

MEDIEVAL
GRAMMAR AND
RHETORIC
LANGUAGE ARTS AND
LITERARY THEORY,
AD 300-1475

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RITA COPELAND
AND
INEKE SLUITER

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AELIUS DONATUS, *ARS MINOR*, *ARS MAIOR*, *LIFE OF VIRGIL*, CA. 350

INTRODUCTION

Aelius Donatus (ca. 350)¹ is the figure who looms largest in late antique and medieval grammar. The *Ars minor* by this teacher of Saint Jerome would become the standard Latin primer throughout the Middle Ages. His three-part *Ars maior* also remained a classic, providing the standard structure for any treatment of grammar until it was replaced with the fourfold division into *ortographia*, *prosodia*, *ethimologia*, *diasintastica* ("syntax") current in the later Middle Ages. Its status as a classic is underlined by the fact that it instantly became the subject of many commentaries.² From late antiquity there are commentaries by Servius, Sergius, Cledonius, and Pompeius.

Latin grammar under the Roman Empire ultimately goes back to Greek contributions to linguistic thought, made in the context of reading the poets (philology), philosophy, and rhetoric. The first teaching manuals were written during the Hellenistic period. During the late second and first centuries BC, Rome became a new center of intellectual activity where Greek and Roman intellectuals exchanged ideas. In this setting, the first major encyclopedic theory of Latin was compiled by Varro, and the first (now lost) *ars grammatica* by Q. Remmius Palaemon, the teacher of Quintilian (first century AD). While Greek grammar reached an intellectual peak in the second century AD with the theoretically sophisticated work of Apollonius Dyscolus and his son Herodian;³ there is a gap in our sources for this period on the Roman side. But under the later Empire, from the third century onwards, and especially in the fourth and fifth centuries AD, a new type of *ars*

¹ Kaster, *Guardians of Language*, number 52. Along with all students of Donatus, we are deeply indebted to the masterful study by Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*.

² Beck, *Zur Zuverlässigkeit der bedeutendsten lateinischen Grammatik*, points out that the universal praise heaped on Donatus should be evaluated critically and proceeds in a rather polemical spirit to show passages where Donatus is either incorrect or unclear or both.

³ On Apollonius Dyscolus, see Blank, *Ancient Philosophy and Grammar*; Sluiter, *Ancient Grammar in Context*; Ildonse, *La naissance de la grammaire dans l'Antiquité grecque*; and bibliography at <http://schmidhauser.us/apollonius/bibliography>. What we consider "syntactic" information was part of the "meaning" half of the opposition form—meaning in ancient grammar.

grammatica, clearly designed for use in teaching (now designated as *Schulgrammatik*) became very popular. On the Greek side, however, we lack this type of source.⁴ Ultimately, the *Schulgrammatik* goes back to Greek (philosophical) ideas, but these were filtered through their reception in Varro and Palaemon, and any original philosophical connections not already watered down in Hellenistic philology were now largely lost. In thinking about the history of linguistic thought it is imperative to keep in mind these different contexts and the discontinuities even within seeming continuity.

Donatus' work represents this *Schulgrammatik* or "school grammar" of the Empire.⁵ The *Schulgrammatik* is a word-and-accident grammar with very little sense of "syntax" beyond the basic concept of "combining parts of speech" into larger units.⁶ Donatus' *Ars minor*, most likely composed after and excerpted from the *Ars maior*, aims at beginners and rehearses the main concepts of the theory of the parts of speech in question and answer format. The *Ars maior* consists of three parts: I. *vox, littera, syllaba, pedes, toni, positurae*; II. *partes orationis, nomen, pronomen, verbum, adverbium, participium, praepositio, coniunctio, interiectio*; III. *barbarismus, soloecismus, cetera vitia, metaplasmus, schemata, tropi*.

Donatus' two *artes* are characterized by a number of pedagogically inspired principles:⁷ they represent two stages in teaching, one for beginners, one for more advanced students; they aim at concision, leaving out material that would be unnecessarily burdensome; even the advanced *Ars* omits the identification of sources; and all exceptions and miscellaneous considerations are relegated to the end of each section. Although one of the purposes of grammar is to offer a framework for reading the poets, this structure makes the direct connection with poetry virtually invisible.⁸ The structure is entirely hierarchical, and rigidly articulated, building up from the most basic units smaller than the word to the heart of the theory, the parts of speech, to the rhetorical superstructure dealing with

⁴ Within the *Schulgrammatik*, closely related grammars are considered to form "groups." Donatus' grammar is the head of the "Donatus-group," which also comprises the grammars by Diomedes (370–380), clearly aimed at a Greek audience, and Consentius (400–410); the commentaries on Donatus also belong to this group. See Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 82–4, who claims that Diomedes and Consentius are directly dependent on Donatus, rather than on a common ancestor of all three.

⁵ The term is not quite logical, since obviously other types of grammar would also be used in teaching, but it has been traditional ever since Barwick, *Remmius Palaemon und die römische Ars grammatica* (1922), who also defended the claim that the *Schulgrammatik* goes back to Remmius Palaemon in the first century AD. Whereas Barwick restricted the use of the term to primers such as the *Ars minor*, it is now used for all hierarchically ordered and rigidly structured Latin grammars, especially including texts such as the *Ars maior*, destined for the more advanced student. Cf. Schenkeveld, in C. Julius Romanus: Schenkeveld, ed., *A Rhetorical Grammar*, 14–17 for the older distinction, Law, *The History of Linguistics*, 65–6 for the more general usage.

⁶ On Latin grammar see especially Baratin, *La Naissance de la Syntaxe à Rome*, and Baratin and Desbordes, "La troisième partie de l'ars grammatica."

⁷ Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 91–3.

⁸ See within, section on Priscian, for a grammarian who gives ample space to poetic examples.

stylistics. The organizing principle of the work is a structure *per divisionem*: it consists mostly of definitions and subdivisions;⁹ it gives lists; and each of the items on the list is discussed systematically. The compelling logic of the organization seems to presuppose a view of language as a rational, logical system, but (unlike Greek grammars as well as Priscian's grammar) the *Ars* does not articulate any philosophical principles.¹⁰

The presence of the "third part" of the *Ars maior*, dealing with linguistic error and stylistic enrichment deserves special mention: it characterizes imperial *Schulgrammatik*, not only differentiating this type of text from beginners' manuals, but also setting it apart from its Greek predecessors.¹¹ Donatus' pedagogical aim is to help his students avoid mistakes. He distinguishes barbarisms, solecisms, and "other mistakes." Barbarisms occur in single words in ordinary language, solecisms are errors in the connection of words. Both are the result of ignorance. But they can also be the result of the extraordinary linguistic mastery of great poets—in which case they are called "transformation" (*metaplasmus*) or "figures" (*schemata*) respectively. This is not just a matter of the difference between prose and poetry: what is at stake is the difference between ignorance and mastery, inadvertent mistake and conscious and purposeful deviation.¹² Donatus does not discuss these from the perspective of aesthetic appreciation, but just gives a technical description. We will see how this same distinction plays out in Servius to indicate the difference between what does and what does not lend itself for imitation.

