The *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville

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Introduction

We are pleased to present the first complete English translation from the Latin of Isidore's *Etymologies.* Isidore, Bishop of Seville, compiled the *Etymologies* (also known as the *Origins*) in the late teens and twenties of the seventh century, and left it nearly complete at his death in 636. In the form of an encyclopedia, it contains a compendium of much of the essential learning of the ancient Greco-Roman and early Christian worlds. In his important study of the Latin literary culture of medieval Europe, Ernst Robert Curtius spoke of the *Etymologies* as serving "the entire Middle Ages as a basic book."[1] It was arguably the most influential book, after the Bible, in the learned world of the Latin West for nearly a thousand years.

To get an idea of what a seventh-century Irish monk, or a lecturer at a cathedral school in the eleventh century, or an Italian poet of the fourteenth century, or a lexicographer of the sixteenth century could learn from the *Etymologies*, one might pick a bit of lore from each of the twenty books in which the work has come down to us. From Isidore, then, we learn that:

- Caesar Augustus used a code in which he replaced each letter with the following letter of the alphabet, *b* for *a*, etc. (I.xxv.2).
- Plato divided physics into four categories: arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy (II.xxiv.4).
- The term 'cymbal' derives from the Greek words for "with" and "dancing," σύν and βαλά (III.xxii.12).
- A physician needs to know the Seven Liberal Arts of Grammar, Rhetoric, Dialectic, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy (IV.xiii.1–4.)
- In ancient times execution by sword was preferred as speedier (V.xxvii.35).
- Architects use green Carystean marble to panel libraries, because the green refreshes weary eyes (VI.xi.2).
- Esau had three names, meaning "red" (for the stew he made), "bloody" (for his complexion), and "hairy" (VII.vi.33–34).
- Aristotle says that Zoroaster, the first magician, composed two million verses (VIII.ix.1).
- A soldier (*miles*) is so called because once there were a thousand (*mille*) in one troop (IX.iii.32).
- The word for a garrulous person (*garrulus*) derives from the name of the constantly chattering bird, the jackdaw (*graculus*) (X.114).
- In the womb, the knees (*genua*) are pressed against the face, and help to form the eye-sockets (*genae*); hence their name (XI.i.108).
- The ibis purges itself by spewing water into its anus with its beak (XII.vii.33).
- Because of its brightness, lightning reaches the eyes before thunder reaches the ears (XIII.viii.2).
- Gaul is so named from the whiteness of its people, for "milk" in Greek is γάλα (XIV.iv.25).
- Minerva is 'Athena' in Greek; she is reputed to be inventor of many arts because various arts, and philosophy itself, consider the city of Athens their temple (XV.i.44).
- Amber is not the sap of the poplar, but of pine, because when burned it smells like pine pitch (XVI.viii.6).
- An altar was dedicated in Rome to Stercutus, who brought the technique of dunging (*stercorare*) fields to Italy (XVII.i.3).
- The battering ram takes its name 'ram' from its character, because it butts walls (XVIII.xi.1).
- The women of Arabia and Mesopotamia wear the veil called *theristrum* even today as a protection from heat (XIX.xxv.6).
- Wine (*vinum*) is so called because it replenishes the veins (*vena*) with blood (XX.ii.2).

1 "Grundbuch des ganzen Mittelalters," in *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (Bern, 1948), trans. by W. R. Trask, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (New York, 1953: 23).

In the following introduction we provide sketches of Isidore's historical setting, of his life and works, of the sources of the *Etymologies*, of the character of the work, and of its influence.[2]

Historical background

When Isidore was born around the middle of the sixth century, the Western Roman Empire no longer existed as a political entity. Gaul was now ruled by the Franks, and in Italy the Ostrogoths had just been defeated by Byzantine forces, who had also taken over North Africa from the Vandals a short time earlier. Spain, meanwhile, had been under Visigothic rule for over a century.[3]

The Visigoths, like the Ostrogoths, were a Germanic people, originally settled north of the Danube. In 376, under increasing pressure from the Huns, they were allowed by Roman authorities to cross the Danube and settle in Thrace. Their dealings with Rome within the Empire were rocky from the outset, and they soon rebelled, raiding throughout Thrace before defeating Roman forces outside Adrianople in 378. Fighting continued until the two sides reached an agreement in 382 which established the Visigoths as Roman allies bound to supply troops in return for subsidies and a certain amount of autonomy. By the end of the century relations had deteriorated again, however, and the Visigoths, led by Alaric (reigned 395–410), entered Italy and sacked Rome in 410 after they were unable to reach an agreement with the Emperor on the subsidies they were to receive. Still at odds with the Romans, they made their way to Southern Gaul in 412, and from there were driven by Emperor Constantius into Spain.

The Roman province of Hispania had been overrun a few years previous to this by a loose alliance of Germanic tribes, the Alans, the Vandals, and the Sueves. The Visigoths, faced with food shortages due to a Roman blockade, came to an agreement with Constantius to fight these earlier barbarian invaders on Rome's behalf. After some success, they were resettled in Gaul in 418.

In 456, under Theodoric II (reigned 453–466), the Visigoths invaded Spain again, where the Suevi had become the dominant power in the meantime. Theodoric's forces did not manage to conquer the entire peninsula, however; areas held by the Suevi, Galicians and others continued to assert their independence for some time, and the Basque territories were never completely subdued.

In 507, Clovis, the king of the Franks, attacked the Gaulish part of the Visigothic kingdom, and over the next quarter century the Visigoths lost all their Gaulish territory apart from the region around Narbonne known as Septimania. From this point on, the Visigothic kingdom was essentially confined to the Spanish peninsula.

It should be pointed out that although the Visigoths were rulers of Spain they probably only made up a small percentage of the population throughout the period under their rule; the majority of the inhabitants were Hispano-Roman. The new rulers retained a large part of the Roman administrative structure; Roman governors and officials continued to collect at least some Roman taxes[4] and enforce Roman law.[5] The two groups remained socially distinct, however; a ban from imperial times on intermarriage between Goths and Romans, for example, apparently remained in effect until the later part of the sixth century.[6]

Visigothic Spain was a politically unstable kingdom throughout most of the sixth century. Four successive kings were murdered (Amalric, Theudis, Theudisclus, and Agila). From 544, Byzantine forces intervened in Visigothic affairs, possibly at the invitation of Athanagild in his rebellion against Agila. By 557, the Byzantines occupied the southeastern coast of the peninsula, including the port city of Cartagena. Isidore's parents appear to have left Cartagena at about this time, quite possibly as a result of this invasion. In the meantime,

2 The fullest recent account of all these matters is the extensive General Introduction by Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz to the Spanish edition of the *Etymologies*, ed. Oroz Reta and Marcos Casquero 1993²: 3–257. No good general treatment of Isidore is available in English; the study by Brehaut (1912) is outdated.

3 For a recent overview of the whole period see McKitterick 2001.

4 Land tax, custom tolls, and *collatio lustralis* continued to be collected, for example; see Heather 1996: 194–95.

5 There is some controversy over whether the Gothic inhabitants were subject to a separate code based on traditional Gothic law; see, among others, King 1980, Collins 1995: 24–31, Heather 1996: 194–96, Velázquez 1999, and Wood 1999.

6 Wood 1999: 193.

relations with the Franks to the north deteriorated and they began to threaten Visigothic Septimania and the Ebro Valley.

Following Athanagild's death in 568, the Visigothic nobility chose Liuva to be king, and after Liuva's death in 571 or 573, his brother Leovigild (the Visigothic monarchy was not hereditary, although sometimes a son did succeed his father to the throne). Under Leovigild, the kingdom saw its strength increase. The new king's military successes restored territory that had been lost to the Byzantines and regained political control over rebellious areas (the city of Cordoba, for example, which had been in a state of rebellion since 550) and bordering regions in the northern part of the peninsula.

Leovigild's attempt to win new converts to Arianism met with less success. Arianism was a form of Christianity that held that the three members of the Trinity were not equal and co-eternal – specifically that the Son was not God by nature but created, and not eternal like the Father.[7] Catholic Christians condemned Arian doctrine as heresy at the Council of Nicaea in 325. The Goths, however, had already accepted Arianism when they converted to Christianity, and they continued to hold this doctrine as they moved westward into Gaul and then into Spain. Until Leovigild, the Gothic rulers had made no attempt to convert their largely Catholic subjects, and had apparently made little restriction on the practice of Catholicism, although the Catholic clergy had been deprived of some of their privileges. Under the Arian rulers, the Catholic Church in Spain had been free to convene synods, construct new churches and found monasteries, correspond with the Pope, and circulate their writings openly. The two Churches coexisted independently of each other, each with its own clergy, shrines, and other institutions.

Leovigild, however, mounted a serious campaign to expand Arianism, choosing persuasion and rewards as his instruments, rather than force. In 580 he summoned the first Arian synod held in Spain, and ruled that converts to Arianism no longer needed to be rebaptized, which presumably also made the process of conversion more appealing to Catholics. According to Gregory of Tours (*Libri Historiarum X*, 6.18), Leovigild also attempted to win converts by redefining Arian doctrine to hold that the Father and Son were equal and co-eternal and only the Holy Spirit was not equal. Although he managed to win over a few important Catholic figures, including the Bishop of Saragossa, he lost ground in his own family, for by 582 his older son Hermenigild had converted to Catholicism.

Hermenigild's conversion may have been based as much on political considerations as religious conviction. He had rebelled against his father in 579, soon after his marriage to a Frankish princess (Clovis, the king of the Franks, had converted to Catholicism around the beginning of the sixth century),[8] and had declared himself the independent monarch over the southern part of the peninsula. For three years, Leovigild seems to have accepted the situation, making no attempt to regain control, while Hermenigild, for his part, did not seek to expand the territory under his rule. Some time around 582, Hermenigild converted to Catholicism, under the influence of Isidore's brother Leander, according to Pope Gregory I, a friend of Leander.[9]

In 583, Leovigild finally moved to retake the territory held by Hermenigild, and by 584 he had regained control and exiled Hermenigild to Valencia, where he was murdered the next year. Leovigild, in the meantime, continued his military successes, conquering the Suevic kingdom before he died in 586.

Reccared, Leovigild's other son and Hermenigild's younger brother, became king at his father's death, and converted to Catholicism the following year. Again, as with Hermenigild, Leander of Seville was apparently instrumental in his conversion[10]. Reccared began systematically disassembling the Arian Church structure, reassigning Arian churches to the Catholic dioceses where they were located, and allowing Arian bishops who converted to retain their sees, even when this meant having two bishops in a single see. Most of the groundwork for these changes was laid at the kingdom-wide church Council convened by Reccared at Toledo in 589.[11]

7 For a discussion of the theology of Gothic Arianism see Wiles 1996:45–51.

8 Some historians have suggested that the Franks first converted from paganism to Arianism, and then from Arianism to Catholicism; see D. Schanzer, "Dating the Baptism of Clovis: the Bishop of Vienne vs. the Bishop of Tours," *Early Medieval Europe* 7 (1998): 29–57.

9 *Dialogues*, iii.31. See Collins 1980:215–18 for further discussion of Leander's role in Hermenigild's conversion.

10 Collins 1995:54.

11 See Stocking 2000:59–88 for a discussion of the Council; records of the Council may be found in G. Martínez Díez and F. Rodríguez, eds., *La Colección Canónica Hispana*, V, Concilios Hispanos: segunda parte (Madrid, 1992).

Although he ordered the destruction of Arian books (and in fact no Arian documents are preserved from Visigothic Spain), there was little if any other persecution of Arians who refused to convert. In the first four years following his conversion, Reccared faced several Arian conspiracies and attempted revolts led by Gothic nobles, but these did not turn out to be serious threats, and within a generation Arianism appears to have died out.

One result of Reccared's conversion to Catholicism was the formation of close ties between the monarchy and the Church. From this point forward, the Visigothic kings exercised control over the appointment of bishops and other decisions that had hitherto been made by the Church alone (see Letters IV and V in the Appendix). In return, the Church, in particular the council of bishops, was given the authority and responsibility for overseeing secular offices like local judges and agents of the treasury estates.

Reccared died in 601, shortly after Isidore became Bishop of Seville, and was succeeded by his seventeen-year-old illegitimate son Liuva II. Less than two years later, Liuva was deposed by Witteric, a Gothic noble. Witteric had Liuva's right hand cut off to prevent him from retaking the throne (Visigothic tradition required that the monarch be able-bodied), and then, in 603, had him executed. Witteric himself was assassinated in 610. The assassins and their motivations have not been recorded, but Witteric was by all accounts not a popular king. Isidore speaks of him with disapproval, and other contemporaries complained of injustices suffered under his role. Gundemar took the throne after Witteric's death, and involved himself, as Reccared had, in the councils of bishops, before dying two years later.

Sisebut then became king. He was a man of some intellectual attainment and authored, among other works, a poem on lunar eclipses (written in 613 as a response to Isidore's cosmological treatise, *De Natura Rerum*) and a Life of St. Desiderius of Vienne.[12] He was also noted by contemporaries for his personal piety, which led him to become deeply involved in the activities of the Church. According to Isidore, Sisebut's anti-Jewish policy of forced conversion was based on zeal rather than knowledge.[13] (Isidore may be referring to this campaign in *Etymologies* V.xxxix.42.) Isidore did not entirely approve of this policy but apparently reserved his criticism until after Sisebut's death.

Sisebut died in 621, of natural causes, or an overdose of medicine, or deliberate poisoning, depending on which account one credits.[14] Reccared II, his young son and successor, died shortly thereafter, and Suinthila took the throne. He began his reign by pushing back a Basque incursion into the province of Tarragona (see Letter II). A further triumph followed a few years later when he succeeded in driving the Byzantines out of Spain. In one version of the *Historia Gothorum*, written during Suinthila's reign, Isidore is lavish in his praise of the monarch. However, Suinthila was deposed in 631 by a group of nobles with Frankish assistance, and Sisenand was made king. Little is recorded about Sisenand's reign aside from his participation in the Fourth Council of Toledo. He died in 636, the same year as Isidore.

Chronology

557: Byzantines occupy Cartagena.
ca. 560: Isidore is born.
572: Leovigild becomes king.
ca. 579: Hermenigild rebels.
586: Death of Leovigild; Reccared becomes king.
587: Reccared converts to Catholicism.
600: Leander dies. Isidore becomes Archbishop of Seville.
601/2: Reccared dies. Liuva II becomes king.
603: Witteric dethrones and murders Liuva II, and becomes king.
610: Witteric assassinated. Gundemar becomes king.

12 See J. Fontaine, "King Sisebut's *Vita Desiderii* and the Political Function of Visigothic Hagiography," in James 1980.

13 Isidore, *History of the Goths*, 61, translated in Wolf 1999:105; see Stocking 2000:132–6 for further discussion of Sisebut's and Isidore's views on conversion.

14 Isidore, *History of the Goths* in Wolf 1999:106: "Some claim that he died a natural death, others, that he died as a result of an overdose of some medication." In an earlier version of the *History of the Goths*, the possibility of poisoning was mentioned (see Stocking 2000:135 fn. 69).

611/12: Death of Gundemar. Sisebut becomes king.
613: Isidore dedicates *De Natura Rerum* to Sisebut.
621: Sisebut dies. Reccared II becomes king and dies shortly thereafter. Suinthila becomes king.
624: Suinthila drives the Byzantines completely out of Spain.
631: Suinthila is deposed. Sisenand becomes king.
636: Sisenand dies. Isidore dies.

Life and works

Few details can be given about Isidore's life with any certainty. He was born some time around 560, about the time when his father Severianus relocated the family to Seville from Cartagena, where invading Byzantine forces had taken control. Isidore's parents died while he was still young, and he was brought up and educated in Seville under the care of his older brother Leander, very likely in the monastery school where Leander was abbot (Riché 1976:289).

Leander, who became Bishop of Seville before 580, was an active and influential churchman.[15] He was a personal friend of Gregory, later Pope Gregory I, whom he encountered on a visit to Constantinople and who dedicated his *Moralia* to Leander. A connection of greater consequence for the kingdom of Spain was Leander's friendship with King Leovigild's sons Hermenigild and Reccared, the future king; it was under Leander's guidance that both his royal friends converted from Arianism to Catholicism.

After Leander's death, and shortly before Reccared died, Isidore was made Bishop of Seville, most likely in the year 600. His other brother, Fulgentius, as well as his sister Florentina, also chose to go into the Church; Fulgentius became Bishop of Ecija and Florentina entered a nunnery. As one of the leading churchmen in the country, Isidore presided over important Church councils in Seville (in 619) and Toledo (in 633). The close ties that had been established between the Visigothic monarchy and the Catholic Church after Reccared's conversion make it likely that Isidore had some political influence as well. His relationship with King Sisebut (reigned 612–621) was particularly close, extending beyond practical matters of government to a personal friendship based on shared intellectual interests. Also important was his friendship with his younger colleague, Braulio, who was in Seville with Isidore until 619, when he became archdeacon (and later, in 631, bishop) of the Church in Saragossa. Their correspondence (see the letters attached to the *Etymologies* in the Appendix) provides a valuable glimpse of Isidore's personality and daily life.

Isidore was deeply admired by his contemporaries for his scholarship and intellectual gifts. Although their praise for his Greek and Hebrew is perhaps unmerited (his knowledge of these languages appears to have extended only to disconnected Greek terms and phrases, and a smattering of Hebrew words), the breadth of his learning is nonetheless impressive.[16] He was happy to draw on pagan authors as well as Church Fathers, and was familiar with works as various as Martial's *Epigrams*, Tertullian's *On Spectacles*, and Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*. In spite of the demands of his episcopal office, Isidore nevertheless found time to produce a substantial body of writing. Braulio compiled a list of these works, the *Renotatio Isidori*, presented in the order in which they were written, shortly after Isidore's death in 636:

> Isidore, an excellent man, bishop of the Church at Seville, successor to and brother of Bishop Leander, flourished from the time of the Emperor Mauritius and

15 Good biographies of Leander, with accounts of his combat against Arianism and his writings, are L. Navarra, *Leandro di Siviglia: Profilo storico-letterario* (Rome, 1987), which prints and translates his *Homilia in Laudem Ecclesiae*, and J. Madoz, "San Leandro de Sevilla," *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 56 (1981): 415–53, printing the basic documentary sources for Leander's career.

