

## XVII.—Nenia 'παίγνιον'

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This article, a lexicographical study suggesting that the central meaning of the word *nenia* was not 'dirge' but 'plaything' (*παίγνιον*), is summarized in the first paragraph of the last section, page 262.

## I

The word *nenia* was thus defined by Festus (as read by Paulus): *Nenia est carmen, quod in funere laudandi gratia cantatur ad tibiam*. Unfortunately, little now remains of the line from the *Materterae* of Afranius with which Festus illustrated his definition, and the word does not have exactly this meaning in many passages both later and earlier than Festus. Still, much ancient evidence supports this definition; it is the first of the meanings given for the word by Festus; and modern scholars have been agreed that the central and original meaning of *nenia* was in fact '*carmen funebre*', 'a kind of dirge', a song both sorrowful and laudatory, performed at a funeral, to the accompaniment of the flute.<sup>1</sup>

We may give another reason for the almost exclusive attention paid to this meaning of the word in modern scholarship. Such a dirge would belong to a class of folk-poetry known all over the world, from very early times to the present, and often studied.<sup>2</sup> Its existence at early Rome, in some form or other, would have to be assumed even if there were no evidence more direct than the laments in Virgil's *Aeneid* (e.g., 9.481–97) or the lines of Lucretius (3.894–911), or a few reliefs from Roman monuments showing scenes of lamentation.<sup>3</sup> Besides the testimony concerning *nenia*,

<sup>1</sup> Paul. Fest. 163 M.; see below, section 2, citation no. 36; Afranius *Com.* fig. 218<sup>1</sup> [below, no. 30]; other meanings, nos. 10ff.; 140ff. For *nenia* '*carmen funebre*', cf. Quint. *Inst.* 8.2.8 [80]; Hor. *Carm.* 2.20.21 [40]; Ov. *Fast.* 6.668 [47]; Sen. *Apocol.* 12.3 [50]. Any dirge would combine praise with lament; cf. Cic. *Leg.* 2.62 [35] and Diomedes (GLK 1.485.6 [37]) on *nenia* as '*cantus lugubris*'. For the assumed central meaning, cf. Walde, *Lat. etym. Wörterb.*<sup>2</sup> s.v. "nēnia, naenia" (872): 'Totenklage, Leichengesang'; Kroll in *RE* s.v. "Nenia": römische Totenklage.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. O. Böckel, *Psychologie der Volksdichtung* (ed. 2, Leipzig, 1913), 97–126; O. Schrader, *Reallexikon der indogermanischen Altertumskunde*, 1 (ed. 2, Berlin, 1917–23), 124–127.

<sup>3</sup> A relief from Amiternum: Cuq in *DS* s.v. "Funus," fig. 3361; Blümner, *Röm. Privatalt.*, fig. 76. A relief from the tomb of the Haterii: Cuq, fig. 3360; Blümner, fig. 75.

however, numerous passages refer to the performance of dirges by *praeficae*, professional wailing-women. Their words were both laudatory and sorrowful; they chanted on various occasions: before the house of the deceased, during the funeral procession, and even at the pyre.<sup>4</sup> Finally, Nonius (145 M.) identifies *nenia* with the song of a *praefica*: *Nenia, ineptum et inconditum carmen, quod a conducta muliere, quae praefica diceretur, is, quibus propinqui non essent, mortuis exhiberetur.* Varro de vita populi Romani lib. IIII: ibi a muliere, quae optima voce esset, perquam laudari; dein neniam cantari solitam ad tibias et fides.<sup>5</sup> If this plausible identification is accepted, we gain a vivid picture of the dirge called *nenia*. It has been accepted, and the picture is so clear that the word has become a generic term, "the *nenia*," used to indicate a definite type of folk-poetry.

Such a dirge, *ineptum et inconditum* though it may have been, was likely, in the imagination of scholars fired by the zeal for folk-poetry characteristic of the early nineteenth century, to have had an important influence on the development of literary forms. One may compare the *θρήνος* of the Greeks.<sup>6</sup> The difficulty, of course, for one who wishes to substantiate such a belief, is to produce any extant example of "folk-poetry," free from "literary" influence.

<sup>4</sup> The most important passage is Varro, *L.L.* 7.70 (text of R. G. Kent, "Loeb Classical Library"): <Praefica> dicta, ut Aurelius scribit, mulier ab luco quae conduceretur quae ante domum mortui laudis eius caneret. Hoc factitatum Aristoteles scribit in libro qui <in>scribitur Νόμμος βαρβαρικά, quibus testimonium est, quod <in> Freto est Naevii: Haec quidem hercle, opinor, praefica est; nam mortuum collaudat. Claudius scribit: Quae praeficeretur ancillis, quemadmodum lamentarentur, praefica est dicta. Utrumque ostendit a praefectione praeficam dictam.

Aurelius' words (ante domum) may be nothing more than an attempt to explain the word *prae-fica*, but Cuq (*DS* s.v. "Funus," 1389) and Kroll (*RE* s.v. "Nenia," 2392) identify as *praeficae* the female mourners shown beside the couch in the relief from the tomb of the Haterii, which illustrates the *πρόθεσις* of the body. For lamentation during the funeral procession, cf. a gloss (Philox. *PR* 78 = *CGL* 2.156.35): *Praefica, ἡ πρὸ τῆς κλίνης ἐν τῇ ἐκφορᾷ κοπτομένη, θρηνηφῶδες ἐπ' ἐκφορᾷ.* This is probably the occasion referred to by Nonius (66 M.): *Praeficae dicebantur apud veteres quae adhiberi solent funeri, mercede conductae, ut et flerent et fortia facta laudarent.* For lamentation at the pyre, cf. Serv. *Aen.* 6.216 (citing Varro).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. below, citations nos. 38 and 34. It is most unfortunate that the locale of this performance is not specified, but we may interpret Varro's *ibi* in the light of the closely related passage in Cicero (*Leg.* 2.62 [35]): *honoratorum virorum laudes in contione memorentur easque etiam ut cantus ad tibicinem prosequatur.* The laudation evidently took place during the funeral procession at a halt in a public place (in contione). Cf. above, note 4.

<sup>6</sup> The best discussions are: M. P. Nilsson, "Der Ursprung der Tragödie," *NJW* 27 (1911) 604-642, 673-696; E. Reiner, *Die Rituelle Totenklage der Griechen* (Stuttgart, 1938); cf. my review of Reiner, *CW* 33 (1939-40) 260f.

Thus Niebuhr, in the interests of his famous theory, pointed to the metrical epitaphs of the Scipios as surviving compositions showing very strongly the influence of *neniae* or of a type which he thought was very closely related, the songs performed at banquets in praise of famous men (clarorum virorum laudes: Cic. *Brut.* 75). Niebuhr's theory has not won general acceptance.<sup>7</sup> It did, however, have the merit of impelling scholars to examine other evidence bearing on the history of these and other types of Roman folk-poetry.

The result, for "the *nenia*," was distinctly unfavorable. On the one hand, it was pointed out, the shrill cries of exaggerated praise and the crocodile tears of the *praeeficae* were repeatedly ridiculed by the comic and satiric poets, until the *praeeficae* became a kind of standing joke.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, the word *neniae* was used in later prose and poetry as a synonym for *nugae*. For example, Phaedrus (3 prol. 10; 4.2.3) speaks of his own verses as *neniae*, exactly as Catullus (1.4) terms his *nugae*. Compare the contemptuous tone in Petron. 47.10: *eiusmodi nenias rustici faciunt*. Moreover, Horace (*Epod.* 17.29) and Ovid (*Ars* 2.102; *Fast.* 6.142) use *nenia* to refer to a witch's incantation, and, in another place (*Epist.* 1.1.63), Horace applies *nenia* to a children's jingle.<sup>9</sup> These facts seemed to suggest overwhelmingly that the dirge, consisting of traditional formulae and monotonous phrases, and performed by the disreputable *praeeficae*, was scorned as early as the time of Plautus, and fell into disuse, while the funeral oration in prose, similar in function to the dirge and much more suitable to the Roman temperament, became increasingly popular. Such, at least, was the conclusion reached by the noted French scholar, M. Henri de la Ville de Mirmont, in a lengthy paper on "La Nenia."<sup>10</sup> La

<sup>7</sup> For references, see Schanz-Hosius, *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.* 14, 23f., and add: D. R. Stuart, *Epochs of Greek and Roman Biography* (Berkeley, 1928) 202–208; F. Altheim, *Epochen der römischen Geschichte*, 1 (Frankfurt a.M., 1934), 232.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Plaut. *Truc.* 495f., *Friv.* fg. 7; Lucil. 954f.; and especially, Gell. 18.7.3: *Ego enim (sc. Domitius) grammaticus vitae iam atque morum disciplinas quaero, vos philosophi mera estis, ut M. Cato ait, mortualia (Scribnerius, mortuaria codd.); glosaria namque colligitis et lexicidia, res taetras et inanes et frivolas tamquam mulierum voces praeeficarum*. For *mortualia*, cf. Plaut. *Asin.* 808: *Haec sunt non nugae, non enim mortualia*.

<sup>9</sup> These passages are cited in full, below, section 2, nos. 140, 141 (Phaedrus), 153 (Petron.), 120, 122, 123 (Horace and Ovid), 135 (Horace).

<sup>10</sup> *RPh* 26 (1902) 263–271, 335–348; reprinted, with a few changes, in his *Études sur l'ancienne poésie latine* (Paris, 1903) 359–406. Schwegler (*Römische Geschichte*, 1 [ed. 2, Tübingen, 1867; ed. 1, 1853] 53ff.) seems to have been the first to draw these inferences about the formulaic character of the dirge; Corssen (*Origines poesis Romanae*

Ville de Mirmont, in his careful analysis of a great many literary passages in which the word occurs, also brought into the discussion some facts which would have been of prime importance for Niebuhr's theory. We do have some compositions actually called *neniae*. Ausonius and Apollinaris Sidonius use the word, quite seriously, to designate their own memorial epigrams. These authors, to be sure, are very late; but Seneca (*Apocol.* 12) has left us a parody, in verse, of a funeral chant which he calls *nenia*, while Suetonius (*Aug.* 100) records the fact that a *nenia*, to be sung by a chorus of girls and boys, was included among the ceremonies with which the senate proposed to honor the memory of Augustus at his funeral.<sup>11</sup> But the proposed *nenia* is not mentioned in Suetonius' list of the honors which were adopted; apparently it had been rejected, "sans doute à cause de la déconsidération qui s'attachait à la *nenia*, que les Romains du commencement de l'époque impériale méprisaient comme archaïque et surannée."<sup>12</sup> For the same reason, La Ville de Mirmont argued, this *nenia* and other funeral panegyrics in verse must not be related to the old *nenia*, but rather to the *cantus convivales*, which, according to Varro (*ap. Non.* 77 M.), were sometimes sung by *pueri modesti*. Though other scholars have contested this last point, arguing that in imperial times there was a deliberate attempt to revive the old *nenia* and purge it of its objectionable features,<sup>13</sup> it must be conceded that we still have no examples, which can be called folk-poetry, either of *neniae* or of

[Berlin, 1846] 103ff.) to suggest replacement by the *laudatio*. For other comments on *nenia*, see: Teuffel in *RE* 5 (ed. 1, 1848) s.v. "Naenia"; Bücheler on Sen. *Apocol.* 12 (*Symbola . . . in honorem F. Ritschelii collecta* [Leipzig, 1864], 63); A. Du Mesnil on Cic. *Leg.* 2.62 (Leipzig, 1879); Bücheler, *RhM* 37 (1882) 226f.; Saalfeld, *Tensaurus Italograecus* (Vienna, 1884) s.v. "nenia"; M. Bréal, *Dictionnaire étymologique latin* (Paris, 1885), s.v. "nenia"; W. Hirschfelder on Hor. *Carm.* 2.1.38 (Orelli-Baiter, ed. 4 [Berlin, 1886]). Schanz, *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.*, 1 (ed. 1, Munich, 1890) stated the canonical opinion (14): Das Lied erstarrte später und kam dann in Verruf und Verachtung.

<sup>11</sup> See below, nos. 61–68 (Ausonius), 75–77 (Sidonius), 50 (Seneca), 52 (Suetonius). For references to other funeral panegyrics which various critics have compared to the *nenia* proposed for Augustus, see my note on no. 52.

<sup>12</sup> *RPh* 26 (1902) 263; Suet. *Aug.* 100: Verum adhibito honoribus modo bifariam laudatus est . . . ac senatorum umeris delatus in Campum crematusque.

<sup>13</sup> See A-G. Amatucci, *RFIC* 32 (1904) 625–635; Blümner, *Röm. Privatalt.* 493, note 4; Kroll in *RE* s.v. "Nenia," 2392. Schanz, however, accepted La Ville de Mirmont's conclusions, adding, in the third edition of his *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.* (Munich, 1907), a new clause (24) to the one cited above (see note 10): Das Lied erstarrte später und kam dann in Verruf und Verachtung, so dass die literarische Entwicklung nicht an dasselbe anknüpfen konnte. Both clauses are retained by Hosius in the fourth edition (1927).

*cantus convivales*, so that neither side can prove its case. Aside from the question of the choral dirges, however, all authorities have accepted La Ville de Mirmont's view of the early history of the dirge called *nenia*.

Thus the discussion stirred up by the interest in Niebuhr's theory and in the study of folk-poetry, which occasioned it, has resulted in the almost complete discrediting of the Roman dirge as a native form likely to have influenced the development of Latin literature. We must approve of this result, for no matter how likely, *a priori*, such influence might appear to be, scholarship should address itself first to the task of determining, as precisely as possible, the relationship among particular examples of forms which are still extant, and are, therefore, literary rather than pre-literary. On the other hand, the attentive reader will have observed that all this disparagement of "the *nenia*" rests upon two assumptions, neither of which is beyond question. In the first place, it has been assumed that Nonius was correctly informed when he stated that the funeral-song called *nenia* was performed by a *praefica*. But Nonius is alone among ancient authorities in making this statement, and Varro, whom he cites as his authority, says something else: the laudation by a *praefica* was followed by the singing of a *nenia*. This point was observed by Kroll, and we should be wise to heed his warning that Nonius' words may be only an inference (Konstruktion),<sup>14</sup> and to avoid, for the present, interpreting *nenia* in terms of the performance by *praeficae*. In the second place, scholars have inferred from the sequence, (1) *nenia* 'carmen funebre', (2) *nenia* 'incantatio', (3) *neniae* 'nugae', that something in the character of the primitive dirge must have justified, if not caused the new meanings.<sup>15</sup> Yet the validity of this inference rests entirely on the assumption, noted in our first paragraph, that the central and original meaning of *nenia* was in fact 'carmen funebre'. What would happen to this theory of the nature and history of the dirge if it should turn out that the central meaning of *nenia* was not

<sup>14</sup> Kroll, in *RE* s.v. "Nenia," 2392.

<sup>15</sup> Walde, *Lat. etym. Wörterb.*<sup>2</sup> s.v. "nēnia, naenia": Aus dem herabgeleiteten Charakter solcher Lieder ist vielleicht erst die Bed. 'Schlaflied, Kinderlied auf der Strasse, hämische Kritik, abgeschmacktes Gerede u. dgl.' entwickelt. Cf. H. Gölzer, *Étude . . . de la latinité de Saint Jérôme* (Paris, 1884) 270; W. Goldberger, *Glotta* 18 (1930) 40. For the meaning 'lullaby' (which is not at all certain), see Hor. *Carm.* 3.28.16 [130] and Arnob. *Nat.* 7.32 [132].

'*carmen funebre*', but something else, perhaps closer to the meaning '*nugae*'?

The habit of associating the word *nenia* primarily with the meaning '*carmen funebre*' has thus become ingrained after a century of effort to discern the character and evolution of the Roman dirge. Difficult though it is to move against a tendency of such long standing, there are a number of considerations which should encourage us to do so. (1) The definition in Festus was based on a line of Afranius, but we no longer have this line. (2) Before the time of Afranius, the word *nenia* occurs in four passages from Plautus, where ancient commentators, intent on finding etymologies for the word, discerned different meanings for it, either '*finis*' or '*extremum intestinum*'.<sup>16</sup> It is true that in one of these passages (*Truc.* 213: *neniam dixit de bonis*) the context shows that *nenia* must refer to a form of verbal expression (not a chant) usual at a funeral, but in two others (*Pseud.* 1278: *id fuit nenia ludo*; *Poen.* 231: *neque umquam lavando et fricando scimus facere neniā*) there is nothing in the several contexts that suggests a funeral, and modern scholars have not been convincing in their efforts to interpret *nenia* in these passages as deriving its meaning from *nenia* '*carmen funebre*'.<sup>17</sup> In the fourth passage (*Bacch.* 889: *confossioem soricina nenia*), the meaning of *nenia* is altogether obscure.<sup>18</sup> (3) No satisfactory etymology for *nenia* in the sense '*carmen funebre*' has ever been advanced. Some ancient scholars, as recorded by Festus, derived *nenia* from Greek *νέαν* or *νήτη*, but this etymology is obviously impossible.<sup>19</sup> Another ancient etymology, appealing to the sound of the word itself, is also recorded by Festus (Paul. Fest. 163 M.: *Quidam volunt neniā ideo dici, quod voci similior querimonia*

<sup>16</sup> See my article, "Festus on *Nenia*," *TAPhA* 70 (1939) 357-367; and below, no. 15, for the meaning '*finis*', deduced from *Pseud.* 1278 and *Truc.* 213; and no. 20, for the meaning '*extremum intestinum*', deduced from *Bacch.* 889 and *Poen.* 231.

<sup>17</sup> I must include myself (*TAPhA* 70 [1939] 363 and note 13) in the condemnation above. For the passages referred to, see below, nos. 28 (*Truc.* 213), 10 (*Pseud.* 1278), 11 (*Poen.* 231), and 13 (*Bacch.* 889).

<sup>18</sup> *TAPhA* 70 (1939) 363, note 12. I had suggested (*ibid.*, 367) that in this passage too *nenia* had the meaning '*finis*', slightly extended in an obscene direction. This suggestion was taken up and elaborated by Riess, *CQ* 35 (1941) 159f., but, as it now seems to me, such a meaning is impossible. If *nenia* really had the meaning 'end' (which we may doubt), it might conceivably be applied to a part of the body, *sensu obsceno* (like our word *tail*), but when used of a mouse or shrew-mouse, it would surely be taken as meaning 'tail', quite literally.

<sup>19</sup> See my article, 364. I have reproduced the whole of the Festine passage below, note 33.

flementum sit), and La Ville de Mirmont (*RPh* 26 [1902] 338) therefore advanced his theory of an onomatopoeical origin for the word; but we have no other evidence (if we grant the status of evidence to this Stoic etymology) that the vocables *nē*, *nē* were ever expressive of grief to the Romans, though we do know of words for this meaning (*ēiulāre*, *vāgīre*, *pīpīre*) which have quite a different ring.<sup>20</sup> Again, Pollux (4.79) speaks of a Phrygian flute-song, *νηρίατον μέλος*, mentioned by Hipponax, and some scholars have assumed that *νηρία* was a Greek (or Greco-Anatolian) word transmitted to southern Italy without having been recorded in Greek literature. In order to confirm this rather unlikely hypothesis, these scholars appeal to a passage of Cicero in which he seems to say that *νηρία* was a Greek word meaning '*cantus lugubris*'; but the text of the passage is unfortunately corrupt just at this point.<sup>21</sup> Still other guesses have been made.<sup>22</sup> (4) At the other end of the assumed development of *nenia*, the word, when used in the sense '*nugae*', is always plural in form. In the earliest appearances of this meaning, in Phaedrus and Petronius, there is no hint that the usual meaning of *nenia* was

<sup>20</sup> Vaniček (*Griechisch-Lateinisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* [ed. 2, Leipzig, 1881; ed. 1, 1877]) had placed *nēn-ia* under the root *NU* 'tönen', comparing Skt. *nu* 'brüllen, schreien, schallen' and *nava*, *nava-na* 'Lob, Preis', and suggesting that *nēnia* resulted by contraction from *\*navan-ja*. Zimmermann (*Etymologisches Wörterbuch der lateinischen Sprache* [Hanover, 1915] s.v. "nenia"), who concludes from Pollux (see above) that *nenia* was a "Fremdwort," also adds: "jedenfalls aber den Schmerz ausdrückendes Schallwort," comparing the interjection *nē* 'surely'. This view of *nenia* as a "Schallwort" is accepted, with some qualification, by Ernout-Meillet, *Dict. étymol. lat.*, s.v. "nēnia": Peut-être forme à redoublement; en tout cas, mot expressif. Un emprunt n'est pas exclu.