The tropes and figures are an ambiguous area in the delineation of the domains of grammarians and rhetoricians. Grammarians as "guardians of language" were the traditional authority in matters of linguistic correctness.¹³ And linguistic correctness is a

⁹ Luhtala, "On definitions in ancient grammar," shows that only with Donatus does the grammatical definition acquire this formalized format. Earlier definitions would often introduce etymological information. But in defining the different parts of speech, Donatus will systematically give the "substantial definition" first (i.e. "x is a part of speech") and then add the "accidentia." His definitions are focused on semantic content of the term at issue. See Law, "Memory and the Structure of Grammars in Antiquity and the Middle Ages," and Law, *The History of Linguistics in Europe*, on the systematic nature of Donatus' *per divisionem* organization of his grammar and its pedagogical value.

¹⁰ Law, *The History of Linguistics in Europe* (discussion of Donatus, 65–80) mentions the link between logical organization and the idea that language itself is logical by nature.

¹¹ Barwick, *Remmius Palaemon und die römische Ars grammatica*, 89–III and "Probleme der stoischen Sprachlehre," had suggested that Stoic ideas on virtues of style were at the basis of the "third part"; this was refuted conclusively by Baratin and Desbordes, "La 'troisième partie' de l'*ars grammatica*." In Stoic theory, correct Greek constitutes the norm, and this leaves no space for "outdoing" the norm. On figures of speech, see Flobert, "La théorie du solécisme," discussing links with logical theory; Baratin, *La naissance de la syntaxe à Rome*, 261–322; Schenkeveld, "Figures and Tropes: A Border Case between Grammar and Rhetoric"; Calboli "The *Schemata lexeos*: A Grammatical and Rhetorical Tool."

¹² So Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 170.

¹³ Cf. Kaster, *Guardians of Language*, especially 169–96; Siebenborn, *Die Lehre von der Sprachrichtigkeit und ihren Kriterien*.

starting point for the rhetorician. But poetic exegesis and rhetorical text production sometimes require similar tools, and this is where the theory of tropes and figures belongs. The "figures" themselves are divided into "figures of speech" (*lexeos*) and "figures of thought" (*dianoeads*). This is not the same distinction as that between changes "in one word" or "in more words," which is relevant for the distinction between "metaplasim" and "figure." The "figures" all occur in combinations of words, but within them there is a distinction between figures that work on the level of the expression, and figures that affect the level of thought or meaning.¹⁴

Whereas the *Ars maior* just provides names, definitions, and examples of the figures, the text by Donatus that seems to have exercised most influence on the "theory of figures" in the earliest commentaries on his grammar was not the *Ars* itself, but rather his exegetical and more expansive work in the commentaries he wrote on Virgil and Terence.¹⁵ Donatus' commentary on Terence is extant; but from his work on Virgil we have only the dedicatory letter to Lucius Munatius, translated below, a "Life of Virgil" heavily dependent on Suetonius' *vita* of Virgil,¹⁶ and an introduction to his commentary on the *Eclogues*. There is much debate about the extent to which Donatan material was adopted in the extended version of the Virgil commentary by Servius.¹⁷ But in any case, Virgil is the most important literary source in Donatus' *Ars maior*, although his name is constantly omitted. The Donatan Life is constructed as the perfect corollary of Virgil's work: there are omens connected with his birth that indicate future poetic greatness (e.g. mention of the laurel which is sacred to Apollo). Poetic tradition and continuity are hinted at by the synchronicity of Virgil's coming of age and the death of Lucretius. And in spite of connections with boys and a woman, there is an overall sense of moral greatness.

Translated from *GL* 4 ed. Keil, and *Vitae Vergilianae Antiquae*, ed. Hardie, by permission.

¹⁴ *Lexis* has the more general sense of "expression" here (Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 183).

¹⁵ Schindel, *Die lateinischen Figurenlehren des 5. bis 7. Jahrhunderts*, discusses the commentaries by Pompeius (fifth century), "Sergius" (fifth–sixth century), and the lost examples of the work by Isidore of Seville, Julian of Toledo, and "Isidore junior." Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 49ff. discusses the difference between treatments of similar phenomena in the schoolbook version of the *Ars* and the more expansive, academic genre of the *variorum* commentary.

¹⁶ See Ziolkowski and Putnam, *The Virgilian Tradition*, 189–99; 227, 406, 424.

¹⁷ See section on Servius, pp. 125–40, within. The extended version is known as "Servius *auctus*" or "Servius Danielis." Daintree, "The Virgil commentary of Aelius Donatus: Black Hole or *éminence grise*?" argues that a correct assessment of commentary practices and medieval intellectual practice in general should make us wary of straight attributions to Donatus of material found in the Servius *auctus*.

FROM *ARS MINOR*¹⁸I. *On the Parts of Speech*

How many parts of speech are there? Eight. Which ones? Noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, participle, conjunction, preposition, interjection.

2. *On the Noun*

What is a noun? A part of speech with case signifying a body or a thing as a proper name [uniquely] or as a common name [generally]. How many *accidentia*¹⁹ does the noun have? Six. Which ones? Quality, comparison, gender, number, figure, case.

In what consists the quality of nouns? It is twofold: for either it is the name of one thing and is called "proper name," or it is that of many things and is called "appellative" [common name].

How many degrees of comparison are there? Three. What are they? The positive degree, e.g. "learned," the comparative, e.g. "more learned," the superlative, e.g. "most learned." What nouns undergo comparison? Appellative nouns as long as they signify a quality or a quantity: a quality, like "good"; a quantity, like "great," "small." What case does the comparative degree serve? The ablative without a preposition: for we say *doctior illo* "more learned than he" [pron.abl.]. And the superlative? The genitive plural only: for we say *doctissimus poetarum* "most learned of the poets" [gen.plur.].

How many genders does the noun have? Four. What are they? Masculine, e.g. *hic magister* "this master," feminine, e.g. *haec Musa* "this Muse," neuter, e.g. *hoc scamnum* "this bench,"²⁰ common, e.g. *hic et haec sacerdos* "this priest/ess."²¹ There are also nouns of three genders, called "everything," as *hic/haec/hoc felix* "happy m/f/n"; and there is the *epicoenon*, i.e. "indiscriminate," e.g. *passer aquila* "sparrow, eagle."²²

¹⁸ GL 4: 355. 1–27 (= Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 585f.).