16 The kind of Greek known by Isidore and others from the sixth century on has been the subject of a number of studies: see Bischoff 1967:246–75, Riché 1976:44–45, W. Berschin, *Griechisch-lateinisches Mittelalter, von Hieronymus zu Nikolaus von Kues* (Bern and Munich, 1980), revised and expanded by the author and trans. J. C. Frakes as *Greek Letters and the Latin Middle Ages, from Jerome to Nicholas of Cusa* (Washington, DC, 1988) and especially M. Herren and S. A. Brown, eds., *The Sacred Nectar of the Greeks: The Study of Greek in the West in the Early Middle Ages* (London, 1988), esp. Herren's introduction (v–xii), and the studies by Dionisotti (1–56), Herren (57–84), Berschin (85–104), and Riché (143–68) in the same volume. Isidore's knowledge of Hebrew was restricted to names interpreted by Jerome (Riché 1976:302).

King Reccared.[17] Our own time indeed found in him a likeness to the knowledge of antiquity, and in him antiquity reclaimed something for itself. He was a man educated in every kind of expression, so that in the quality of his speech he was suited to both the ignorant audience and the learned. Indeed, he was famous for his incomparable eloquence, eloquence appropriate to the occasion. An intelligent reader can now very easily understand from his diverse undertakings and well-crafted works just how great Isidore's knowledge was. Accordingly, I have noted down these thoughts about the works that have come to my notice. He published:

Two books of *Differences (Differentiae)*, in which he used subtle distinctions to differentiate the meaning of terms whose use is confused.

One book of *Introductions (Proemia)*, in which through brief notes he pointed out what each book of Holy Scripture contains.

One book *On the Lives and Deaths of the Fathers (De Ortu et Obitu Patrum)*, in which he noted with thoughtful brevity their deeds and worthiness, their deaths and burials.

Two books of *Offices (Officia)*, for his brother Fulgentius, Bishop of Ecija, in which he set out the origin of the Offices and why each Office is performed in the Church of God, with interpretations of his own pen, but not without the authority of our forefathers.

Two books of *Synonyms (Synonyma)*, with which, through the intervening exhortation of reason, he encouraged the reader to a consolation of the soul and a hope of receiving forgiveness.

One book *On the Nature of Things (De Natura Rerum)*, addressed to King Sisebut, in which he resolved certain obscure matters concerning the elements, relying on his study of both the Doctors of the Church and the philosophers.

One book *On Numbers (De Numeris)*, in which he touched in part on the discipline of mathematics, on account of the numbers which are inserted in Sacred Scripture.

One book *On the Names of the Law and the Gospels (De Nominibus Legis et Evangeliorum)*, in which he shows what the people who are mentioned signify in a mystical sense.

One book *On Heresies (De Haeresibus)*, in which, following the examples of our forefathers, he gathers diverse topics, being as brief as he can.

Three books of *Sentences (Sententiae)*, which he ornamented with flowers from the book of *Morals* by Pope Gregory.

One book of *Chronicles (Chronicon)*, from the creation of the world up until his own time, collected with great brevity.

Two books *Against the Jews (Contra Judaeos)*, at the request of his sister Florentina, a virgin (i.e. a nun) in her way of life, in which he demonstrated everything that the Catholic Church believes based on the evidence of the Law and of the Prophets (i.e. based on the Hebrew Scriptures alone).

One book *On Illustrious Men (De Viris Illustribus)*, to which we are adding this entry.[18]

One book of the *Monastic Rule (Monastica Regula)*, which he tempered most fittingly for use in this country and for the souls of the weak.

One book *On the Origin of the Goths, and also The Kingdom of the Suevi, and The History of the Vandals (De Origine Gothorum et Regno Suevorum et etiam Vandalorum Historia)*.

Two books of *Questions (Quaestiones)*, which the reader may recognize as an abundant anthology of ancient treatises.

The *Etymologies (Etymologiae)*, a codex of enormous size, divided by him into topics, not books. Although he left it unfinished, I divided it into twenty (or, "fifteen," in some manuscripts) books, since he wrote the work at my request. Whoever thoughtfully and thoroughly reads through this work, which is suited to philosophy in every respect, will not be ignorant of the knowledge of human and divine matters, and deservedly so. Overflowing with eloquence of various arts with regard to nearly every point of them that ought to be known, it collects them in a summarized form.

There are also other minor works by this man, and abundantly ornamented writings in the Church of God. After such misfortune in Spain in recent years, God encouraged him, as if he were setting up a prop – to preserve the ancient monuments, I believe, lest we decay into rusticity. To him we may fittingly apply the philosopher's comment (Cicero, *Academica Posteriora* 1.3): "Your books have brought us back, as if to our home, when we were roving and wandering in our own city like strangers, so that we might sometimes be able to understand who and where we are. You have laid open the lifetime of our country, the description of the ages, the laws of sacred matters and of priests, learning both domestic and public, the names, kinds, functions and

17 The Byzantine Emperor Mauritius reigned from 582 to 602, and Reccared from 586 to 601.

18 On the *De Viris Illustribus* see below. Braulio's list was appended to a manuscript of Isidore's treatise. It is edited from the manuscript León 22 by P. Galindo, pp. 356–60 in C. H. Lynch, *San Braulio* (Madrid, 1950).

causes of settlements, regions, places, and all matters both human and divine."[19]

The proceedings of the Council at Seville, at which he was present, declare how with a flood of eloquence he pierced through the heresy of the Acephalites (see VIII. v. 66) with the arrows of divine Scripture and the testimonies of the Church Fathers. In this council he asserted the truth against Gregorius, leader of the aforementioned heresy.

Isidore died during the reign of the Emperor Heraclius and of the most Christian King Chintila.[20] He was outstanding above everyone with his sound doctrine, and very generous in his works of charity.

All of these works except *On Heresies* (the subject of *Etymologies* VIII.v) are still extant. They range in date from what is presumably the earliest, the first book of the *Differentiae*, around 600, to around 625. Four of them focus closely on the Bible. The *Introductions* gives a brief description of each book of the Bible, and the *On the Lives and Deaths of the Fathers* is a collection containing short biographies of important Biblical figures. In spite of Braulio's description, *On Numbers* is a religious rather than mathematical treatise; in it Isidore discusses the symbolic interpretation of numerals contained in the text of the Bible. *On the Names of the Law and the Gospels*, also known as the *Allegories (Allegoriae)*, is a similar discussion of the symbolism of Biblical names.

Against the Jews is an attempt to win converts from Judaism to Christianity by means of rational persuasion; it was most likely written around the time of King Sisebut's campaign of forced conversion (see above, p. 6), and may be seen as an alternative approach in contrast to Sisebut's harsher measures. In the first book Isidore argues that Old Testament prophets foresaw the birth, death, resurrection, and divinity of Christ, while the second book presents passages from the prophets that Isidore interprets as condemning Jewish rituals.

The four other surviving theological works deal with the Church and the duties of Christians. The first book of *Offices* (also the subject of *Etymologies* VI.xix) gives a history of the Catholic liturgy, and is an important source of information about the Mozarabic liturgy. The second book deals with the various ecclesiastical offices and their duties. The *Monastic Rule* and the *Sentences* are more instructional works, the first providing an introduction to monastic life in simple and straightforward language, and the second a guide to Church doctrine and Christian conduct of life. In the *Synonyms*, Isidore presents a contemplation on sin and conversion, relying on synonyms to reiterate and emphasize each point of his message.

On the Nature of Things is a detailed cosmology dealing with astronomy, meteorology, and other natural phenomena, as well as with the human conventions of timekeeping and calendars.

The *Chronicles*, although a useful source for the history of Visigothic Spain, is otherwise mainly derivative of earlier chronicles, particularly Eusebius's chronicle (*ca.* 326), translated and continued by Jerome (*ca.* 378), and Prosper of Aquitaine (*ca.* 455) and others. Like the *History of the Goths*, it draws from Julius Africanus, Eusebius's universal history, Orosius's *History against the Pagans*, other works of Jerome, Augustine, and Cassiodorus. There are two versions, both by Isidore, one completed in 615/16, during Sisebut's reign, and the other completed in 626. *Etymologies* V.xxxix incorporates an abbreviated version of the chronicle; the fact that it uses materials found in the 626 version shows that the work dedicated to Sisebut before 621 was not the complete *Etymologies* as we now have it.[21] There are likewise two extant versions of *On the Origin of the Goths*, one that ends with the death of Sisebut in 621 and one that continues up through 625, in the middle of Suinthila's reign. It is not clear which is the later version; it may be that the longer account was written first and that Isidore thought it prudent to excise the final section after Suinthila's fall from power.[22] *The Kingdom of the Suevi* and *The*

19 Braulio would have read Cicero's encomium of Varro, the great predecessor of Isidore, in Augustine's *City of God* 6.2.

20 The Byzantine Emperor Heraclius reigned from 610 to 641, and Chintila from 636 to 640.

21 Both the *Chronicon (Chronica Maiora)* and the shorter version *(Chronica Minora)* included in the *Etymologies* are edited by T. Mommsen, MGH, Auct. Ant. XI, 391–497 (Berlin, 1894). The new edition of the *Chronica* (615/16 and 626 redactions) by Martin (2003) contains the most recent full bibliography of Isidore studies and a thorough account of Isidore's sources. See also P. M. Bassett, "The Use of History in the *Chronicon* of Isidore of Seville," *History and Theory* 15 (1976): 278–92. See further the materials on the *Chronicon* and *The History of the Goths* in Wolf 1999.

22 On the *History of the Goths* see the edn. by Mommsen, preceding note, pp. 267–303, and the edn. by R. Alonso, *Las Historias de los Godos, Vándalos y Suevos de Isidoro de Sevilla* (León, 1975), with full introduction, and G. Donini and G. B. Ford, *Isidore of Seville's History of the Goths, Vandals, and Suevi* (Leiden, 1970), with trans. See also J. N. Hillgarth, "Historiography in Visigothic Spain," in *La Storiografia altomedievale* (Spoleto, 1970: 287–302).

History of the Vandals, although Braulio speaks of them as if they and *On the Origin of the Goths* were a single work, appear to be brief but separate histories, which have been appended to the larger work. In *On Illustrious Men*, Isidore presents thirty-three brief biographies of important Christian figures, mainly writers, from various countries (many Spaniards) and eras, including his brother Leander. It is a continuation of works with the same title by Jerome (*ca.* 392) and his continuator Gennadius (*ca.* 490); all three sketch the lives of prominent Christians, as an answer to Suetonius Tranquillus's *De Viris Illustribus.*[23]

Like the *Etymologies*, the *Differences* is closely concerned with the form and meaning of individual words. The first book explains the distinctions between pairs of words that are either synonyms or homophones, and gives instructions for correct usage. The second book focuses on the differences between things; between angels, demons, and men, for example.

A second early notice of Isidore and his works was included by Ildefonsus, bishop of Toledo, in his work *On Illustrious Men*, a continuation of the Jerome–Gennadius–Isidore tradition.[24] Ildefonsus was reputed to have been a student of Isidore's; he completed the work shortly before his death in 667. The notice (cap. 8) follows:

> Isidore held the bishopric of the see of Seville, in the Province of Baetica, after his brother Leander. He was a man esteemed for both his propriety and his intellect. In speaking he had acquired a supply of such pleasing eloquence that his admirable richness of speech amazed his listeners. Indeed, someone who had heard a sermon of his a second time would not approve unless it were repeated still further. He wrote not a few exceptional works, that is:
>
> *The Types of Offices*,
> *The Book of Prefaces*,
> *The Births and Deaths of the Fathers*,
> A book of lamentations, which he himself called the *Synonyms*,
> Two little books written for his sister Florentina, *Against the Iniquity of the Jews*,
> A book for King Sisebut, *On the Nature of Things*,
> A book of *Differences*,
> A book of *Sentences*.
> He also collected into one place from various authors what he himself called the *Exposition of the Secret Sacraments*. It is also known as the *Questions*.
> Finally, in response to a request from Braulio, Bishop of Saragossa, his book of *Etymologies*. He tried to fulfill this request completely over the course of many years, and seemed to finish his final days engaged in this work.
>
> He was active during the reigns of Reccared, Liuva, Witteric, Gundemar, Sisebut, Suinthila, and Sisenand. He held the honor of the bishopric for almost forty years, and maintained the distinction of its holy doctrine, its glory as well as its propriety.

Obviously a good deal of Isidore's earlier writing was taken over into the *Etymologies*, which Isidore must have considered the *summa* of his scholarly career. Presumably he began work on it before the death of Sisebut early in 621, and he left it unfinished at his death in 636.

Isidore was officially canonized as a saint in 1598, and was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1722. His feast day is April 4.

The sources of the *Etymologies*

Isidore acknowledges, in the dedication (before 621) to King Sisebut prefaced to an early draft (perhaps Books I–X) of the *Etymologies*, that his work compiles material "gathered from my recollection (or, "record") of readings from antiquity" (see the appended Letter VI). This is no mere topos of humility; nearly the whole work, in fact, consists of intricately woven excerpts and paraphrases of the works of earlier writers. To assess Isidore's achievement we cannot look to original researches or innovative interpretations, but rather to the ambition of the whole design, to his powers of selection and organization, and to his grand retentiveness. His aims were not novelty but

23 The main part of Suetonius's work still extant is *De (Claris) Grammaticis et Rhetoribus.* The Jerome and Gennadius works are edited by E. C. Richardson, *Hieronymus: Liber de Viris Illustribus. Gennadius: Liber de Viris Illustribus*, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 14, 1. (Leipzig, 1896). On these and Isidore's *De Viris Illustribus* see R. McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge, 1989: 200–02).

24 C. C. Merino, ed. and trans. into Spanish, *El 'De Viris Illustribus' de Ildefonso de Toledo* (Salamanca, 1972).

authority, not originality but accessibility, not augmenting but preserving and transmitting knowledge.

A full reckoning of Isidore's sources must await the completion of the major edition of the *Etymologies* now under way, being published in the series Auteurs Latins du Moyen Age (Paris: Belles Lettres). To date five volumes of a projected twenty, one for each book of the *Etymologies*, have appeared (see Bibliography). These and the important study by Jacques Fontaine (1959, 1983²) are the only authoritative studies of the *Etymologies*'s sources yet to appear.

The following sketch divides Isidore's sources into three kinds: first, his forebears in producing etymologies and encyclopedias; second, the actual scholars from whom he derives his information, whether or not at first hand; and third, the *auctores* whom he cites, that is, the acknowledged classical masters of imaginative literature and artful prose (Vergil, Cicero, and the rest).[25]

The idea that knowledge of the origins of words can yield up the words' "true sense" (ἔτυμον), and indeed something of the intrinsic character of the thing named by the word, is very ancient. The oldest Greek and Hebrew writings take for granted that proper names can conceal and reveal the characters and fates of their bearers.[26] Plato in the *Cratylus* treats the fundamental question, whether a thing takes its name arbitrarily or with reference to the thing's nature. The first known work, now lost, devoted to the science of etymologies is the Περί ἐτυμολογίας of Heraclides Ponticus (fourth century BCE). Developing the Greek science of etymology were the Ἐτυμολογίαι of Apollodorus of Athens and a work by Demetrius of Ixion, both of the second century BCE. In the Roman tradition of scholarship the first important figure is Aelius Stilo Praeconinus (*ca.* 154–74 BCE), of whose works only fragments survive, but whose pupils Varro and Cicero carried on his interest in etymology. The Stoics, in particular, continued the study of etymology, including the articulation, by Varro (especially in the lost books II–IV of *On the Latin Language*) and others, of the several types of etymologies.

Parallel to, and eventually coincident with, the development of etymologizing proper was the compilation of encyclopedias.[27] As the term 'encyclopedia' suggests (if we may follow Isidore's practice of explanation by etymology – 'paideia' means "education"), these were summations of learning intended for general instruction, the "cycle of education" proper to a free person – hence, the "liberal arts." The first encyclopedias were Latin. Cato the Censor compiled (*ca.* 185 BCE) an encyclopedia, now lost. Much the most important figure, both for the production of etymologies and for the making of encyclopedias, is Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 BCE). Of his many works those on the Latin language and on agriculture substantially survive. Lost is the *Disciplines*, an encyclopedia whose nine books treated in turn grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, geometry, arithmetic, astrology, music, medicine, and architecture. The first seven of these, regularly divided into the language arts (the trivium: the first three) and the mathematical arts (the quadrivium), became the classic model of preliminary education, the "Seven Liberal Arts."[28] The shape of Isidore's first five books may be traced directly to Varro's influence, though in fact it is unlikely that Isidore had direct access to texts of Varro.

Of A. Cornelius Celsus's encyclopedia (early first century CE) only the medical books survive intact. After Varro the greatest encyclopedist is Pliny the Elder, whose massive *Natural History* (dedicated in 77 CE) in effect fills out the classical matrix of encyclopedic learning, adding to Varro's cycle of the liberal arts the cycle of

25 Preliminary guidance for many of the following authors and works may be found in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edn., ed. Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth (Oxford, 2003), and *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, ed. Joseph R. Strayer (New York, 1982–89).

26 Fundamental studies of the history of etymologizing are Ilona Opelt, "Etymologie," *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 6 (1965: cols. 797–844) and Roswitha Klinck, *Die lateinische Etymologie des Mittelalters* (Munich, 1970). See also Fontaine 1981.