<sup>21</sup> See below, no. 35 and my note; Walde, *Lat. etym. Wörterb.*<sup>2</sup>, s.v.: Am nächsten liegt die Annahme eines (kleinasiat.?) Lallwortes, das mit einer griech. Kolonisations-schicht nach Grossgriechenland getragen wurde, ohne je in die griech. Literatur aufzusteigen. Walde does not refer to the old theory of Scaliger, which related the assumed Greek *νηρία* to a Hebrew word *n<sup>h</sup>i* (*Amos* 5.16, etc.); cf. G. J. Vossius, *Etymologicon linguae latinae* (Amsterdam, 1695) 395; H. Lewy, *Die semitischen Fremdwörter im Griechischen* (Berlin, 1895) 167f.

<sup>22</sup> Regnaud (*Dictionnaire étymologique du Latin* [Lyon, 1908] s.v. "nenia") conjectured that *nenia* was derived from *\*nec-ven-ia*, the root being connected with *nex*, *νέκ-υς*; cf. H. Ehrlichs, *BPhW* 31 (1911) 1576, deriving *nenia* from *\*neksnia*, also related to *nex*.

The guesses of the so-called Apuleius minor need not be taken seriously, *De diphthongis* (ed. F. Osann, Darmstadt, 1826) 21: Naenia a nanus. Nanos enim veteres parvos dicebant; unde naenias frivola et inania aliqua, qualia scilicet parvuli actitare solent. Quidam autem naenia ab inani per demptionem primae vocalis asserunt derivatum. It is notable that this author knows only the usage *neniae* '*nugae*', and, in any case, he can hardly be dated earlier than the tenth century; cf. Schwabe in *RE* s.v. "Appuleius (9)", 257f.

'*carmen funebre*'. It is true that in Phaedrus *neniae* refers to verbal expressions (the poet's own verses), but in Petronius it refers to 'petty dishes', such as rustics prepare (47.10) or to 'hobbies', 'games' (46.4). If the original meaning of *nenia* was 'dirge', the shift to *neniae* 'trifling things' would be singular indeed. But *neniae* has every appearance of being a genuine popular word. If we may trust the glosses, derivatives were formed from it, *nenior* '*vana loquor*' and *niniosus* '*garrulus*'.<sup>23</sup> *Nenia* in the sense '*carmen funebre*', on the other hand, seems to belong to a learned tradition. It is quite possible that in popular speech the word retained a meaning older than the one it had received in the learned tradition. (5) Finally, one bit of the learned tradition, very possibly the oldest bit of all, has been overlooked by modern scholars. Under his lemma *Nenia* (145 M.), Nonius cited a sentence from Varro's *De vita populi Romani*, which we have quoted above (p. 216). In his first book, under *Praeficae* (67 M.), Nonius had given more of the passage: *dein neniam cantari solitam ad tibias et fides feorumque ludistras cursicassent.*† *Haec mulier vocitata olim praefica usque ad Poenicum bellum.* I give the text of Lindsay, who rightly rejected Scaliger's emendation, *eorum qui ludis Troicis cursitassent*, and retained, within daggers, the reading of the manuscripts. But in his edition of the grammatical fragments of Varro, Funaioli printed the (privately communicated?) emendation of Bücheler: *eorum qui ludis tricas curitassent.* This easy and palaeographically sound emendation has never received the consideration it deserves. Perhaps one reason is that in Funaioli's edition this passage is relegated to an appendix!<sup>24</sup> We should also note that the first sentence of the passage from Varro (*Ibi a muliere . . . curitassent*) is an indirect statement, whereas the second (*Haec mulier . . . bellum*) is direct. Nonius quoted Varro for the second sentence, which alone used the word *praefica*. Therefore the first sentence would appear to have been quoted by Varro from a still earlier authority.

In the following pages, therefore, I propose to abandon the fixed idea that the central and original meaning of *nenia* was '*carmen*

<sup>23</sup> See below, nos. 250ff.

<sup>24</sup> See below, no. 34 and my note. The older emendation of Scaliger, which held the field for so long, was utilized by J. Wehr in his article on "*Nenia*," published in a collection of papers honoring E. Curtius on his departure from Göttingen (*E. Curtium . . . valere iubet Societas Philologica Göttingensis* [Göttingen, 1868], 11-17). Wehr's arguments for an oriental origin of the Roman dirge are now quite out of date.



*funebre*'. I will attempt to review all the passages known to me in which the word occurs, from Plautus to the Venerable Bede, to determine as accurately as possible the several meanings of the word from these contexts, and then to search among these meanings, especially those which are given to the word by writers like Plautus and Phaedrus and Petronius, whose ears were attentive to popular speech, for one which may conceivably be central to them all. I believe that this search will not be in vain. Certain of the later passages using *neniae* in the plural suggest a new central meaning. It will not, at first sight, have any connection with the meaning '*carmen funebre*', but it will be consistent with the meaning of *neniae* in all the later passages, and it will fit exactly the puzzling context of Plaut. *Bacch.* 889: confossio<sup>r</sup>em soricina nenia. Moreover, a plausible etymology for the word in this sense can be suggested, and light can be thrown on the meaning of *nenia* in at least one of the eccentric passages of Horace (*Epist.* 1.1.63). Finally, a study of the implications of Bücheler's reading of the quotation from Varro made by Nonius will suggest how, in a learned tradition, *nenia* came to have the meaning '*carmen funebre*', and also how, in Plautus, it could appear to have the meaning '*finis*'. Fresh light will thus be shed on the nature of the ceremonies at the early Roman funeral procession and at imperial funerals, and, incidentally, on the important problem of Roman dramatic origins.<sup>25</sup>

## II

The citations below have been classified in five main groups, according to the most obvious differences in meaning: I. Nenia dea, II. *nenia*, sense uncertain (Plaut. *Pseud.* 1278, *Poen.* 231, *Bacch.* 889), III. *nenia* 'a form of verbal expression appropriate for the dead' (Plaut. *Truc.* 213), IV. *nenia* 'carmen', V. *neniae* 'nugae'. Most of the groups are subdivided, e.g., under IV. *nenia* 'carmen', we have A. 'carmen funebre', B. 'incantatio', C. 'cantilena', 'ludus', D. 'vox extrema cantionis'; and there are of course still further subdivisions. With a few exceptions, the main groups and the subdivisions within them are arranged in chronological order of the first occurrence, in extant passages, of the given meaning. This method has probably resulted in an excessively large

<sup>25</sup> Much of this lexicographical material, and some of these conclusions were presented in a doctoral thesis, hitherto unpublished, at Princeton University (1933). Since then, the material has been somewhat augmented, and the conclusions very considerably revised. I am especially indebted to the kindness of Prof. Dr. G. Dittmars for allowing the references to the word *nenia* (*naenia*), collected for the *TLL*, to be copied for me.

number of small divisions, but it must be remembered that our object is merely to exhibit the diversity of meanings as evident from the contexts alone, and that we wish to avoid making any assumptions, for the present, as to the development of one meaning from another.

The exceptions to the rule of chronological arrangement are as follows. (1) The few passages bearing on the existence and nature of *Nenia dea* are placed first, even though occurring in later authors, because it cannot be doubted that the goddess was old, and that she was connected in some way with the use of the word *nenia*. This is not to say that the guesses of Roman scholars as to her nature are to be accepted without question. (2) In some literary passages, the use of *nenia* obviously reflects an earlier usage still extant, and such passages have been placed together, e.g., Amm. 31.13.19 [43], reflecting Hor. *Carm.* 2.1.38 [42]. (3) The continuity of tradition among different definitions of the word is often obvious, and such definitions have been grouped together, e.g., nos. 34–38 and nos. 80–116. Wherever possible, the definitions have been placed close to the literary passage on the usage of which they were based, e.g., Plaut. *Bacch.* 889 [13] and the mistaken interpretations and usages based on it [20–25].

I have taken some pains to cite abundant context for the use of the word, and to note textual difficulties, especially in the spelling of *nenia* (or *naenia*).<sup>26</sup> To save space, I have printed all passages as prose, without indicating divisions between lines of verse. The capitalization and punctuation is also mine. In a second paragraph, I have added comments of various scholars on the meaning of the word in the given passage, but only when it seemed desirable to do so. I hope that no one will ask for completeness in this matter. In most cases, the context supplied will be a sufficient check on the accuracy of the heading under which the passage is classified. In general, I have tried to be very conservative in supplying definitions for the headings (cf. no. 130).

I have assigned serial numbers (leaving numerous gaps, for convenience) to the citations in order to facilitate reference, and have

<sup>26</sup> See below, note 51. Aside from the spellings in our manuscripts, there is no evidence as to the true (spoken) form of the word. It does not occur in inscriptions, and the grammarians are not explicit on this point. The testimony of manuscripts on such a point is hardly good evidence, but there is no better. Unfortunately, one may suspect that in some cases modern editors have not reproduced the spelling of the manuscripts, because it may have conflicted with their notions of orthography. Older editions invariably printed *naenia*; modern editions almost as regularly give *nenia*, perhaps merely on the authority of Brambach (*Hilfsbüchlein für lateinische Rechtschreibung* [Leipzig, 1864] 49). Occasionally, therefore, my critical notes call attention to the spelling of *nenia* (*naenia*) in the manuscripts, as well as to other matters of importance.

I have tried to follow the system of the *TLL* in abbreviations of the names of authors and the titles of works (see the *Index* volume, Leipzig, 1904) and to give due warning wherever my reading cannot be verified in editions named there. If I have departed from the system in other respects, it has only been for the sake of greater explicitness. See the list of abbreviations of titles of journals and collections at the beginning of this volume.

appended in a sixth group (nos. 250–259) a few glosses indicating possible derivatives of *nenia*.

### I. Nenia dea

#### A. had chapel outside Viminal gate

1. Fest. 161.32–162.1 M. (L. 156.13–15) <sup>27</sup>:

<Neniae deae>  
 sacellum ultra portam <Viminalem . . . . .>  
 . . . . . t aediculam.

Cf. Paul. Fest. 163 M. (L. 157): Neniae deae sacellum extra portam Viminalem fuerat dedicatum.

Wissowa, *Rel. u. Kult.* 197: the location of her shrine, away from the center of early Rome, indicates that N. was probably not one of the earliest circle of deities.

#### B. associated by Varro with *nenia* 'carmen funebre' and *nenia* 'finis'

3. Aug. *Civ.* 6.9 (Varro *Ant. div.* 14, fg. 65 Agahd): Denique et ipse Varro commemorare et enumerare deos coepit a conceptione hominis, quorum numerum est exorsus a Iano, eamque seriem perduxit usque ad decrepiti hominis mortem, et deos ad ipsum hominem pertinentes clausit ad Neniā deam, quae in funeribus senum cantatur.

R. Agahd, *Varronis Antiquitatum rerum divinarum Libri* (Leipzig, 1898; *Jahrb. f. class. Phil.*, Supbd. 24). Ernout-Meillet, *Dict. étymol. lat.* s.v. "nenia": Au premier sens ['carmen funebre'] se rattache sans doute le nom propre *Nenia*, déesse des lamentations funèbres; Stoll, in Roscher, *Lexikon* s.v. "Naenia": die Personifikation der Leichenklage; so Kroll, in *RE* s.v. "Nenia," 2392. It is to be noted, however, that Varro also emphasized the polar position of *Nenia* with respect to *Ianus*, probably because of the etymological theory based on the meaning *nenia* 'finis'; cf. Arnob. *Nat.* 4.7 [5]; Fest. [15]; Heller, *TAPhA* 70 (1939) 364, note 15.

5. Arnob. *Nat.* 4.7: In tutela sunt Orbonae orbati liberis parentes, in Neniae, quibus extrema sunt tempora.

Because of the verbal discrepancies, Agahd (Varro, page 124) doubted that Varro (cf. above) was the authority for this statement also, whose immediate source seems to be Cornelius Labeo. But the connection with *nenia* 'finis' seems explicit enough in both cases. It is not certain that Tertullian (*Nat.* 2.15) refers to *Nenia*.

### II. *nenia*, sense uncertain

#### A. in comic locutions

10. Plaut. *Pseud.* 1273–78: Orant (sc. iuvenes) med ut saltem. . . . Ad hunc me modum intuli . . . ludibundus. Plaudunt . . . Occepi denuo, hoc modo.

<sup>27</sup> References to Festus and to Paulus cite the pages of Müller's second edition (Leipzig, 1880) and of Lindsay's edition (Leipzig, 1913).



16. *Gloss.* Ps. Plac. N 14 (CGL 5.34.5; 5.86.18; 5.121.2): Neniam, finem; alias, carmen mortuorum.<sup>28</sup>

The form of the lemma makes it likely that this gloss was drawn either directly from a marginal comment on Plaut. *Truc.* 213 [28] or from a comment on this line as cited by Festus, above.

17. *Gloss.* (CGL 5.573.21): Nenias, finis vel vilissimas fabulas vel epitaphia, id est carmina quae in memoria mortuorum in tumbis scribuntur.

Cf. Ps. Plac., above, but here the form of the lemma and the second definition supplied suggest a gloss [170] on Ambros. *In Ps.* 118, serm. 11.19 [164]. For the third definition, see below, no. 116.

c. and, by mistaken interpretation (cf. nos. 13, 11)

1. defined as 'extremum intestinum', 'intestini perrectio'

20. Fest. 161.23–32 M. (L. 156.4–13):

Quidam aiunt nae <niae ductum nomen ab extre->  
mi intestini voca <bulo, quo sensu, aiunt testimo->  
nio, utitur Plautus <in Bacchidibus: si tibi est ma-> 25  
chaē[de]ra, at nobis <veruinast domi, qua quidem>  
te reddam, u <bi tu me inritaveris, confossio->  
rem soricina nenia; <idem: neque umquam lavan->  
do et f[e]rica <ndo sci> m <us facere neniam; namque>  
Graeci νεατον dic <unt extremum; sive quod chor-> 30  
darum ultima <νήτη appellata est, vocem extre->  
mam cantionis neni <am appellarunt>.

Cf. Paul. 163 M. (L. 157): Quidam aiunt neniae ductum nomen ab extremi intestini vocabulo; Graeci enim νεατον extremum dicunt; sive quod cordarum ultima νήτη dicitur, extremam cantionis vocem neniam appellarunt.

Heller, *TAPhA* 70 (1939) 359–63. My suggestion above for completing line 24 draws upon Ursinus' restoration. The interpretation 'extremum intestinum' (ἡ νήτη χορδή) is evidently a false deduction as to the meaning of *nenia* in *Bacch.* 889 [13] and *Truc.* 231 [11]; see *TAPhA* 70 (1939) 364f., and below, note 62.

22. Arnob. *Nat.* 7.24: Quid, inquam, sibi haec volunt? . . . Quid taedae, quid neniae, quid offae . . . penitae? Ex quibus . . . quod in secundo (*sc.* nenia) situm est, intestini est perrectio, per quam proluviis editur sūcis perexsiccata vitalibus.

Heller, *TAPhA* 70 (1939) 365, note 18.

## 2. and so used

24. Arnob. *Nat.* 7.25: O deorum magnitudo mirabilis . . . siquidem . . . neque prius iras atque animos ponunt nisi sibi adoleri paratas conspexerint nenias offasque reddi penitas.

<sup>28</sup> References to the Glossaries follow the system, wherever possible, of Lindsay's *Glossaria Latina* (Paris, 1926–31), as well as the pages of CGL.

Marchesi (Turin, 1934): reddi penitas *Lorenz*, reddier penitas *Zinke*, redemptas *P*.

La Ville de Mirmont, *RPh* 26 (1902) 269 note 4: 'edulium in minutas partes concisum.'

25. *Not. Tir.* 103.60–82: offa . . . attagina, (78) nenia, tumatulum, tumatularius, ungula, ungella.

W. Schmitz, *Commentarii Notarum Tironianarum* (Leipzig, 1893). W. Heraeus, *Kleine Schriften* (Heidelberg, 1937) 70f.; Goldberger, *Glotta* 18 (1930–31) 40f.; Heller, *TAPhA* 70 (1939) 365, note 19.

### III. nenia 'a form of verbal expression appropriate for the dead'

28. *Plaut. Truc.* 213f.: Huic homini amanti mea era apud nos neniam dixit de bonis; nam fundi et aedes obligatae sunt ob Amoris praedium.

nneiam *A*, neniam *BCD*; neniam dixit *AB*, dixit neniam *rell.*; h. h. a. neniam m. e. a. n. dixit d. b. *edd.*; de bonis *Plauti cod.*, domi *Festi cod. Farn.* [15] *edd. plerique* (see below, note 65).

For the meaning '*finis*,' cf. *Fest.* [15], *Ps. Plac.* [16]; but *neniam* here must be interpreted in the light of the previous conversation (162–177) between Astaphium (the speaker here) and Diniarchus, esp. 174 (*Din.*: Non hercle occidi, sunt mi etiam fundi et aedes); cf. La Ville de Mirmont, *RPh* 26 (1902) 335: Ma maitresse a enterré peu à peu le patrimoine de ce galant; elle a chanté la *nénie* sur sa défunte fortune. The word must refer to a form of verbal expression usually heard at a funeral, but not a chant. I can find no example of *carmen dicere* before Horace (e.g. *Carm. Saec.* 8). See below, 258.

### IV. nenia 'carmen'

#### A. 'carmen funebre'

##### 1. so used

30. *Afran. Com.* fg. 218<sup>1</sup> (*Fest.* 161.14–16 M. [L. 154.20–22]):

<Afra->

nium in Materte <ris: . . . nenia . . . exe->

quias eant.

quia seant. *F as read by Löwe*, quias canti *F as read by Ursinus*, <exe> quias canti <tant> *Scaliger*, <exe> quias canti <tabant> *Ursinus*.

The citation must have contained the word *nenia* (or *naenia*, cf. below, no. 36). For <exe>quias eant, cf. *Ter. Phorm.* 1026: exequias . . . ire; *Ov. Fast.* 6.663: pompam qui funeris irent. To complete the line, I would suggest: <ut cum nenia tibicines exe>quias eant; cf. *Ov. Fast.* 6.667f. [47].

##### 2. variously defined by antiquarians and lexicographers

- a. 'carmen post laudationem a praefica habitam cantatum ad tibias et fides eorum qui ludis tricas curitabant'

34. Varro *Gram.* fg. pag. 613 F. (Non. 145.24: Nenia ineptum et inconditum carmen . . . Varro de vita populi Romani lib. III: ibi a muliere . . . et fides; Non. 67.8: Varro de vita populi Romani lib. III: dein neniam . . . bellum): Ibi a muliere, quae optima voce esset, perquam laudari; dein neniam cantari solitam ad tibias et fides eorum qui ludis tricas curitassent. Haec mulier vocitata olim praefica usque ad Poenicum bellum.