¹⁹ The features or properties of a part of speech are called *accidentia*. They are "what happens to" (*accidit*) the word.

²⁰ Note the common didactic practice of choosing as examples of the grammatical genders words which are easily identified as male, female, or "neither" (*neutrum*), i.e. a thing, in the real world. Note further the use of the demonstrative pronoun *hic haec hoc* for quick identification of what gender is meant. The forms of *hic* are used where, for the same purpose, the Greek would have used the article, which Latin does not have.

²¹ "Common" nouns have the same form in the masculine and feminine, but their modifiers will take the masculine or feminine form.

²² *Passer* "sparrow" is always grammatically masculine, whether it denotes a female or a male bird; similarly, *aquila* "eagle" is always feminine. The difference with the common noun *sacerdos* is that common nouns can either

How many numbers does the noun have? Two. What are they? Singular, e.g. *hic magister* "this master," plural, e.g. *hi magistri* "these masters."

How many figures does the noun have? Two. What are they? Simple, e.g. *decens* "fitting," *potens* "powerful," compound, e.g. *in-decens* "un-fitting," *in-potens* "powerless." How do nouns form compounds? In four ways: from two intact [*integer*] words, e.g. *sub-urbanus* "suburban";²³ from two affected [*corruptus*] words, e.g. *efficax* "efficient," *muni-ceps* "citizen";²⁴ from an intact and an affected word, e.g. *in-sulsus* "tasteless";²⁵ from an affected and an intact word, e.g. *nugigerulus* "dealer in women's stuff";²⁶ sometimes from several words, e.g. *in-ex-pugna-bilis* "inexpugnable," *in-per-territus* "unterrified."

How many cases does the noun have? Six. What are they? Nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, vocative, ablative. Nouns, pronouns, and participles of all genders are declined in these cases as follows . . .

[Following this introduction of the noun, the *Ars minor* has a survey of the declensions and similar, but shorter discussions of the other parts of speech.]

FROM *ARS MAIOR*²⁷II. *On Sound [Voice]*²⁸

Sound²⁹ is air that is struck which is perceptible to the ear, in and by itself.³⁰ Every sound is either articulate or confused. Articulate sound can be captured in letters, confused sound cannot be written.

behave as masculine nouns, when they denote a male, or as feminine nouns, when they denote a female. This will appear, e.g. from the gender of accompanying adjectives.

²³ The two halves of the compound are each complete words in Latin: *sub* and *urbanus*.

²⁴ Neither of the two halves of the compound is a complete and unchanged word: *efficax*, comes from *ex* and *facio*; *muni-ceps* comes from *munia* and *capio*.

²⁵ *In* is a complete Latin word, *sulsus* relates to *salsus*. ²⁶ *Gerulus* is complete, *nugi* relates to *nugae* "trifles."

²⁷ GL 4:367.1–4.369.15 = *de voce, littera, syllaba* (=Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 603,iff.)

²⁸ On the chapter *De voce* see: Ax, *Laut, Stimme und Sprache: Studien zu drei Grundbegriffe der antiken Sprachtheorie*; Schenkeveld, "Studies in the History of Ancient Linguistics IV: Developments in the Study of Ancient Linguistics"; Stroh, "De vocis definitione quadam Stoica"; Ax, "Zum *de voce*-Kapitel der römischen Grammatik."

²⁹ *Vox* is "voice," "sound," "utterance" (articulate/inarticulate), "word." The emphasis in using this term is always on the form of the word as opposed to its meaning. We will not strive after totally consistent translation, since that could be misleading, but indicate what Latin word hides behind the English terminology.

³⁰ "In and by itself": *quantum in ipso est*. There are two competing interpretations of this phrase: (1) "in as far as it depends on the air that has been struck," that is, independent of the question whether the sound is actually perceived. This disambiguates the phrase "perceptible to the ear." Thus Stroh, "De vocis definitione quadam

I 2. On the Letter³¹

The letter is the smallest part of articulate sound [*vox articulata*]. Of the letters, some are vowels, others consonants. Of the consonants, some are semi-vowels, others are mute.

Vowels are letters that can be brought forth by themselves and that make a syllable by themselves. They are five in number, *a e i o u*. Two of these, *i* and *u*, cross over to the value of consonants, when they are either repeated themselves, or are combined with other vowels, e.g. *Iuno* "Juno," *uates* "vates, seer." They are also called "middle" letters, because in certain words they do not have an explicit sound, *i*, as in *uir* "man," *u*, as in *optumus* "best."³² Apart from having its form the letter *u* is sometimes considered neither a vowel nor a consonant,³³ when it is put between the consonant *q* and a vowel, e.g. *quoniam*, *quidem*. A digammon [F/W] is also commonly written next to it, when it is put in front of itself, e.g. *seruus* > *servus*, *uulgus* > *vulgus*.³⁴ For most people deny that the letter *i* can be doubled in one syllable.³⁵

All Latin vowels can be taken long or short. And some people think that these alone can take an aspiration.

Semi-vowels are letters that, although they can be pronounced by themselves, do not produce a syllable by themselves. There are seven of them, *f l m n r s x*. One of these is double, *x*, four are liquids, *l m n r*, and of these *l* and *r* produce a syllable that is common,³⁶ the letter *s* has a peculiar force of its own: in meter it usually loses its force as a consonant.

Stoica." (2) "in and by itself," "in isolation," "an und für sich": thus *Ax*, *Laut*, *Stimme und Sprache* and "Zum *de voce*-Kapitel der römischen Grammatik"; Schenkeveld, "The Stoic *technè peri phônês*: Studies in the History of Ancient Linguistics III." See also the section on Priscian, within, pp. 172–3.

³¹ The term *littera* can easily be misleading. It corresponds to our "letter," but also to "speech sound," i.e. it can refer both to a phonological or phonetic entity and to a part of our writing system. See also selection from Isidore of Seville, within, pp. 235–40. For a critical reading of the sections on letters and syllables of Donatus, see Beck, *Zur Zuverlässigkeit der bedeutendsten lateinischen Grammatik*, 6ff.

³² The point here is that *i* and *u* are fairly close together and hard to distinguish in pronunciation in these two examples. The *i* in *uir* is colored by the preceding *u* and the middle *u* in *optumus* even forms an alternative spelling for *optimus*. Cf. Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 1.4.8; Priscian, *Institutiones grammaticae* 1.3, *GL* 2:7.15ff.; Isidore, *Etymologiae* 1.4.7.

³³ I.e. it is an empty graphic form. Cf. Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 53 for an analysis of the structure of this part of the chapter.