27 An introductory treatment of early encyclopedias is R. Collison 1966. Pp. 21–35 survey the tradition up to Isidore. With full bibliographies on both the basis of encyclopedias in Greek and Roman education and on encyclopedias themselves are H. Fuchs, "Enkyklios Paideia" (cols. 365–98) and "Enzyklopädie" (cols. 504–15) in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 5 (1962). See also Ribémont 2002 and M. de Gaudillac, "Encyclopédies pré-médiévales et médiévales," pp. 1–42 in *La Pensée encyclopédique au moyen âge* (Neuchatel, 1966) and other essays in this collection on encyclopedias partly derived from Isidore.

28 On the liberal arts see *Arts libéraux et philosophie au moyen âge. Actes du Quatrième Congrès International de Philosophie Médiévale, Montréal, 1967* (Paris, 1969), esp. the essays by Marrou and Díaz y Díaz. The scheme of the Seven Liberal Arts came to the Middle Ages primarily by way of Martianus Capella. See Herbert Backes, *Die Hochzeit Merkurs und der Philologie: Studien zu Notkers Martian-Übersetzung* (Thorbecke, 1982: esp. 11–15), and P. Courcelle, *Les Letters grecques en occident: De Macrobe à Cassiodore* (Paris, 1948).

scientific and naturalist lore: extensive treatments of the world in general (cosmology and meteorology), geography, the human being, zoology, botany, mineralogy, and medicine. Both Varro's and Pliny's works are arranged, with a view to ready access, by topics in rational order. To these foundational works of scholarship should be added the *Institutes of Oratory* (before 96 CE) of Quintilian, a masterwork on rhetoric in the broadest sense, including what we would call literary history and criticism.

With the exception of medicine, Roman scholarship after the first century CE shows a progressive decline in the practice of original scientific research. Concomitantly, the major works of reference (following Varro's lead) focus more and more intently on the Latin language itself. Encyclopedic works of the later period show more interest in presenting and defining, often with etymological explications, the *terms* of the arts and sciences, rather than the actual processes of the technologies and the essential qualities of the objects of study. One looks to these works for copious vocabulary, for careful discriminations of correct and incorrect usage of language, and in general for what might be called a heightened state of literacy.

The main encyclopedic works after Pliny are the *Compendious Doctrine* (early fourth century) of Nonius Marcellus, arranged in alphabetical order; the *Marriage of Mercury and Philology* (perhaps early fifth century) of Martianus Capella, which contains a review of the Seven Liberal Arts; and the *Institutes* (*ca.* 562) of Cassiodorus, written in two books for the monks at the monastery he founded. Its first book gives instructions on the parts of the Bible and about how to study and copy religious writings, and the second is a compendium of the Seven Liberal Arts.[29] Less encyclopedic in form – that is, organized in a deliberately casual manner – but of encyclopedic scope are the (mainly lost) *Prata* (early second century CE) of Suetonius Tranquillus, the *Attic Nights* (late second century CE) of Aulus Gellius, and the *Saturnalia* (early fifth century) of Macrobius. Of crucial importance are the vast commentaries by Servius (late fourth century), available to Isidore in the longer version called *Servius Danielis* (after its first publisher, Pierre Daniel), which is thought to include materials from Donatus not reworked by Servius. Servius's commentaries amount to an encyclopedia organized by the order of the text of Vergil, rather than by topic or by alphabet. All these, apart from the Cassiodorus, are pagan works; among Christian works with encyclopedic abundance of lore are the writings of Lactantius (*ca.* 240–*ca.* 320), including the *Divine Institutes*, Ambrose's *Hexameron* (late fourth century), and Augustine's *City of God* (413–426).

Alongside, and in part excerpting, the encyclopedias was a tradition of lexicography, which included from the outset definitions, etymologies, and *differentiae*, the discrimination of meaning and usage of closely related terms. At the head of this tradition stands Verrius Flaccus's *On the Meaning of Words* (early first century CE), lost but epitomized by S. Pompeius Festus in the late second century. These works were arranged in roughly alphabetical order. The Latin tradition of free-standing glossaries, not attached to individual authors, seems to begin with the sources of Placidus's glossary in the late fifth or early sixth century. Some glossaries compiled after Isidore's time are known to include material from sources probably known to him, especially Paul the Deacon's epitome of Festus, preserving much of that work otherwise lost, and the vast (over 500,000 entries) *Liber Glossarum (Glossarium Ansileubi)*, probably of the late eighth century and compiled at Corbie or a related scriptorium.[30]

Together with these encyclopedic and lexicographical works we must presume a substantial number of lost school-texts and manuals treating the various arts, and of course a mass of monographs, many still

29 R. A. B. Mynors, ed., *Cassiodori Senatoris Institutiones* (Oxford, 1937; corr. reprint 1961). An important translation and commentary: Leslie Webber Jones, *An Introduction to Divine and Human Readings, by Cassiodorus Senator* (New York, 1946). Isidore apparently knew only the second book of the *Institutes* (Fontaine 2000:334); Mynors observes that the two books usually circulated separately.

30 The *Liber Glossarum* is edited (abridged) by W. M Lindsay, *Glossaria Latina*, vol. I (Paris, 1926). Lindsay also studied the Festus material contained in it and other post-Isidorean glossaries: see his reprinted *Studies in Early Mediaeval Latin Glossaries*, ed. Michael Lapidge (Aldershot, Hampshire, 1996), no. 7, "The Abstrusa Glossary and the Liber Glossarum." Festus is also edited by Lindsay: *Sexti Pompei Festi De Verborum Significatu quae Supersunt cum Pauli Epitome* (Leipzig, 1913). See further D. Ganz, "The 'Liber Glossarum': A Carolingian Encyclopedia," in *Science in Western and Eastern Civilization in Carolingian Times*, ed. P. L. Butzer and D. Lohrmann (Basel, 1993: 127–35), and T. A. M. Bishop, "The Prototype of the *Liber Glossarum*," in M. B. Parkes and A. G. Watson, eds., *Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts and Libraries* (London, 1978: 69–86). On Paul the Deacon's epitome of Festus, completed in 786, see Settimio Lanciotti, "Tra Festo e Paolo," in *Paolo Diacono: Uno scrittore fra tradizione longobarda e rinnovamento carolingio* (Udine, 2000: 237–50), and the references cited there.

extant, treating specific disciplines: grammar, rhetoric, medicine, law, geography, architecture, philosophy, chronology, logic, music, ecclesiastical and theological matters, and the rest. Outstanding among these are the treatises of Boethius (480–524), covering the disciplines of the quadrivium as well as important translations and commentaries on logic; the standard grammatical works of Donatus (fourth century), Sacerdos (third century), and Terentianus (late second century); the many legal compilations of Julius Paulus (*ca.* 210) and Ulpian (died 223), whose works were used in the great codifications under Justinian (529–534); Vitruvius's (late first century BCE) *On Architecture*; for agriculture the works of Palladius (fourth century), partly based on Columella (60–65 CE); Marius Victorinus's (fourth century) translations of Greek philosophical texts; the geographically arranged miscellany of lore, practically an encyclopedia, the *Collection of Memorable Things* (soon after 200) of G. Julius Solinus; and for history and chronology Jerome's translation and continuation to the year 378 of Eusebius's *Chronicle*, Rufinus's translation and continuation (late fourth century) of Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* (early fourth century), and Paulus Orosius's *History Against the Pagans* (418).[31]

From this survey it appears that Isidore's twin informing principles, etymologizing and encyclopedism, descend from ancient and distinguished ancestry.[32] In that the *Etymologies* amounts to a reorganized redaction and compendium of writings mainly of the fourth to sixth centuries (with the large exception of Pliny), it could be said that his work is not merely conditioned by, but in the main is comprised of, the major components of intellectual history as they were handed down to him. He had access, albeit largely indirect, to the major traditions of Latin learning reaching back 800 years, from Gregory the Great to Cato. Like his fellow "transmitters"[33] from Servius to Cassiodorus, Isidore quite consciously preserved, in abbreviated form, the accumulated learning of the classical world. As his disciple Braulio remarked in his *Renotatio*, "Our own time indeed found in him a likeness of the knowledge of antiquity, and in him antiquity reclaimed something for itself . . . God encouraged him . . . to preserve the ancient monuments . . ."

Apart from the dedication to Sisebut Isidore does not speak generally about his use of sources in the *Etymologies*, with one exception, his use – particularly his occasional augmenting – of Jerome's work explicating the meaning of Hebrew terms (VII.i.1).[34] More vaguely, he claims to avoid presenting material about the founding of cities when the authorities differ among themselves, giving examples of such dissension from Sallust and two places in the *Aeneid* (XV.i.1). At the beginning of Book XIII he emphasizes that he will tell of the cosmos in a "brief sketch" *(brevis tabella)* and "with compendious brevity" *(conpendiosa brevitas)*, implying abbreviation of his sources.[35]

Because Isidore derives his information mainly at second or third hand, his actual naming and even quoting of earlier scholars is no reliable guide to his immediate sources. Let the crucial figure of Varro, at the head of the encyclopedic tradition in which the *Etymologies* stands, serve as an example.[36] Isidore names him as his authority for various facts twenty-eight times, and appears to quote him eighteen times.[37] The first ten of these

31 On historiography before and after Isidore see R. McKitterick, *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge, 2004).

32 On this see especially Fontaine (1966).

33 On such "transmitters" of classical culture as Boethius, Cassiodorus, and Isidore see E. K. Rand, *Founders of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA, 1928). Broadly for the period see M. L. W. Laistner, *Thought and Letters in Western Europe, AD 500–900* (Ithaca, NY, 1931), and esp. Riché (1976) and J. J. Contreni, "The Carolingian Renaissance: Education and Literary Culture," in R. McKitterick, ed., *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. II *c.* 700–*c.* 900 (Cambridge, 1995: 709–57).

34 The openings of three other books, X, XIII, and XIX, refer without specification to Isidore's abbreviation of his sources. Three chapter titles refer to sources (II.xxv, xxvi, and xxix).

35 Díaz y Díaz observes that Isidore uses similar phrasing when speaking of his intentions in the preface to his treatise *On the Nature of Things:* "presenting some statements about the nature and causes of things . . . all of which I have noted in a brief sketch *(brevis tabella)* according to what has been written by the ancients and especially in the works of Catholic writers" (Oroz Reta and Marcos Casquero 1993^2:176).

36 The information about those whom Isidore names, and those whom he directly quotes (whether or not naming the specific source), may be gleaned from two indexes in the Reta–Casquero edition (1993^2): "Index nominum" and "Loci citati in textu." These do not include Isidore's quotation or paraphrase of sources where he gives no indication of doing so. In what follows we collect statistics from these indexes with the caveat that they contain many errors.

37 Isidore appears to quote Varro at I.iii.1, I.xxvii.15, I.xxxviii.1, II.xxiii.1, IV.viii.13, IV.xi.5, VIII.vi.21, VIII.vii.3, IX.ii.74, X.185, XI.i.51, XI.i.97, XIII.i.2, XIII.xviii.2, XV.xiii.6, XVII.ix.95, XX.x.1, XX.xi.9 and otherwise names him as his authority at VIII.ix.13, XI.iii.1, XIV.vi.18, XIV.vi.36, XIV.viii.33, XIV.ix.2, XV.i.63, XVII.vii.57, XVII.i.1, and XVIII.xvi.2.

citations give an idea of what Varro provides: he calls grammar 'literacy'; he observes that Caesar's use of the *i* in *maximus* led to the standard orthography; he defines the term *prosa*; he gives the etymology of the disease *aurigo*; he gives the etymology of the word for 'mortar' *(pila)*; he speaks of fire as the soul of the world; he gives the etymology of the word for 'prophet' *(vates)*; he records the Pelasgians' first arrival in Italy; he defines the word *hilum*; and he gives the etymology of the word for 'tongue' *(lingua)*. Yet modern scholarship has affirmed that all of these references are at second hand; there is no evidence that Isidore handled any writing by Varro. Compare his naming of Pythagoras as authority eight times in the *Etymologies*; we can be sure that Isidore had no direct access to Pythagoras, who, as far as we know, wrote nothing.

Because so much of the *Etymologies* is complacently derivative, we can nowhere take for granted that we know the stance of the "we" who compiles the work. When he describes the types of parchment, Isidore might have told us about the production of books in his own scriptorium. Instead, he reproduces Pliny on the types of papyrus sheets and the ancient types of parchment (VI.x). Presumably many of the critical remarks about pagan beliefs that we find are Isidore's own words – but many may derive from his Christian forebears. Things that persist "up to this day" may be those that persist up to the time of Isidore's source. Usages that Isidore labels as "commonly" *(vulgo)* current may be those current in the milieu of the source. Descriptions of Spain, even of Seville, are exiguous, traditional, *pro forma*.

The names of earlier scholars found in the *Etymologies* display a striking fact. Isidore names Aristotle (15 times), Jerome (10), Cato (9), Plato (8), Pliny (7), Donatus (6), Eusebius (5), Augustine (5), Suetonius (4), and Josephus (2), along with single references to a few others. At one point he names, we may suppose with admiration and in emulation, those "who wrote many things": Varro and, "of ours," that is, of Christians, Origen and Augustine. Of all these writers, Isidore surely drew excerpts directly from Jerome and Augustine, and possibly from Pliny and Donatus, yet he probably never saw the other authorities, but borrowed the references from secondary works.[38] (Whether or not he cites Pliny from intermediate sources, he often borrows from him at length verbatim.) More striking, he never names several encyclopedists from whose work he probably drew at second or third hand: Aulus Gellius, Nonius Marcellus, Lactantius, Macrobius, and Martianus Capella (possibly an immediate source). And most striking, nowhere in the *Etymologies* do we find mention of three of Isidore's four (with Pliny) main scholarly sources: Solinus (himself heavily indebted to Pliny), Servius, and Cassiodorus.

Jacques Fontaine's important study (1959, 1983²) examines Isidore's profound indebtedness to Cassiodorus's *Institutes* in the first three books of the *Etymologies*, and Peter Marshall's edition (1983) of Book II bears out Fontaine's conclusions in even greater detail. The ALMA editions of other books of the *Etymologies* (IX, XII, XVII, XIX) confirm the findings of investigations since the fifteenth century concerning Isidore's vast quotation and paraphrase of Servius, Pliny, and Solinus. In his treatment of the sources of Book XII (1986: 13–22), Jacques André finds a typical situation. The book contains 58 citations – that is, acknowledged quotations (there are altogether nearly 600 of these in the *Etymologies)* – and 293 uncited borrowings. Of these most, 79, are from Solinus; 45 are from Pliny the Elder. From Servius come 61 borrowings of material; André estimates that some 400 from Servius occur in the whole of the *Etymologies* – this may understate the number. Of the Church Fathers from whom Isidore constantly borrows, in Book XII (on animals) the most used is Ambrose – the *Hexameron*. Ambrose is named only once in the *Etymologies*.

The ancient tradition of grammar and of encyclopedias took for granted that for the uses of particular words, as well as for figures of speech and in fact for any other information, the major poets and rhetoricians, the *auctores*, constituted the prime witnesses. Hence copious citation, in grammars and reference works, of wording from Vergil or Cicero or Horace not only displayed the writer's liberal learning (and status), and not only illustrated particular literary techniques or fact, but also authenticated assertions by the highest standard – higher, indeed, than immediate experience of the world. Thus Isidore reports (XII.iv.48) that Pythagoras says that a cadaver's spinal cord turns into a snake, and to buttress the veracity of

38 The detailed evidence is found in Fontaine and in the ALMA editions – see below.

the idea he quotes Ovid's *Metamorphoses* with the same report – even though Ovid leaves room for doubt ("there are those who believe . . ."). Surely Isidore himself did not believe so unbiblical an idea; rather, he follows his respected source, both in stating it as fact and in providing further authentication. Elsewhere (XIX.i.17) he speaks of a type of boat called *phaselus*, and notes that "we" (either seventh-century Spaniards or whoever were the original audience of his source) incorrectly call this boat *baselus*. Merely to affirm the existence of the word in its correct form he quotes Vergil's *Georgics*. If Vergil used the word it is worth knowing – so the Roman scholars presumed, and Isidore follows them.

The most cited *auctores* used in this way are Vergil (over 190 citations),[39] Cicero (over 50), and Lucan (some 45). Other much-cited figures are Plautus, Terence, Lucretius, Ovid, Horace, Juvenal, Martial, Ennius, Sallust, and Persius. In addition, Isidore quotes from the Bible nearly 200 times. Apart from the Bible and Vergil, and perhaps Ovid, Lucretius, and Martial, modern scholarship (especially Fontaine and the ALMA editors) shows that Isidore probably quotes none of these *auctores* at first hand. Yet he often carefully names them; clearly he distinguishes between these writers and the scholarly providers of the bulk of his material. They are older (mainly Augustan and pre-Augustan); apart from Cicero and Sallust they are poets; they are revered from antiquity on as luminaries of the language, as originators and originals – they are, in short, what we would call "classics." In contrast are the unnamed and seldom named sources: Pliny, Servius, Cassiodorus, and the rest. We may presume that Isidore thought of them as not worth mentioning as authorities: they are fellow scholars, (except for Pliny) relatively recent, utilitarian and prosaic, themselves secondary. Evidently Isidore made no sharp division between the authoritativeness of pagan versus Christian writers, but he probably did generally regard his Christian sources – to use some old terminology – as "moderns," and the pagans as "ancients" (whom with great frequency he calls *maiores, veteres, antiqui*; roughly "our ancestors, those of old times, the ancients").

Because our translation of the *Etymologies* specifies sources only in the few cases where they particularly bear on Isidore's meaning, we offer here a very rough guide to the major sources of the individual books.[40] Two caveats: first, the forthcoming volumes of the ALMA edition of the *Etymologies* will supersede any current knowledge of sources; second, the positing of a source by no means indicates that it is Isidore's immediate source. The first two books rely mainly on Cassiodorus, as does the third, with important additions from Boethius on mathematics. Book IV on medicine draws on Caelius Aurelianus's (fifth century) Latin translation, *On Acute Diseases and Chronic Disorders*, of Soranus of Ephesus (second century) and Pliny. Among the sources of the legal materials in Book V are the *Institutes* of Gaius (second century) and its epitome in the *Lex Romana Visigothorum*, and Julianus Salvius's (second century) *Digesta*. The chronicle section updates and abbreviates Isidore's own *Chronicon*, which derives from Jerome's adaptation of Eusebius's chronicle and continuations of it.