Funaioli, *Gram. Rom. Frag.* (Leipzig, 1907); Lindsay, *Nonius* (Leipzig, 1903): eorumque ludistras cursicassent *codd.*, eorum qui ludis Troicis cursitassent Scaliger, curitassent Bueheler.

Scaliger's emendation was rightly rejected by Lindsay; cf. Schneider in *RE* s.v. "Lusus Troiae" 2059. The excellent reading of Bueheler was accepted by Ripsati (*Varronis De Vita Populi Romani Fragmenta* [Milan, 1939]), who, however, failed to interpret it in his commentary. See above, 222, and below, 254.

b. 'cantus ad tibicinem lugubris qui laudes honoratorum virorum in contione habitas prosequitur'

35. Cic. *Leg.* 2.62: Reliqua sunt in more, funus ut indicatur, si quid ludorum, . . . honoratorum virorum laudes in contione memorentur easque etiam ut cantus ad tibicinem prosequatur, cui nomen neniae, quo vocabulo etiam [Graecos] cantus lugubres nominantur.

etiam ut Kroll (*RE* s.v. "Nenia," 2391) etiam et *codd.*; grac chos A, graccus B, grecos H, Graccho Turnebus; etiam <apud> Graecos Wesenberg, [etiam Graecos] Amatucci (*RFIC* 32 [1904] 625f.).

No such word as *νηία* 'cantus lugubris' is known in Greek. Those who, like Walde (see above, note 21), accept Cicero's testimony (as emended by Wesenberg) refer to Pollux (4.79) for the Phrygian flute-song *νηίατον*, mentioned by Hipponax. But ancient scholarship seems to have associated *νηίατον* with *νεαίλας*; cf. Hesych. *N* 582: *νηήατος, νόμος παιδαριώδης καὶ Φρύγιον μέλος*; Stat. *Theb.* 6.120–24; Serv. *Aen.* 5.138; La Ville de Mirmont, *RPh* 26 (1902) 336–8; whereas *nenia*, on the basis of the Plautine passages giving it the sense 'finis' (above, nos. 10–13), was traced to Greek *νέατον* or *νήη*; cf. Heller, *TAPhA* 70 (1939) 364, note 15 and 358. Varro seems to have associated *Nenia dea* [3, 5] with *nenia* in the meaning 'finis' as well as 'carmen funebre'; both he and Cicero, whose definition of *nenia* is close to Varro's, must have been acquainted with the etymology, e.g., as stated by Festus [20] or Diomedes [37]. If Cicero had given the word a Greek etymology, it would surely have been this one; but *νήη* is not *νηία*, nor does it have the meaning 'cantus lugubris.' Even if the text were sound, therefore, we should wonder that Cicero could ascribe the origin of *nenia* to an unknown Greek word, when the supposed Greek etymon for *nenia* was well known; but the text is not sound. Amatucci's procedure is much superior to Wesenberg's. I have preferred to bracket *Graecos* as the expansion (hence the variants) of a marginal note (*viz. GR*) added by some scribe as a reminder of the Greek etymology current for the word. But *etiam* is not otiose: it indicates that Cicero knew of other meanings for *nenia* beside 'cantus lugubris,' e.g., such as it has in the Plautine passages. Though it has no very direct bearing on the textual question here, a passage of St. Jerome (*Epist.* 60.1.3) may be cited as a *testimonium* on Cicero's passage: Moris quondam fuit, ut super cadavera defunctorum in contione pro rostris laudes liberi dicerent et instar lugubrium carminum ad fletus et gemitus audientium pectora concitarent.

- c. 'carmen quod in funere laudandi gratia cantatur ad tibiam'

36. Fest. 161.13f. M. (L. 154.20f.):

Naenia est carmen, <quod in funere laudandi>  
gratia can <tatur ad tibiam, quem ad modum Afra->

Cf. Paul. 163 M. (L. 155): Nenia est carmen, quod in funere laudandi gratia cantatur ad tibiam.

Varro's works were certainly used by Verrius Flaccus, but Festus' definition differs notably from Varro's words in the *De vita populi Romani* [34], in that Varro (and Cicero) clearly separates the laudation from the *nenia*. Hence it seems better to trust to Paulus' reading, rather than accept (as I did, *TAPhA* 70 [1939] 359, note 3) Lindsay's restoration from Varro of the longer phrase, ad tibias et fides. The line may be filled quite satisfactorily (cf. no. 30, above) by supplying *quem ad modum*.

- d. 'carmen quod cum lamentatione extremum atque ultimum mortuo accinitur'

37. Diom. (GLK 1.484.22-485.8): Elegia autem dicta . . . Apud Romanos autem id carmen quod cum lamentatione extremum atque ultimum mortuo accinitur *nenia* dicitur *παρὰ τὸ νελαρον*, id est *ἔσχαρον*; unde et in chordis extremus nervus appellatus est *νήτη*. Nam et elegia extrema mortuo accinebatur sic ut *nenia*.

For the etymology, cf. Fest. [20] and Lydus [110]. Varro was doubtless acquainted with this doctrine (cf. on 35, above), and the definition in Diomedes shows the same association with *nenia* 'carmen funebre' and *nenia* 'finis' which is apparent in Varro's description of *Nenia dea* [3]; but Varro's definition of *nenia* [34] is distinctly different, so that it hardly constitutes a "certum indicium" of Varronian authorship for the statement above, which was printed as a fragment (303) of Varro's *De poematis* by Funaioli, *Gram. Rom. Frag.*<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, Diomedes must have had some authority for his statement, and Varro is the most likely ultimate source. As an antiquarian, Varro [34] may have described *nenia* somewhat differently than he would as a lexicographer interested in etymology.

- e. 'ineptum et inconditum carmen, quod a praefica exhibebatur eis mortuis quibus propinqui non erant'

38. Non. 145.24-27: Nenia, ineptum et inconditum carmen, quod a conducta muliere, quae praefica diceretur, is, quibus propinqui non essent, mortuis exhiberetur. Varro de vita populi Romani etc. Cf. *Gloss. Non.* (CGL 5.644.57): Nenia, ineptum carmen.

Lindsay has shown (*Nonius Marcellus' Dictionary of Republican Latin* [Oxford, 1901], 3ff.) that Nonius drew his illustrative citations from 41 annotated

<sup>29</sup> Funaioli's leading note (page 320) is puzzling to me: Varronem auctorem agnovit A. Augustinus (cf. O. Mueller ad hunc loc. [sc. Paul. Fest. 163.2]). Can it be that Funaioli referred to Müller's note at the foot of this page (163): 4.5 *M. Ter. Varro*] hunc intelligi vidit A. Aug. ? But this is from Müller's "Ann. Festi Qu. IX, 11," i.e., a note on the article "Navali corona," not "Naenia."



books, which he consulted in fixed order, and implies (100f.) that his definitions, when he gives any, were drawn from the annotations. But in this case, there is only one citation, and the definition does not by any means correspond to it, or, indeed, to any other statement about *nenia* known to us. Von Strzelecki, on the other hand (*RE* s.v. "Nonius Marcellus," 892), attributes the "Grundstock" of lemmas and definitions in each of Nonius' own 20 books to a special source, but he does not attempt to identify these sources. One must conclude that the authority of the definitions which Nonius gives is very much less than that of his illustrative citations. It is still possible that Nonius had access to reliable information about *nenia* differing from any that has come down to us, but one is rather inclined to suspect that Nonius (or his source) was merely careless in drawing unwarranted deductions from the citation from Varro which he used here (145) and from the passages which he had previously cited (67) to illustrate *praeficae*. Cf. above, no. 34, and below, 262.

3. so used, by Horace, Ovid, and others apparently drawing from this learned tradition

a. a feature of the usual rites of mourning in honor of the dead

40. Hor. *Carm.* 2.20.21-24: Absint inani funere neniae luctusque turpes et querimoniae; conpesce clamorem ac sepulcri mitte supervacuus honores.

Cf. *Schol. Hor.* [81]; Porph. [82]; La Ville de Mirmont, *RPh* 26 (1902) 265: Un chant funèbre tombé en désuétude. But, from this passage one is justified only in inferring that *neniae* (Horace does not even say that they were songs) were usually considered *honores* at a funeral. On this occasion they were *super-vacui*, since Horace was not really there (inani funere; cf. Birt, *Horaz' Lieder, Studien* [Leipzig, 1925] 118). See below, 265.

b. a word equivalent to Greek *θρῆνος*

42. Hor. *Carm.* 2.1.37f.: Sed ne relictis, Musa procax, iocis, Caeae retractes munera neniae.

Cf. Porph. [84]; *Schol. Hor.* [85]. Horace refers, indubitably, to the *θρῆνοι* of Simonides.

43. Amm. 31.13.19: <Nec ulla> annalibus praeter Cannensem pugnam ita ad internicionem res legitur gesta, quamquam Romani . . . cesserunt ad tempus, et certamina multa fabulosae neniae flevire Graecorum.

Clark-Traube-Heraeus (Berlin, 1915). The use of *nenia* here echoes Horace; compare the two stanzas immediately preceding the citation above [42], in which Horace refers to the dreadful loss of Roman manpower in the civil wars. In the last stanza (37-40) he turns away from this topic, which, he says, befits the Simonidean dirge (cf. below, no. 84), not his own *Musa procax*. For *fabulosae neniae*, see below, nos. 160ff.

45. Amm. 19.1.10: Ac per dierum spatium septem, viri quidem omnes per contubernia et manipulos epulis indulgebant, saltando et cantando tristia quaedam genera neniarum, regium iuvenem lamentantes.

Clark (Berlin, 1910). See below, note 60.

c. a song (?) accompanied by tibicines during the funeral procession

47. Ov. *Fast.* 6.659–68: Cantabat fanis, cantabat tibia ludis, cantabat maestis tibia funeribus . . . Adde quod aedilis, pompam qui funeris irent, artifices solos iusserat esse decem. Exilio mutant urbem Tiburque recedunt . . . Quaeritur in scaena cava tibia, quaeritur aris; ducit supremos naenia nulla toros.

Frazer (London, 1929): toros *Um*<sup>1</sup>, choros *DXMm*<sup>2</sup>; (see below, note 61). For the spelling *naenia*, see my note on no. 123.

d. a choral dirge performed at imperial funerals

50. Sen. *Apocol.* 12.3f.: Claudius ut vidit funus suum, intellexit se mortuum esse. Ingenti enim μεγάλη χορικῶ nenia cantabatur anapaestis:  
Fundite fletus, edite plactus . . .  
Delectabatur laudibus suis Claudius et cupiebat diutius spectare.

Bücheler, Heraeus, *Petronii Saturae* (ed. 6, Berlin, 1922).

52. Suet. *Aug.* 100.2: Ut inter alia complura censuerint quidam, funus triumphali porta ducendum, praecedente Victoria quae est in curia, canentibus neniam principum liberis utriusque sexus. . . . Verum adhibito honoribus modo bifariam laudatus est . . . ac senatorum umis delatus in Campum crematusque.

Ihm (Leipzig, 1907). Cf. Ov. *Epist.* 1.7.29f.: Cui (sc. Messallae) nos et lacrimas, supremum in funere munus, et dedimus medio scripta canenda foro; Tac. *Ann.* 3.5: Ubi illa veterum instituta, propositum toro effigiem, meditata ad memoriam virtutis carmina et laudationes, et lacrimas vel doloris imitamenta? (cf. Cic. *Leg.* 2.62 [35]); Dio 75.4.4–5.3: προκειμένου δ' αὐτοῦ (sc. τοῦ Περτίνακος) ὃ τε Σεουήρος καὶ ἡμεῖς οἱ βουλευταὶ αἱ τε γυναῖκες ἡμῶν προσήειμεν . . . ἔπειτα χοροὶ παίδων καὶ ἀνδρῶν θρηνηδὴ τινὰ ὕμνον ἐς τὸν Περτίνακα ᾄδοντες παρήλθον . . . ὁ Σεουήρος . . . ἀνέγνω ἐγκώμιον τοῦ Περτίνακος . . . καὶ τέλος . . . οἱ μὲν οὖν ἄλλοι πρὸ τῆς κλίνης προήειμεν, καὶ τινες ἐκόπτοντο ἑτέρων πένθιμόν τι ὑπαυλοῦντων; Hdn. 4.2.5: ἐπὶ μὲν θατέρου μέρους τῶν εὐγενεστάτων καὶ εὐπατριδῶν χορὸς ἔστηκε παίδων, ἐν δὲ τῷ ἀντικειμένῳ γυναικῶν τῶν ἐν ἀξιώσει εἶναι δοκουσῶν. ᾄδουσι δὲ ἐκάτεροι ὕμνους τε καὶ παιάνας ἐς τὸν τετελευτηκότα (sc. τὸν Σεουήρον), σεμνῶ μέλει καὶ θρηνώδει ἐρρυθμισμένους; App. 14 (*B.C.* 2) 146: ὡς δ' ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις (sc. τοῦ Ἀντωνίου) ἕτεροι θρήνοι μετὰ ψῶδης κατὰ πάτριον ἔθος ὑπὸ χορῶν ἐς αὐτὸν (sc. τὸν Καίσαρα) ᾄδοντο καὶ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ πάθος κατέλεγον. See below, 264f.

55. Pacat. *Paneg. Theodos.* 37.3 (121 B.): Ferebant se obviae tripudiantium catervae. Cuncta cantu et crotalis personabant. Hic tibi (sc. Theod.) triumphum chorus, ille contra tyranno (sc. Maximo) funebres nenias et carmen exequiale dicebat.

W. Bährens, *Panegyrici Latini* (Leipzig, 1911). See below, note 60.

e. in the memorial epigrams of Ausonius,<sup>30</sup> a sorrowful song by which the dead were to be honored

(i) Nenia (Musa) invoked:

61. Auson. *Par.* Praef. Vers. 5f.: Nenia, funereis satis officiosa querellis, annua ne tacitis munera praetereas.  
 62. Auson. *Com.* 3.2: Nenia maesta refer.  
 63. Auson. *Com.* 10.42–45: Pange et Anastasio flebile, Musa, melum et memora tenuem, Nenia, grammaticum.

(ii) nenia with canere:

64. Auson. *Par.* 9.1f.: Hactenus ut caros, ita iusto funere fletos functa piis cecinit nenia nostra modis.  
 65. Auson. *Par.* 15.1f.: Et te, germanum, . . . nenia nostra canet.

(iii) nenia with honor:

66. Auson. *Par.* 17.1–3: Nec . . . te modulamine nenia tristi tacitum sine honore relinquat.  
 67. Auson. *Com.* 4.5: Honore maestae non carebis neniae.  
 68. Auson. *Par.* 28.6f.: Quam celebrat sub honore pio nenia carmine funereo.

The usage of Ausonius seems to depend closely on that of Horace [40, 42]; cf. the scholia on these passages [81ff.]. In *Com.* 13.6 (Concedit Cei musa Simonidei), Ausonius clearly echoes Horace [42]. For other invocations of his muse in these poems, cf. Auson. *Par.* 13.1f. (Avitium, Musa, . . . dona querella funebri), 26.1f. (Quin et funereis amitam impertire querellis, Musa); and especially *Par.* 7.1 (Et patruos, Elegea, meos reminiscere cantu); with the last, compare also *Par.* 29.1f. (Accipe questus, debent quos cineri maesta elegea tuo). The implied synonymy of *Elegea* and *Nenia* strongly suggests that Ausonius was also acquainted with grammatical doctrine associating the two, e.g. Diomedes [37]; see below, 266.

f. a song to appease the angry shades

70. Mart. Cap. 9.925: Per me (*sc.* Harmoniam) vestrum (*sc.* Apollinis ceterorumque deorum) homines illexere succursum irasque inferas per nenias sedavere.

Dick (Leipzig, 1925): nenias *codd.*: naenias *edd.*

Two glosses [177–8] are referable through their lemmas (per nenias) to this passage, but the meaning supplied is not appropriate here. Like Ausonius, Martianus Capella probably follows Horace [40, 120, 130] and his commentators [81ff.; 125f.]. Cf. my note on Arnob. *Nat.* 7.32 [132].

<sup>30</sup> References to Ausonius are made according to the numbering in Peiper's edition (Leipzig, 1886), whose text is followed throughout. For the *Parentalia*, see Peiper 28ff.; for the *Commemoratio Professorum Burdigalensium*, see 48ff.

g. in Sidonius, verses suitable for inscription on a tomb

(i) *nenia* 'epitaphion' (cf. below, nos. 100ff.)

75. Sidon. *Epist.* 2.8.2f.: Post quae precatu parentis orbatu *neniam* funebrem non per elegos sed per hendecasyllabos marmori incisam planctu prope calente dictavi . . . Hoc enim epitaphion est.

76. Sidon. *Epist.* 4.11.6f.: Ergo . . . *neniam* condidimus tristem luctuosamque . . . Nam dum forte meditarer, lacrimis habenas anima parturiente laxavi fecique ad epitaphium, quod alii fecerunt ad sepulchrum.

Cf. Hier. *Epist.* 60.1.2: Quotienscumque nitor in verba prorumpere et super tumulum eius epitaphii huius flores spargere, totiens implentur oculi et renovato dolore totus in funere sum.

77. Sidon. *Epist.* 7.17.1: Iubes me . . . sancto Abrahae diem functo *neniam* sepulchralem luctuosis carminibus inscribere.

(ii) in phrase epitaphistarum *neniae*

78. Sidon. *Epist.* 1.9.7: Sane moneo praeque denuntio quisquilias ipsas Clui tuae hexametris minime exaeques. Merito enim conlata vestris mea carmina non heroicorum phaleris sed epitaphistarum *neniis* comparabuntur.

Sidonius elsewhere speaks of his verses as *nugae* (*Epist.* 4.8.5; 4.18.3; 9.13.6), *ineptiae* (8.9.4), or *ludicra* (9.13.6), but in none of these cases are the verses so characterized sepulchral epigrams. Sidonius used *nenia* (sg.) in a technical sense, with no derogatory connotation, and in the present passage he still connects *nenia* with *epitaphion*, but he seems to be aware of such contexts for *neniae* (pl.) as in Phaedrus [140, 141] and, notably, in Paulinus of Nola [145]. Exactly the same conflict between connotation, derived from the context, and explicit meaning is observable in the appearance of *neniae* (pl.) in certain grammatical lists [100–103], where *neniae*, glossed *ἐπιτάφιοι* (-ια), appears in close association with *nugae*, *leriae*, and *quisquiliae*. See below, 266ff. It is likely that Ausonius too knew the usage of Phaedrus; cf. Biss. (*Epist.* ad Paulum): Poemata, quae in alumnus meam (sc. Bissulam) luseram, rudia et incohata ad domesticarum solacium cantilenarum; but Ausonius was careful to avoid using *neniae* in the plural.

#### 4. and, subsequently, defined

##### a. 'carmen funebre'

80. Quint. *Inst.* 8.2.8: Et tertius est huic diversus modus, cum res communis pluribus in uno aliquo habet nomen eximium, ut carmen funebre proprie *nenia* et tabernaculum ducis augurale.

Radermacher, 2 (Leipzig, 1935). This difficult passage is not discussed by J. Cousin, *Études sur Quintilien*, 1 (Paris, 1936), 408. Quintilian means, I think, that one may speak of various kinds of *carmina*: *carmen vocale*, *carmen ferale*, *carmen lyrae*, etc., or of *tabernacula*: *tabernaculum primum*, *tabernaculum secundum*, *tabernaculum militis*; but one will secure propriety in diction (*perspicuitas*) if, instead of saying *carmen funebre* or *tabernaculum ducis*, one uses the words *nenia* or *augurale*. That is, the proper word for the meaning '*carmen funebre*' is *nenia*; Quintilian does not say that this was the only meaning of the word *nenia*.