³⁴ *Huic item digammon adscribi solet, cum sibi ipsa praeponitur*. I.e. the first of two *lul*, taken as a consonant, can be replaced with the Aeolic sign, "wau." Beck, *Zur Zuverlässigkeit der bedeutendsten lateinischen Grammatik*, 21 and 28 points out that in fact *lul* also stands in for the fricative in front of a vowel, not just in front of another *u*.

³⁵ I.e. even if, phonetically, the consonant *i* is followed by the vowel *i*, it is written only once. Cicero liked doubling it (Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 1.4.11).

³⁶ I.e. metrically either long or short.

Further, of these letters *f* can be put in front of the liquids *l* or *r*, just like whichever mute consonant, and then produces a syllable that is common.³⁷

Mute letters cannot be pronounced by themselves, and do not produce a syllable by themselves. There are nine of them: *b c d g h k p q t*. Some people think *k* and *q* are redundant.³⁸ These people do not know that whenever an *a* follows, the letter *k* should precede, not *c*. And whenever *u* follows, spelling should be with *q*, not *c*. It is sometimes believed that the consonant *h* is the sign of aspiration [rough breathing].

The remaining letters are *y* and *z*, letters which we have admitted because of Greek names:³⁹ the former is a vowel, the latter a double consonant. This explains that according to some there are only seventeen Latin letters, since out of the twenty-three one is the sign of aspiration, one is double, two are redundant, and two are Greek.

Every letter has three accidents, name [*nomen*], form [*figura*], and force [*potestas*]. For it is asked what the letter is called, what its form is, and what effect it has.

I 3. On the Syllable⁴⁰

A syllable is the combination of letters or the pronunciation of one vowel capable of containing [metrical] beats. Some syllables are short, others are long, others again are "common."

Short syllables have a vowel with short pronunciation and do not end in two consonants or in one double consonant or in something that stands in for two consonants. Long syllables are either long by nature or become so by position: by nature, when either their vowel is pronounced long, as *ā ō*, or when two vowels are combined to make a diphthong, as in *ae, oe, au, eu, ei*; [they are long] by position, when a vowel with short pronunciation ends in two consonants, e.g. *arma* "weapons," *arcus* "bow," or in one double consonant, e.g. *axis* "axis," or in one consonant and one vowel that is used instead of a consonant, e.g. *at Iuno* "but Juno," *at Venus* "but Venus," or in just the letter *i* when used as a consonant, which is written twice by some, e.g. *aio te, Aeacida, Romanos vincere posse*.⁴¹

³⁷ I.e. the syllable preceding the *fl/fr* combination counts for metrical purposes as either long or short.

³⁸ Namely because of the existence of "c." For discussion of this passage, see Beck, *Zur Zuverlässigkeit der bedeutendsten lateinischen Grammatik*, 38–42.

³⁹ I.e. in order to be able to spell Greek names with them.

⁴⁰ On this chapter, see the critical discussion by Beck, *Zur Zuverlässigkeit der bedeutendsten lateinischen Grammatik*, 42–5.

⁴¹ Ennius, *Annales* 179. This is a famously ambiguous oracle, meaning either "I say that you, descendant of Aeacus, can vanquish the Romans" or: "I say that the Romans can vanquish you, descendant of Aeacus." Reference here is to the length of the initial *a* of *aio*, which is claimed to be long "by position."

There are also syllables which are called "common," when either two consonants follow a short vowel, of which the first is either any mute consonant or the semi-vowel *f*, and the second a liquid consonant; or when a short vowel ends in one consonant followed by *h*, which to most people is the sign of a rough breathing; or when a short vowel is followed by two consonants, of which the first is the letter *s*; or when a short syllable ending in one consonant is the end of a part of speech; or when a part of speech ends in a long syllable, called a diphthong,⁴² and a vowel follows immediately; or when there is a long vowel, followed by another vowel; or when a pronoun ending in the letter *c* is immediately followed by a vowel; or when a vowel with short pronunciation is taken up by the Greek double consonant *z*.

A long syllable has two beats, a short one one. The metricians call the syllable "half-foot."

[The end of chapter I continues with discussion of metrical feet, accents, and punctuation.]

II 1. On the Parts of Speech⁴³

There are eight parts of speech, noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, participle, conjunction, preposition, interjection. Of these, two are the principal parts of speech, noun and verb. The Latin authors do not count the article, the Greeks do not count the interjection.⁴⁴ Many people think there are more parts of speech, many that there are fewer. Of all parts of speech there are three that are declined through six cases, noun, pronoun, and participle.

II 2. On the Noun

The noun is a part of speech with case signifying a body or a thing as a proper name [uniquely] or as a common name [generally], as a proper name, e.g. *Roma* "Rome," *Tiberis* "Tiber," as a common name, e.g. *urbs* "city," *flumen* "river."⁴⁵ The noun has six accidents, quality, comparison, gender, number, figure, case. A name belongs to one person, an appellative [common noun] to many, a designation [*vocabulum*] to things. But we use only the word "nouns" generally.⁴⁶

⁴² Rather imprecisely put in Latin—and thus also in English: reference is to metrical correction.

⁴³ *GL* 4:372.25–30 (= Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 613.iff.)

⁴⁴ Latin does not have the article. The suspicion is justified that the Latin grammarians added the interjection as a separate part of speech in order to bring their list up to eight, a number which had acquired canonical standing (e.g. through the *Tekhnê* ascribed to Dionysius Thrax). Cf. Sluiter, *Ancient Grammar in Context*, chapter 4.

⁴⁵ Note that the examples belong together. Rome is a city, the Tiber a river.

⁴⁶ I.e. for all of these: proper names, common names, and words for things.

II 3

The quality of nouns is twofold. Nouns are either proper nouns or appellatives. According to the Latins there are four kinds of proper names, *praenomen* "first name," *nomen* "family name," *cognomen* "surname," and *agnomen* "nick-name," e.g. *Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus*. All first names are either written as single letters, e.g. *C.* [Gaius], *P.* [Publius], or with two letters, e.g. *Cn.* [Gnaeus], or with three, e.g. *Sex.* [Sextus].

There are many kinds of appellative nouns: some denote corporeal things, e.g. *homo* "man," *terra* "land," *mare* "sea," others are incorporeal, e.g. *pietas* "piety," *iustitia* "justice," *dignitas* "dignity."