Books VI to VIII constitute the ecclesiastical and theological part of the *Etymologies*. Primary sources are, naturally, Augustine and Jerome, whom Isidore ransacked thoroughly, as well as Gregory the Great (a friend of Isidore's brother Leander), Lactantius's *Divine Institutes*, Tertullian, and for the pagan lore in Book VIII, Varro, Cicero, Pliny. Book IX weaves together material from Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, Servius, Pliny, and Solinus. A remote source is M. Junianus Justinus's (third century) Latin epitome of Pompeius Trogus's universal history (early first century). The vocabulary of Book X derives from the glossographic tradition from Verrius Flaccus through Festus, as well as Servius, and the Church Fathers. For Books XI–XX excerpts from Pliny, Servius, and Solinus occur everywhere. Book XII borrows much from Ambrose's *Hexameron*. Solinus and Paulus Orosius's *Histories against the Pagans* (fifth century) provide much of the geographical learning in Book XIV.

39 These figures derive from an index in the BAC edition of the *Etymologies*; however, in the same edition Díaz y Díaz (Oroz Reta and Marcos Casquero 1993^2:193) writes that Vergil is cited by name more than one hundred times, and 266 times altogether, as reported by N. Messina, "Le citazioni classiche nelle *Etymologiae* di Isidoro di Siviglia," *Archivos Leoneses* 68 (1980: 205–64). Our own search finds that in the *Etymologies* Isidore cites Vergil by name 112 times.

40 Particularly valuable for Isidore's sources are the works of Fontaine listed in the Bibliography. On the general topics of education and knowledge of the classics in Isidore's Spain see Riché (1976), esp. 246–65, 274–303, and Díaz y Díaz (1975). The manuscript evidence for transmission of the classics in Spain may be found in Lowe, *Codices Latini Antiquiores*, and Reynolds 1983.

On buildings and fields (Book XV), Columella and Servius are the main bases. Pliny, Servius, and Solinus yield most of Isidore's mineralogical lore (Book XVI). Book XVII, on agriculture, derives ultimately from Cato via Varro, Columella, Pliny, Servius (mainly his commentary on the *Georgics* of Vergil), and Rutilius Palladius (fourth century), whose agricultural treatise derives mainly from Columella and from his own experience in farming. On war and games (Book XVIII) Isidore draws much material from Servius and, on the Circus games, from the treatise *De Spectaculis* (*ca.* 200) of the Christian apologist Tertullian. The last two books may have been conceived as a unit (so Rodríguez-Pantoja 1995: 1); Book xx bears no separate title in early manuscripts. Along with Servius (the main source), Jerome, Festus, and Pliny, in these books Isidore uses the abridgement of Vitruvius's treatise on architecture made by M. Cetius Faventinus (uncertain date), Palladius, Book xiii of Nonus Marcellus, and others.

Isidore's absorbing and replicating of these traditions, pagan and Christian, Plinian and Augustinian, show him facing both ways. He may be included among the last humanist polymaths of late antiquity, and also among the early and most influential medieval Christian scholars.[41] He obviously accepted the commonplace among Christian scholars, from Augustine (especially *De Doctrina Christiana*) and Jerome, that mastery of pagan learning is a good thing for the inquiring Christian: the liberal arts are a fit introduction to the study of the Bible and theology.[42] He offers an apology for one type of this learning to his Christian reader *(Etym.* I.xliii): "Histories of peoples are no impediment to those who wish to read useful works, for many wise men have imparted the past deeds of humankind in histories for the instruction of the living." Especially in the broad survey of the natural world and human institutions in the second decade of books, he passed beyond strictly Christian interest by reverting to the interests of Latin scholars some centuries earlier.

In this connection a set of verses attributed, probably correctly, to Isidore makes a witty case for eclectic reading. The verses purport to speak of the contents of the cathedral library at Seville, as if they were written on the walls or bookcases.[43] The works of encyclopedists – Pliny, Servius, Cassiodorus, and the rest – go unmentioned; the poem sheds light not on the sources of the *Etymologies* but rather on Isidore's attitude toward antique learning.

I. These bookcases of ours hold a great many books.
Behold and read, you who so desire, if you wish.
Here lay your sluggishness aside, put off your fastidiousness of mind.
Believe me, brother, you will return thence a more learned man.
But perhaps you say, "Why do I need this now?
For I would think no study still remains for me:
I have unrolled histories and hurried through all the law."
Truly, if you say this, then you yourself still know nothing.

II. Here there are many sacred works, and here many other secular ones.
If any of these poems pleases you, take it up and read it.
You see meadows filled with thorns and rich with flowers.
If you do not wish to take the thorns, then take the roses.

III. Here the venerable volumes of the two Laws shine forth,
The New joined together with the Old.

IV. Origen
I, the celebrated Origen, at one time a Doctor most true,
Whom famous Greece first brought to the faith:
I was lofty in merit and famous for my abundance of speech,
But was suddenly ruined, cut short by a malicious tongue.
I toiled, if you may believe it, to compose as many thousands of books
As a legion has armed men.
No blasphemy ever touched my senses,
But I was watchful and wise, and safe from the enemy.

41 On Isidore's place in the scholarly tradition see especially Fontaine (1966).

42 See among many studies H. Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics: A Study of the Apologists, Jerome, and Other Christian Writers* (Gothenburg, 1958) and G. Ellspermann, *The Attitude of Early Christian Latin Writers toward Pagan Literature and Learning* (Washington, 1949). Further references are in Riché 1976:7, and see his detailed treatment of Christian uses of classical writings, 79–176. In his *Rule for Monks* Isidore charged monks to avoid the books of pagans or heretics – evidence that such books were available in monastic libraries. Riché (296) argues that the stricture would not apply to more experienced monks. Isidore's time was broadly one of less interest in the classical texts, as indicated in Reynolds 1983. Reynolds notes that of 264 books and fragments of Latin books preserved from the seventh century, only a tenth are secular works, and those mostly technical (p. xvi).

43 We translate from the edition in Sánchez Martín 2000. Among studies of the poem, and Isidore's sources generally, is Díaz y Díaz 1975: esp. 136–42.

Only the words in my *Peri Archon*[44] brought this misfortune on me.
Impious darts attacked me when I was assailed by these words.

V. Hilary
Nurturing Gaul sent me, born in Poitiers,
Her own Doctor Hilary with thundering speech.

VI. Ambrose
Doctor Ambrose, celebrated for his miracles and hymns,
Shines here with his chapters and his text.

VII. Augustine
He lies who says he has read you entirely.
What reader could possess your complete works?
For you, Augustine, glow with a thousand volumes.
Your own books bear witness to what I say.
However pleasing may be the wisdom of books by many authors,
If Augustine is there, he himself will suffice you.

VIII. Jerome
Translator Jerome, most learned in the various languages,
Bethlehem praises you, the whole world resounds with your name;
Our library also celebrates you through your books.

IX. John
I am John by name, called 'Chrysostom,'
Because a golden tongue[45] makes my work glitter.
Constantinople glows with me as its teacher
And I am everywhere renowned for my books as a Doctor.
I have established morals, I have spoken of the rewards of virtues,
And I have taught wretched culprits to bemoan their crimes.

X. Cyprian
With a brighter eloquence than all the rest, Cyprian, you gleam.
At one time you were a Doctor, now you are here as a martyr.

XI. Prudentius, Avitus, Juvencus, Sedulius
If Maro, if Flaccus, if Naso and Persius raise a shudder,
If Lucan and Papinius[46] disgust you,
Sweet Prudentius of distinguished speech is at hand;
With his various poems this noble one is enough.
Read through the learned poem of eloquent Avitus.
Behold – Juvencus is there with you, and Sedulius,
Both equal in tongue, both flourishing in verse.
They bear large cups from the gospel fountain.
Leave off, therefore, waiting on pagan poets –
While you can have such good things, what is Callirhoe[47] to you?

XII. Eusebius, Orosius
Histories of events and circumstances of a bygone age,
This chest holds them collected together on parchment.

XIII. Gregory
Hippo, as much as you are distinguished for your teacher Augustine,
So much is Rome for its Pope Gregory.

XIV. Leander
You are held to be not much unequal to the ancient Doctors,
Leander the Bishop: your works teach us this.

XV. Theodosius, Paulus, Gaius
Collected here is a most ample series of the laws of justice;
These rule the Latin forum with their true speaking.

The character of the *Etymologies*

Internal evidence alone defines the method and purpose of the *Etymologies*, because apart from the brief dedication to Sisebut (appended Letter VI) no statement from Isidore survives. Obviously he compiled the work on the basis of extensive notes he took while reading through the sources at his disposal. Not infrequently he repeats material verbatim in different parts of the work; either he copied extracts twice or he had a filing system that allowed multiple use of a bit of information. Presumably he made his notes on the slips of parchment that he might have called *schedae:* "A *scheda* is a thing still being emended, and not yet redacted into books" (VI.xiv.8).

44 Origen was accused of heresy, partly on the basis of statements he made in *Peri Archon.* For the text (i.e. Rufinus's Latin translation) and an account of the controversy see H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti, ed. and French trans., *Origène: Traité des principes*, Tomes I and II, Sources Chrétiennes 252 (Paris, 1978).

45 Cf. Χρυσός, "gold" and στόμα, "mouth."

46 The four poets in the title are Christians; the next six (Vergil, Horace, Ovid, Persius, Lucan, and Statius) are pagans.

47 Callirhoe was the name of an Athenian fountain, here taken as the inspiration of the pagan poets.

The guess that Isidore had help from a team of copyists (Fontaine, 1966:526) finds some support in the fact that some errors of transmission may indicate that Isidore was using excerpts poorly copied or out of context, perhaps excerpts made by a collaborator. Although these could result from Isidore's own copying error or failure of memory, they are suggestive. At XVII.iv.10, for example, he misconstrues Servius's comment on *Aeneid* 6.825, taking the phrase *Pisaurum dicitur*, "the city of Pesaro is so called . . . ," as if it were *pis aurum dicitur*, "*pis* means gold" – there is no Latin word *pis*. Again, at XVII.vii.67 occurs another misreading of Servius (on *Georgics* 2.88), taking types of pears as olives. Most telling in this connection is a confusion at XVI.iii.3:

> *Crepido* (i.e. 'a projection, promontory') is a broken-off extremity of rock, whence a height of sheer rock is called *crepido*, as in (Vergil, *Aeneid* 10.361): 'Foot (*pes*) presses against foot' – whence it is so called.

The place in Servius from which the information "*crepido* is a height of broken-off rock" is drawn actually is a comment on *Aeneid* 10.653, where the word *crepido* occurs. In the course of his comment, Servius cites in another connection *Aeneid* 10.361, which does not involve the term *crepido* but rather exemplifies a grammatical point. The error could be Isidore's own, but it could easily be attributed to an assistant's truncating the excerpt so as to leave the wrong line from Vergil as the authenticating illustration of the use of the term. It appears that Isidore then turned the error into an etymology, deriving *crepido* from *pes*, gen. *pedis*. These instances are from Servius, whose organization followed the text of Vergil rather than an alphabetical or topical arrangement, and whose information was hence more difficult to extract and reorder than the materials in Pliny or Cassiodorus, and thus more liable to errors of this kind.

Explicit evidence about the purpose of the *Etymologies* is scant.[48] In a few places Isidore indicates that he will treat "what ought to be noted" (*notandum*) about a topic,[49] but seldom does he explain why. In Book II, following Cassiodorus, he several times remarks on the usefulness of knowing the logical disciplines for understanding books of both rhetoric and logic, avoiding the deception of false sophisms, and grasping the "clearly wonderful" power of gathering human inventiveness into a limited set of topics.[50] Elsewhere he explains the symbols used for different weights, to keep a reader who might be ignorant of them from falling into error (XVI.xxvii.1). Thus he aims to furnish the material required for good reading and to provide schemas for managing discourse. In a few places he proposes aids for understanding the Bible: knowing the rationale of terms for numbers can elucidate scriptural mysteries; exposition of Hebrew names reveals their meaning; the patriarchs' names derive from intrinsic causes; the names of prophets can indicate what their words and deeds foretell; it is proper to know of cities whose origin is reported in Scripture (or in pagan histories).[51] Again, he remarks that the most important of mountains and rivers – as celebrated in histories or in general opinion – should be known (XIII.xxi.6, XIV.viii.1).

A fuller sense of what Isidore was about, and for whom he wrote, may be gathered from who he was and what he did. His close relations with the Visigothic rulers, especially Sisebut, and his dedication of the *Etymologies* to Sisebut (himself a writer),[52] imply that he wrote in part for the general literate governing class of his nation – those who might partake of and patronize a liberal education.[53] The clergy, too, were among the main recipients of Isidore's attention – more obviously in some of his other works, but evidently in the *Etymologies* as well. His purpose was pastoral and pedagogical – he wished for his priests and monks to possess a general knowledge of what books make available, and to possess the preliminary skills that make intelligent reading, especially of Scripture, possible. External evidence of Isidore's concern for education of the clergy is available: he presided over the Council of Toledo in 633, and one of the decrees promulgated there commanded bishops

48 On Isidore's motives for compiling the *Etymologies* see Fontaine (2000: 174–76).

49 For example VII. vii. 1, XIII.xxi.6, XIV. viii.1.

50 See II.xxvi.15, xxviii. 1, xxx.18.

51 See III.iv.1, VII.i.2, VII.vii.1, VII.viii.3, XV.i.2.

52 Sisebut's poem on natural phenomena is edited in J. Fontaine, *Traité* (1960: 328–35).

53 On the learning of the laity in Isidore's Spain see Riché 1976:246–65, and R. Collins, "Literacy and Laity in Early Medieval Spain," in R. McKitterick, ed., *The Uses of Literacy in Early Mediaeval Europe* (Cambridge, 1990: 109–33). Relevant also is the chapter on "The Literacy of the Laity" in McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge, 1989). A fascinating argument that, for the Spanish laity, learning Latin would be merely the learning of a traditional spelling system is made by R. Wright, *Late Latin and Early Romance in Spain and Carolingian France* (Liverpool, 1982), esp. 83–95 on Isidore.

to establish educational centers at each cathedral city of Spain. Bishop Braulio's claims that the *Etymologies* were written at his own request (Letter II and *Renotatio*) presume a clerical motive, and Braulio's sense of the *Etymologies*' purpose is to the point: "Whoever thoughtfully and thoroughly reads through this work . . . will not be ignorant of the knowledge of human and divine matters, and deservedly so. Overflowing with eloquence of various arts with regard to nearly every point of them that ought to be known, it collects them in summarized form." The work, then, aims to gather what ought to be known, especially by a cleric, in a compendium.

More precisely, the form of the work indicates Isidore's intentions. It is written in easy Latin, in relentlessly utilitarian prose. At the outset it presents the Seven Liberal Arts, with an obviously propaedeutic motive. It is a storehouse, to be sure, but it also provides a reasonably sequential general education. The hundreds of citations illustrate the facts presented, but conversely they exemplify the kinds of reading, pagan and Christian, that the *Etymologies* can enrich. Generally the treatment is in continuous prose, not tables or lists, and its effort at pleasing variation – even when the facts presented are rather repetitive in form – implies a reader absorbing the work consecutively, even as its careful organization ensures access topic by topic to a reader looking for a particular fact. In an era when the gravest dangers to Christianity were thought to be intellectual errors, errors in understanding what one read – that is, heresies like Arianism – mastery of the language arts was the Church's best defense. Isidore's book constituted a little library for Christians without access to a rich store of books (it even incorporates a good deal of material from Isidore's own previous books) in order to furnish capable Christian minds.

Although a good number of statements in the *Etymologies* address particular Christian concerns, such statements amount to comments by the way when theologically incorrect ideas emerge in Isidore's sources. The core of the work is not apologetic but informational. Still, we find Isidore carefully denying such superstitions as that a turtle's foot on board retards the progress of a ship (XII.vi.56), or that the stars have predictive power – "These [horoscopes] are undoubtedly contrary to our faith, and so they ought to be ignored by Christians, so that these things are not seen to be written up" (III.lxxi.38). Reporting that augurs claim to predict the future by observing crows, he remarks, "It is a great sin to believe that God would entrust his counsels to crows" (XII.vii.44). Isidore's persistent response to pagan religious belief is euhemerism, the interpretation of pagan divinities and mythological figures as in fact human beings wrongly elevated as supernatural creatures by benighted heathen.[54] In his chapter on the pagan gods (VIII.xi) Isidore begins confidently, "Those who the pagans assert are gods are revealed to have once been men, and after their death they began to be worshipped among their people." In the same chapter (section 29) he rejects the tradition of interpreting the names of the gods as expressing universal physical properties, "physical allegory," such that Cronos would represent time, Neptune water. Treating the names of the days of the week (V.xxx.5–11) Isidore gives both the Christian and the pagan terms. Noting that the latter are named from heathen gods – Saturday from Saturn, etc. – he is careful to remind us that those figures were actually gifted humans, but he acknowledges that these names for days are in common use. "Now, in a Christian mouth, the names for the days of the week sound better when they agree with the Church's observance. If, however, it should happen that prevailing practice should draw someone into uttering with his lips what he deplores in his heart, let him understand that all those figures whose names have been given to the days of the week were themselves human." We sense here both Isidore's theological precision and his episcopal tolerance.

