpl-o, cumpl-e(s), but compl-imos (phonetically unmotivated), a situation understandable only on the independent assumption of a very deeply embedded pattern: 1, 2, 3, 6—X; 4, 5—Y, with X representing a vowel one notch higher than Y.
Similarly, the spread of *pid-* from *pid-ió* to *ped-i* was blocked phonetically, while structure shielded *dorm-ió* from the pressure of *durm-ió*.

(8) Conceivably the single major advantage gained from the new approach here advocated is that it explains the seeming spread of metaphony at the cost of diphthongization (siegues > sigues, sierve > sirve, viesten > visten) at a time when, in Castile at least, metaphony, a very old heritage, was approaching exhaustion, while the relatively new process of diphthongization was in full swing. Clearly, the flagging metaphony in isolation could not have achieved this vigorous breakthrough against a thriving competitor; it succeeded solely through its alliance with a force even more recent than diphthongization of *ś* (and *ǭ*), hence endowed with greater impact, namely partial monophthongization of *ie*.

(9) The weakening grip of metaphony is best amenable to observation in the often mentioned but never fully explained contrast OSp. *dev-ér* : *dev-ió* vs. *ment-ir* : *mint-ió*, etc. The sharper characterization and individuation of conjugation classes, through acceptance (*-ir* class) or rejection (*-er* class) of *-e/-i*, was allowed to override the mechanics of metaphony.

(10) The relative strength of the diphthong at the decisive moment (except in certain narrowly defined environments which made it vulnerable) is also the best explanation for the inability of the *-e/-i* model to dislodge its *-e/-ie* rival completely. The transfer from one group to the other was limited to individual verbs (and their satellites), with similarities of form and affinities of meaning exerting their expected pressures. Subsequent growth was further complicated by the steady absorption of Latinisms, most of them assigned to the *-ir* class even where there were vernacular primitives in *-er*, and by the tendency of Castilian, and even more of Navarro-Aragonese, to shift from *-er to -ir*. Thus, *convertir*, traceable to the Middle Ages, and modern in-, *per-vertir*, move along in the groove of *verter < vértere (-e/-ie-)*; the learned verbs in *ferir*, though based on *ferre* 'to carry', have been allowed to dovetail *f- > h-erir < ferre* and *zaherir < facerir* 'to reproach', lit. 'slap one's face' < *facie(m) ferire*; *requerir*, once an *-e/-i* verb (Apolonio 218d, *requiro : miro*), has been reconciled with *querer* (*-e/-ie*). Slight losses have occurred in the ranks of *-e/-i* verbs through generalization of the radical *-i*: *recibir* (despite *concebir*) in its development parallels *cumplir*. The latest evolutionary stage is the allowance increasingly made among the highly literate for rhizotonic *e* in *-ir* verbs, as in *sumerge* 'he submerges' from *sumergir* (beside the less troublesome *emerger*).