Some are original [*primae positionis*],⁴⁷ e.g. *mons* "mountain," *schola* "school," others derivative, e.g. *montanus* "of a mountain," *scholasticus* "belonging to a school," others diminutive, e.g. *monticulus* "little mountain," *scholasticulus* "little schoolmaster." There are three degrees of diminutives; the smaller the shape gets, the more syllables there are.⁴⁸ There are also quasi-diminutives, whose origin is unclear, e.g. *fabula* "story," *macula* "stain," *tabula* "table," *vinculum* "tie."⁴⁹

There are nouns that are completely Greek in declension, e.g. *Themisto*, *Calypso*, *Pan*; there are nouns that are totally adapted to the Latin rules, e.g. *Polydeuces* into *Pollux*, *Odysseus* into *Ulixes*. There are also nouns which are intermediate between Greek and Latin in form, called "bastards," like *Achilles Agamemno*.

Some nouns are homonyms, which signify several things with one appellative, e.g. *nepos* "grandson/spendthrift," *acies* "keenness of sight/line of battle," *aries* "ram/battering ram." Others are synonyms or polynoms, e.g. *terra humus tellus* [all three: "earth"], *ensis mucro gladius* [all three: "sword"].⁵⁰

Others are patronymics, like *Atrides* "son of Atreus," *Pelides* "son of Peleus": these are also often formed on the basis of the name of the grandparents and mothers. The Greek

⁴⁷ I.e. not reducible to any other nouns; they are "the way they were on first imposition" (*primae positionis*); cf. Charisius, *Ars grammatica* 196.10f. Barwick = *GL* 1:154.26–155.1 "some nouns are spoken as they were at birth, like *mons* "mountain," *schola* "school," others are derivative."

⁴⁸ I.e. the strongest sense of diminution is created by adding more syllables (along the principle that makes teeny tiny smaller than tiny). The three degrees may be reflected in series like *homo*, *homuncio*, *homunculus* or *homo*, *homullus*, *homullulus*, for which cf. Priscian, *Institutiones grammaticae* 3.27, *GL* 2:102.2ff. (diminution of words already diminutive). They would parallel the three *gradus comparationis*.

⁴⁹ These words have the ending of a diminutive, but there is no corresponding non-diminutive word.

⁵⁰ The examples are highly traditional, and ultimately derive from the Greek tradition (along the lines of the *Tekhnê* attributed to Dionysius Thrax, *GG* I:i).

ones among them, whether masculine or feminine, will rather preserve the Greek rules.⁵¹ The masculine forms then end in *-des*, e.g. *Atrides* from Atreus, or in *-ius*, e.g. *Peleius* from Peleus, or in *-ion*, e.g. *Nerion* from Nereus. The feminine ones end in *-is*, like *Atreis*, or in *-as*, like *Peleias*, or in *-ne*, like *Nerine*. There are also *ketika* [Gr.], i.e. possessives, which end in *-ius*, like *Euandrius ensis* “the sword of Euander,” *Agamemnoniaequae Mycenae* “[and] Agamemnon’s Mycenae.”⁵²

Other nouns are of middle meaning⁵³ and are added to [substantive] nouns, like *magnus* “great,” *fortis* “brave.” For we say *magnus vir* “a great man,” *fortis exercitus* “a brave army”: these are also called epithets.

Some indicate quality, like *bonus* “good,” *malus* “bad”; others quantity, like *magnus* “great,” *parvus* “small”; others ethnicity, like *Graecus* “Greek,” *Hispanus* “Spanish”; others fatherland, like *Thebanus* “Theban,” *Romanus* “Roman”; others number, like *unus* “one,” *duo* “two”; others order, like *primus* “first,” *secundus* “second”: but we use *primus* “first” when we’re dealing with many, *prior* “former” when we’re dealing with two, like we say *alter* “the other” when we’re dealing with two, *alius* “another” when we’re dealing with many.

Some are relative [*ad aliquid*], like *pater* “father,” *frater* “brother”; others express relative quality [*ad aliquid qualiter se habentia*], like *dexter* “right,” *sinister* “left.” These also admit the comparative degree, like *dexterior* “more to the right,” *sinisterior* “more to the left.”

Others are general, like *corpus* “body,” *animal* “animal,” others particular, like *lapis* “stone,” *homo* “man,” *lignum* “wood.” Some are made from verbs, like *doctor* “teacher,” *lector* “reader,” others resemble participles, like *demens* “demented,” *sapiens* “wise,” *potens* “powerful,” others resemble verbs, like *comedo* “glutton” [also: “to eat”] *palpo* “flatterer” [also: “to touch”] *contemplator* “contemplator” [also looks like deponent verb “to contemplate” (*contemplor*)], *speculator* “explorer” [also looks like deponent verb “to explore” (*speculor*)]: but the former group [those resembling participles] are distinguished [from real participles] by their comparative grade, the latter [are distinguished from verbs] by their cases.

[We omit the remaining discussion of the noun and the other parts of speech, resuming with the short section on the interjection.]

⁵¹ I.e. they keep their Greek declension.

⁵² *Agamemnoniae Mycenae*, with the nom. f. plur. of the possessive adjective noun *Agamemnonius*.

⁵³ Cf. Priscian, *Institutiones grammaticae* 2.28, *GL* 2:60.6ff. *adiectivum . . . significat laudem vel vituperationem vel medium . . . medium, ut magnus—dicimus enim magnus imperator laudantes et magnus latro . . . vituperantes*: “an adjective signifies praise or blame or something in the middle . . . in the middle, e.g. “great, big”: for we say “a big chief” in praise, and “a big thief” in blame.”

II 17. On the Interjection⁵⁴

The interjection is a part of speech thrown in between the other parts of speech to express the affects of the soul; either of someone who fears, like *ei*; or of someone who wishes, like *o*; or of someone in pain, like *heu*; or of someone merry, like *evax*.

But among the Greeks these are joined to the adverbs.⁵⁵ The Latins do not do that for the reason that the verb does not immediately follow this kind of words.⁵⁶

Instead of an interjection it is also allowed to substitute one or more other parts of speech, e.g. *nefas* “dreadful!” *pro nefas* “o terrible!”

There can be no certain accents in the interjections—this also goes for other words that are of a crude sound-form.⁵⁷

[From the beginning of book 3 of the *Ars Maior*, the so-called *Barbarismus*.⁵⁸]

III 1. On Barbarism⁵⁹

A barbarism is one wrong word in common speech.⁶⁰ In a poem, it is called “metaplasm” [“transformation”], occurring within our own language it is “barbarism,” in a foreign language it is called “barbarolexis” [“barbaric speech”], e.g. *mastruga* “a sheepskin coat [Sardinian],” *cateia* “boomerang [Gallic],” *magalia* “huts, tents [Punic].”⁶¹

Barbarisms occur in two ways, in pronunciation and in writing. Four species are subordinated to these two categories: addition [*adiectio*], omission [*detractio*], substitution

⁵⁴ *GL* 4:391.25–392.3 *de interiectione* (= Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 652.4–13). The interjection was the part of speech added by the Latin grammarians to the Greek list.