The learned tradition that lies behind Isidore's work would lend him five schemes of organization from which to choose. In roughly chronological order these are: the sequential "scholiastic" order of a particular text, as used by the scholiasts on ancient texts, and commentators on master texts like Vergil (Servius) and the Bible (the Church Fathers); the "encyclopedic" order from Varro through Pliny, arranged in rational order

54 Euhemerus's utopian novel, *Sacred Scripture*, written around 300 BCE, is extant only in fragments and epitomes. It presented the idea that Uranus, Cronos, and Zeus were human kings whose subjects worshipped them as gods – an idea not alien to Augustan Rome. Christians naturally seized on the idea. For the development of the idea of euhemerism and physical allegory see Don Cameron Allen, *Mysteriously Meant: The Rediscovery of Pagan Symbolism and Allegorical Interpretation in the Renaissance* (Baltimore, 1970). Examples of euhemeristic and rationalizing interpretations of such mythological figures as Scylla and Hydra may be found at II.xii.6 and XI.iii.28–31 and 34.

by topic; the educational or propaedeutic order, especially of the Seven Liberal Arts (from trivium to quadrivium), from Varro through Cassiodorus; the haphazard "conversational" order of Aulus Gellius and Macrobius; and the alphabetical "dictionary" order of collections of glosses and other extracts, through Placidus. Apart from these broader orders are the internal ordering principles of such monographic treatises as annals and chronologies (obviously, chronological order), medical works (e.g., acute and chronic diseases; head to toe anatomies), and the rational orders of logical and legal texts.

Isidore used all these orders except the scholiastic and the conversational. The general scheme of the twenty books can be approached in several ways.[55] One arrangement, with some support from the manuscript tradition, divides the *Etymologies* into two decades of ten books. In assessing this arrangement we need to remember Braulio's assertion in the *Renotatio* that it was he, not Isidore, who divided the text into books, where Isidore had left it only divided into "titles" (*tituli*) – perhaps what we call the "chapters" of the received text.[56] The organizing principle of the second decade is obviously encyclopedic, and contains two movements: the first (Books XI–XVI) might be called *On the Nature of Things* – the Lucretian title, adopted by Isidore himself in an earlier work. This segment ranges (below celestial matters) from higher to lower things – from intelligent animals (humans; Book XI) through other animals (XII), cosmic and non-earthly phenomena (XII), the earth (XIV), and earthy materials (XVI). Within these orders a number of subclassifications are perceptible – for example, the treatment of metals from the most to the least valuable, of gems by color, or the division of the world's objects into those composed of each of the four elements. Out of order here, in this conception, is Book XV, rather a miscellany on cities and things built by humans – this would fit better, perhaps, in the second movement of the second decade. This movement (XVII–XX) broadly treats human institutions, artifacts, and activities. Book XVII begins in this way, at least, with agriculture, though the bulk of the book treats flora in detail – our (ultimately Aristotelian) sense of order would prefer to place this material among the books on animals and minerals. The order of this last group of books is not obvious; their miscellaneous character may explain why they fall at the end of the whole work.

The first decade adopts several principles of order: propaedeutic, encyclopedic, alphabetic. Books I–III obviously conform to the idea of the Seven Liberal Arts, as explained in I.ii. These are followed by the treatments of medicine and law (IV, the first part of V), rounding out a general introductory education, we might say, in the professions. The second part of Book V, on the mensuration of time and the actual chronology of history, annalistically ordered, may be said to look both back, to the essentially pagan character of the liberal disciplines of the first books, and forward, to the religious matter of the following books. This set, Books VI to VIII, focuses on the sacred sciences, not in an obvious sequence. Book VI is propaedeutic to these, treating Scripture, the authority for the rest, then books in general, then a number of ecclesiastical matters. Books VII and VIII present a transparent order, moving from God downward to heresy and paganism. Book IX treats human institutions broadly conceived, human organization (languages, nations, reigns, cities, kinship), and Book X, alphabetically ordered, presents terms descriptive of humans. These two books might after all be classed with the following book (XI), the anatomy of human beings.

A more general characterization of the *Etymologies*' scheme of organization would make the main division after Book V. Thus the first part constitutes notes toward a general education, and the second a particularization of reality based mainly on two principles, that of the Great Chain of Being (from God to inanimate materials) and that of the four elements. In this scheme, too, the last group of books constitutes an anomalous miscellany. Neither order consistently dominates the text, and the exigencies of Isidore's broadest intention, to store in compendious form what is known from former times, ultimately takes precedence over the inherited schemes.

As Fontaine has pointed out (1966:536–38), Isidore's followers derived material wholesale from the *Etymologies*, but under more fully Christianized, "clericalized" form, in "a sort of Carolingian edition." Especially remarkable in this connection is the reordering of the work by Hrabanus Maurus in his *On the Nature of Things*, which begins not with the Liberal Arts (which

55 A similar account of the organization of the work may be found in Fontaine 2000:176–78.

56 Furthermore, it seems that Braulio divided the work into fifteen books; the division into twenty books developed during the course of the manuscript diffusion (see Reydellet 1966:435).

Hrabanus treated in another book) but with the religious material, and works "down" through the Chain of Being.[57] Furthermore, Hrabanus lards the whole with allegorical interpretations of the kind found in Isidore's own *Certain Allegories of Sacred Scripture.* Not until the thirteenth century, and not entirely until the sixteenth century, does the impulse toward encyclopedism recover the intellectual inclusiveness of Isidore.

Given this rough outline of the *Etymologies*, we can turn to its particular content, and begin by noticing a few things the *Etymologies* is not. First of all, it is not complete or polished – so Braulio implies and so Isidore says in the letters prefaced to the work in the manuscripts (Letters II and V). We may imagine that the finished work would have eliminated many of the repetitions currently present, and might have joined together the now scattered materials on law (Books II and V), on astronomy (Books III and XIII), on nations (Books IX, XIV, and XV), and the like. However, Isidore might well have retained those repeated statements that fall naturally into separate topics. Surely he would have completed or omitted the dozens of items that now stand as the lemma – a single word – alone, without further discussion. These are signaled in this translation by the appearance of ellipsis points, as XI.i.93 or XIX.v.4.[58]

Second, Isidore makes no effort to disclose the rationale of the taxonomies he presents. Here the (derived) shapeliness of the early books on the liberal disciplines is the exception; on the whole Isidore does not explain the order of things beyond what is implicit in their sequence in the text. In this he is like his sources, from Varro on, and differs from the masters of these sciences, Plato and Aristotle. As a consequence we have no reason to think most of the classes of things treated are presented with all their members – a consideration repeatedly made explicit by Isidore himself (e.g. XII.vii.2). So it is, after all, with post-Linnaean biology as well. It should be added here that Isidore does include a good number of lesser schemata, establishing such logical sets of things as the types of definition, or the types of divination, or the kinds of fields.[59]

And third, Isidore generally avoids, in the *Etymologies*, providing "spiritual" or "mystical," or "figurative," that is, allegorical, interpretations of the items he adduces. These were the main content of his earlier work (perhaps 612–615), the *Certain Allegories of Sacred Scripture.*[60] In fact we find a few of such interpretations: "the Hebrews used a ten-stringed psaltery on account of the number of laws of the Decalogue" (III.xxii.7); Esther's people are "a figure of the Church of God," and as Aman's name means "wickedness, so his killing is celebrated in the feast of Purim" (Esther 7 and 9; *Etym.* VI.ii.29); the seraphim "figuratively signify the Old and New Testaments," they have six wings as a figure of the things made in the six days, and their crying "Holy" three times (Isaiah 6:3) "shows the mystery of the Trinity" (VII.v.32–33); the split tip of a quill pen signifies the Old and New Testaments (VI.xiv.3). At one point Isidore explicitly denies any attempt to provide the spiritual sense: speaking of the names of Biblical characters, he says, "While a holy and spiritual character abides in these names, we are now describing the meaning of their stories only with regard to the literal" (*ad litteram*; VII.vi.2). Indeed, his direct treatment of divinity in Book VII is essentially a treatment of names, and not a theological investigation. This self-imposed limitation has its precedent in Augustine's *The Literal Level of the Book of Genesis (De Genesi ad Litteram)*, and it is fairly consistently carried out through the *Etymologies*, hence giving Hrabanus his opportunity for "improvement" of the work for a clerical audience eager for such interpretations.

Isidore's overriding interest, the fundamental principle of the *Etymologies*, falls under the discipline Isidore would call grammar, the "origin and foundation of liberal letters" (I.v.1), and what we would call philology – the art of understanding and correctly producing words and texts. It is an obvious fact that, before the nineteenth century (the twentieth in the East), philology broadly conceived was the dominant concern of the learned world, the queen of the sciences; Isidore merely reflects

57 Hrabanus's work is usually known under the title *De Universo* (mid-ninth century): *Patrologia Latina* 111. A facsimile of an early Montecassino manuscript of it is ed. G. Cavallo, *De Rerum Naturis*: *Casin. 132, secolo XI* (Turin, 1994). See Maria Rissel, *Rezeption antiker und patristischer Wissenschaft bei Hrabanus Maurus* (Bern and Frankfurt, 1976).

58 A much rarer type of incompleteness occurs at XIV.ix.7, where a sentence breaks off before giving the Biblical citation.

59 II.xxix, VIII.vii.3, XIV.ix.2. The sources are explicitly named: Marius Victorinus and Varro. For such *divisiones* of topics see also I.v.4, II.v, II.xxi.1, II.xxiv.9–11, II.xxvi.5 (all from Cassiodorus), and V.xxvii.4 (following Cicero) and XVIII.ii.1 (following Sallust). It may be doubted whether Isidore supplied any such rationales apart from his sources.

60 This is the work Braulio calls *On the Names in the Law and the Gospels.*

that concern at one of the turning-points of intellectual history, as pagan thought in the West gave way to Christian thought. What we might understand as alternative master-disciplines – theology, or experimental science, or philosophy – in Isidore's work are subsumed under philology in what Fontaine calls the "pangrammatical" cast of late antique culture (1966:534).

In fact three sequential chapters (I.xxix–xxxi) in his treatment of the art of Grammar treat three of the main informing principles of the *Etymologies:* these are etymology, glosses, and differentiae. If we add to these the theme of the next three chapters (xxxii–xxxiv), faulty Latin usage, and the idea that propositions are usefully finished with an illustrative or exemplary quotation, we will have summed up much of the content of the *Etymologies.*

First, glosses. Isidore defines a gloss as a single term that designates the meaning of another term (I.xxx). If we broaden this to include any sort of definition of a term, we might expect to find hundreds of such definitions in the *Etymologies*, and indeed there are many: the definition of "gloss" itself, or, selecting at random, of such terms as "chronic disease" (IV.vii.1), "hymn" (VI.xix.17), "tyro" (IX.iii.36), "vineshoot" (XVII.v.9). However, such glosses are relatively infrequent, as compared with Isidore's usual presumption that the basic meaning of the Latin word is either already known to his reader, or (like terms for minerals or herbs) is not in his interest to define in any systematic way – such that, for example, one could positively identify an actual specimen of an item using only his description of it. This is not to say that formal systems of definition were unknown to him: thus in II.xxix he lists fifteen types of definition, with their Greek equivalents, "abbreviated from the book of Marius Victorinus"; and in II.xxv and xxvi he briefly but clearly expounds the logical taxonomy of Porphyry's *Isagoge* and the system of predicates of Aristotle's *Categories.*

Second, differentiae. This is the kind of definition that does interest Isidore, and they constitute the subject matter of a treatise he wrote before he turned to the *Etymologies.* In I.xxxi he says a *differentia* is the distinguishing and therefore defining feature of things otherwise alike, and gives for example the differentiation of the terms for a king (restrained and temperate) and a tyrant (cruel). Isidore introduces dozens of such differentiae in the *Etymologies* – between a maxim and a chreia (II.xi), between astronomy and astrology (III.xxvii), between three types of law (*ius, lex, mores*; V.iii), between types of wars (XVIII.i.2–10) and types of pyres (XX.x.9). As much as any information Isidore gives, such differentiae reveal Isidore's pedagogical motives: to refine the reader's sense of Latin, sharpen the mind with a fundamental form of reasoning, discourage incorrect usage.

Finally, etymology. On this crucial subject in Isidore we must refer to the essay by Fontaine (1978), with full bibliography, which remains the best treatment – perhaps the only essay on a section of the *Etymologies*, namely the chapter on etymology itself (I.xxix), that fully and definitively treats Isidore's thinking and his work with his sources. The sources of this chapter include Quintilian's *Institutes of Oratory* (I.vi.28), citing Cicero's *Topics* (35) – where Cicero literally translates the Greek term ἐτυμολογία as *veriloquium*, "true utterance" – and Boethius's commentary on the *Topics.*[61] In his chapter on etymology Isidore gives no hint that what he is defining is the most powerful informing principle of the work that both he and Braulio refer to as either *Etymologiae* or *Origines* (Letters II, IV, V, VI, *Renotatio*). He defines etymology as "the origin of words, when the force of a word or a name is inferred through interpretation." He goes on, "The knowledge of a word's etymology often has an indispensable usefulness for interpreting the word, for when you have seen whence a word has originated, you understand its force more quickly. Indeed, one's insight into anything is clearer when its etymology is known."[62]

In the same chapter Isidore offers a brief account (as had Varro and others) of types of etymology, as follows. Some things take their names not from their nature, but arbitrarily. Words with retrievable etymologies take them from their *causa* (rationale, intrinsic principle, explanatory force), the word's answer to the question "why?" Other words derive from the thing's origin, the word's answer to the question "from where?" Of the former an example is *rex* ("king") from acting *recte* ("correctly"); of the latter, *homo* ("human being") from *humus* ("earth," the "origin" – Aristotle would say "the material cause" – of the human). Still other etymologies

61 The commentary is trans. E. Stump, *Boethius's In Ciceronis Topica* (Ithaca, NY, 1988). Cicero's *Topics* are edited by T. Reinhardt (Oxford, 2003).

62 Obviously a great many, perhaps most, of the etymologies that Isidore proposes are incorrect in light of modern scholarship. For the actual etymologies of Latin words consult A. Ernout and A. Meillet, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine*, 4th edn. (Paris, 1979) and the appendix on "Indo-European Roots" by Calvert Watkins in *The American Heritage Dictionary* (Boston, 1976).

are based on contraries, so that 'mud' (*lutum*) derives from 'washing' (*lavare*, with the past participle *lutus).* Some words have their etymology by derivation from other words, like the adjective "prudent" from the noun "prudence." Some etymologies may be discovered in words of similar sound. Some words are derived from Greek, and others derive their names from place names. The origins of words derived from other foreign languages are often hard to discern.

This brief statement could be much expanded, but it contains the essence of Isidore's principal endeavor, to disclose the inner and true (ἔτυμος) meaning of the Latin lexicon by way of the etymology of the words. The method is fundamentally derivational, whether from a thing's intrinsic character (its *causa*) to its extrinsic name, or from its originating motive by process of time to its current locution, or from some term's sound to another term's similar sound, or from one word-class or language to another. The constantly repeated formulas are "X is so called because Y" and "X is so named as if the word were Y." The focus on origins, indeed, finds expression in many places in the *Etymologies* where the origins of things rather than merely words are specified: the origins of various alphabets (I.iii.5) and the Latin letters (I.iv.1), of shorthand signs (I.xxii) and of fables (I.xl.1), of historiography (I.xlii) and of the disciplines of Rhetoric (II.ii.1) and physics (II.xxiv.4).[63] Further, Isidore supplies hundreds of indications of the regions where things – metals, spices, gems, birds, and the like – originate, uniquely, or in their best condition, or abundantly, and whence they are imported (imported, that is, as Isidore's sources presume, into Italy). The very idea of a disquisition on the "Nature of Things," the essential title of an encyclopedic work, implied for a Latin reader the idea that the genesis of things is in question, as the word *natura* itself means (etymologically!) "what is begotten or generated," from *natus*, the past participle of *nasci*, "be born."[64]

63 A few more origins, particularly those inventors and discoverers whom he calls *auctores*, adduced by Isidore: mathematics (III.ii), geometry (III.x.1), music (III.xvi), various musical instruments (III.xxii.2 and 12), astronomy and astronomical writing (III.xxv and xxvi), medicine and its three schools (IV.iii and iv), laws (V.i) and chronicles (V.28), libraries (VI.iii.2–5), book collecting (VI.v), Christian libraries (VI.vi), canon-tables (VI.xv.1), the method of dating Easter Sunday (VI.xvii.1–2), agriculture (XVII.i.2). An unusual instance is the detailed technical description of the origin of glass (XVI.xvi.1–2).

64 So *Etymologies* XI.i.1, "Nature (*natura*) is so called because it causes something to be born (*nasci*)."

In a number of places Isidore offers a brief review of types of etymology for classes of things. Thus "meters are named either after their feet or after the topics about which they are written, or after their inventors, or after those who commonly use them, or after the number of syllables." Examples, respectively, are dactylic, elegiac, Sapphic, Asclepiadian, pentameter (I.xxxix.5–15). Ointments are named after their regions, inventors, or material (IV.xii.7–9). Heretics may be named after their founders or their tenets (VIII.v.1); philosophers from their founders (Platonists) or their meeting sites (Stoics – VIII.vi.6). To such as these we can add the great many places where Isidore makes the type of an etymology explicit. Examples are the derivations of the names of seas from the names of people who perished in them (XIII.xvi.8); of the disease satyriasis from its exemplars the satyrs (IV.vii.34); the names of parts of the Mediterranean from the adjacent regions (XIII.xvi.5); the different terms for earth from logic (*ratio* – XIV.i.1); 'pocket change,' the thing contained, from the word for 'bag,' the container (XVI.xviii.11; for such metonymies see I.xxxvii.8); derivation by physical resemblance, as the disease *elefantiacus* takes its name from the sufferer's resemblance to an elephant (IV.viii.12); from onomatopoeia, as the word for 'cricket,' *gryllus*, is from the sound of its call (XII.iii.8); and similarly the names of many birds (XII.vii.9). The notorious type that Isidore labels with the Greek term κατ᾽ ἀντίφρασιν ("by opposition") is not infrequent: thus the merciless Parcae take their name from the verb meaning "spare" (*parcere* – VIII.xi.93).