81. *Schol. Hor. Carm.* 2.20.21 [40]: [*neniae*] *Carmen funebre*.

## b. 'cantus funerum'

82. Porph. *Carm.* 2.20.21 [40]: Neniae enim cantus sunt funerum.

## c. 'lugubre carmen in mortuos cantatum', 'θρῆνος'

84. Porph. *Carm.* 2.1.37f. [42]: Nenia lugubre carmen est, quod in mortuos canitur. Simonides autem ex <C>ea insula lyricus poeta θρῆνος [id est planctus] optime scripsit. Inde Ce[n]am neniā appellavit.
85. *Schol. Hor. Carm.* 2.1.38 [42]: Nenia carmen lugubre quod mortuis dicebatur, quod nunc Graece epitaphion appellatur, quod Simonides, Graecus poeta lyricus, primus instituit a Cea insula oriundo; unde et Cae neniae posuit.

For *epitaphion*, cf. below, nos. 100ff.

86. *Schol. Γ Hor. Carm.* 3.28.16 [130]: [nenia merita] Convenienti carmine; nam quia tenebrosa nox est, merito lugubri carmine dicetur.

## d. 'carmen quod mortuis cantabatur in honorem inferorum'

88. *Schol. Hor. Carm.* 3.28.16 [130]: [nox quoque nenia] Carmen est, quod mortuis cantabatur in honorem inferorum. Sed quia noctem praedicaturus erat, propter tenebras et somnum, quae morti proxima creduntur, ideo dixit: nenia noctis.

Cf. *Schol. Hor. Epist.* 1.1.63 [137]: nenia laus mortuorum.

## e. 'carmen in mortuos cantatum'

90. Porph. *Carm.* 3.28.16 [130]: <Nenia> carmen est, quod in mortuos cantatur.

Cf. Porph. *Epod.* 17.28 [125]: nenia proprie carmen est quod mortuis cantatur.

91. *Schol. cpv Hor. Epod.* 17.29 [120]: [dissillire nenia] Ut tamquam in mortuum can <t>at.

92. *Gloss. Abol. NE* 5 (*CGL* 4.122.45; 5.467.51): Neniae, cantica in mortuos.

The definition here given seems to be drawn from Horatian scholarship. The lemma also fits *Hor. Carm.* 2.20.21 [40], but glosses with *neniae* in the lemma are common, cf. below nos. 170ff., 200ff.

93. *Schol. Hor. Epod.* 17.29 [120]: [nenia] Carmine mortuorum.

Cf. *Gloss. Ps. Plac. N* 14 [16].

94. *Gloss. Sid. Epist.* 2.8.2 [75]: Neniā, i <d est> cantum super mortuos.

Ellis, *Anec. Oxon.* 1, 5 (Oxford, 1885).

## f. 'novissimum canticum quod ad mortuum dicitur'

97. *Gloss. Ansil. NE* 292 (*CGL* 5.226.4): Nenias, novissima cantica quae ad mortuum dicuntur.

Again the definition seems to be drawn from Horatian scholarship, though the word *novissima* points rather toward Diomedes [37]; but the form of the lemma relates the gloss to those below, nos. 170ff., 200ff.

## g. 'carmen senile et mortuale'

98. *Gloss.* Ansil. NE 291 (CGL 5.226.3): *Nenias dicuntur carmina senilia et mortualia.*

Cf. my note on the preceding gloss. Here, however, the definition suggests familiarity with *Aug. Civ.* 6.9 [3]. Is it possible that both of these unusual glosses drew information (not the lemma) from Varro, who was explicitly Augustine's source, and possibly Diomedes' (cf. my note on no. 37)?

## h. (neniae) 'ἐπιτάφιοι (-ια)'

100. *Exc. Bob.* (GLK 1.548.37–549.26): *Feminina semper pluralia . . . hae nundinae, hae nugae, hae neniae ἐπιτάφιοι, hae leriae φλυαρίαι, hae opes . . . hae plagae δίκτυα.*  
 101. *Charis.* (GLK 1.33.4–18): *Feminina semper pluralia: . . . nundinae, Nonae, neniae ἐπιτάφια, nugae, opes . . . plagae.*  
 102. *Diom.* (GLK 1.327.32–328.3): *Feminina semper pluralia: . . . nundinae, nugae, neniae, plagae.*  
 103. *Phoc.* (GLK 5.428.4–11): *Alia sunt quae in singulari numero non declinantur . . . generis feminini: . . . nundinae, neniae, quisquilliae.*

Cf. *Beda* (GLK 7.281.10 [116]).

## i. (neniae) 'ὕμνοι ἐπὶ τοῖς νεκροῖς'

105. *Gloss.* (CGL 2.62.61): *Ὑμνοι ἐπὶ τοῖς νεκροῖς, neniae; singulare non habet.*

## k. (neniae) 'ἐγκώμια νεκρῶν'

106. *Gloss.* (CGL 2.284.14): *Ἐγκώμια νεκρῶν, neniae; singularia non habet.*

## l. 'ἐπιτάφιον', i.e. 'ἐπικήδειον', 'laudatio funebris'

110. *Lyd. Mag.* 1.33: *Τὸν δὲ ἕτερον (sc. Βροῦτον) ὁ θάτερος (Πουπλικόλας) ἔτι περιὼν ἐπικηδεῖω πρῶτος ἐτίμησε. λέγεται δὲ παρ' αὐτοῖς (sc. τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις) τὸ ἐπιτάφιον νηγία, ἐξ Ἑλληνικῆς μᾶλλον ἐτυμολογίας, ὅτι νήτην τὴν ἐσχάτην τῶν ἐν κιθάρα χορδῶν Ἑλληνες καλοῦσιν.*

Wünsch (Leipzig, 1903). For the etymology, cf. *Fest.* [20] and *Diom.* [37]. For the meaning 'ἐπιτάφιον', cf. *Schol. Hor. Carm.* 2.1.38 [85], and for the relationship among the various forms of this definition, see below, 267.

111. *Gloss.* (CGL 2.311.39): *Ἐπιτάφιος, epitafium, nenia, laudatio.*  
 112. *Gloss.* (CGL 2.308.37): *Ἐπικήδ <ε>ιον, haec nenia.*  
 113. *Gloss.* (CGL 2.497.27): *Nenia, ἐπικήδ <ε>ιον.*

## m. (neniae) 'epitaphia', i.e. 'tituli sepulcrales'

116. *Beda* (GLK 7.281.10): *Neniae pluraliter tantum, et nar invenimus. Nenias autem dicunt epitaphia, id est carmina quae in memoriam mortuorum in tumbis scribuntur.*

Cf. *Gloss.* (CGL 5.573.21) [17].

## B. 'incantatio', 'malignum carmen'

1. *so used*

120. Hor. Epod. 17.27-29: Ergo negatum vincor ut credam miser Sabella pectus increpare carmina caputque Marsa dissilire nenia.  
 122. Ov. *Ars.* 2.101f.: Non facient, ut vivat amor, Medeïdes herbae mixtaque cum magicis naenia Marsa sonis.

Jahn, 1 (Leipzig, 1828): naenia Marsa *Reg., exc. Scal., Put.*; mersa (marsa) venena *cett.*

123. Ov. *Fast.* 6.141f.: Sive igitur nascuntur aves, seu carmine fiunt, naeniaque in volucres Marsa figurat anus.

Merkel (Berlin, 1841) prints *naen-*, but notes several variants in *nen-*. All modern editions retain the orthography in *naen-* here, above [122], and at *Fast.* 6.668 [47].

2. *and defined*

125. Porph. *Epod.* 17.28 [120]: Sabella autem carmina pro Marsis posuit, et neniā pro incantatione. Alioquin nenia proprie carmen est quod mortuis cantatur.  
 126. *Schol. Hor. Epod.* 17.29 [120]: Nenia pro maligno carmine posuit.

This is the second of two notes at this place; for the first, see above, no. 93.

## C. 'cantilena', 'ludus'

## 1. 'a song invoking Night'

130. Hor. *Carm.* 3.28.9-16: Nos cantabimus invicem Neptunum et viridis Nereidum comas; tu (*sc.* Lyde) curva recines lyra Latonum et celeris spicula Cynthiae, summo carmine, quae Cnidon fulgentisque tenet Cycladas . . .; dicetur merita Nox quoque nenia.

La Ville de Mirmont, *RPh* 26 (1902) 263: Une complainte populaire dans le genre de notre *Au clair de la lune*. Birt (*Horaz' Lieder*, 2 [Leipzig, 1926] 28f.), following Walde (see above, note 15), suggested that *nenia* here has the same meaning as in Arnob. *Nat.* 7.32 [132], viz. 'lullaby'; but Heinze, in the 7th edition of Kiessling's *Oden und Epoden* (Berlin, 1930) denies that the meaning 'lullaby' is appropriate in this scene of erotic play, and repeats his earlier suggestion that *nenia* here means 'cadence', 'close of a song', comparing Paul. Fest. 163 M. [139]: extremam cantionis vocem neniā appellarunt. Most modern commentators (e.g., Wickham, *Odes* [Oxford, 1912] 216) are content with pointing out that Horace's usage in *Epist.* 1.1.63 [135] shows that to him *nenia* was not necessarily a dirge. See below, 252 and 266. For ancient comments, cf. above, nos. 86 and 88, and below, no. 137.

## 2. 'a lullaby addressed to the gods'

132. Arnob. *Nat.* 7.32: Quid dormitiones illae quibus bene ut valeant (*sc.* dei) auspicabili salutatione mandatis? Somni enim quiete solvuntur occuparique ut hoc possint, lenes audiendae sunt neniae.

This passage is almost certainly based on an interpretation of Horace, above [130]; see below, 252. Cf. Mart. Cap. 9.925 [70], probably also reflecting learned interpretation [e.g., no. 88] of this and other passages of Horace.

## 3. 'a children's jingle'

135. Hor. *Epist.* 1.1.59-64: At pueri ludentes "rex eris" aiunt, "si recte facies."  
 . . . Roscia, dic sodes, melior lex an puerorum est nenia, quae regnum recte  
 facientibus offert, et maribus Curiis et decantata Camillis?

Keller-Holder 2 (ed. 2, Jena, 1925): puerorum est *codd.*; puerorumst *edd.*  
*plerique*. See below, 252.

4. *defined*

137. *Schol. Hor. Epist.* 1.1.63 [135]: [nenia] Ludus, cantilena, quia dixit "ludentes."  
 Aliter nenia laus mortuorum, sed hic cantilena, ut alibi [130] "Merita nox  
 quoque nenia."

For *cantilena* '*incantamentum*', cf. Pöckel in *TLL* s.v. 'cantilena', citing  
 Cael. Aur. *Chron.* 5.1.23: Alii cantilenas adhibendas probaverunt.

## D. 'vox extrema cantionis'

139. Fest. 161, 30-32 M. (L. 156, 11-13):

sive quod chor->  
 darum ultima <νήρη appellata est, vocem extre->  
 mam cantionis neni <am appellarunt.

Cf. Paul. 163 M. (157 L.): sive quod cordarum ultima νήρη dicitur, extremam  
 cantionis vocem neniam appellarunt.

Heller, *TAPhA* 70 (1939), 359, note 3. Heinze used this sentence to inter-  
 pret *nenia* in Hor. *Carm.* 3.28.16 [130], but it is altogether doubtful whether this  
 meaning is genuine; compare the form of this same etymology as stated by  
 Diomedes [37].

v. *neniae* (pl.) with *deroga-*  
*tory connotation* 'trifles'

## A. 'trivial, artless verses', 'ineptiae'

1. in *Phaedrus*, of his own verses, characterized as  
 viles, iocularare, quae levi calamo ludimus, pusilla.

140. *Phaedr.* 3 prol. 10f.: Legesne, quaeso, potius viles nenias, impendas curam  
 quam rei domesticae?

141. *Phaedr.* 4.2.1-4: Iocularare tibi videmur, et sane levi, dum nihil habemus  
 maius, calamo ludimus; sed diligenter intueri has nenias: quantam in pusillis  
 utilitatem reperies!

Postgate (Oxford, 1919): in pusillis *Postgate*, subtilis *codd.*, sub illis *Pithou*.

2. *similarly, but much later*  
*(syn. 'ineptiae', 'nugae')*

145. Paul. Nol. *Epist.* 32.9: Habes versus . . . quos si non erubueris spectandis  
 domesticae ecclesiae tuae parietibus inscribere, vindicabor. Credo enim vel  
 tunc de meis ineptiis erubescas et poenitebit te desiderii et exactionis tuae,  
 cum aedificia . . . obscurata naeniis insipientiae meae . . . adspicies.



Cf. Sidon. *Epist.* 1.9.7 [78]; Helpericus (*MGH, Epist.* 6, 118): Ego enim decreveram nugarum mearum ineptias dignis occultare latebris, ne, cum prodire ceperint, multorum in me fel commoveant iure causantium vanissimis neniis occupari membranas.

147. Fulg. *Myth.* 1 praef. (3 H.): . . . quia soles, domine, meas cachinnantes sepius nenas lepore satyrico litas libentius adfectari.

Helm's apparatus notes that in one ms. *nenias* has the suprascript gloss *nugas*.

3. *associated with* nugae, leriae 'φλναρίαι',  
quisquiliae *in grammatical lists of*  
verba feminina semper pluralia.

See above [100–103]; Heraeus, *Kleine Schriften* (Heidelberg, 1937) 70.

B. 'trivial, childish things'

1. 'playthings', 'hobbies', 'games'

150. Petron. 46.4: Ingeniosus est et bono filo (*sc.* cicaro meus), etiam si in aves morbosus est. Ego illi iam tres cardeles occidi, et dixi quod mustella comedit. Invenit tamen alias nenas, et libentissime pingit.<sup>31</sup>

Translation ascribed to Oscar Wilde (repr. New York, 1930) 87: But he has found other hobbies, and he's devoted to painting.

2. 'petty dishes of food (e.g. fowl)'

153. Petron. 47.10: Gallum enim gallinaceum, penthiacum et eiusmodi nenas rustici faciunt; mei coci etiam vitulos aeno coctos solent facere.<sup>31</sup>

Translation ascribed to Oscar Wilde (repr. New York, 1930) 89: Farmyard cocks and pheasants and suchlike small deer are for country folks; Heraeus, *Kleine Schriften* (Heidelberg, 1937) 70: Höchst wahrscheinlich steht *neniae* hier in dem Sinne von *nugae* "dummes Zeug, Scherze, Possen." See below, 248.

C. 'trivial tales', 'idle talk', *characterized as* aniles, ludicra litteraria, superfluae loquacitates

1. *so used*

160. Tert. *Adv. Val.* 29: Quae (*sc.* animae) nunc quoque, si plenam atque perfectam notitiam adprehenderint istarum neniarum, naturificatae iam spiritalis conditionis germanitate certam obtinebunt salutem.

Kroymann, (Vienna, 1906; *CSEL* 47). A good equivalent for *neniae* here is *cantilena*; cf. below no. 180. For earlier uses of *cantilena* in this sense, cf. Ter. *Phorm.* 495: Cantilenam eandem canis (cf. 492ff.: hariolare . . . fabulae . . . logi . . . somnia . . . garri modo); Brut. Cic. *Epist.* 11.20.2: totam istam cantilenam; Sen. *Epist.* 24.18: Non sum tam ineptus, ut Epicuream cantilenam hoc loco persequar.

<sup>31</sup> Text of Bücheler-Heraeus (ed. 6, Berlin, 1922).

162. Sept. Sev. *Epist.* (Capitol. *Alb.* 12.12): Maior fuit dolor, quod illum (*sc.* Albinum) pro litterato laudandum plerique duxistis, cum ille neniis quibusdam anilibus occupatus inter Milesias Punicas Apulei sui et ludicra litteraria consenesceret.

Hohl, *Script. Hist. Aug.* 1 (Leipzig, 1927). Cf. Paul. Nol. *Epist.* 16.4: ut ridiculam anilis fabulae cantilenam non erubesceret (*sc.* Plato) scriptis suis inserere.

164. Ambros. *In Ps.* 118, serm. 11.19.1: Etenim quasi fabulae cuiusdam naenias narratas sibi dicit ἀδολεσχίας, hoc est superfluas loquacitates.

Petschenig (Vienna, 1913; *CSEL* 62). Cf. Lambertus (*MGH, Script.* 24, 598): Ab illis (*sc.* clericis) enim divinum accepit (*sc.* comes Balduinus) eloquium, et eis, quas a fabulatoribus accepit, gentilium nenias vicario modo communicavit et impartivit.

2. hence, so defined in glosses

a. 'vilissimae fabulae'

170. *Gloss. Abba NE 62 (CGL 4.261.1)*: Nenia[a]s, vilissimas fabulas.

Cf. *Gloss.* [17]: Nenias, finis vel vilissimas fabulas vel epitaphia.

b. 'fabulae vanae'

172. *Gloss. Abavus NE 28 (CGL 4.368.7)*: Neniae, fabulae vanae.

173. *Gloss. (CGL 5.544.47)*: Neniae (ninie *cod.*), fabul<a>e.

c. 'superfluae loquacitates'

175. *Gloss. AA (Accipe) NE 152 (CGL 5.467.48)*: Nenias, superfluas loquacitates, fabulas inanes, seu vilissimas res.

This gloss is certainly referable to Ambros., above [164], and the other glosses in this group [170–178] are probably related. For the third definition, see below, no. 239.

d. 'fabulationes vacuae'

177. *Gloss. (CGL 5.510.9)*: Per nenias, per fabulationes vacuas.

The form of the lemma refers this gloss to Mart. Cap. 9.925 [70], but the meaning supplied is probably drawn from the glosses above [170–175].

178. *Gloss. (CGL 5.473.22)*: Per nenias, per fabulationes.

Cf. above [177].

D. hence, in Christian eristic, especially in St. Jerome,<sup>32</sup> of the 'silly arguments', 'false doctrines', 'apocryphal writings' of the opposition

1. syn. 'cantilenae', 'ineptiae', 'lulgubres cantilenae' (cf. nos. 160f.)

180. Hier. *Epist.* 109.4.1: Plura dictare volueram, si . . . tu librorum ipsius ad nos voluisses mittere cantilenas, ut scire possemus, ad quae rescribere

<sup>32</sup> I have not attempted to arrange the numerous citations from St. Jerome in chronological order, merely to put first the more vivid contexts.

deberemus . . . Ceterum, si volueris longiorem nos adversum eum librum scribere, mitte nenias illius et ineptias.

Hilberg (Vienna, 1912; *CSEL* 55). Cf. Cassian. *C. Nest.* 7.3.2: Ineptae sint hae calumniae tuae et non videntis penitus dei omnipotentiam cantilenae.

181. Hier. *Epist.* 143.2.2: Nec grande est ineptissimis naeniis respondere . . . Paucis lucubrationibus respondebimus, non ut convincamus heresim emortuam, sed ut inperitiam atque blasphemiam nostris sermonibus confutemus.

Hilberg (Vienna, 1918; *CSEL* 56); cf. Aug. *Epist.* 202. Cf. Cassian. *C. Nest.* 3.7.4: seposita impietatis blasphemia ac verborum infidelium cantilena.