⁵⁵ I.e. they are not (yet) separated out from the class of adverbs, which in Greek grammar functions as a “rest” category.

⁵⁶ I.e. it does not feature the most eye-catching characteristic of the ad-verb, namely that it is construed “with the verb.”

⁵⁷ In order to accommodate these words, of which the form is often not completely articulate and which behave irregularly, in an *Ars grammatica*, their very irregularity is made into a rule. Cf. Sluiter, *Ancient Grammar in Context*, chapter 4.

⁵⁸ *GL* 4:392.4–393.3 *de barbarismo* (= Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 653.1–655.2).

⁵⁹ See on this section Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 136ff.; cf. Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 1.5.6.

⁶⁰ Cf. *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.12.17.

⁶¹ Donatus will focus on the “regular mistake” within Latin, i.e. barbarism in the narrow sense. What in normal language would be called a mistake is considered a purposeful alteration protected by poetic license in poetry—not to be imitated by the student of language. The use of loan-words (barbarolexis) within a Latin context was considered a stylistic mistake that Cicero reflects upon often in the *proemia* of his philosophical work. See e.g. *Tusculanae disputationes* 1.15. This does not prevent Donatus from citing poetic examples that use the different categories of (corrupting) change. For *mastruga*, see Cicero, *Pro Scauro* 20; for *cateia*, see *Aeneid* 7.741; *magalia*, see *Aeneid* 1.421.

[*inmutatio*], transposition [*transmutatio*].⁶² [These four species can affect] the letter, the syllable, the quantity, the accent, and the aspiration.

Barbarism through addition of a letter occurs, e.g. in *reliquias Danaum* "what had been left over by the Danaans,"⁶³ since we should spell *reliquias* with one L.

[Barbarism through addition] of a syllable, e.g. *nos abiisse rati* "we thought they had left," instead of *abisse*;⁶⁴ of quantity, e.g. *Italiam fato profugus* "through fate fleeing to Italy,"⁶⁵ since we should pronounce *Italiam* with the first letter taken short.

[Barbarism] through omission of a letter [occurs], e.g. in *infantibu parvis* "from little children,"⁶⁶ instead of *infantibus*; of a syllable, e.g. *salmentum* "salted fish" instead of *salsamentum*;⁶⁷ of quantity, e.g. *unius ob noxam* "because of one man's wrongdoing,"⁶⁸ instead of *unius*.

[Barbarism] through substitution of a letter, e.g. *olli* "they [arch.]" instead of *illi*; of a syllable, e.g. *permities* instead of *pernicies* "ruin"; of quantity, e.g. *fervere Leucaten* "that Leucate was seething,"⁶⁹ although *fervere* is of the second conjugation and should be pronounced long.

[Barbarism] through transposition of a letter, e.g. *Euandre* instead of *Euander*;⁷⁰ of a syllable, e.g. *displicina* instead of *disciplina*;⁷¹ of quantity, as when one pronounces *dēs* "gods [acc.plur.]" with long first syllable and short last syllable.

The accents are similarly changed through these four species. For they, too, are added, omitted, substituted, or transposed. The examples will present themselves spontaneously, if one looks into it.

In the same number of ways barbarism is also detected in aspiration. Some think this ought to be ascribed to errors of writing, others of pronunciation, because of the H, of course, which some consider a letter, others the sign of aspiration.⁷²

Barbarism can also occur through hiatus. For there are bad compositions, *cacosyntheta* [Gr. "badly put together"], which some consider barbarisms. They include mytacisms, labdacisms, iotacisms,⁷³ hiatus, collisions, and all the other phenomena that produce an excess of sound or too little of it, which are rejected by trained ears. We will state clearly that these mistakes are to be avoided, but leave the dispute about the name to the intransigent.

⁶² These four categories of change also underlie etymological procedures: see the etymology dossier (Part 2); Usener, "Ein altes Lehrgebäude der Philologie"; and Ax, "*Quadrupertita ratio*: Bemerkungen zur Geschichte eines aktuellen Kategoriensystems."

⁶³ E.g. *Aeneid* 1.30. The example is also discussed under metaplasm (Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 661.1f.).

⁶⁴ *Aeneid* 2.25. ⁶⁵ *Aeneid* 1.2. ⁶⁶ Lucretius, *De rerum natura* 1.186.

⁶⁷ An interesting example of "new" contemporary Latin adopted as an example in Donatus.

⁶⁸ *Aeneid* 1.41. ⁶⁹ *Aeneid* 8.677. ⁷⁰ In both cases vocative. See *Aeneid* 11.55.

⁷¹ The ancient version of the spoonerism. ⁷² Cf. *Ars maior* 1.2, above, pp. 88–9.

⁷³ Labdacisms, mytacisms, and iotacisms are associated with various mistakes to do with the letters L (Gr. labda), M (Gr. mylmu), and I (Gr. iota). They are either pronounced too thickly or not clearly enough, or the sounds are used too frequently. The grammatical tradition varies. Cf. e.g. Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 1.5.32.

III 2. On Solecism⁷⁴

Solecism is the mistake that is committed against the rules of grammar in a combination [*contextus*] of parts of speech.

The difference between a solecism and a barbarism is that a solecism contains words which are in conflict or incongruent among themselves, while barbarisms occur in individual written or spoken words. Yet many people err, who believe that a solecism can also occur in one part of speech, if we either say "she" while pointing out a man, or "he" when pointing out a woman;⁷⁵ or when we are asked where we are going and we answer *Romae* "in Rome";⁷⁶ or when we greet one man and say *salvete* "hello [to second pers. plur.]": in fact, the preceding pointing, or the question or the greeting provide the effect of context.⁷⁷ Many people have also hesitated about whether *scala* "stairs," *quadriga* "team of four," *scopa* "broom" is a solecism or a barbarism,⁷⁸ but of course the fact that this sort of word is a barbarism can easily be recognized from the very definition of that mistake.

Solecism occurs in two ways, either through the parts of speech or through the accidents of the parts of speech . . .

III 3. On the Other Faults⁷⁹

Including barbarism and solecism the faults are twelve in number,⁸⁰ as follows: barbarism, solecism, improper choice of words [*acyrologia*], obscenity [*cacemphaton*], fullness of

⁷⁴ *GL* 4:393.5–19 *de soloecismo* (= Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 655.3–16). On this section see also Holtz, 136 ff.

⁷⁵ The example derives from Greek grammar (see Apollonius Dyscolus, *On Syntax* III 8ff.); on this passage, cf. I. Sluiter, review of Jean Lalot's translation of the *Syntax* of Apollonius Dyscolus.