Usually Isidore grants that the borrowing of a Latin word from Greek amounts to a sufficient etymology, though often he supplies a second explanation from within Latin as well. A great many etymologies based on Greek are not made explicit in the *Etymologies*, in some cases perhaps from Isidore's own ignorance of the import of the etymology he adduces. We have supplied the relevant Greek in this translation when we are aware of it. In his treatment of illnesses, for example, Isidore provides a number of etymologies from Greek, but when he gives the etymology of the antidote *tyriaca* he omits the crucial information that θηριακός means "of venomous beasts" (IV.ix.8) although he knows that the medicine is "made from snakes." He also supplies a number of etymologies from languages other than Latin or Greek – obviously from secondary sources. Most of these, as in the case of Biblical names, are from Hebrew,

but we also learn of words derived from Persian (XII.ii.7), Syrian (XII.vi.38), and a number of others.

The most frequent type of etymology, from the very beginning ('know' [*scire*] is named from 'learn' [*discere*]) to the end ('branding iron' [*cauterium*] is so called because as a warning [*cautio*] to potential thieves it burns [*urere*]), is the discovery of a term's origin in another term, a single word or a phrase, because of a resemblance in their sound. Such similarities are often tenuous and remote, as Isidore seems to acknowledge when he observes, in deriving 'spiced' (*salsus*) from the phrase 'sprinkled with salt' (*sale aspersus*), "with the [three] middle syllables taken away" (XX.ii.23) – it is a stretch. It is hard not to agree with the remark of Isidore's distinguished editor Faustino Arévalo, some two hundred years ago, that Isidore can produce an etymology not in the belief that it is the actual origin of a term, but as a mnemonic aid (*Patrologia Latina* 82.954). Arévalo's example is Isidore's deriving 'swan' (*cygnus*) from 'sing' (*canere*) – after he has just referred to the Greek word that is the obvious etymon, κύκνος. We might add a large number of instances where Isidore notes that a term is "as if the word were" (*quasi*) another term. Thus Isidore distinguishes the two plural forms of *pecus* ("livestock"), *pecora* and *pecudes*, by proposing that the latter term is used only of animals that are eaten, "as if the word were *pecuedes*," that is, as if it contained the term 'eat' (*edere*; XII.i.6). The many dozens of such instances may well reflect Isidore's effort to help a student of Latin to remember a distinction rather than his belief in the actual origin of a word. To be sure, Isidore's authoritative sources, pagan and Christian, were replete with etymologies no more strained than these. Isidore illuminates the essences of words, their natures, not in terms of historical linguistics, but in terms of grammar.

The influence of the *Etymologies*

It would be hard to overestimate the influence of the *Etymologies* on medieval European culture, and impossible to describe it fully. Nearly a thousand manuscript copies survive, a truly huge number. As evidence of its continuing popularity down to and after the advent of printing, more than sixty manuscript copies of the whole work, as well as more than seventy copies of excerpts, were written in the fifteenth century.[65] It was among the early printed books (1472), and nearly a dozen printings appeared before the year 1500. According to Díaz y Díaz (Oroz Reta and Marcos Casquero 1993²:210), abundant evidence demonstrates that, by the year 800, copies of the *Etymologies* might be found "in all the cultural centers of Europe."

The earliest dissemination of the work beyond the cathedral centers of Seville itself and Braulio's Saragossa seems to have been in Gaul and Ireland. The earliest manuscript fragments of the *Etymologies* are housed at the monastery of St. Gall, a foundation in present-day Switzerland with Irish connections going back to the early seventh century. These fragments are written in an Irish scribal hand, perhaps as early as the mid-seventh century.[66] Irish texts of the mid to late seventh century show knowledge of the *Etymologies*, for instance (possibly) the *Twelve Abuses of the Age* (perhaps before 650).[67] The English scholar Aldhelm (obit 709) knew works of Isidore in the late seventh century, and "the

65 J. M. Fernández Catón, *Las Etimologías en la tradición manuscrita medieval estudiada por el Prof. Dr. Anspach* (León, 1966).

66 The fragments are described by E. A. Lowe, *Codices Latini Antiquiores* 7 (Oxford, 1956, no. 995). For the early diffusion of the *Etymologies* see A. E. Anspach, "Das Fortleben Isidors im VII. bis IX Jahrhundert," in *Miscellanea Isidoriana: Homenaje . . .* (Rome, 1936:323–56) especially for influence in Spain; Bischoff (1966:171–94), esp. 180–87; J. N. Hillgarth 1962; M. Herren, "On the Earliest Irish Acquaintance with Isidore of Seville," in E. James (Oxford, 1980); Reydellet 1966; Oroz Reta and Marcos Casquero 1993²:200–11. Reydellet 1966:389–91 provides a list of the thirty-seven complete or nearly complete manuscripts of the *Etymologies* dating from before the tenth century, with their provenances, and reference to the Bischoff study (1966) and Lowe's *Codices*. Fontaine 2000:401–16 treats a number of instances of Isidore's influence, with good bibliography on the subject.

67 On Isidore in early Ireland see Herren (preceding note); M. C. Díaz y Díaz, "Isidoriana II: Sobre el *Liber de Ordine Creaturarum*," *Sacris Erudiri* 5 (1953): 147–66; Paul Grosjean, "Sur quelques exégètes irlandais du VIIᵉ siècle," *Sacris Erudiri* 7 (1955): 67–97; Riché 1976:320. The Pseudo-Cyprian *De XII Abusivis Saeculi* is edited by Siegmund Hellmann in *Texte und Untersuchungen der altchristlichen Literatur* 34, 1 (Leipzig, 1909). A. Breen sharply disagrees with Hellmann's "quite unproven thesis" that the *Twelve Abuses* makes use of the works of Isidore: "Evidence of Antique Irish Exegesis in Pseudo-Cyprian, *De Duodecim Abusivis Saeculi*," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Section C, vol. 87 (1987): 71–101, esp. p. 76.

works of Isidore of Seville were a major influence on the development of Anglo-Saxon intellectual life in the age of Bede," that is, in the late seventh and early eighth centuries.[68]

Bede himself, the most learned scholar of his age, made extensive use of the *Etymologies*, and the work thrived in the Carolingian educational program in Gaul (where Isidore was known at the abbey of Corbie by the mid-seventh century). We have noticed above that Alcuin's pupil, the churchman Hrabanus Maurus (*ca.* 780–856), called "the teacher of Germany," "clericalized" the *Etymologies* of Isidore in his popular treatises *The Natures of Things* and *Allegories on the Whole of Sacred Scripture*, as well as other works. Both directly and indirectly, through such prominent writers as these, Isidore's influence pervaded the High Middle Ages of the eleventh to fifteenth centuries, in which the *Etymologies* was always regarded as a prime authority.

Of that continuing influence we can here only touch on a couple of strands. First was the direct influence of the *Etymologies* on the traditions of lexicons and encyclopedias that were standard reference works of the later Middle Ages.[69] We have noticed that the vast *Liber Glossarum (Glossarium Ansileubi)*, probably of the late eighth century, incorporates much of Isidore. Around the year 1053 the Italian Papias composed the *Elementarium Doctrinae Rudimentum*, an alphabetically arranged encyclopedic dictionary replete with etymologies and differentiae from Isidore, surviving in some ninety manuscripts and several Renaissance printings. Borrowing from Papias and Isidore, Osbern of Gloucester compiled his *Panormia* in the mid-twelfth century, and Huguccio (Hugutio), bishop of Ferrara, produced his *Liber Derivationum*, also known as the *Magnae Derivationes* (over 200 manuscripts), of the same type as Papias, around the year 1200. Before 1270 the Franciscan Guillelmus Brito, master at Paris, completed his *Summa*, another alphabetized dictionary of encyclopedic proportions, in this case treating some 2,500 words from the Bible. Its extensive use of the *Etymologies*, where Isidore is explicitly cited hundreds of times, is detailed in the Index of the modern edition.[70] It survives in over 130 manuscript copies, and was printed in the fifteenth century. From these same sources and others Giovanni Balbi of Genoa (Johannes Januensis) finished the culminating encyclopedic dictionary of the Middle Ages, the *Catholicon*, in 1286. It was one of the first printed books, in 1460.

These dictionaries are accompanied by a series of topically arranged encyclopedias likewise derivative of Isidore, and cumulatively massive. Major ones include Honorius Augustodunesis, *The Image of the World* (early twelfth century), Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *The Properties of Things* (*ca.* 1240 – early translated into six languages, including English), Thomas of Cantimpré's *Nature of Things* (*ca.* 1245), and the massive set of encyclopedias (over three million words), the *Speculum Maius*, of Vincent of Beauvais (*ca.* 1260), of which some eighty manuscripts are extant; it was the first book printed at Strasbourg (1473–1476). Bartholomaeus's encyclopedia was the basis of the thoroughly allegorized encyclopedic work of Pierre Bersuire, the *Reductorium Morale* of the mid-fourteenth century. The first encyclopedia in a vernacular language, Brunetto Latini's *Li Livres dou trésor*, duly dependent on Isidore, appeared around 1265.

Some sense of the continuing use of the *Etymologies* beyond this tradition of reference works can be acquired by observing its influence on the great Italian and English poets of the fourteenth century.[71] For Dante, suffice it

68 P. H. Blair, *The World of Bede* (London, 1970). F. C. Robinson has identified a number of bits of etymological lore from Isidore in such Old English poetic texts as *Genesis*, the riddles of *The Exeter Book*, and *Instructions for Christians*: see *The Tomb of Beowulf and Other Essays on Old English*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1993), pp. 197, 103, 119.

69 A number of medieval encyclopedias that borrow from the *Etymologies* are treated by Collison 1964, 1966²: 44–81.

70 L. Daly and B. A. Daly, *Summa Britonis sive . . . Expositiones Vocabulorum Biblie*, 2 vols. (Padua, 1975).

71 A few other evidences of Isidore's influence: Isidore was often among those excerpted and praised in the collections of sententious utterances (the *florilegia*) and the chronicles of the later Middle Ages; a number of these are cited in *Patrologia Latina* 82:198–205. Aspects of Isidore's influence on music theory well into the sixteenth century are discussed in R. Stevenson, *Spanish Music in the Age of Columbus* (The Hague, 1960). Materials from Book VI of the *Etymologies* are the earliest sources for some lore about books and libraries, according to K. Christ, *The Handbook of Medieval Library History*, trans. T. M. Otto (Metuchen, New Jersey, 1984). Isidore's deep influence on the medieval tradition of poetics and rhetoric may be exemplified in the citation of his name as an authority on the first page of John of Garland's *Parisian Poetics* (about 1220–1235); see T. Lawler, ed., *The 'Parisiana Poetria' of John of Garland* (New Haven, 1974: 5). On "Etymology as a Category of Thought" in medieval Latin Poetry see Curtius (as n.1 above), pp. 495–500. Instances such as these can be multiplied indefinitely.

that Isidore is among the luminous minds in the circle of the Sun in *Paradiso:* "See, flaming beyond, the burning spirit of Isidore" (10.130–31).[72] Boccaccio naturally derives material from Isidore (or by way of quotations of the *Etymologies* in Hrabanus and Vincent of Beauvais) in his learned treatise on the *Genealogy of the Gods*.[73] Closer to hand, he would have found Isidore's discussion of the origins of poetry and of the term *poeta (Etymologies* VIII.vii.1–3) among Petrarch's *Familiar Letters*, in the letter addressed to his brother Gherardo. Isidore had referred to an otherwise unknown passage from Suetonius, and to Varro, in his discussion. Isidore's actual source is Servius on *Aeneid* 3.443. Petrarch in turn cites the material from Varro and Suetonius, and diligently records that he actually derives the information from Isidore, an author "better known to you." Boccaccio repeats the information in his *Short Treatise in Praise of Dante*.[74] So we find information passed from ancient Latin authors through Isidore and his encyclopedic borrowers to the Italian poets.

In his long French poem, *The Mirror of Mankind* (*ca.* 1377), the English poet John Gower calls Isidore "the perfect cleric."[75] In his equally long Latin poem *The Voice of One Crying* (*ca.* 1378–*ca.* 1393), in an exemplary instance, Gower cites Isidore in a passage actually drawn from Godfrey of Viterbo's encyclopedic poem *Pantheon* (late twelfth century).[76] In *Piers Plowman* (written *ca.* 1376), William Langland quotes and paraphrases Isidore's definition of *anima* in the course of the figure Anima's self-explication.[77] This may be the only direct paraphrase of a passage of Isidore in English verse; it begins:

> 'The whiles I quykne þe cors', quod he, 'called am I *anima*;
> And for þat I kan and knowe called am I *mens* . . .'

Finally we may see the influence of the *Etymologies* on Chaucer. In the Parson's Tale of *The Canterbury Tales*, and nowhere else, Chaucer names Isidore, and quotes from him, both times (lines 89 and 551) at second hand. The latter instance cites Isidore's remarks on the long-lasting fire made from the juniper tree (*Etymologies* XVII.vii.35): so, says the Parson, is the smoldering fire of Wrath.

Again, we may find the *Etymologies* behind a passage in the Second Nun's Tale that derives from the legend of Saint Cecilia in the *Golden Legend* of Jacobus de Voragine, the standard collection of saints' lives in the later Middle Ages (before 1298).[78] As often, Jacobus begins his Vita with an etymology of the name of the saint, here deriving her name from *caelum*, "heaven," and explicitly borrowing from the *Etymologies*: "Or she [Saint Cecilia] is called a heaven because, as Isidore says, the philosophers asserted that the heavens are revolving, round, and burning." He thus quotes verbatim, including the reference to "philosophers," from *Etymologies* III.xxxi.1, and he goes on to say in what ways Cecilia was revolving, round, and burning (*rotundum, volubile atque ardens*). Chaucer says he will "expowne" the meaning of Cecilia's name, and follows Jacobus's several etymologies in detail, concluding with this perfect Chaucerian stanza (113–19), with which we conclude our own exposition:[79]

> And right so as thise philosophres write
> That hevene is swift and round and eek brennynge,
> Right so was faire Cecilie the white
> Ful swift and bisy evere in good werkynge,
> And round and hool in good perseverynge,
> And brennynge evere in charite ful brighte.
> Now have I yow declared what she highte.

72 "Vedi oltre fiammeggiar l'ardente spiro / d'Isidoro." See also the citation of Isidore's etymology of *anima* in *Convivio* IV.XV.11.

73 For example in the treatment of "poetry" in *Genealogy* XIV.vii, perhaps written around 1360. See C. G. Osgood, trans., *Boccaccio on Poetry*, 2nd edn. (Indianapolis, 1956), pp. 156–59, etc. – see Index. Boccaccio cites the same passage of Isidore in *Genealogy* XI.ii.

74 See Petrarch, pp. 413–14, and Boccaccio, pp. 492–93, translated in *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism c. 1100–c. 1375*, eds. A. J. Minnis, A. B. Scott, and D. Wallace, rev. edn. (Oxford, 1991).

75 Line 10,405. See W. B. Wilson, trans., *John Gower: Mirour de l'Omme* (East Lansing, MI, 1992: 143).

76 *Vox Clamantis* I.765. See E. W. Stockton, trans., *The Major Latin Works of John Gower* (Seattle, 1962), p. 353.

77 G. Kane and E. T. Donaldson, *Piers Plowman: The B Version* (London, 1975), 15.23–39. The passage is from *Etymologies* XI.i.13. It is also quoted in the *Summa* of Guillelmus Brito, ed. Daly and Daly, p. 40, in Peter the Chanter's *Distinctiones Abel* (late twelfth century, under the term 'Anima'; unedited), and doubtless elsewhere – such is Isidore's afterlife.

78 G. Ryan and H. Ripperger, trans., *The Golden Legend of Jacobus de Voragine* (New York, 1969), p. 689. For other citations of Isidore in the *Legend* see the Index. Caxton translated and printed the *Legend* in 1483.

79 *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson (Boston, 1987).

Editions of the *Etymologies* and this translation

The first printed edition of the *Etymologies* was issued by G. Zainer at Augsburg in 1472.[80] This was followed by ten further editions by the year 1500. The first edition of the complete works of Isidore appeared in Paris in 1580. The first important scholarly edition was that of Juan de Grial, which became the basis for work on Isidore until the early nineteenth century; it was issued in Madrid in 1599. Its valuable notes are retained in Arévalo's edition. The Jesuit scholar Faustino Arévalo produced his seven-volume edition of the *opera omnia* from Rome between 1797 and 1803; volumes III and IV contain the *Etymologies*. This great edition, whose notes update and correct Grial, was reprinted, with the usual large number of errors, in volumes 81–83 of the *Patrologia Latina* (ed. J.-P. Migne) in 1850.[81] The *Etymologies* form the bulk of volume 82. In 1909 Rudolph Beer published in Leiden a facsimile edition of the "Toledo" manuscript of the *Etymologies*, now Madrid manuscript Tol. 15.8.

Wallace M. Lindsay edited the *Etymologies* for the Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis series in 1911. This was the first edition of the work based on modern principles of textual criticism, and it was prepared by the ablest student of Late Latin of his time. Lindsay claims, with good reason, to have produced a text that accords with the state of Isidore's text as it might have appeared around the year 700. His diffidence about capturing the *ipsissima verba* of Isidore is sensible; given the complex relationship of Isidore with his sources, which themselves doubtless often came down to him in somewhat corrupted form, it is in fact hard to be sure that one does not over-correct on the basis of sources. On the other hand, the steadily accumulating knowledge about the precise sources Isidore used will inevitably inform better readings in future editions, as it already has in the recent critical editions. Lindsay's remarkable accuracy and good judgment have been apparent to us from the outset, and his edition will not easily be superseded.[82] It is still in print, and is likewise handily accessible in the Oroz Reta-Marcos Casquero edition (1993²), which has very few typographical errors. Further, it is also now available on the internet at the address http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/texts/Isidore/home.html. This version is corrected and variously improved from the text that may also be found on the internet at www.thelatinlibrary.com/isidore.html. Lindsay's text is also available on the CD-ROM issued by CETEDOC in the Library of Latin Texts. A concordance to the *Etymologies* has recently appeared.[83]

Two translations into Spanish of the complete *Etymologies* have hitherto appeared for the Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos: by Luis Cortés y Góngora (Madrid, 1957), and by José Oroz Reta and Manuel-A. Marcos Casquero (1993²). The latter edition has an excellent and comprehensive introduction by Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz, and is provided with the Latin text of Lindsay on facing pages with the translation. We have compared the Reta–Casquero translation in detail with our own, and we have a good number of differences of interpretation from their translation. Yet we must acknowledge that they have divined, at various points of difficulty in the Latin, solutions that we had not grasped.