182. Hier. *C. Vigil.* 3 (*MPL* 23, 356 C): Una lucubrationcula illius naeniis respondebo.

183. Hier. *C. Vigil.* 6 (*MPL* 23, 360 C): Legito fictas revelationes omnium patriarcharum et prophetarum, et, cum illas didiceris, inter mulierum textrinas cantato, imo legendas propone in tabernis tuis, ut facilius per has naenias vulgus indoctum provoces ad bibendum.

Cf. Hier. *In Matth.* praef. [192]: omnes apocryforum nenias . . . canendas. For *nenias inter mulierum textrinas canendas*, cf. Sept. Sev. [162]: nenis quibusdam anilibus.

184. Hier. *In Is.* lib. 10 praef. (*MPL* 24, 363 A): Cuius (sc. Rufini) naeniae et lugubres cantilenae necdum mihi proditae sunt.

Cf. Ps. Rufin. *In Am.* 5.16f.: funebres cantilenae.

186. Claud. Mam. *Anim.* 2.8: Acrius isti, ni fallor, abstrusas rerum rationes ingressi sunt, quam nonnulli nostrates, qui cubiculariis disputationibus de sublimium indage causarum aliquid soporiferum in lectulis oscitantes perpellente copia tepentium naeniarum stolido laudatore veterinosas anilium opinionum suspensiones edormiunt innexamque visceribus animam corporis claustris includi et contineri decernunt. Sed istuc inperitiae veri vacuae figmentum . . . discussimus.

Cf. Prud. *Perist.* 10.304f.: quod pavendum rancidae edentularum cantilenae suaserint.

187. Licinian. (*MGH, Epist.* 1, 60): Et satis miror hominem doctissimum et sanctum, ut de stellis naenias Origenis transferret.

## 2. syn. 'pretiosae querellae'

189. Hier. *Epist.* 57.13: Illico intellegas accusatorum meorum nenias et pretiosas querellas.

Hilberg (Vienna, 1910; *CSEL* 54).

## 3. syn. 'apocryphorum deliramenta'

190. Hier. *Praef. Vulg. Pent.* (Heyse-Tischendorf, xxxiii): Quod multi ignorantes, apocryphorum deliramenta sectantur, et Iberas naenias libris authenticis praeferunt.

Cf. Hier. *In Is.* 17.64.4f.: unde apocryphorum deliramenta conticeant . . . Gnosticorum, qui . . . Hispaniarum nobiles feminas deceperunt, miscentes fabulis voluptatem et imperitiae suae nomen scientiae vindicantes; *Epist.* 57.9.6: Solent in hoc loco apocryphorum quidam deliramenta sectari. Cf. the glosses below [200–203], and, for *Iberas naenias*, *CGL* 1.219; Remig. Antiss. *In. Genes.* (*MPL* 131, 53 B).

191. Hier. *Epist.* 120.10.2: Multoque melius est simpliciter imperitiam confiteri . . . quam, dum volumus dei probare iustitiam, Basilidis et Manichei heresim defendere et Hiberas nenias Aegyptiaque portenta sectari.

Hilberg (Vienna, 1912; *CSEL* 55). Cf. Hier. *In Am.* 1.3.9f.: et Iberae ineptiae in Balsamo Barbeloque mirantur.

192. Hier. *In Matth.* praef. (Wordsworth-White 1, 14): omnes apocryphorum nenias mortuis magis hereticis quam ecclesiasticis vivis canendas.

Cf. Hier. *C. Vigil.* 6 [183]; *Adv. Rufin.* 2.33 [216]; Aldhelm (*MGH, Auct. antiq.* 15, 313): Apocryphorum enim naenias et incertas fribulorum fabulas nequaquam catholica recepat ecclesia; *id.* (316): praefatas fribulorum naenias; Anastasius (*MGH, Epist.* 7, 442): Qui . . . et hereticorum nenias et imperatorum vesaniam . . . repressit. Cf. the glosses below [200–203].

194. Hier. *Epist. ined.* 2 (*Rev. Bénéd.* 27 [1910] 4): De furore autem Iuliani et sociorum eius, Pelagiique naeniis et garrulitate Celestii magnopere non cures.

196. Salvian. *Eccles.* 3.16: Quid tibi est cum his neniis, quid tibi cum his deliramentis, quid cum stultitia huius erroris, quid cum perditione istius vanitatis?

197. Pallad. *Hist. monach.* 1.25 (*MPL* 74, 309 D): (Evagrius) grandi scripturarum peritia haereticorum omnium naenias destruentem.

198. Greg. Tur. *Iul.* 1 (*MGH, Script. rer. Mer.* 1, 564): Ad Brivatinsim vicum, in quo fanatici erroris neniae colebantur, advenit.

For *colebantur*, cf. Prud. *Cath.* 11.34 [235]: venerans inanes nenias.

#### 4. hence, defined in glosses

##### a. 'delegeramenta'

200. *Gloss. Abolita* NE 17; *Ansil.* NE 290 (*CGL* 4.122.52a; 5.86.19; 5.467.52): Nenias, delegeramenta; set proprie carmen funebre.

Cf. *Abol.* NE 28 (*CGL* 4.124.2; 5.467.54): Nenias, delegeramenta; propri[a]le; *Abol.* NE 28a; *Abba* NE 42 (*CGL* 4.124.4; 4.123.37; 4.261.39; 5.467.53): Nenia, carmen funebre. This gloss, to which the others below [201–203] are certainly related, seems to draw its first definition from Hier. *Praef. Vulg. Pent.* [190]. The second definition might come from a number of sources: Quint. [80], *Schol. Hor.* [81], or Fest. [36]. The lemma, on the other hand, also fits Hier. *In Matth.* praef. [192]. Both passages are exceedingly likely to have drawn comment from mediaeval readers, but it is more likely that this gloss was first placed in the margin opposite the second passage [192], interpreting it in the light of the first [190] and of the learned meaning, '*carmen funebre*', of *nenia*. For references to the debate between Lindsay and Wessner over the origin of this gloss, see my article, *TAPhA* 70 (1939) 361 note 8.

201. *Gloss.* Ansil. *NE* 73a (*CGL* 5.119.43): Neni <a>e, deleramenta, set proprie neni <a>e carmen funebre.
202. *Gloss.* Philox. *NA* 7 (*CGL* 2.132.19) + *NE* 32 (*CGL* 2.133.28): Naenia, ἀνομία. Nenia ἐπιτάφιος ψδῆ.  
ἀνομία *Heraeus*, ανομία *codd.*
203. *Gloss.* (*CGL* 5.374.1): Nenias, carmen funebr[a]e mulierum vel deleramentum.

## b. 'mendacium'

205. *Gloss.* (*CGL* 5.416.21): Nenias, mendatium.

For the definition, cf. Cassiod. *Psalm.* 4.2 [236]. The lemma, however, was certainly drawn from Hier. *In Matth.* praef. [192]. A series of notes in this glossary (*CGL* 5.416.15ff.), under the heading *Incipit Verborum Interpretatio*, begins with five lemmas arranged alphabetically; then come *Proemium*, *Nenias*, *Elucubratum*, all three of which occur in the Praefatio, in this order. Cf. Götz, *CGL* 6.734; J. H. Hessels, *A Late Eighth-Century Latin-Anglo-Saxon Glossary* (Cambridge, 1906) 153.

## 5. 'canina facundia'

210. Hier. *In Hier. lib.* 4 praef. 4: Quorum tunc temporis editis adversum eos libris neniae confutatae sunt; quos qui legere voluerint, liquido pervidebunt canes eos iuxta Isaiaem esse mutos, qui latrare nesciant habentes quidem voluntatem et rabiem mentiendi, sed artem fingendi et latrandi non habentes.

Reiter (Vienna, 1913; *CSEL* 59). Cf. *Prol. in* (2) *Vitam S. Bavonis* (*MGH, Script. Rer. Merov.* 4, 546): obtrectancium . . . meras nenias et caninam facundiam non curamus magnopere.

## 6. with demonstrative pronouns, indicating contempt (cf. Petron. 47.10 [153]; Tert. [160])

215. Hier. *Adv. Rufin.* 1.24 (*MPL* 23, 436 C): Si . . . aliquo scissem vaticinio te istiusmodi naenias sectaturum, etiam calumniae verba vitassem.
216. Hier. *Adv. Rufin.* 2.33 (*MPL* 23, 476 B): Qui istiusmodi naenias consecratur, et Scripturae Hebraicae veritatem non vult recipere.

Cf. Hincmar (*MGH, Script.* 1, 476): talibus naeniis non credentes.

## 7. generally

220. Hier. *C. Ioh.* 37 (*MPL* 23, 407 C): nec nostris (sc. Hieronymi) "naeniis" terreatur (sc. Iohannes).
221. Hier. *Adv. Rufin.* 3.10 (*MPL* 23, 486 A): nisi forte non fuit impraesentiarum qui tuas emendaret naenias.
223. Rufin. *Clement.* 2.66 (*MPG* 1, 1279 B): Qui vero, inquit, multas naenias texuisti, audi iam nunc.
224. Cyrill. *Conc.* 255: Insisto neniis inaniter et interrogationes superflue facio.

Schwartz, *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum* 1, 5 (Berlin, 1924–25): niniis V, naeniis P edd.

## E. 'trivial songs (of an actor)'

230. Arnob. *Nat.* 6.12: cum plectro et fidibus Delius, citharistae gestus servans, cantaturi et nenias histrionis.

Cf. Paschasius (*MGH, Epist.* 6, 142): tragoediarum nenias et poetarum figmenta; Dado (*MGH, Script. Rer. Merov.* 4, 665): Quid sceleratorum neniae poetarum, Omeri videlicet, Virgilii et Menandri, legentibus conferunt?

## F. 'images', 'statues (of pagan gods)'

## 1. so used

235. Prud. *Cath.* 11.33–36: Nam caeca vis mortalium venerans inanes nenias vel aera vel saxa algida vel ligna credebat Deum.

Bergman (Vienna, 1926; *CSEL* 61). Cf. Lucret. 5.1200f.: Nec pietas ullast velatum saepe videri vertier ad lapidem; Lact. *Inst.* 2.4.13–15: Non videbat (*sc.* Persius, cf. *Sat.* 2.69f.) enim simulacra ipsa et effigies deorum . . . nihil aliut esse quam grandes pupas, non a virginibus, quarum lusibus venia dari potest, sed a barbatis hominibus consecratas . . . Ergo his ludicris et ornatis et grandibus pupis unguenta et tura et odores inferunt. See below, 248.

236. Cassiod. *Psalm.* 4.2 (*MPL* 70, 48 D–49 A): Post adventum vero Creatoris sui justissime vapulabit (*sc.* mundus) . . . qui adhuc idolorum naenias inquirebat. Sequitur "Utquid diligitis vanitatem et quaeritis mendacium?" . . . Istud autem "mendacium" idola significat.

## 2. and defined: 'res supervacuae', 'species'

238. *Gloss.* (*CGL* 5.313.3): Nenias, res supervacuas vel species.

Cf. *CGL* 4.541.8: Nenias, res supervacuas; *CGL* 5.313.9: Nenias, species. For the meaning of *species*, cf. *CGL* 4.464 (*Glossae Vergilianae*) 34: Species, imago, simulacrum.

Glosses on Prud. *Cath.* 11.34 are known from other manuscripts. See the edition of Dressel (Leipzig, 1860) *ad loc.*; J. M. Burnam, *Glossemata de Prudentio* (*U. of Cincinnati Stud.* 2, 1, 1905) 35; Burnam, *Commentaire anonyme sur Prudence* (Paris, 1910) 33. The meaning usually given in these glosses is 'vanitates'.

239. *Gloss.* (*CGL* 5.313.35): Neniae, vanae res (venares *cod.*).

Cf. the third definition (Nenias . . . vilissimas res) in a gloss, cited above [175].

## VI. Derivatives

## A. nenior 'vana loquor'

## 1. in grammatical lists of verba quae passive tantum efferuntur

250. Dosith. (*GLK* 7.431.23–25): . . . negotior *πραγματεύομαι*, nugar *ἀστετεύομαι*, nepotor *ἀσωτεύομαι*, nenior *εἰκαιολογῶ*, odoror *ὀσφραίνομαι*.

*ἀστετεύομαι* Keil, *ἀστομενομαι cod.*; *ἀσωτεύομαι Hagen*, *ἀστομενομαι cod.* Cf. above, nos. 100–103.

## 2. in glossaries:

253. *Gloss.* (CGL 5.313.34; 5.544.48): Neniior, vana loquor.

## B. niniosus 'garrulus'

## 1. in glossaries

255. *Gloss. Abavus GA* 8 (CGL 4.346.8): Garrulus, niniosus, argutus.

256. *Gloss. Abavus NI* 13 (CGL 4.368.39): Niniosus, garrulus, nugax, nugator.

257. *Gloss.* (CGL 5.605.22): Niniosus, garrulus.

258. *Gloss.* (CGL 3.334.13): Βαρολόγος, niniosus (*corr.*, neniosus *cod.*).

259. *Gloss.* (CGL 4.595.42): Garrulus, verbosus, nugator, ingeniosus, argutus, laetus, blandus, vel niniosus.

## III

It is now clear that among all the passages using the word *nenia*, only about half (nos. 30–116) give it the sense '*carmen funebre*'. Moreover, many of the later passages in this group depend very closely on earlier passages, either by obvious literary imitation (e.g., Ammianus and Ausonius on Horace and the Horatian scholia; cf. on nos. 43 and 68) or by repeating definitions drawn from a learned tradition (nos. 34–38, 80–116). With this learned tradition, the names of Varro (no. 34), Cicero (no. 35), Festus (and his source, Verrius Flaccus; no. 36) may be connected certainly, though others doubtless figured in it, such as Varro's unnamed informant (no. 34), and Ovid's source at *Fast.* 6.659ff. (no. 47). The earliest passage cited by ancient authorities as an illustration of the word in this sense was a line of Afranius (no. 30); in certain passages of Plautus they perceived other meanings for the word, '*finis*' (no. 15) and '*extremum intestinum*' (no. 20). One of these meanings is demonstrably false (cf. on no. 20), and the other is only superficially accurate; but it is important to observe that the Greek etymologies (νέαρον and νήτην), with which the meanings '*finis*' and '*extremum intestinum*' were connected, were used to elucidate the history of the word *nenia* in the sense '*carmen funebre*'<sup>33</sup>; compare Varro on

<sup>33</sup> For convenience, I reproduce here the complete passage in Festus. Numbers on the left refer to the lines of Müller's edition, on the right, to my citations above, where critical notes may be found.

M.161	Naenia est carmen, <quod in funere laudandi>	36
	gratia cap <tatur ad tibiam, quem ad modum Afra->	
15	nus in Materte <ris: . . . nenia . . . . . exe->	30
	quias eant. <Sunt, qui eo verbo finem sig->	15
	nificari credi <derunt, ut ait Plautus in Pseudolo:>	

*Nenia dea* (no. 3) and Diomedes on *nenia* '*carmen extremum*' (no. 37). Moreover, in one of the Plautine passages (no. 28), it is true that the words *neniam dixit* denote an action customary at a funeral, though *nenia* here is not exactly a *carmen*. Though this passage has not yet been fully explained, and though the other passages from Plautus are decidedly obscure, we must conclude that '*carmen funebre*' was certainly an important meaning of the word *nenia*.

Was it also the central and original meaning of *nenia*? The remaining passages fall into one large group (nos. 140-239), in which the word is always plural, and is used in a derogatory sense, 'trifles', and one small group (nos. 120-139), in which Horace and Ovid use *nenia* in the apparent senses '*incantatio*' and '*cantilena*'. If we turn now to the large group, we observe first that here too there is some continuity of tradition, at least among the later passages. St. Jerome, *Latinae linguae dilatator eximius*, seems to have given the word *neniae* a great vogue among Christian writers (nos. 180-224). We may also observe that in some of these passages the word in this special application is associated with the old usage, *nenia* '*carmen funebre*'; cf. Hier. *In Matth.*, praef. (no. 192): *omnes apocriforum nenas mortuis magis hereticis quam ecclesiasticis vivis canendas*; *In Is.* lib. 10, praef. (184): *neniae et lugubres cantilena*. Since the connection is explicit here, it is possible that it was implicit in all the other passages in this group, from Phaedrus on, and that the usage, *neniae* '*nugae*', was an extension and generalization of the usages of Horace and Ovid in the smaller group just mentioned. There is no great gap between *nenia* '*cantilena*' in Hor. *Carm.* 3.28.16

- ubi ergo <circumvortor, cado: id fuit nenia ludo;>  
idem: huic hom <ini amanti mea era apud nos neniā>  
20 dixit domi; et ap <ud . . . . .>  
niam esto. Quosdam <constat inde ducere verbum>  
quod ei voci sim <ilior querimonia fletium>  
sit. Quidam aiunt nae <niae ductum nomen ab extre- 20  
mi intestini voca <bulo, quo sensu, aiunt testimo->  
25 nio, utitur Plautus <in Bacchidibus: si tibi est ma->  
chaē[de]l[ra], at nobis <veruinast domi, qua quidem>  
te reddam, u <bi tu me inritaveris, confossio->  
rem soricina nenia; <idem: neque umquam lavan->  
do et f[el]rica <ndo sci>m <us facere neniā; namque>  
30 Graeci νέαν dic <unt extremum; sive quod chor-> 139  
darum ultima <νήη appellata est, vocem extre->  
mam cantionis neni <am appellarunt. Neniae deae> 1  
sacellum ultra portam <Viminalem . . . . .>  
M. 162 . . . . . t aediculam.



(no. 130) and *neniae* in Phaedrus (nos. 140f.). We may then suppose that something derogatory in the character of the old *carmen funebre* justified, first, the usages of Horace and Ovid, and then the generalized usages. Such, at least, is the usual theory, accepted by Walde (see above, note 15).

We shall probably never understand exactly why semantic extension takes place, even in the case of modern languages and living speech. Our records are too incomplete to enable us to infer, with any degree of certainty, the reasons why one speech-form was favored at the cost of another, in situations where both would have been applicable.<sup>34</sup> Some approach to plausibility is perhaps all that can be secured. In this case, however, it must be said that, if *neniae* in the sense 'nugae', 'ineptiae' is an extension of the earlier usages, *nenia* 'carmen funebre' and *nenia* 'cantilena', the only discoverable critical contexts, in which the form *neniae* is applicable both to the old meaning and the new development, occur at a very late point. The recorded examples of the form in the apparently more recent meaning begin with Phaedrus and Petronius, but, as was pointed out in our introductory section (above, 221), the meaning 'carmina funebria' will not fit the contexts here. On the other hand, one may readily suppose that St. Jerome, having seen the word *neniae* in such contexts as those in Tertullian (no. 160) and St. Ambrose (164), and, perhaps, having heard this form used in actual speech as an equivalent for 'vain, idle talk', '*superfluae loquacitates*' (compare the derivatives *nenior* and *niniosus*, nos. 250–259), had looked up the word in such a dictionary as that of Festus, and thus came to devise artificial contexts for *neniae* in which the dictionary-meaning, as well as the meaning which he perceived for this form of actual speech, was appropriate. Indeed, when we are faced by the remarkable collocation of words in Claudianus Mamertus (no. 186), we must suppose that some such intrusion of learned meaning into ordinary speech had taken place. The way will then be open for us to abandon the old theory, tentatively at least, to search for more enlightening critical contexts, and to see if a more plausible account of the divergent meanings of *nenia* cannot be given, if we assume that some meaning other than 'carmen funebre' was central among them.

<sup>34</sup> See the illuminating criticisms of most theories of semantic change in L. Bloomfield, *Language* (New York, 1933), 430–443, esp. 440f.