⁷⁶ The correct form would have been *Roman* "to Rome."

⁷⁷ So the cases discussed are indeed solecisms: they are not mistakes within one word, but function within a wider context, to which linguistic and non-linguistic (or pre-linguistic) elements contribute. Thus far, Donatus agrees with Apollonius Dyscolus, who also points out that in fact these one-word sentences presuppose more linguistic elements. However, as long as the sentence is grammatically well-formed, Apollonius will deny that the mistake in reference has anything to do with grammar. So according to him, the one-word reply "she" while pointing to a man, could qualify as a solecism, since in fact theoretically more words are involved, but as long as the grammar is in order, it is in fact not the grammarian's problem.

⁷⁸ The "correct" forms are the pluralia tantum *scalae*, *quadrigae*, *scopae*.

⁷⁹ *GL* 4:394.24ff. *de ceteris vitiis* (= Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 658.4f.).

⁸⁰ Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 163, points out that from here the different categories (e.g. "other faults") get a fixed number of subcategories (here twelve), which are then systematically presented.

expression [*pleonasmus*], redundancy [*perissologia*], long-windedness [*macrologia*], tautology, eclipse, bathos [*tapinosis*], bad composition [*cacosyntheton*], ambiguity [*amphibolia*].

[definitions follow]...

III 4. On Transformation [metaplasmus]⁸¹

“Transformation” [*metaplasmus*] is a certain change in form of straight prose speech into another kind for the sake of meter or embellishment. It has fourteen species: addition [*prosthesis*], epenthesis, and paragoge;⁸² aphaeresis, syncope, and apocope;⁸³ ectasis and systole,⁸⁴ diaeresis and episynaloephe;⁸⁵ synaloephe and ecthlypsis;⁸⁶ antithesis and metathesis.⁸⁷

[Donatus then goes on to discuss the so-called *schemata* (“figures”) and the *tropi* (“tropes”). From the latter chapter, we translate the sections on metaphor and allegory.]

III 5. On Schemata [Figures]

There are figures of speech [*schemata lexeos*] and of thought [*schemata dianoeas*], but figures of thought pertain to the orators, those of speech to the grammarian.

There are seventeen figures: prolepsis,⁸⁸ zeugma,⁸⁹ hypozeuxis,⁹⁰ syllepsis,⁹¹ anadiplosis, anaphora, epanalepsis, epizeuxis,⁹² paronomasia,⁹³ schesis onomaton,⁹⁴

⁸¹ GL 4:395.25ff. *de metaplasmo* (= Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 660.7ff.).

⁸² These first three kinds refer to an addition at the beginning, in the middle, or at the ending of a word.

⁸³ The second group of three refers to elements left out from the beginning, the middle, or the ending of a word.

⁸⁴ These are metrical abnormalities: abnormal metrical lengthening versus abnormal metrical shortening.

⁸⁵ The splitting of one syllable into two and conversely the combining of two syllables into one.

⁸⁶ A gentle gliding over colliding vowels through elision of one of them versus the harsh expulsion of a syllable when consonants “collide” with vowels (i.e. when the meter cannot accommodate them all) (e.g. the elision of the last syllable of *multum* in *Aeneid* 1.3, *multum ille*).

⁸⁷ Substitution of a letter, called *immutatio* (“substitution”) in the section on barbarism, see above, pp. 93–4; versus transposition of letters, called *transmutatio* in the section on barbarism, see above, p. 94.

⁸⁸ “Anticipation.” ⁸⁹ One verb added to different objects.

⁹⁰ Repetition of verb with each complement.

⁹¹ One verb connected with more nouns, but only agreeing with one.

⁹² These last four are all forms of “addition”: *anadiplosis*, the repetition of the last word of the preceding verse at the beginning of a verse; *anaphora*, the repetition of the same word at the beginning of several verses; *epanalepsis*, the repetition at the end of a verse of a word from the beginning of the same verse; *epizeuxis*, the instant repetition of the same word.

⁹³ “Punning.” ⁹⁴ Amplification through heaping of synonyms.

parhomoeon, homoeoptoton, homoeoteleuton, polyptoton,⁹⁵ hirmos,⁹⁶ polysyndeton, dialyton.⁹⁷

III 6. On Tropes⁹⁸

A trope is a word transferred from its proper signification to a likeness that is not proper to it for reasons of embellishment [*ornatus*] or necessity. There are thirteen tropes: metaphor, catachresis, metalepsis, metonymy, antonomasia, synecdoche, epitheton, onomatopoeia, periphrasis, hyperbaton, hyperbole, allegory, homoeosis.

Metaphor is the transfer of things and words. This happens in four ways: from animate to animate, from inanimate to inanimate, from animate to inanimate, from inanimate to animate.⁹⁹

From animate to animate, as in “They made Tiphys the charioteer [*auriga*] of the fast ship.”¹⁰⁰ For both a charioteer [*auriga*] and a steersman [*gubernator*] have a soul. From inanimate to inanimate, as in “As the rafts [*rates*] sailed the sea.”¹⁰¹ For neither rafts [*rates*] nor ships [*naves*] have a soul.

From animate to inanimate, as in “of Atlas, whose pine-bearing head is constantly surrounded by dense clouds” etc.¹⁰² For as these features belong to an animate being,¹⁰³ so a mountain does not have a soul, yet the parts of a human body are ascribed to it. From inanimate to animate, as in “if you have such oaktree-(strength) [*robur*] in your breast.”¹⁰⁴ For an “oak tree” [*robur*] does not have a soul, but Turnus, to whom this is said, definitely does.

We should know that some metaphors are reciprocal, some are one-sided.¹⁰⁵

[...]

⁹⁵ Four figures associated with the Greek intellectual Gorgias (fifth century BC): *parhomoeon*, similarity of words; *homoeoptoton*, similarity of cases (often with same endings); *homoeoteleuton*, similarity of word-endings; *polyptoton*, the use of one word in several case forms.

⁹⁶ “Concatenation.”

⁹⁷ The use of many connectors (*polysyndeton*), or the use of none (*asyndeton*, or *dialyton*). See on this whole section Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 183–99.

⁹⁸ GL 4:399.12ff. (= Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, 667.1ff.); GL 4:401 (= Holtz, 671.14ff.).

⁹⁹ Cf. Aristotle, *Poetics* 21.1457b7; Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 8.6.9–13.

¹⁰⁰ A fragment from the work of P. Terentius Varro Atacinus (82–ca. 35 BC); see A. S. Hollis, ed. and trans., *Fragments of Roman Poetry c. 60 BC–AD 20* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 172–3 (fragment 124).