As already noted, a new, international edition of the *Etymologies* has been appearing, book by book, in the series Auteurs Latins du Moyen Age, being published by Belles Lettres in Paris.[84] To date five volumes have appeared, published from 1981 to 1995, under the general direction of the distinguished Isidoreans Jacques Fontaine and Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz. Information about these volumes appears in the bibliography appended below. These are accompanied by translations in the language of the editors; one has appeared so far in English (Marshall, 1983); of the others, three are in French, and one in Spanish. Of particular value is their profuse

80 The following information about early editions of Isidore is mainly drawn from Díaz y Díaz (Oroz Reta and Marcos Casquero 1993²:226–36).

81 The *Patrologia* edition was reprinted in 1977 by Brepols in Turnhout, Belgium.

82 We find no reason to dissent from the judgment, printed in his edition of Lindsay's *Studies*, of Michael Lapidge, himself a distinguished Latinist: "Wallace Martin Lindsay (1858–1937) was one of the greatest, perhaps *the* greatest, Latin scholars ever born in these British Isles" (Studies in Early Medieval Latin Glossaries 1996: ix).

83 A.-I. Magallón Garcia, *Concordantia in Isidori Hispaliensis Etymologias: A Lemmatized Concordance to the Etymologies of Isidore of Sevilla*. 4 vols. Hildesheim, 1995.

84 On the origins of this edition see Oroz Reta and Marcos Casquero 1993²:235–36.

presentation, in the form of footnotes, of the sources of Isidore's text. We have examined these volumes in detail, have admired them enormously, have learned much from them, and occasionally refer to them in our own notes. The new editors make a number of emendations of Lindsay's text on sound grounds, but in fact the excellence of Lindsay's edition is confirmed by the small number of substantial emendations that the ALMA editors propose. In striking cases we supply the probably superior readings in our notes.

We have based our translation strictly on Lindsay's text. It will be obvious that our translation is fairly literal, as we anticipate that readers with some knowledge of Latin will prefer clarity and help with the occasionally difficult syntax rather than elegance of style. As we have said, Isidore's Latin is resolutely utilitarian; he manifestly aimed to help his readers, and not to delight them with fancy prose.[85] We offer translations of a number of technical terms – plants, colors, minerals, and the like – not in confidence that the English term exactly catches the meaning of the Latin word (or whatever meaning Isidore or his sources might attach to the word), but as a rough guide to the sense. Further, when a Latin term in Isidore has no known English correspondent or meaning beyond what Isidore explicitly supplies, we have simply left the term in Latin: examples are *flamines* (X.96), *sibilus* (XII.iv.9), *thracius* (XVI.iv.8), and *cetra* (XVIII.xi.5). In the many places where Isidore quotes earlier authors in wording that departs from the modern received texts of those authors, we have translated Isidore, and not the received text, annotating the passage when needed for clarity. The simple conventions that we follow in presenting the text are explained in the Note to the Reader.

85 Cf. Fontaine 2000:352: "Isidore sought a purely functional and pedagogical style that was accessible even to the least literate clerks and monks."

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See also the recent and full bibliography in Martin's edition of *Chronica* (2003).

Analytical table of contents

The first table below, within quotation marks, is a translation of the listing of the titles of the twenty books of the *Etymologies* found at the beginning of some early manuscripts, along with its prefatory remark; the list is printed by Lindsay (vol. 1, pages 11–12). Since Braulio, not Isidore, divided the work into books, we can be sure these titles are not Isidore's. There follows an analytical table of contents, drawn from the text itself. The title and chapters of each book correspond with our translation of the work. Book XX has no title in the early manuscripts. Manuscripts of the *Etymologies* often listed the chapter titles at the head of each book.[1]

"So that you may quickly find what you are looking for in this work, this page reveals for you, reader, what matters the author of this volume discusses in the individual books – that is, in Book

I. Grammar and its parts.
II. Rhetoric and dialectic.
III. Mathematics, whose parts are arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy.
IV. Medicine.
V. Laws and the instruments of the judiciary, and times.
VI. The order of Scripture, cycles and canons, liturgical feasts and offices.
VII. God and angels, prophetic nomenclature, names of the holy fathers, martyrs, clerics, monks, and other names.
VIII. Church and synagogue, religion and faith, heresies, philosophers, poets, sibyls, magicians, pagans, gods of the gentiles.
IX. Languages of the nations, royal, military, and civic terminology, family relationships.
X. Certain terms in alphabetical order.
XI. Human beings and their parts, the ages of humans, portents and metamorphoses.
XII. Four-footed animals, creeping animals, fish, and flying animals.
XIII. Elements, that is, the heavens and the air, waters, the sea, rivers and floods.
XIV. Earth, paradise, the regions of the whole globe, islands, mountains, other terms for places, and the lower regions of the earth.
XV. Cities, urban and rural buildings, fields, boundaries and measures of fields, roads.
XVI. Earthy materials from land or water, every kind of gem and precious and base stones, ivory likewise, treated along with marble, glass, all the metals, weights and measures.
XVII. Agriculture, crops of every kind, vines and trees of every kind, herbs and all vegetables.
XVIII. Wars and triumphs and the instruments of war, the Forum, spectacles, games of chance and ball games.
XIX. Ships, ropes, and nets, iron workers, the construction of walls and all the implements of building, also wool-working, ornaments, and all kinds of clothing.
XX. Tables, foodstuffs, drink, and their vessels, vessels for wine, water, and oil, vessels of cooks, bakers, and lamps, beds, chairs, vehicles, rural and garden implements, equestrian equipment."

Book I: GRAMMAR. i. Discipline and art. ii. The seven liberal disciplines. iii. The common letters of the alphabet. iv. The Latin letters. v. Grammar. vi. The parts of speech. vii. The noun. viii. The pronoun. ix. The verb. x. The adverb. xi. The participle. xii. The conjunction. xiii. The preposition. xiv. The interjection. xv. Letters in grammar. xvi. The syllable. xvii. Metrical feet. xviii. Accents. xix. Accent marks. xx. Punctuated clauses. xxi. Critical signs. xxii. Common shorthand signs. xxiii.

1 For an account of some of the manuscript systems of presenting tables of contents of the *Etymologies* see B.-J. Schröder, *Titel und Text: Zur Entwicklung lateinischer Gedichtüberschriften. Mit Untersuchungen zu . . . Inhaltsverzeichnissen . . .* Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte, vol. 54 (Berlin, 1999). See also Reydellet 1966: 388 *et passim.*

Signs used in law. xxiv. Military signs. xxv. Epistolary codes. xxvi. Finger signals. xxvii. Orthography. xxviii. Analogy. xxix. Etymology. xxx. Glosses. xxxi. Differentiation. xxxii. Barbarism. xxxiii. Solecisms. xxxiv. Faults. xxxv. Metaplasm. xxxvi. Schemas. xxxvii. Tropes. xxxviii. Prose. xxxix. Meters. xl. The fable. xli. History. xlii. The first authors of histories. xliii. The utility of history. xliv. The kinds of history.

Book II: RHETORIC AND DIALECTIC. i. Rhetoric and its name. ii. The founders of the art of rhetoric. iii. The term 'orator' and the parts of rhetoric. iv. The three kinds of arguments. v. The two states of legal arguments. vi. The tripartite dispute. vii. The four parts of an oration. viii. The five types of cases. ix. Syllogisms. x. Law. xi. The maxim. xii. Confirmation and refutation. xiii. Prosopopoeia. xiv. Ethopoeia. xv. Kinds of questions. xvi. Style. xvii. The three registers of speaking. xviii. Clause, phrase, and sentence. xix. Faults to be avoided in letters, words, and expressions. xx. Combinations of words. xxi. Figures of words and expressions. xxii. Dialectic. xxiii. The difference between the arts of rhetoric and dialectic. xxiv. The definition of philosophy. xxv. Porphyry's *Isagoge.* xxvi. Aristotle's categories. xxvii. The *De interpretatione.* xxviii. Logical syllogisms. xxix. The division of definitions abbreviated from the book by Marius Victorinus. xxx. Topics. xxxi. Opposites.

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MUSIC. xv. Music and its name. xvi. The inventors of music. xvii. The power of music. xviii. The three parts of music. xix. The threefold division of music. xx. The first division of music, which is called harmonic. xxi. The second division, which is called *organicus.* xxii. The third division of music, which is called rhythmic. xxiii. Musical numbers.
ASTRONOMY. xxiv. The name of astronomy. xxv. The inventors of astronomy. xxvi. Those who established astronomy. xxvii. The difference between astronomy and astrology. xxviii. Astronomical reckoning. xxix. The world and its name. xxx. The shape of the world. xxxi. The sky and its name. xxxii. The position of the celestial sphere. xxxiii. The movement of this same sphere. xxxiv. The course of the same sphere. xxxv. The speed of the sky. xxxvi. The axis of heaven. xxxvii. The celestial polar regions. xxxviii. The poles of the heavens. xxxix. The vault of heaven. xl. The doorways of heaven. xli. The twin faces of the sky. xlii. The four parts of heaven. xliii. The hemispheres. xliv. The five circles of heaven. xlv. The circle of the zodiac. xlvi. The bright circle. xlvii. The size of the sun. xlviii. The size of the moon. xlix. The nature of the sun. l. The course of the sun. li. The effect of the sun. lii. The path of the sun. liii. The light of the moon. liv. The shapes of the moon. lv. Interlunar intervals. lvi. The path of the moon. lvii. The proximity of the moon to the earth. lviii. Eclipse of the sun. lix. Eclipse of the moon. lx. The differences between stars, star clusters, and constellations. lxi. The light of the stars. lxii. The location of the stars. lxiii. The course of the stars. lxiv. The changing course of the stars. lxv. The distances between the stars. lxvi. The orbital number of the stars. lxvii. Planets. lxviii. Precession and antegrade motion of stars. lxix. Recession or retrograde motion of stars. lxx. The standing of stars. lxxi. The names of the stars and the reasons for these names.

Book IV: MEDICINE. i. Medicine. ii. The term 'medicine.' iii. The inventors of medicine. iv. The three schools of medicine. v. The four humors of the body. vi. Acute illnesses. vii. Chronic illnesses. viii. Illnesses that appear on the surface of the body. ix. Remedies and medications. x. Medical books. xi. The instruments of physicians. xii. Scents and ointments. xiii. The foundations of medicine.

Book V: LAWS AND TIMES. i. The originators of laws. ii. Divine laws and human laws. iii. How jurisprudence, laws, and customs differ from each other. iv. What natural law is. v. What civil law is. vi. What the law of nations is. vii. What military law is. viii. What public law is. ix. What quirital law is. x. What a law is. xi. What popular resolutions (i.e. plebiscites) are. xii. What a senate decree is. xiii. What an order and an edict are.

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Book I

Grammar (De grammatica)

i. Discipline and art (De disciplina et arte) 1. A discipline (*disciplina*) takes its name from 'learning' (*discere*), whence it can also be called 'knowledge' (*scientia*). Now 'know' (*scire*) is named from 'learn' (*discere*), because none of us knows unless we have learned. A discipline is so named in another way, because 'the full thing is learned' (*discitur plena*). 2. And an art (*ars*, gen. *artis*) is so called because it consists of strict (*artus*) precepts and rules. Others say this word is derived by the Greeks from the word ἀρετή, that is, 'virtue,' as they termed knowledge. 3. Plato and Aristotle would speak of this distinction between an art and a discipline: an art consists of matters that can turn out in different ways, while a discipline is concerned with things that have only one possible outcome. Thus, when something is expounded with true arguments, it will be a discipline; when something merely resembling the truth and based on opinion is treated, it will have the name of an art.

ii. The seven liberal disciplines (De septem liberalibus disciplinis) 1. There are seven disciplines of the liberal arts. The first is grammar, that is, skill in speaking. The second is rhetoric, which, on account of the brilliance and fluency of its eloquence, is considered most necessary in public proceedings. The third is dialectic, otherwise known as logic, which separates the true from the false by very subtle argumentation. 2. The fourth is arithmetic, which contains the principles and classifications of numbers. The fifth is music, which consists of poems and songs. 3. The sixth is geometry, which encompasses the measures and dimensions of the earth. The seventh is astronomy, which covers the law of the stars.

iii. The common letters of the alphabet (De litteris communibus) 1. The common letters of the alphabet are the primary elements of the art of grammar, and are used by scribes and accountants. The teaching of these letters is, as it were, the infancy of grammar, whence Varro also calls this discipline 'literacy' (*litteratio*). Indeed, letters are tokens of things, the signs of words, and they have so much force that the utterances of those who are absent speak to us without a voice, [for they present words through the eyes, not through the ears]. 2. The use of letters was invented for the sake of remembering things, which are bound by letters lest they slip away into oblivion. With so great a variety of information, not everything could be learned by hearing, nor retained in the memory. 3. Letters (*littera*) are so called as if the term were *legitera*, because they provide a road (*iter*) for those who are reading (*legere*), or because they are repeated (*iterare*) in reading.

4. The Latin and Greek letters seem to be derived from the Hebrew, for among the Hebrews the first letter is called 'aleph,' and then 'alpha' was derived from it by the Greeks due to its similar pronunciation, whence **A** among Latin speakers. A transliterator fashioned the letter of one language from the similar sound of another language (i.e. derived the names and shapes of letters of similar sound from the "earlier" language); hence we can know that the Hebrew language is the mother of all languages and letters. But the Hebrews use twenty-two characters, following the twenty-two books of the Old Testament; the Greeks use twenty-four. Latin speakers, falling between these two languages, have twenty-three characters. 5. The letters of the Hebrews started with the Law transmitted by Moses. Those of the Syrians and Chaldeans began with Abraham, so that they agree in the number of characters and in their sounds with the Hebrew letters and differ only in their shapes. Queen Isis, daughter of Inachus, devised the Egyptian letters when she came from Greece into Egypt, and passed them on to the Egyptians. Among the Egyptians, however, the priests used some letters and the common people used others. The priestly letters are known as ἱερός (sacred), the common letters, πάνδεμος (common).

The Phoenicians first discovered the use of Greek letters, whence Lucan (*Civil War* 3.220):

> If the report is trustworthy, the Phoenicians were the first to dare to indicate by rudimentary shapes a sound meant to endure.

6. Hence it is that the chapter headings of books are written with Phoenician scarlet, since it is from the Phoenicians that the letters had their origin. Cadmus, son of Agenor, first brought seventeen Greek letters from Phoenicia into Greece: Α, Β, Γ, Δ, Ε, Ζ, Ι, Κ, Λ, Μ, Ν, Ο, Π, Ρ, Σ, Τ, Φ. Palamedes added three more to these at the time of the Trojan War: Η, Χ, Ω. After him the lyricist Simonides added three others: ψ, Ξ, Θ.

7. Pythagoras of Samos first formed the letter Υ as a symbol of human life. Its lower stem signifies the first stage of life, an uncertain age indeed, which has not yet given itself to vices or to virtues. The branching into two, which is above, begins with adolescence: the right part of it is arduous, but leads toward a blessed life; the left is easier, but leads to death and destruction. Concerning this Persius (*Satires* 3.56) speaks thus:

> And where the letter has spread out into Samian branches it has shown you the way that rises by means of the right-hand path.

8. There are also five mystical letters among the Greeks. The first is Υ, which signifies human life, concerning which we have just spoken. The second is Θ, which [signifies] death, for the judges used to put this same letter down against the names of those whom they were sentencing to execution. And it is named 'theta' after the term θάνατος, that is, 'death.' Whence also it has a spear through the middle, that is, a sign of death. Concerning this a certain verse says:

> How very unlucky before all others, the letter theta.

9. The third, Τ, shows the figure of the cross of the Lord, whence it is also interpreted as a symbol in Hebrew. Concerning this letter, it was said to an angel in Ezekiel (9: 4): "Go through the midst of Jerusalem, and mark a thau upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and mourn."[1] The remaining two mystical letters, the first and the last, Christ claims for himself; himself the beginning, himself the end, he says (Apocalypse 22:13): "I am Alpha and Omega," for by moving towards each other in turn, Α rolls on all the way to Ω, and Ω bends back to Α, so that the Lord might show in himself both the movement of the beginning to the end, and the movement of the end to the beginning.

10. All the letters in Greek compose words and also make numbers, for they use the letter alpha as the number 'one.' And when they write beta, they mean 'two'; when they write gamma, they mean 'three' in their numbers; when they write delta, they mean 'four' in their numbers – and so every letter corresponds to a number for the Greeks. 11. Latin speakers, however, do not assign numbers to the letters, but only use them to form words, with the exception of the letters **I**, and **X**, which both signifies the cross by its shape, and stands for the number ten.[2]

iv. The Latin letters (De litteris latinis)[3] 1. The nymph Carmentis first brought the Latin letters to the Italians. She is called Carmentis because she would sing in songs (*carmen*) of things to come, but she is properly called Nicostrate. 2. Letters are either common or liberal. 'Common (*communis*) letters' are so called because many people employ them for common use, in order to write and to read. 'Liberal (*liberalis*) letters' are so called because only those who write books (*liber*), and who know how to speak and compose correctly, know them. 3. There are two types of letter, for they are first divided into two groups, vowels and consonants. Vowels are letters that are released in various ways through the straightforward opening of the throat, without any contact. And they are called 'vowels' (*vocalis*), because they make a complete 'vocal sound' (*vox*, gen. *vocis*) on their own, and on their own they may make a syllable with no adjoining consonant. Consonants are letters that are produced by various motions of the tongue or a compression of the lips. And they are called 'consonants' (*consonans*) because they do not produce sound by themselves, but rather 'sound together' (*consonare*) with an adjoining vowel. 4. Consonants are divided into two groups: semivowels and mutes. Semivowels (*semivocalis*) are so called because they take a certain half (*semis*) of their quality from vowels. Their letter-names, accordingly, begin with the vowel **E**, and end in their natural sound [as **F**, **L**, **M** etc.]. The mutes (*mutus*, i.e. the voiced stops) are so called because, without vowels joined to them, they are never released. In fact, if you were to remove the sound of the following vowel from them,

1 For the Vulgate *thau* the New Revised Standard Version translates "mark." The last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, 'taw,' parallel to the Greek 'tau,' was shaped like an X in ancient script and came to have the meaning "mark, sign, symbol."