We may begin with those contexts which are the hardest to account for by the old theory, namely, the passages in Petronius in which the word *neniae* is applied to concrete objects, 'petty dishes' of food (47.10, no. 153) and a child's 'hobbies' (46.4, no. 150). It is always easier to suppose that an abstract or refined meaning has grown out of a more concrete meaning, than that the change has been in the opposite direction.<sup>35</sup> Our suspicion that these usages of Petronius are not isolated or eccentric is confirmed by the striking fact that another instance of *neniae* in a concrete application comes much later and from a totally unexpected source. This is in Prudentius, *Cath.* 11.34 (no. 235): *venerans inanes nenias*. Here the glosses (nos. 238f.) correctly deduced the superficial meaning 'images', '*species*', which is echoed by Cassiodorus (no. 236), but the key to our whole problem is supplied, I believe, by a passage of Lactantius which may well have been in the mind of Prudentius when he composed his lines. Here (*Inst.* 2.4.13-15, cited above, on no. 235) Lactantius compared the images of pagan gods to large dolls worshipped by grown men, not girls, and added: *Ergo his ludicris et ornatis et grandibus pupis unguenta et tura et odores inferunt*. For *inanes nenias* in Prudentius, then, we may quite properly substitute the words *ludicras pupas*. Moreover, this passage may then be compared with Petron. 46.4 (no. 150): *in aves morbosus est . . . invenit tamen alias nenias, et libentissime pingit*. The meaning 'playthings' for *nenias* will fit both contexts. Finally, the same meaning will satisfy all the demands of the context at Petron. 47.10 (no. 153): *Gallum enim gallinaceum, penthiacum et eiusmodi nenias rustici faciunt; mei coci etiam vitulos aeno cotos solent facere*. Compare Ephipp. fg. 24 (Kock): *κάρυα, ῥόας, φοίνικας, ἕτερα νώγαλα, σταμνάριά τ' οἶνον μικρά τοῦ φοινικίνου, ψάρια, τοιαῦθ' ἕτερα πολλά παίγνια*.

We have thus found three passages, with a wide gap in time between the second and third, in all of which we may justly ascribe the meaning 'playthings' to the word *neniae*. The first two passages come from a writer who undoubtedly reflects popular speech. Since one can hardly suppose that Prudentius was imitating the usage of Petronius, we must conclude that the third passage also reproduces a context familiar in popular speech. A word for this meaning, like *παίγνιον* in Greek, was needed in Latin: *ludus*, *lusus*,

<sup>35</sup> Bloomfield, *Language*, 429.

*ludicrum* were all more generalized and abstract in meaning. Such a word as *nenia*, with a concrete meaning, 'παίγνιον', might then easily be generalized, in the plural, to refer to trivial, childish things of any sort. Thus we will be able to explain all the passages in our large group, in which *neniae* is an equivalent of *nugae*; but it is important to observe that the concrete meaning is dominant in these critical contexts.

Moreover, I would suggest that we still have a record of this meaning for the word *nenia* in the singular, and at a much earlier date. It is in the much discussed passage of Plautus, *Bacch.* 887-9 (no. 13): *veruina . . . qua quidem te faciam . . . confossiores soricina nenia*. I would translate: "(I have a) little spit, and . . . I'll take it and dig you fuller-of-holes than a mouse's plaything." The most natural interpretation of the Latin, eliminating the ambiguities of the comic diction, leads to the paraphrase: *veruina . . . qua quidem te confodiam . . . plus (i.e., plenius) quam soricina nenia confossa est*. References to the animal world in similar threats may be found in *Curc.* 576: *Iam ego te faciam ut hic formicae frustillatim differant*, or Pompon. fg. 177 (Non. 112.5): *Eis tete obiectes frustatim passerinum prandium*. In these cases, the weapon involved is a *machaera*; with *veruina*, or a similar pointed instrument, one expects an action of stabbing or piercing, not of cutting; compare *Most.* 55-7: *O carnuficium cribrum, quod credo fore, ita te forabunt patibulatum per vias stimulis*.<sup>36</sup> *Nenia* in the phrase from the *Bacchides* should denote an object which was pierced with holes, like a *cribrum*, or, at least, nicked or dug up, *confossus*. An illuminating parallel may be cited from Aristophanes (*Ach.* 761-3; the Megarian is speaking): *ποῖα σκόροδ' ὕμεις τῶν ἀεί, ὅκκ' ἐσβάλλετε, τῶς ἀρωραῖοι μύες πάσσακι τὰς ἀγλιθὰς ἐξορύσσετε*. *Nenia* in the phrase *soricina nenia* must also denote an object possessed by, or intimately associated with the *sorex*.<sup>37</sup> It is true that the *sorex* was best known for its shrill and ill-omened piping cry<sup>38</sup>;

<sup>36</sup> Cf. *Men.* 951: *At ego te pendentem fodiam stimulis triginta dies*; *Aul.* 418: *latu' fodi (cultro)*. For a similar duel, *machaera* vs. *verum*, cf. *Truc.* 627f.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. the phrase from Pomponius, cited above; *passerinum prandium*; Plaut. *Pseud.* 852: *miluinis aut aquilinis unguis*; *Men.* 888: *formicinum gradum*. Otto's explanation of the phrase in the *Bacchides* (see on no. 13) cannot be right, because it requires *soricina nenia* to be equivalent to *sorici eiulante*, i.e. the object which is *confossus* would be the *sorex*, not the *nenia*.

<sup>38</sup> Steier, in *RE* s.v. "Spitzmaus," 1820, refers to Plin. *N.H.* 8.223; Val. Max. 1.1.5; and Ter. *Eun.* 1024; cf. Donatus on the last passage, cited above on no. 13.

but the Romans did not always distinguish between the *sorex* and the *mus*.<sup>39</sup> References to the destructive nibbling and gnawing of mice were as familiar then as they are now.<sup>40</sup> In one passage, at least, the *sorex* too is characterized as a rodent; cf. Donat. *Ter. Eun.* 1024 (cited on no. 13): *Proprium soricum est vel stridere clarius quam mures vel strepere magis, cum obrodunt frivola*. The word *frivola* gives us the clue: *nenia* in our phrase must denote some choice tid-bit, like the *acinum semesaque lardi frusta* of the country mouse in the fable (Hor. *Sat.* 2.6.85f.), which the *sorex* preserved as his plaything. With the passage of Ephippus (fg. 24, cited above, 248) before us, we may well conclude that *nenia* in this passage of Plautus is synonymous with Greek *παίγνιον*.

In our next section we will return to the problem of *nenia* in Plaut. *Truc.* 213 (no. 28), where it is definitely associated with a funeral, and in the other passages of Plautus. It can be shown, I think, that in these passages too, and in the learned tradition which defined *nenia* as *carmen funebre*, the meaning of *nenia* can be connected with the usage *nenia* 'παίγνιον', which we may now accept as established in four widely scattered passages. We return now to the remaining passages in our large group, in which the plural *neniae* has the apparent meaning 'nugae'. With the history of the Greek word *παίγνιον* in mind, we need not be surprised that the word *neniae* was applied to trivial literary compositions, both prose and verse.<sup>41</sup> As a matter of fact, there are several contexts among the Latin passages which strongly suggest that the meaning 'playthings' was still present. This is true of the first passages in the group, those from Phaedrus. At Phaedr. 3 prol. 10f. (no. 140), there is a pointed contrast between *leges viles nenias* and *impendas curam rei domesticae*. At Phaedr. 4.2.1-4 (no. 141), *neniae* denotes the poet's light verses, *iocularia, quae levi calamo ludimus*; Postgate's excellent emendation *in pusillis* (for *subtilis*) fits the context exactly.

<sup>39</sup> Steier, *ibid.* Even Varro said (*R.R.* 2.4.12): *sorex . . . peperisset mures*.

<sup>40</sup> Parasites in comedy were compared to mice, cf. Plaut. *Pers.* 55-58; *Capt.* 77: *quasi mures semper edimus alienum cibum*. The name of the parasite Artotrogus (compare Miccotrogus, *Stich.* 242) recalls the mouse *Τρωξάρης* in *Batrach.* 28; cf. K. Schmidt, *H* 37 (1902) 357. Cf. Ar. *Ach.* 761-3 (above); Cic. *Div.* 2.59: *diem noctemque aliquid rodentes (mures)*; and, for the mouse and his cheese, Sen. *Epist.* 48.6.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Gorg. *Hel.* 21: *τὸν λόγον Ἑλλῆς μὲν ἐγκώμιον, ἐμὸν δὲ παίγνιον*; Leon. Alex. (*A.P.* 6.322, 1f.): *Τήνδε Λεωνίδεω . . . δέρκεο Μοῦσαν, δίστιχον εὐθικτοῦ παίγνιον εὐεπίης*; Παίγνια as the title of poems by Philetas, Stob. 2.4.5; applied to the poems of Theocritus, Ael. *N.A.* 15.19. Cf. Hor. *Epist.* 1.1.10: *Et versus et cetera ludicra pono*.

Later passages (nos. 145, 147) are probably derived from Phaedrus by literary imitation. Here we have trifles in verse. *Neniae* is applied to prose tales in a letter of Septimius Severus, preserved by Capitolinus (*Alb.* 12.12, no. 162), and in a passage of St. Ambrose (no. 164). Since a literary connection between the two is hardly possible, we must suppose that both passages reproduce contexts actually heard in popular speech. In both passages, *neniae* refers to tales such as might be told by women in the nursery, aniles fabulae<sup>42</sup>; but in the first passage, the connection with the meaning 'playthings' is explicit: *neniae* are *ludicra litteraria*. Such tales were doubtless regarded by saner persons as idle chatter, ἀδολεσχία, superfluae loquacitates (cf. Ambros.). Our records do not give us enough material to make it fully clear why the word *neniae* should have been associated so strongly with this meaning, but the presence of the derivatives *nenior* 'vana loquor' and *niniosus* 'garrulus' (nos. 250–59) is sufficient to indicate that this was the prevailing meaning of *neniae* in popular speech of the early Christian period. The usage of St. Jerome and other Christian writers, in which *neniae* is applied, with contempt, to the false and malicious arguments and writings of the opposition, is best explained as being based on such contexts.<sup>43</sup> At the same time, it seems likely that St. Jerome had devised some rather artificial contexts (see above, 247) to accord with his knowledge of the meaning asserted for the word in the learned tradition.

Only one passage in the large group remains to be accounted for: Arnob. 6.12 (no. 230). Here the curious phrase, *nenias histrionis*, has something of the contemptuous tone which we expect in a Christian writer, but the association of *neniae* and *histriones* is without parallel in this group. Since Arnobius elsewhere (cf. nos. 5, 22, 24, and 132) is a good witness for the learned tradition, we may postpone consideration of this passage until the next section, where it will be found to be valuable. We shall also postpone the passages

<sup>42</sup> Compare the glosses, nos. 170–178; Hor. *Sat.* 2.6.77f.: *garrit anilis fabellas* (e.g., the fable of the town mouse and the country mouse). Heraeus (*Kleine Schriften* 178) compares Petr. 63.8 and Tert. *Adv. Val.* 3: *Nonne . . . te in infantia inter somni diffcultates a nutricula audisse Lamiae turres et pectines Solis?* Heraeus calls such a nursery-tale a *nenia*, because he accepts the meaning 'lullaby' for Hor. *Carm.* 3.28.16; but this is doubtful, see on no. 130.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Tert. *Adv. Val.* 29 (no. 160) where *neniae* is an equivalent of *cantilena*. For the tone of contempt in these usages, compare *παίγνιον* as a term of abuse in the famous epigram of Apollonius (*A.P.* 11.275) and in Theocr. 15.50.

in Horace and Ovid from our smaller group (nos. 120–139) in which *nenia* has the meaning ‘incantation’, but in at least one of the two other passages from Horace the word *nenia* may readily be connected with the meaning ‘παίγνιον’. This is in *Epist.* 1.1.63 (no. 135), where *nenia* refers, as the scholiast (no. 137) saw, to the jingle (*cantilena*) of the boys at play (*ludentes*). The scholiast also suggests *ludus* as an equivalent for *nenia* here; we may suppose that in popular speech the word *nenia* ‘plaything’ was first generalized as ‘game’ (cf. Plat. *Leg.* 7.796 B: Κουρήτων ἐνόπλια παίγνια), and then applied to the ‘jingle’ that formed an integral part of the game. Such a usage would also be illuminating in connection with the contexts in Phaedrus for the plural *neniae*.

It is tempting also to suppose that in popular speech the word *nenia* was applied to the song or lullaby of a nurse, just as the plural form *neniae* seems to have been used of the tales, *aniles fabulae*, told by nurses (cf. note 42, above). *Nenia* in Hor. *Carm.* 3.28.16 (*dicetur merita Nox quoque nenia*) has been interpreted thus by some scholars (see on no. 130), but it is by no means certain that this is the meaning demanded by the context. A passage of Arnobius (*Nat.* 7.32), which is often cited in support of the meaning ‘lullaby’, is probably not independent of Horace (see on no. 132), since in Arnobius these *neniae* are not ‘*dormitiones*’ in general, but only those addressed to the gods; further, if this passage was based on an interpretation of Horace, the interpretation cannot be right, for, in Horace, it is certainly not *Nox* who was lulled to sleep. The meaning of *nenia* in this passage of Horace is still obscure. It is true that the scholiast on *Epist.* 1.1.63 (no. 137) quoted *Carm.* 3.28.16 for comparison with this passage, discerning the same meaning for *nenia* in both, namely, ‘*cantilena*’. He may have been right in so doing; *nenia* may have been used in popular speech to denote any light, playful poem, as the plural was so used by Phaedrus<sup>44</sup>; but other ancient commentators (nos. 86, 88) felt that a reference to the meaning ‘*carmen funebre*’ was appropriate here, because of the association of Night and Death. They too, may be right, and we must return to this passage later.

Finally, I may suggest an etymology for this word *nēnia* ‘παίγνιον’; that is, I shall attempt to show that the form *nēnia* was appropriate, according to our knowledge of similar forms in Latin

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Meleager’s address to a cicada (*A.P.* 7.196.5f.): Φθέγγου τι νέον δενδρώδεσι Νύμφαις παίγνιον.

and other languages, for this meaning, which has now been sufficiently established. Various critics have felt that *nēnia* was a reduplicated form, indicating a *Lallwort* or nursery-word.<sup>45</sup> But the typical forms for the *Lallwort* based on the syllable *na* would be *nana* or *nenā* or *nina* or *nuna* (or *nanna*, *nenna*, etc.), and in most languages the meaning usually associated with these forms is 'mother', 'aunt', 'nurse'.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, the only Latin word which can be associated definitely with these forms is *nonnus*, *nonna*, and its late appearance is suspicious. It is true that the corresponding forms *nanna* and *ninna* have been assumed for Latin, because of the wide occurrence of cognates for all three variants in the Romance languages; but again it is possible that these forms may have been borrowed at a late date from Greek, where they are quite common.<sup>47</sup> In any case, the form *nēnia* cannot be related directly to any of these words.<sup>48</sup> On the other hand, authorities do admit that some Latin words of slightly different formation (e.g. *anus*) are related to these *Lallwörter*.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, a number of Latin words, some of them typical *Lallwörter*, some of them related forms, and all of them feminine nouns in *-a*, are known to have been used by Roman children (and their elders in the nursery) to refer to food or other things (not merely persons) of the child's world. Compare Varro *ap. Non. 81*: cum cibum ac potionem buas ac pappas vocent (*sc. parvuli*).<sup>50</sup> Our word *nēnia* 'παίγνιον' will fit very well in this class

<sup>45</sup> See Ernout-Meillet, cited above, note 20; Walde, note 21.

<sup>46</sup> The best analysis of these *Lallwörter*, which are especially common among Anatolian personal names, is in P. Kretschmer, *Einleitung in die Geschichte der Griechischen Sprache* (Göttingen, 1896), 334–357; cf. Walde-Pokorny, *Vergleichendes Wörterb. d. indogerm. Sprachen* 2 (Berlin and Leipzig, 1927), s.v. "nana, nena."

<sup>47</sup> See Walde, *Lat. etym. Wörterb.*<sup>2</sup> s.v. "nonnus, nonna"; W. Meyer-Lübke, *Roman. etym. Wörterb.*<sup>3</sup> s.v. "nanna, ninna, nonna."

<sup>48</sup> Meyer-Lübke<sup>2</sup>, *ibid.* Cf. Heraeus, *Kleine Schriften* 179, who repeats Meyer-Lübke's denial, though he argues for the existence in Latin of *ninna* in the meaning 'cradle', and though he accepts the meaning 'cradle-song', 'lullaby' for *nenia*; see above, note 42.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Walde, *Lat. etym. Wörterb.*<sup>2</sup> s.v. "anus"; Ernout-Meillet, *Dict. étym.* s.v. "anus" and "pūsus." Walde (s.v. "pūsus") objected to Stolz' theory that the feminine *pūpa* was the original form and that it was identical in meaning with *puppa*; but cf. Heraeus, *Kleine Schriften* 167f., and Ernout-Meillet s.v. "puppa (pūpa)." I.e., authorities do not always agree on specific words, but in various places each admits the possibility of variant forms for *Lallwörter*, with or without reduplication of syllables, with or without a doubled internal consonant, and with a short or a long vowel; cf. also Walde<sup>3</sup> s.v. "babit"; J. B. Hofmann, *Lateinische Umgangssprache* (Heidelberg, 1926), 61.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Heraeus, *Kleine Schriften* 170f. on *bua* and *pappa*, 172 on *titia* 'κρέα νήπιων', and 167 on *pupa* 'doll' as well as 'girl'.

of children's words; the variation in spelling, *nenia* vs. *naenia*, may be not without significance in this connection.<sup>51</sup>

## IV

The Greek word *παίγνιον* also had the specialized meaning 'play', i.e. an impromptu mime, without a plot. Compare Plut. *Quaest. sympos.* 7.8.4 (712 E.): *μῖμοί τινες εἰσὶν ὧν τοὺς μὲν ὑποθέσεις, τοὺς δὲ παίγνια καλοῦσιν*; Suet. *Aug.* 99: *Supremo die . . . admissos amicos percontatus ecquid eis videretur mimum vitae commodè transegisse, adiecit et clausulam: εἰ δέ τι ἔχοι καλῶς τὸ παίγνιον, κρότον δότε.*<sup>52</sup> The phrase of Arnobius (*Nat.* 6.12, no. 230), *nenias histrionis*, suggests that *nenia* in Latin may have had this meaning also. Better evidence can be cited and, at the same time, the word *nenia* 'παίγνιον' may be connected with the meaning '*carmen funebre*'.

Varro (Non. 145 and 68, see above, no. 34) had cited a sentence, apparently drawn from an earlier authority, on the performance of the *praeifica*: *Ibi a muliere, quae optuma voce esset, perquam laudari; dein neniam cantari solitam ad tibias et fides eorum qui ludis tricas curitassent.* Though there were many other occasions when musical accompaniment by *tibiae et fides* was appropriate, these instruments are especially familiar in connection with performances on the stage. Compare Cic. *Leg.* 2.38: *Cavea cantu vigeat fidibus et tibiis*; and especially, Ephipp. fg. 7: *κοινωνεῖ γάρ, ὧ μειράκιον, ἡ ἐν τοῖσιν αἰλοῖς μουσικὴ κὰν τῇ λύρᾳ τοῖς ἡμετέροισι παιγνίοις.* The word *tricae*, moreover, points definitely to the comic intrigues, '*ineptiae*',

<sup>51</sup> Cf. above, note 26. Among the passages reading *naen-*, according to the editions I have used, we should reject from consideration those cited from Migne's reprints, where the spelling was standardized. This leaves only the following passages in which we may be reasonably certain that the manuscripts had the spelling *naen-*: Fest. (nos. 20, 36), Ov. (nos. 47, 122, 123), Paul. Nol. (145), Ambros. (164), Hier. (181, 190, 194), Claud. Mam. (186), Licinian. (187), Gloss. (202). In most of these cases, the manuscripts are late, even if the authors themselves are not. The spelling *nen-* is found in far more editions, including many in which the spelling is certainly not standardized (e.g. Horace and the Horatian scholia, the grammarians and the glosses), many based on early manuscripts (e.g. the Christian authors), and the earliest passages (Plautus). Still, it is not certain that the spelling in *naen-* is merely a scribal error for *nen-*, and we should expect some variation in the vowels of these children's words; see note 49.