¹⁰¹ *Aeneid* 5.8. ¹⁰² *Aeneid* 4.248f.

¹⁰³ The passage does not only give Atlas a head, but also discusses its shoulders, chin, and beard.

¹⁰⁴ *Aeneid* 11.368ff.

¹⁰⁵ Not explained in Donatus' text. Cf. Diomedes, *Ars grammatica*, GL 1:457.32f. Standard example is that wings may be described as oars, and vice versa, so that the metaphor may work both ways. Other metaphors are unidirectional.

Allegory is a trope, by which something else is signified [*significatur*] than is said [*dicitur*], as in “and now it is time to unharness the steaming necks of the horses,”¹⁰⁶ that is, “to finish up the poem.” There are many kinds of allegory, of which seven stand out: irony, antiphrasis, enigma, charming politeness, proverb [*paroemia*], sarcasm, humor [*astismos*].

Irony is the trope that shows what it attempts to say through the contrary, as in “Truly wonderful praise and ample spoils you are winning, you and that boy of yours” etc.¹⁰⁷ If the speaker is not assisted by the seriousness of her intonation, she will seem to agree to what she intends to deny.

Antiphrasis is irony in one word,¹⁰⁸ e.g. *bellum* “war,” *lucus* “sacred grove,” *Parcae* “the goddesses of Fate.” *Bellum*, i.e. not at all *bellus* “pretty”; *lucus* from the fact that there is no light [*luceat*] there; *Parcae*, because they spare [*parcant*] nobody.

Enigma is a sentence that is obscure through the hidden similarity of the referents, as in *mater me genuit, eadem mox gignitur ex me* [“my mother brought me forth, and will soon be born from me”]: this means that water congeals into ice and will stream forth from it again.

Charming politeness [*charientismos*] is a trope which proffers things that are harsh to say in a more acceptable way. For instance, if we ask “was anyone looking for us?,” and we are given the answer “you’re lucky.” We understand that nobody wanted us.

A proverb [*paroemia*] is a saying which is appropriate to the times and circumstances, for example, “kicking against the goad”¹⁰⁹ and “the wolf in the story.”¹¹⁰

Sarcasm is hostile derision full of hatred, as in “There! Lying down you can measure out, Trojan, the lands and Hesperia, which you tried to conquer through war.”¹¹¹

Humor [*astismos*]¹¹² is a varied trope with many virtues. It describes whatever is free of rustic simplicity, and is polished by a rather witty urbanity [*urbanitas*], as in the

¹⁰⁶ Virgil, *Georgics* 2.542.

¹⁰⁷ *Aeneid* 4.93f. Juno speaking to Venus, who, with the help of her son Cupid, has made Dido fall in love with Aeneas.

¹⁰⁸ This paragraph is related to the theory of etymology that specifies that in some cases the semantic relationship between the word that is to be explained and its explanation is a negative or inverse one. In fact, this view is not entirely nonsensical, since it is the basis of the phenomenon of euphemism. Thus, the explanation for *lucus* may very well be right; cf. further the name of the Eumenides. See the etymology dossier (Part 2).

¹⁰⁹ Terence, *Phormio* 77, meant as a comforting “resistance is futile.”

¹¹⁰ Terence, *Adelphi* 537, said when the person about whom one is talking all of a sudden shows up (“talking of the devil . . .”).

¹¹¹ *Aeneid* 12.359f., the hateful words of Turnus as he kills one of his enemies in battle.

¹¹² See D. M. Schenkeveld, “*astismos*,” in G. Ueding, ed., *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, 1 (1992), s.v.; on the stylistic opposition expressed in terms of city and countryside, see I. Sluiter and R. Rosen, “General Introduction” to *City, Countryside, and the Spatial Organization of Value*.

well-known “He who does not hate Bavius, must love your songs, Maevius, and he must also bring foxes under the yoke and milk he-goats.”¹¹³

FROM THE *VITAE VERGILIANAE ANTIQUAE*¹¹⁴

Aelius Donatus sends his greetings to his dear friend Lucius Munatius.

After having looked at almost every author versed in Virgil’s work before me, I have excerpted, in a concerted effort to be brief (I know you appreciate that), so few things out of the many that I would rather expect the justified indignation of the reader because I have knowingly skipped a lot of information from older authors, than because I have filled a page with unnecessary matter. In this work of a collector you may frequently recognize the authentic voice of an ancient authority. Of course I was free to put in my own views: but I have preferred in good faith to retain the words also of those to whom the ideas belonged.¹¹⁵ So what did we achieve? This, to be sure, that by presenting what we have collected from the massive material, mixed with our own understanding, the few things presented here give us more pleasure than others have from the many things written down elsewhere. An additional advantage is that, for those authors whose views we took over with our full approval, we have secured the attention of all in the parts that we chose, while we removed boredom by having left out the rest.¹¹⁶ So see if we succeeded in following your instructions. For if this work will show the way and lend a hand to a grammarian who, as you put it, is inexperienced and a beginner, we will have fulfilled your orders.¹¹⁷ If not, you will have to demand from yourself what you wished from us. Greetings.

¹¹³ Virgil, *Eclogues* 3.90f.

¹¹⁴ The so-called *VSD* (*Vita Suetoniana-Donatiana*) is a fourth-century AD version of the Life of Virgil by Suetonius (in his *De poetis*, now lost), dating from the end of the first century AD. Most recent edition by Brugnoli and Stok. For translations of the letter to Munatius, see Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l’enseignement*, 29f. (into French); Hardie (2nd edn., 1963), x (into English); Ziolkowski and Putnam, *The Virgilian Tradition*, 643f. (into English). The *Life of Virgil* itself has been translated into English by D. S. Wilson-Okamura, available at www.virgil.org/vitae/a-donatus.htm; Ziolkowski and Putnam, *The Virgilian tradition*, 189–99; 227–8; 406; 424–5. See further Stok, “Virgil between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance,” 15, describing the medieval reception of the “Life” tradition; and for a skeptical view on the reliability of the *Vita*, Horsfall, “Virgil: His Life and Times.”

¹¹⁵ Note that he does not claim to have given full credit in the commentary. If we look at Servius’ practice (who must have relied on Donatus very heavily), we notice that the only times he mentions Donatus by name is to disagree with him.

¹¹⁶ Donatus claims to have done a service to his sources: he picked out what was best and strongest and thus made sure that people noticed it fully—and at the same time he made sure nobody could get bored with the rest.

¹¹⁷ Donatus’ commentary was indeed so used by later commentators on Virgil, who freely excerpted it. See Schindel, *Die lateinischen Figurenlehren des 5. bis 7. Jahrhunderts*.