The spelling in *nin-*, found in the derivative *niniosus* and occasionally as a variant for *nenia* (see nos. 173 and 224), is perhaps due to the influence of the typical Lallwort *ninna*, which probably came into Latin at a late date from Greek, where it is well attested; see above, notes 48 and 49.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Pall. (*A.P.* 10.72.1): *Σκηνὴ πᾶς ὁ βίος καὶ παίγνιον.* The meaning 'comic play' seems to be as early as Plato, *Leg.* 7.816 E.



of the Atellan farce; cf. Varr. *Men.* 198 B.: Putas eos non citius tricas Atellanas quam id extricatuross? <sup>53</sup> Varro's informant, then, seems to have said that a *nenia* was sung, to the accompaniment of *tibicines et fidicines*, who performed farces at *ludi*. Since this *nenia* followed immediately after the laudation by a *praefica*, the locale of the performance was doubtless not the theater, but at some point during the *pompa funebris* (cf. above, note 5).

Much other evidence shows that players and dancers did perform during the *pompa* at the funerals of distinguished Romans. Compare Fest. 334 M. (L. 452): Simpludiarea funera . . . nam indictiva sunt, quibus adhibentur non ludi (i.e. ludii) modo, sed etiam desultores, quae sunt amplissima; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 7.72.12: εἶδον δὲ καὶ ἐν ἀνδρῶν ἐπισήμων ταφαῖς ἅμα ταῖς ἄλλαις πόμπαις προηγουμένους τῆς κλίνης τοὺς σατυριστῶν χοροὺς κινουμένους τὴν σίκιννιν ὄρχησιν, μάλιστα δ' ἐν τοῖς τῶν εὐδαιμόνων κήδεσιν.<sup>54</sup> This was the third example by which Dionysius argued that ἡ σατυρικὴ παιδιὰ καὶ ὄρχησις, being an old Roman custom (as well as Greek), showed the close kinship of the Romans and Greeks. He had previously (7.72.10) noted that during the *pompa circensis* groups of *σατυρισταί*, dressed in costumes which recalled the Greek *σίκιννις*, κατέσκωπτόν τε καὶ κατεμμούντο τὰς σπουδαίας κινήσεις ἐπὶ τὸ γελοιότερα μεταφερόντες.<sup>55</sup> His second example was the *pompa triumphalis* (7.72.11): ἐφέλται γὰρ τοῖς καταγοῦσι τὰς νίκας ἱαμβίζειν τε καὶ κατασκώπτειν τοὺς ἐπιφανεστάτους ἄνδρας αὐτοῖς στρατηλάταις, ὡς Ἀθηνησι τοῖς πομπευταῖς τοῖς ἐπὶ τῶν ἀμαξῶν, πρότερον ἀμέτροις σκώμμασι παρορχομένοις, νῦν δὲ ποιήματ' ἄδουσιν αὐτοσχέδια.<sup>56</sup> Ullman has shown that these burlesque dances (*παρορχεῖσθαι*), accompanied by rude jests, and performed to the music of the flute (and lyre), must be related to the second of the five stages in Livy's

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Schanz-Hosius, *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.* 1<sup>a</sup>, 249.

<sup>54</sup> The context, especially the following sentence, indicates that it is probably Dionysius himself, not the source he used in this section (Fabius Pictor, cf. 7.71.1), who speaks here.

<sup>55</sup> This description, drawn from Fabius Pictor, purports to be applicable to the *ludi Romani* of 496 B.C. The date can hardly be accepted, but the description is valid; compare Ullman's discussion of the passage, *CPh* 9 (1914) 14–16. It may be noted that the serious dances on this occasion (7.72.5) were accompanied by *αὐληταί* and *κιθαρισταί*.

<sup>56</sup> I accept Post's thoroughly sound interpretation and emendation of this passage (see the "Loeb" Dionysius, vol. 4): *CW* 37 (1943–44) 27f.; cf. Ullman, *CPh* 39 (1944) 47f. Compare also Appian's description (8.66) of the singing and dancing by a *χορὸς καθαριστῶν τε καὶ τυτυριστῶν*, which immediately preceded the general in his *pompa triumphalis*. One of these men, Appian added, σχηματίζεται ποικίλως ἐς γέλωτα ὡς ἐπορχούμενος τοῖς πολεμίοις.

famous account of the evolution of drama at Rome (7.2.5): *Imitari deinde eos (sc. ludiones ex Etruria accitos ad tibicinis modos saltantes) iuventus, simul inconditis inter se iocularia fundentes versibus, coepere; nec absoni a voce motus erant.*<sup>57</sup> These burlesque dances were known at Rome at least as early as 364 (Liv. 7.2.1). They were kept up, until, at a later date, it was possible for a historian of the drama to associate some features of the Atellan farce with them (Livy's fifth stage: 7.2.11f.). Finally, we can point to at least two occasions, not far removed from the time of Dionysius (cf. 7.72.12, above), on which *mimi* and *scenici artifices* did perform at the funerals of distinguished men. Suetonius (*Vesp.* 19) records the jest of the *archimimus* who wore the mask of Vespasian at his funeral, and tried, as was the custom, to impersonate his speech and actions.<sup>58</sup> At the funeral of Caesar, the people were stirred to pity and resentment at the murder of Caesar, even before Antony's speech and during the *ludi*, by the chanting of verses adapted from Roman tragedy in such a way that Caesar himself seemed to be appealing to them.<sup>59</sup> Suetonius does not say who it was that chanted these lines, but he does add (*ibid.*) the detail, important in this connection, that *tibicines et scenici artifices* contributed to the funeral pyre by tearing off and casting in the costumes (*vestem*),

<sup>57</sup> B. L. Ullman, "Dramatic 'Satura'," *CPh* 9 (1914) 1-23, especially page 16. A further argument may be drawn from the fact that Appian, in his description of the *pompa triumphalis* (see the preceding note), says that the chorus of harpers and pipers performed ἐς μῦθμα Τυρρηνικῆς πομπῆς. He calls them λυδοί, adding ὅτι (οἶμαι) Τυρρηνοὶ Λυδῶν ἄποικοι. That is, Appian, or his (annalistic?) source, adopted the etymology, *ludi* (sc. *ludii*) < Λυδοί, which is also given by Tertullian in his passage (*Spect.* 5) on the origin of *ludi*, in a context very similar to Livy's. Livy, on the other hand, seems to have avoided this etymology, for he implies that *ludio* was a Latin word equivalent to Etruscan *ister* (7.2.6). Varro too, it may be noted, preferred the Latin etymology; cf. Tert. *ibid.*: Sed . . . Varro ludios a ludo id est a lusu interpretatur, sicut et Lupercos ludios appellabant, quod ludendo discurrant. Cf. Ullman, 14 note 2 and 16 note 1; L. R. Taylor, *CPh* 30 (1935) 128, noting Tertullian's sentence (*Spect.* 10): Ad scaenam a templis et aris et illa infelicitate turis et sanguinis inter tibias et tubas itur duobus inquinatissimis arbitris funerum et sacrorum, dissignatore et haruspice.

<sup>58</sup> Sed et in funere Favor archimimus personam eius ferens imitansque, ut est mos, facta ac dicta vivi, interrogatis palam procuratoribus, quanti funus et pompa constaret, ut audit "sestertium centiens," exclamavit "centum sibi sestertia darent, ac se vel in Tiberim proicerent."

<sup>59</sup> Suet. *Caes.* 84: Inter ludos cantata sunt quaedam ad miserationem et invidiam caedis eius accommodata ex Pacuvi Armorum iudicio "men servasse ut essent qui me perderent!" et ex Electra Atili ad similem sententiam. Cf. App. 14 (*B.C.* 2) 146, who places the recitation of the lines after the laudation by Antony. Other authorities (Dio 44.35ff.; Plut. *Caes.* 68, *Brut.* 20, *Ant.* 14) add nothing of importance.

quam ex triumphorum instrumento ad praesentem usum induerant. In this case, the lines recited were not comic, but the occasion was very unusual, and we should not suppose that such performances were always the same in all details. We may conclude that the *ludi* performed by musicians and actors during the *pompa* on these two occasions are in general accord with the tradition of burlesque dances performed at funerals and triumphs, and on some other occasions, first by the Roman youth in imitation of Etruscan professionals, later by the actors of Atellan farces. The dances were accompanied by music on the flute and lyre, and by the chanting of comic verses, at first rude and unmetrical, like the Fescennines (Liv. 7.2.7; cf. ἄμετρα σκώμματα in D. H. 7.72.11), later more regular, but still improvised, as in the Atellan farce.

Against this background, the words attributed by Nonius to Varro are now fully intelligible. It was this comic song and dance, performed by young men, which was called *nenia*, much as the jingle of boys at play was called *nenia* by Horace (*Epist.* 1.1.63). This performance, for which *tibicines* and others provided the music, was usual at a funeral, but also on other occasions, at a triumph and during the *pompa circensis*.<sup>60</sup> It is even possible that the word *nenia* was applied, like the Greek *παίγνιον*, to stage-plays such as the Atellan farce. If this were so, such usages would have assisted in the development of the meaning '*nugae*' for the plural form *neniae*, and in the formation of the derivatives *nenior* '*vana loquor*' and *niniosus* '*garrulus*'; compare Sen. *Dial.* 9.11.8: *mimicas ineptias*; Plin. *Epist.* 7.29.3: *mimica et inepta*; and the well-attested words *nugor*, *nugax*, *nugator*; *tricolor*, *trico*, *tricosus*. However this may be, the use of *nenia* in the passage attributed to Varro is consistent with what little we know concerning the line from Afranius cited by Festus (no. 30). It is not inconsistent with the usage of Horace at *Carm.* 2.20.21 (no. 40) and of Ovid at *Fast.* 6.668: *ducit supremos naenia nulla toros*.<sup>61</sup> It has at least one point of contact with the

<sup>60</sup> A passage from the *Paneg. Theod.* (no. 55) is notable in that it represents *tripudiantium catervae* (cf. Ullman, *CPh* 9 [1914] 16 note 1) as performing, on the one hand, a triumphal song for Theodosius, and on the other, *funebres nenas et carmen exequiale* for Maximus. With the phrase, *tripudiantium catervae*, compare Amm. 19.1.10 (no. 45): *saltando et cantando tristia quaedam genera neniarum*. But these passages are so late that it is dangerous to attach much importance to them.

<sup>61</sup> See above, no. 47. Ovid does not say that *naenia* was a *carmen*. His phrase, *ducit supremos toros*, strongly suggests the words of Dion. Hal. 7.72.12: *προηγούμενους τῆς κλίνης τοὺς σατυριστῶν χορούς*. (For this reason, the reading *toros* in Ovid is prefer-

choral dirge at imperial funerals, which we shall consider in the next section. Finally, it is consistent with, and will greatly illumine, two passages from Plautus which we have hitherto regarded as obscure. I would suggest that at *Pseud.* 1278 (id fuit nenia ludo, see above, no. 10) *nenia* has the meaning 'comic dance', in sharp distinction to the more serious dance (*ludus*) attempted by the drunken slave, and ending in his unhappy fall. A similar contrast between *παίγνιον* and *δρᾶμα* had been made not long before by Euphron.<sup>62</sup> Again, at *Poen.* 231 (neque umquam lavando et fricando scimus facere neniā; see above, no. 11) the word *nenia* has an excellent point if we assume that it meant 'burlesque dance', providing comic relief for the washing and scrubbing which the ladies took so seriously; *neniam facere* will then be analogous to the phrase *ludos facere*.<sup>63</sup>

In these two passages of Plautus there is nothing in the contexts which suggests a funeral. At *Truc.* 213f. (Huic homini amanti mea era apud nos neniā dixit de bonis; nam fundi et aedes obligatae sunt ob Amoris praedium) there is such a reference, for in a line (174) of the preceding conversation, the young man had denied that he was dead, so far as the interests of the self-seeking courtesan were concerned, since he still had *fundi et aedes* (see above, no. 28). The present passage seems to imply that the young man is now dead

able to *choros*.) The context reveals the close connection of *naenia*, through the *tibicines*, with the stage. The strike of the *tibicines* occurred in 311 B.C. (cf. Liv. 9.30.5-10), so that we have another point in the development of the burlesque dances datable to the fourth century; cf. Ullman, *CPh* 9 (1914) 13f.

<sup>62</sup> Euphro fg. 1.35: *ἐκεῖνο δρᾶμα, τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶ παίγνιον*. Here *ἐκεῖνο* refers to a wily cook's successful deception in persuading the Tenians to provide three sacrificial kids instead of one (18-29), whereas *τοῦτο* refers to another trick (32-34) by the same cook—stealing entrails (*χορδαί*) from two spits by dropping them in the fire, as if by accident, while whistling to the double-stringed lyre (*διχορδον*). (Compare a comic fragment, reprinted by Page [*Greek Literary Papyri* 1, no. 59.12-14]; both passages are illuminating in connection with the ancient interpretation of Plaut. *Bacch.* 889; see *TAPhA* 70 [1939] 365 note 17.) Gulick in the "Loeb" Athenaeus (4.219) translates: The other trick was a tragedy, but this was a vaudeville skit. His note suggests that "the whistling to string-accompaniment is compared to a single act in vaudeville, while the exploit with three kids was a long drama"; but surely the contrast is between a solo song-and-dance performance, as in a mime, and a serious play involving several actors.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Plaut. *Rud.* 593; *Truc.* 759; and especially *Most.* 427f.: *Ludos ego hodie vivo praesenti hic seni faciam, quod credo mortuo numquam fore*. It is in this context that we should understand the remark in Plaut. *Asin.* 808: *Haec sunt non nugae, non enim mortualia*, which La Ville de Mirmont (*RPh* 26 [1902] 335f.) had cited as evidence of the scorn with which, as early as the time of Plautus, people regarded the dirge.

after all, since he has been forced to relinquish full possession of his *fundi et aedes*. With *neniam dixit*, then, we expect the complement *mortuo*. It is possible, perhaps, to explain this phrase as derived from the usage just considered, translating somewhat as follows: "My mistress inside has delivered a funeral speech for this lover, making a jest out of his property." But this is strained, and there will remain the problem of the learned tradition in which *nenia* appears definitely as '*carmen funebre*'. It might be possible to explain this tradition, in turn, as derived from careless interpretation of sources, such as Varro's informant, who placed the burlesque song and dance in close connection with the laudatory words of the *praefica*.<sup>64</sup> But it would have been singularly stupid of the Roman antiquarians to ignore the meaning 'burlesque song and dance', when these comic dances were still being performed, according to Dionysius (cf. above, note 54), and it is much more likely that the word *nenia* was actually applied, in common speech, to the performance of the *praefica*. The line from the *Truculentus* will be much more satisfactorily interpreted, if we translate: ". . . delivered a funeral speech for this lover, in praise of his property (so far as his goods are concerned)," simply replacing *neniam* by *laudationem*, i.e., the laudatory words of the *praefica*.<sup>65</sup> We have not yet considered the role of these persons in the ceremonies of the early *pompa funebris*, nor have we faced the question: if these burlesque dances, known as *neniae*, were usual at a funeral, just what did they imitate? Unfortunately, direct evidence is lacking, and I am not sure that convincing answers can be given to these problems, but I may offer some conjectures.

The *praeficae* are known to us chiefly from passages in comedy and satire (above, notes 4 and 8). Their function at this period seems to have been to lament and praise the dead, in a song or chant. We may learn a little more from a sentence of the grammarian Servius Clodius, quoted by Varro (*L. L.* 7.70, above, note 4): *Quae praeificeretur ancillis, quemadmodum lamentarentur, praeifica*

<sup>64</sup> See above, on no. 38, and note the phrase *laudandi gratia* in Festus, no. 36.

<sup>65</sup> For the use of *de bonis*, which some editors have replaced by the *domi* of the codex Farnesianus of Festus, compare *Bacch.* 957f.: *ut dixeram nostro seni mendacium et de hospite et de auro et de lembo*; *Most.* 260: *Lepide dictum de atramento atque ebore*. For the laudation by the *praefica*, cf. a later passage in the *Truculentus* (495f.): *Sine virtuti argutum civem mihi habeam pro praefica, quae alios conlaudat, eapse sese vero no potest*.

est dicta.<sup>66</sup> Whether or not this etymology is correct, the fact is probably authentic, and it will acquire more significance if we compare the passage of Dionysius (7.72.5f.) which describes the *pompa circensis* as it appeared, probably, in the early part of the third century B.C.<sup>67</sup> About midway in the procession, just behind the contestants, came bands of dancers (*ὀρχηστῶν χοροί*), divided into three groups according to age, clad in scarlet tunics, and carrying weapons. For each group there was a leader, *ὃς ἐνεδίδου τοῖς ἄλλοις τὰ τῆς ὀρχήσεως σχήματα*. Dionysius does not tell us what such a leader was called, but an excellent name for him would have been *praeificus*, 'one who does (acts or dances) in advance'. Now, serious funeral dances are known to have existed in Greece, and their presence in Rome has been inferred.<sup>68</sup> Gestures, at least, are indicated in a law of the Twelve Tables (Cic. *Leg.* 2.59, 64): *Mulieres genas ne radunto neve lessum funeris ergo habento*.<sup>69</sup> Women are indicated here as prominent among those participating in a funeral; perhaps objections were already being made to the demonstrations of the *praeificae*, who were known at Rome at least as early as the fourth century (Aristotle had commented on them; see above, note 4). Since in the *pompa circensis* the burlesque dancers followed immediately after the serious armed dancers (D.H. 7.72.10), and since the presence of burlesque dancers in the *pompa funebris* is certain, it seems very reasonable to conclude that these were preceded by serious dancers, who would be women: one or more *praeificae* and

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Paul. Fest. 223 M. (L. 250): *Praeficae dicuntur mulieres ad lamentandum mortuum conductae, quae dant ceteris modum plangendi, quasi in hoc ipsum praefectae*. Naevius: *Haec quidem mehercle, opinor, praefica est, quae sic mortuum conlaudat*. Cf. also Serv. *Aen.* 6.216: *praeficae, id est principi planctuum*; Serv. *Aen.* 9.484.

<sup>67</sup> Dionysius here follows Fabius Pictor, who may have gathered information from his elders; see Ullman, *CPh* 9 (1914) 14.

<sup>68</sup> Séchan, in *DS* s.v. "Saltatio," 1044 and fig. 6070 for Greece; for Rome (1953), Séchan commented on the burlesque dances recorded by Dionysius, and drew the inference: *Il est probable aussi que la naenia . . . était accompagnée de mouvements orchestiques*.

<sup>69</sup> The meaning of the word *lessus* (for the nominative, cf. Cic. *Tusc.* 2.55) was disputed by Roman authorities. Cicero (*Leg.* 2.59) cited the opinion of the early scholars Sextus Aelius and Lucius Acilius, who hesitantly suggested that it meant 'vestimenti aliquod genus funebris', but gave his own support, after comparing the law of Solon, to the view of Lucius Aelius, that *lessus* meant 'lugubris eiulatio'. The correspondence between this law of the Twelve Tables and Solon's law, from which it was translated, is by no means clear in the extant references to the latter: Demosth. 43.62; Plut. *Sol.* 21.4).

their *ancillae*.<sup>70</sup> The word *præfica* will be best understood if we give the root *fic-* an active sense (cf. *beneficus*, *veneficus*, etc.), rather than the passive sense indicated in Clodius' etymology, and apply it to the leader of a chorus of female mourners, who followed her in rhythmic movements expressive of grief. The performance, however, could hardly have been silent; cries of sorrow must have been uttered; probably it was also the function of the *præfica* to interpret these gestures and cries in more easily intelligible speech, in a song or chant, as was certainly true later on. It is pertinent to observe that a burlesque song and dance, as distinct from a dance alone, would have been much more appropriate at a funeral or triumph, where the dangerous (to a superstitious people) topic of praise was voiced, than after the silent dances during the *pompa circensis* (D.H. 7.72.6) or at the *ludi scenici* (Liv. 7.2.3f.). Only by supposing that the imitation on the part of the young men took place first at funerals and triumphs, can we understand why the imitation included speech (or song), and why it was ridiculous and even obscene in character.<sup>71</sup>

Such is the picture which we may draw of the performance of the *præfica* and her chorus, and of the burlesque dances and songs which followed, as they appeared at an early date, certainly the first part of the fourth century B.C. But, as time went on, the laudatory songs of the *præfica* became more elaborate, until ultimately they defeated their own purpose, and were replaced by the prose *laudatio funebris*.<sup>72</sup> On the other hand, as the words of the *præficae* came to be regarded as inept and silly, hardly to be taken seriously (cf. Gell. 18.7.3; above, note 8), the distinction between the burlesques and the things they burlesqued would disappear, and the word *nenia* 'plaything', 'childish play' might then be applied to the

<sup>70</sup> It is true that Suetonius (*Vesp.* 19; above, note 58) says that it was customary for the *archimimus* to wear the mask of the deceased, but it is hardly likely that this was true of early times, or that the burlesque dancers imitated the men who did wear the masks of the deceased and his ancestors, dressed in garments appropriate to their ranks, riding in chariots during the *pompa*, or sitting in curule chairs on the rostra during the laudation; cf. Polybius (6.53), to whom this part of the spectacle was a most ennobling sight.

<sup>71</sup> Ullman (*CPh* 9 [1914] 16) accepts the view that the Circus *pompa* was a development of the triumphal *pompa*.

<sup>72</sup> See above, note 10. The earliest extant fragments of *laudationes* date from the close of the third century, a date which accords well with the scorn of the *præficae* expressed in Plautus. Four earlier laudations are listed by Vollmer (*Jahrb. f. Class. Phil.*, Supbd. 18 [1892] 478), but none of these is above suspicion.

laudatory song of a *praeifica*. This is the meaning which it seems to have in Plaut. *Truc.* 213, and this is the meaning ascribed to it in the learned tradition. The definition given by Nonius (145 M.; above, no. 38) may, after all, embody the good fruits of republican scholarship. To be sure, the scholars were only half right. They should have mentioned in their definitions other meanings for the word, which they might have heard in the actual speech around them. They were excessively devoted to etymology, however, and having found what seemed to them an appropriate Greek original for the word as it appeared in certain contexts of Plautus, Afranius, and doubtless, other passages now lost to us, they took the later contexts, just as modern scholars have done, as confirming their belief that *nenia* was *ineptum et inconditum carmen*, sung by the disreputable *praeficae* at funerals.

Moreover, if we grant that the word *nenia* was actually applied to the songs of *praeficae*, we may then explain the passages in Horace (no. 120) and Ovid (nos. 122f.) which give to *nenia* the unmistakable meaning '*incantatio*'. Without assuming that the *praefica*'s chant consisted of unintelligible formulae, or that it was sung to monotonous tunes, we may note that witches were called *praecantrices*, *cantatrices anus*, *omnis carminis sepulchralis magistrae*.<sup>73</sup> That is, the association of the word *nenia* with the disreputable *praeficae*, who knew songs appropriate for the dead, will provide some justification for the extension in meaning of *nenia* to include the incantations supposedly performed by such old women. If such contexts were sufficiently numerous, they would doubtless have assisted in establishing the meaning '*aniles fabulae*' for the plural form *neniae*.

## V

We have thus arrived at a point almost exactly opposed to the prevailing view of the history of the word *nenia*. We admit that this word did have the meaning '*carmen funebre*' in some contexts, that occasionally it did denote the speech or song of the disreputable *praeficae*, and that, because of this connotation, it was applied to the incantations of dreadful old witches; but, instead of supposing

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Plaut. *Mil. Glor.* 693; Apul. *Met.* 2.30; 2.5; and 2.20: Sed oppido formido caecas et inevitabiles latebras magicae disciplinae. Nam ne mortuorum quidem sepulchra tuta dicuntur sed ex bustis et rogis reliquiae quaedam et cadaverum praesegmina ad exitiabiles viventium fortunas petuntur et cantatrices anus in ipso momento choragi funebris praepeti celeritate alienam sepulturam antevortunt.



that it was also due to this connotation, or to something unsavory in the character of the song itself, that the word later developed the meanings 'childish song', and, in the plural, 'trifles' of various kinds, we have suggested that the central meaning of the word was something much closer to what it has in these generally late and genuinely popular contexts, namely 'plaything', 'play' in general, that in this sense it was applied, at an early date, to the burlesque song-and-dance performances of amateur actors at funeral processions and, doubtless, on other occasions, and that it was only because the performances of the *praefica* and her group of dancers came at length to be regarded as silly, that the word *nenia* developed the meaning '*carmen funebre praeficae*', as it was transferred from the imitation to the thing imitated. Against this theory must be cited the fact that it is hardly charitable to the reputation of the Roman grammarians and lexicographers, whose observations on the meanings of Latin words should, as a general rule of method, be treated with respect. In its favor we may fairly claim that it provides a more plausible account both of the early history of the ceremonies at the funeral procession, which we may now trace in some clarity to the beginning of the fourth century B.C., and of the relationship among the observed meanings of the word in all recorded contexts. The vital point at issue between the two theories, on which they must stand or fall, is the question of the contexts in which *nenia* is applied to a concrete object, and seems to have the meaning 'παίγνιον'. These come from three authors, widely separated in time and cultural milieu, Plautus, Petronius, and Prudentius. The old theory fails to account for these contexts, because it accepts at its face value the testimony of the Roman lexicographers. The new theory prefers to regard the evidence of the contexts themselves as of primary importance.

I conclude with some notes on a few points of interest.

1. Nothing definite is known about the goddess Nenia, save that she did have a shrine in Rome, near the Viminal gate (Fest., no. 1). Other statements of ancient authorities (nos. 3, 5) must be rejected, since they are based on a misconception of the meaning of *nenia*. If we may make a guess as to her original nature, it would be that she was a goddess of childish play; compare Cunina, Potina and Edusa, Cuba, Fabulinus, Camena.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Preller-Jordan, *Röm. Myth.* 2, 209ff., but note the reservations of E. Bickel, *RhM* 89 (1940) 42 note 20: So wurden zu Schutzgöttern bestimmter Zweckgebiete

2. The simplest way to regard the choral dirges at imperial funerals (see my note on no. 52), called *neniae* by Seneca (no. 50) and Suetonius (no. 52), is to suppose that they were intended as revivals of the old chant by the *praefica* and her chorus, made more appropriate by eliminating the *praefica* altogether (whose part was then taken by the orator who delivered the prose *laudatio*) and by substituting for her chorus of women a chorus of girls and boys of good family (cf. Suet., Dio, Hdn.), as in other solemn processions at Rome, notably the *ludi saeculares* as reconstituted by Augustus.<sup>75</sup> These arrangements would be in general accord with the best information available to scholars at the end of the Republic, who distinguished between the laudation by the *praefica* (Varro, no. 34) or in prose (Cicero, no. 35) and the song to flute accompaniment which they called *nenia*. The scholars, to be sure, misunderstood the nature of this *nenia*: it was really a burlesque song and dance by a second chorus (since the serious performance by the *praefica* and her chorus had already been mentioned). In the lack of more detailed information, Greek precedents were doubtless studied, such as the *θρήνοι* of Simonides (cf. Hor. *Carm.* 2.1.38 (no. 42), or the hymn of praise prescribed by Plato for the burial of his Euthyneis, in a passage which Cicero must have studied.<sup>76</sup> Certainly Greek precedents would have been studied in the composition of the words to be sung by the chorus. The folk-song of the *praefica* and her chorus had been forgotten.

Such a *nenia* was suggested for the funeral of Augustus, and actually performed for Claudius, Pertinax, and Septimius Severus. It is doubtful whether the choral *θρήνοι* mentioned by Appian as having been performed at the funeral of Caesar represent the serious *nenia* of the other funerals, and not rather some survival of the burlesque *nenia*, since Suetonius (see above, note 59) mentions the presence of *scenici artifices*. Ovid's claim (*Epist.* 1.7.30) to have written *scripta medio foro canenda* for the funeral of Messalla ranks

Orts- und Totengötter und nicht zuletzt etruskische Geschlechtsgötter in einem geschichtlichen Prozess umgedeutet, an dem die Volksreligiosität, die pontifikale Kultgestaltung und schliesslich auch grammatische Spekulation der Antiquare beteiligt war.

<sup>75</sup> A few parallels for the chorus of boys and girls on this occasion are collected by L. R. Taylor, *AJPh* 55 (1934) 106 note 22.

<sup>76</sup> Plat. *Leg.* 12.947 B. This hymn of praise was carefully distinguished from the laments (*θρήνοι καὶ ὄδυρμοί*), which were to be performed elsewhere, but it is notable that Plato specified a chorus of fifteen girls and fifteen boys for the hymn of praise.

him as the only known author of these serious choral dirges, the only known Roman Simonides. The reference of Tacitus (*Ann.* 3.5) to *meditata ad memoriam virtutis carmina* is more important when read in its full context, in which the inhumanity of Tiberius in arranging the funeral of Germanicus is contrasted with the generosity of Augustus at the funeral of Drusus. The public lamentation (*defletum in foro*) and the memorial songs of praise sound very much like the *neniae* at the imperial funerals just described; this is then the first known occasion on which such *neniae* were performed. It seems very likely that it was Augustus himself who took the lead in reviving and revising the ceremonies, *cuncta a maioribus reperta aut quae posterì invenerint cumulata*, which he considered to be appropriate for the *publici funeris pompa* of distinguished men, especially the members of the imperial family.<sup>77</sup>

At the same time, traces of the old burlesque song and dance still remained; cf. Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 7.72.12; Suet. *Vesp.* 19; *Caes.* 84 (cf. App. *B.C.* 2.146). These performances too must have been revised, once the laudation by the *praeфика* had been replaced by the prose *laudatio*, and it is doubtful whether the word *nenia* 'play' was still applied to them.

3. Horace's use of the word *nenia* is remarkable. The word occurs five times in his poems, in very different contexts. At *Epist.* 1.1.63 (*puerorum nenia*; no. 135), he shows that he knew the central meaning of the word, 'plaything' or 'game'. At *Epod.* 17.29 (*Marsa nenia*; no. 120), *nenia* has the meaning 'incantation', probably derived from the association of the *praeфика* and her *carmen funebre* with witches. In both these cases Horace probably reflects popular usage. At *Carm.* 2.1.38 (*Ceae neniae*; no. 42), however, we have a learned reference to the dirges of Simonides. At *Carm.* 2.20.21 (*Absint inani funere neniae*; no. 40), the meaning of *neniae* is indefinite, except that it must refer to a ceremony of mourning at a funeral, and one which was considered an honor to the dead. *Carmina funebria* is a good equivalent, but a reference to the burlesque song-and-dance performance is not excluded; cf. Ov. *Fast.*

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Vollmer, *Jahrb. f. Class. Phil.*, Supbd. 19 (1893) 333. It is worth noting that Augustus left at his death three rolls, in one of which he set forth *mandata de funere suo* (Suet. *Aug.* 101). This roll was read to the senate by Drusus (Dio 56.33). It is quite possible, then, that the proposed *nenia* had been suggested by Augustus himself. In any case, it was Tiberius who decided which of the various proposals, which were submitted to him in writing, should be carried out (Dio 56.47). La Ville de Mirmont's opinion (cited above, 218) on this matter cannot stand.

6.668 (no. 47). Horace, however, was deprecating the celebration of these funeral honors in his own case, as unnecessary, and his choice of the plural form *neniae* was no doubt deliberate, suggesting the meaning 'playthings', 'trifles', which *neniae* had in popular usage (cf. Phaedr. 4.2.3; no. 141). In this case his use of the over-tone struck by this word is very successful. In the remaining passage (*Carm.* 3.28.16: *Dicetur merita Nox quoque nenia*; no. 130), he probably attempted something similar—e.g. using *nenia* to denote the incantation of a witch, fitting indeed for the invocation of Night, but also to suggest a light, playful poem, fitting for the close of his afternoon's concert with Lyde—but his attempt was not so successful, and the passage remains obscure.

4. Neither the memorial epigrams of Ausonius nor the metrical epitaphs of Sidonius have any connection with the old chants known as *neniae*, either serious or burlesque. It has been shown above (on no. 68) that, in his use of the word *nenia*, Ausonius followed Horace and the Horatian scholia, and also, as we might have expected from his professional career in Bordeaux, grammatical doctrine associating the poetical forms *elegia* and *nenia*, e.g., Diom. (no. 37): *Nam et elegia extrema mortuo accinebatur sic ut nenia*. As for the poetry itself, there is nothing in any of the poems included in the *Parentalia* and the *Commemoratio*, aside from the biographical matter, which Ausonius could not have drawn from his usual poetical models.

The memorial epigrams of Ausonius were carefully arranged for circulation in a book, apparently in the same order in which we now have them. The metrical epitaphs of Sidonius, preserved in his letters, were designed for actual inscription on a tomb (cf. *Epist.* 2.8.2f.; no. 75), though some of them are so long that one may doubt whether the intention was ever carried out. The poems themselves are conventional epigrams, but the use of the word *nenia* is curious, and leads to the consideration of a still more curious complex of definitions and glosses (nos. 100–116).

*Nenia* in Sidonius appears to be an equivalent for *epitaphium* '*titulus sepulcralis*', exactly as Bede defined it (no. 116). Bede's source was evidently a list of defective nouns, found in many grammars (cf. nos. 100–103). In the earliest of these grammars still extant, the word *neniae* occurs in a list of words *feminina semper pluralia*, with the gloss *ἐπιτάφιοι* (*Exc. Bob.*; no. 100) or *ἐπιτάφια* (*Charis.*; no. 101). As Barwick has shown, such a list formed part

of the work on which all the extant grammars drew heavily for material, namely, the *Ars* of Remmius Palaemon (Suet. *Gramm.* 23). Barwick further conjectured that Remmius, in turn, drew many of the Latin words in the lists of defective nouns from a work by Pansa (L. Crassicius Pasicles, an elder contemporary of Verrius Flaccus: Suet. *Gramm.* 18), though he thinks that Palaemon himself added the Greek glosses.<sup>78</sup> In the case of this word and its gloss, such a conjecture is appropriate, for the gloss does not quite fit the word. The word *ἐπιτάφιοι* (or *ἐπιτάφια*) is not very precise, and was interpreted variously by subsequent users of the list; compare the glosses (nos. 105f.), certainly drawn from this same grammatical context, which supply the Greek equivalents *ὑμνοι ἐπὶ τοῖς νεκροῖς*, *ἐγκώμια νεκρῶν*. The passage of Lydus (no. 110), which contains an etymology for *nenia* also found in Diomedes (no. 37), equates *nenia* with *ἐπιτάφιον*, and both with *ἐπικήδειος* (sc. λόγος), i.e., the supposed laudation of Brutus by Publicola.<sup>79</sup> From this passage of Lydus, other glosses were drawn (nos. 111–113). Finally, Bede interpreted *ἐπιτάφια* as '*tituli sepulcrales*'. One may say, at least, that all of these definitions associate *neniae* with a funeral. On the other hand, there were plenty of contexts, in the literary and scholarly works available to a grammarian of the early Empire, which used the word *nenia* in this general sense, but in the singular form; whereas the plural form *neniae* suggests the popular usages of our fifth class, beginning with Phaedrus (no. 140),<sup>80</sup> in which there is no hint of the meaning '*carmen funebre*' until the time of St. Jerome. This puzzle may be solved, I suggest, if we assume that it was indeed Pansa who inserted the word *neniae* in the list of words *fem. semp. plur.*, and Remmius who, not quite understanding Pansa's purpose, added the Greek gloss. Pansa had been connected with the comic stage as a youth, and may well have picked up the word *neniae* 'playthings', 'games', while it was being fixed, in popular usage, as an equivalent of *nugae*, both in form and

<sup>78</sup> K. Barwick, *Ph*, Supbd. 15, 2 (1922), 157ff., esp. 167 and 186.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Dion. Hal. *Ars Rhet.* 6.1: *ἐπεὶ τοι καὶ τὰ ποιήματα μεστὰ τούτων* (sc. τῶν ἐπιταφίων), οἱ ἐπικηδείοι οὕτως ὀνομαζόμενοι θρήνοι τε; 6.2: *Συνελόντι μὲν οὖν ὁ ἐπιτάφιος ἔπαινός ἐστι τῶν κατοικομένων*. For the date (third century after Christ) of this part of this anonymous work, see Usener's edition (Leipzig, 1895), Praef. v–vii. For the prose-poetry of the rhetoricians of this period, see T. C. Burgess, (Chicago) *Stud. Class. Phil.* 3 (1902), 166ff., esp. 170.

<sup>80</sup> Heraeus commented on the juxtaposition of *neniae*, *nugae*, and *quisquiliae* in these lists; see above, 239 (following no. 147).

meaning.<sup>81</sup> If Remmius, on the other hand, had searched through the more recent standard texts (his scorn of Varro and the older learning is well known: Suet. *Gramm.* 23) for a passage using the plural form, he would have found it at Hor. *Carm.* 2.20.21 (Absint inani funere neniae). In this passage, as we have just seen, there is a hint of the meaning 'trifles'. If, then, Remmius had inferred the meaning '*ludi funebres*' for *neniae* here, he would have satisfied the demands both of the context in Horace and of Pansa's list; and ἐπιτάφιοι (sc. ἀγῶνες), or ἐπιτάφια, would be a good equivalent for *ludi funebres*.<sup>82</sup>

However this may be, there can be no doubt that Sidonius also drew from this grammatical tradition, interpreting the Greek gloss in the sense it commonly had as a Latin word, '*tituli sepulcrales*'. The usage of Ausonius may have confirmed this interpretation, and also reestablished the singular form. On one occasion, however, Sidonius used the plural form (*Epist.* 1.9.7), and here there is a notable conflict between connotation and explicit meaning, just as in the grammarians' list (see on no. 78). This same passage, moreover, uses two other words, *quisquiliae* and *phalerae*, which also occur in the list. Finally, Sidonius is one of the very few ancient authors who mention Palaemon by name (*Epist.* 5.10.3).

<sup>81</sup> Suet. *Gramm.* 18: Hic initio circa scaenam versatus est, dum mimographos adiuvat.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Ar. *Resp. Ath.* 58.1: ἀγῶνα τὸν ἐπιτάφιον; Plut. *Pyrrh.* 31: ἐπιτάφιον ἀγωνιάμενος; and the Athenian festival, 'Ἐπιτάφια; Thalheim in *RE* s.v. "Ἐπιτάφιος," 219.