2 Isidore disregards here the numeral-letters **V**, **L**, **C**, **D**, **M**.

3 Isidore uses the word 'letter' (*littera*) to refer both to the written character and to the sound for which it stands.

the sound of the letter will be a blocked murmur [as **B**, **G**, **D**, etc.]. Furthermore, vowels and semivowels and mutes were called by the ancients sounds (*sonus*) and semisounds (*semisonus*) and non-sounds (*insonus*).

5. Among the vowels, **I** and **U** signify different things to the grammarians. 6. Now they are vowels, and now semivowels, and now medials (i.e. glides). They are vowels because they make syllables when they are positioned alone or when they are joined to consonants. They are considered consonants in that they sometimes have a vowel set down after them in the same syllable, as *Ianus*, *vates*, and they are considered as consonants.[4] 7. They are [also] called medials because only they naturally have a medial sound, as *illius*, *unius*. They sound more fully when joined to others, as *Ianus*, *Vanus*. They sound one way when alone and another when adjoined. On this account, **I** is sometimes called twofold, because whenever it is found between two vowels, it is taken as two consonants, as *Troia*, for there its sound is geminated. 8. Further, the letter **V** is sometimes nothing, because in some places it is neither vowel nor consonant, as in *quis* (who). It is not a vowel, because **I** follows, and it is not a consonant, because **Q** precedes. And thus when it is neither vowel nor consonant, it is undoubtedly nothing. This same sound is called *digamma* by the Greeks, when it is joined to itself or to other vowels. And it is called *digamma* because it has the double shape of the letter **F**, which looks like two gammas (i.e. one Γ atop another). On account of this resemblance the grammarians would call the vowels conjoined in this way *digamma*, as in *votum*, *virgo*.

9. Among the semivowels, some are called liquids (*liquidus*) because sometimes, when placed after other consonants in one syllable, they are deficient and excluded from the meter.[5] In Latin there are two sounds which melt (*liquescere*) like this, **L** and **R**, as in *fragor* (crash), *flatus* (breathing). The others, **M** and **N**, are liquid in Greek, as in *Mnestheus*.

10. The old script consisted of seventeen Latin letters, and they are called legitimate (*legitimus*) for this reason: they either begin with the vowel **E** and end in a mute sound, if they are consonants,[6] or because they begin with their own sound and end in the vowel **E**, if they are mutes [and they are **A**, **B**, **C**, **D**, **E**, **F**, **G**, **I**, **L**, **M**, **N**, **O**, **P**, **R**, **S**, **T** and **U**].

11. The letter **H** was added afterwards for aspiration alone, whence it is considered by many to be a breathing, not a letter, and it is called a mark of aspiration because it elevates the voice, for aspiration is a sound that is raised more fully. Its opposite is *prosodia*, a sound accented levelly. 12. Salvius, the schoolmaster, first added the letter **K** to Latin, so as to make a distinction in sound between the two letters **C** and **Q**. This letter is called superfluous because, with the exception of the word 'Kalends,' it is considered unnecessary; we express all such sounds by means of **C**. 13. Neither Greek nor Hebrew has a sound corresponding to our letter **Q**, for with the exception of Latin no other language possesses this letter. It did not exist earlier; hence it is also called superfluous because the ancients wrote all such sounds with a **C**.

14. The letter **X** did not exist in Latin until the time of Augustus, [and it was fitting for it to come into existence at that time, in which the name of Christ became known, which is written using the letter which makes the sign of the cross],[7] but they used to write **CS** in its place, whence **X** is called a double letter, because it is used for **CS**, so that it takes its name from the composition of these same letters. 15. Latin borrowed two letters from Greek, **Y** and **Z**, especially for the sake of writing Greek words. These letters were not written by the Romans until the time of Augustus, but two **S**s were used for **Z**, as in *hilarissat*, and they would write **I** for **Y**.

16. There are three things associated with each letter: its name, how it is called; its shape, by which character it is designated; and its function, whether it is taken as vocalic or consonantal. Some people add 'order,' that is, what does it precede and what does it follow, as **A** is first and **B** following – for **A** is the first letter among all peoples, because it first initiates voice in babies as they are being born. 17. Indeed, nations assigned the names of the letters from the sounds in their own languages, when the sounds of the mouth were noted and distinguished. After they paid attention to these sounds, they imposed both names and shapes on them. The shapes they formed partly by whim, and partly from the sound of the letters;

4 The Romans used a single letter *i* to represent both the vowel /i/ and the glide /y/, and the single letter *u* (= *v*) for both /u/ and /w/. The letters *u* and *v* are not distinct in the Latin alphabet.

5 In the scansion of Latin poetry, consonants followed by *l* or *r* may be treated as if they were single consonants.

6 From what Isidore said above, iv.4, he should have written "and end in their natural sound, if they are semivowels . . ."

7 Christian scribes abbreviated the name of Christ as Xp̄s (for Greek chi-rho-sigma) and similar forms.

for instance **I** and **O** – the first one is a thin sound, as it were, thus a slender twig, and the other a fat sound, thus a full shape.

Now nature has assigned the function, and human will has assigned the order and the macron. 18. The ancients counted the macron among the letter characters, and it is called 'macron' (*apex*, lit. "peak") because it is far from the letter's foot, and is placed at the top of the letter. It is a line drawn horizontally and levelly above the letter. [But a letter character (*figura*) is that with which a whole letter is written.]

v. Grammar (De grammatica) 1. Grammar is the knowledge of speaking correctly, and is the origin and foundation of liberal letters. Among the disciplines this was invented after the letters of the alphabet, so that through it those who have already learned the letters know the method of speaking correctly. 'Grammar' takes its name from letters, for the Greeks call letters γράμματα. 2. It is truly called an art, because it consists of strict (*artus*) rules and precepts. Others say that the word 'art' is derived by the Greeks from ἀρετή, that is, 'virtue,' which they called knowledge. 3. 'Oratory' (*oratio*) is so called as if it were 'method of speech' (*oris ratio*), for 'to orate' (*orare*) is to speak and to say. Oratory is the joining of words with sense. But a joining without sense is not oratory, because then there is no method in the speaking. Oratory is made up of sense, voice and letters. 4. Thirty divisions of the grammatical art are enumerated by some, that is: the eight parts of speech, enunciation, letters, syllables, feet, accent, punctuation, critical signs, spelling, analogy, etymology, glosses, differentiation, barbarisms, solecisms, faults, metaplasms, schemes, tropes, prose, meter, tales, and histories.

vi. The parts of speech (De partibus orationis) 1. Aristotle first proposed two parts of speech, noun and verb; then Donatus defined eight (*Ars Grammatica*, ed. Keil 4.372). But all parts revert back to these two principal ones, that is, to the noun and verb, which signify the person and the act. The others are ancillary and derive their origin from these two. 2. For the pronoun is taken from the noun, whose function it assumes, as in 'an orator . . . he' (*orator ille*). The adverb is taken from the noun, as in 'a learned one, learnedly' (*doctus, docte*). The participle is taken from the noun and the verb, as in 'I read, a reading one' (*lego*, *legens*). The conjunction and preposition, however, and the interjection, occur in connection with these other parts. For this reason, some people define five parts of speech, because these latter three are superfluous.

vii. The noun (De nomine)[8] 1. The noun (*nomen*) is so called as if it were 'denoter' (*notamen*), because by its designation it makes things known (*noscere*, ppl. *notus*) to us. Indeed, unless you know its name (*nomen*), the knowledge of a thing perishes.

Proper nouns (*proprium nomen*) are so called because they are specific; they signify one single person only. There are four types of proper nouns: the praenomen, the name, the cognomen, and the agnomen. The praenomen is so called because it is placed before (*prae*) the name, as 'Lucius,' 'Quintus.' 2. The name (*nomen*) is so called because it identifies (*notare*) the clan, as 'Cornelius,' for all Corneliuses are in this clan. The cognomen (*cognomen*), because it is conjoined (*coniungere*) to the name, as 'Scipio.' The agnomen (*agnomen*) is an 'acquired name' (*accedens nomen*), as in 'Metellus Creticus,' so named because he subdued Crete: the agnomen comes from some outside cause. But it too is commonly called a cognomen, because it is added to the name for the sake of recognition (*cognitio*), or because it is used 'with the name' (*cum nomine*).

3. Appellative nouns (*appellativum nomen*) are so called because they are common and make reference to many things (cf. *appellare*, "name"). They are divided into twenty-eight types. Of these the corporeal (*corporalis*) nouns are so called because they are either seen or touched, as 'sky,' 'earth.' 4. The incorporeal (*incorporalis*) nouns, because they lack a body (*corpus*), so that they cannot be seen or touched, as 'truth,' 'justice.' 5. The general (*generalis*) nouns, because they denote many things, as 'animal,' for a human and a horse and a bird are animals. 6. The specific (*specialis*) nouns, because they indicate a sub-class, as 'man,' for a human being is a type (*species*) of animal. 7. Primary (*principalis*) nouns, because they hold a primary

8 Following traditional grammarians, Isidore uses the term *nomen* to refer to both nouns and adjectives, and also to mean "name." The noun vs. adjective distinction is less clear-cut in Latin than in English because adjectives standing alone commonly function as substantives: *bonus*, "good" or "a good man." Further, both nouns and adjectives have case endings. We translate *nomen* as "noun" or "adjective" or "name" or even "word" where appropriate.

position, and are not derived from another word, as 'mountain,' 'fount.' 8. Derivative (*derivativus*) nouns, because they are derived from another noun, as 'mountainous region' (*montanus*) from 'mountain' (*mons*). 9. Diminutive (*diminutivus*) nouns, because they diminish the meaning, as 'Greekling' (*Graeculus*), 'little scholar' (*scholasticulus*). 10. Some nouns are called 'diminutive in sound' (*sono diminutivus*), because they sound like diminutive nouns, but are conceptually primary nouns, as 'table' (*tabula*), 'fable' (*fabula*). 11. 'Entirely Greek' (*totus Graecus*) nouns, because they are declined entirely in the Greek manner, as *Callisto* – for both Greek and Latin decline it in the same way. 12. 'Entirely Latin' (*totus Latinus*) nouns, because they are turned entirely into Latin. Greek has 'Odysseus,' and Latin 'Ulysses.' 13. Medial (*medius*) nouns are so called because they are partly Greek and partly Latin. These are also called 'mongrel' (*nothus*), because they corrupt the final syllables while the previous syllables stay the same, as in Greek, for example, 'Alexandros,' 'Menandros,' while we (Latin speakers) have 'Alexander,' 'Menander.' They are called 'mongrel' inasmuch as whoever is begotten of unequal classes is called 'mongrel.' 14. Synonymous (*synonymus*) nouns, that is, plurinomial (*plurinomius*), because there is a single meaning shared by 'many nouns' (*plura nomina*), as *terra*, *humus*, and *tellus* (i.e. all meaning "earth"). Indeed, these are all the same thing. 15. Homonymous (*homonymus*) nouns, that is uninomial (*uninomius*), because there is a multiple meaning in one (*unus*) noun, as *tumulus*, which is in one context a low hill, in another context rising (*tumere*) ground, and in another context a grave-mound – for there are diverse meanings in the one noun. 16. The relational (*relativus*) nouns are so called because they are defined in relation to another person, as 'teacher,' 'master,' 'father.' 17. Words defined as somehow related to something by way of their opposition of meaning are also called relational, as 'right' – for 'right' cannot be defined unless there is 'left.' 18. Next, the qualitative (*qualitas*) adjectives are so called because through them some quality is shown, as 'wise,' 'beautiful,' 'rich.' 19. Quantitative (*quantitas*) adjectives are so called because they are defined by measure, as 'long,' 'short.' 20. Patronymics (*patronymicus*) are so called because they are derived from fathers (*pater*), as 'Tydides,' son of Tydeus, 'Aeneius,' son of Aeneas, although they may also be derived from mothers and from more remote ancestors. 21. 'Ctetic' (*cteticus*) adjectives, that is possessive, from possession, as the 'Evandrian' sword. 22. Epithets (*epitheton*), which in Latin are called either adjectives (*adiectivus*) or additions, because they are 'added to' (*adicere*, ppl. *adiectus*) nouns to complete the meaning, as 'great,' 'learned.' You may add them to persons, as 'a great philosopher,' 'a learned man,' and the sense is complete. 23. Agent (*actualis*) nouns derive from the action (*actus*), as 'leader,' 'king,' 'runner,' 'nurse,' 'orator.' Ethnic (*gens*) adjectives come from the ethnic group (*gens*), as 'Greek,' 'Roman.' 24. Adjectives of nationality (*patrius*) come from a native land (*patria*), as 'Athenian,' 'Theban.' Local (*locus*) adjectives from the place (*locus*), as 'suburban.' 25. Verbal (*verbialis*) nouns are so called because they come from the verb, as 'reader' (*lector*, from *legere*, ppl. *lectus*, "read"). Participials (*participalis*), which have the same form as participles, as 'the reading one' (*legens*). 26. Quasi-verbal (*verbis similis*) nouns, so called from their similarity to the verb, as *contemplator* – for this word is both a verb in the imperative mood, future tense, and a noun, because it takes the comparative degree.[9] All these types of appellative nouns come from the 'naming quality' (*appellatio*) of nouns.

27. A second division is the comparison of adjectives. 'Comparison' (*comparatio*) is so called because it prefers one thing in comparison with another. There are three degrees of comparison: positive, comparative, and superlative. 'Positive' (*positivus*) is so called because it is placed (*ponere*, ppl. *positus*) first in the degrees of comparison, as 'learned' (*doctus*). 'Comparative' (*comparativus*) is so named because when compared (*comparatus*) with the positive it surpasses it, as 'more learned' (*doctior*) – for he knows more than someone who is merely learned. 'Superlative' (*superlativus*) is so called because it completely surpasses (*superferre*, ppl. *superlatus*) the comparative, as 'most learned' (*doctissimus*), for he knows more than someone who is merely *doctior*.

28. 'Gendered nouns' (*genus*) are so called because they generate (*generare*), as masculine and feminine. Other nouns are not gendered, but analogy and tradition

9 The form *contemplator* is ambiguous, being either the future imperative of the deponent verb *contemplor* ("observe") or the agent noun (i.e. 'observer') formed from the same verb. Isidore here uses a formal criterion to define a noun: its taking the case endings of a declension, as the genitive of *contemplator*, for example, is *contemplatoris*. Apparently by mistake he actually refers to a noun's taking the comparative degree, a property of adjectives only, where he must mean taking case endings.

have assigned them gender. A neuter (*neuter*, lit. "neither") noun is so named because it is neither one nor the other, that is, neither masculine nor feminine. A common (*communis*) noun is so called because one noun has a share in both genders, as *hic canis* ("this male dog") and *haec canis* ("this female dog"). 29. The opposite of this is an epicene (*epicoenos*) noun, because it expresses either sex with a single gender, as in *hic piscis* ("this fish"). It is of uncertain sex, because it can be distinguished neither by nature nor by sight, but only by expert discernment. The inclusive (*omne genus*) noun is so named because it serves for all genders: for masculine and feminine, neuter, common – for all (*omnis*).

30. 'Grammatical number' (*numerus*) is so named because it shows whether a noun is singular or plural. 'Morphological form' (*figura*), because nouns are either simple or compound. 31. Cases (*casus*) are so called from 'having an ending' (*cadere*, ppl. *casus*): through the cases inflected nouns are varied and have their endings. The nominative (*nominativus*) case is so called because through it we name (*nominare*) something, as *hic magister* ("this teacher"). The genitive (*genetivus*), because through it we find the descent of someone, as *huius magistri filius* ("this teacher's son"), or because we assign a thing to someone, as *huius magistri liber* ("this teacher's book"). 32. The dative (*dativus*), because through it we show that we give (*dare*, ppl. *datus*) something to someone, as *da huic magistro* ("give to this teacher"). The accusative (*accusativus*), because through it we accuse someone, as *accuso hunc magistrum* ("I accuse this teacher"). The vocative (*vocativus*), because through it we call (*vocare*) someone, as *O magister* ("hey, teacher!"). Ablative (*ablativus*), because through it we indicate that we take away (*auferre*, ppl. *ablatus*) something from someone, as in *aufer a magistro* ("take from the teacher"). 33. Certain nouns and adjectives are called *hexaptota* because they have distinct inflection in six cases, as the word *unus* ("one"). *Pentaptota*, because they are declined in only five cases, as *doctus* ("learned"). *Tetraptota*, because they are only declined in four cases, as *latus* ("side"). *Triptota* because only in three, as *templum* ("temple"). *Diptota*, because only in two, as *Iuppiter* ("Jupiter"). *Monoptota*, because they only use one case, as *frugi* ("thrifty").[10]

viii. The pronoun (De pronomine) 1. The pronoun (*pronomen*) is so named because it is put 'in place of the noun' (*pro vice nominis*), lest the noun itself cause annoyance when it is repeated. When we say, "Vergil wrote the *Bucolics*," we continue with the pronoun, "he (*ipse*) wrote the *Georgics*," and thus the variation in expression both removes annoyance and introduces ornament. 2. Pronouns are either definite or indefinite. Definite (*finitus*) pronouns are so called because they define (*definire*) a certain person, as *ego* ("I"); for you immediately understand this to be me. The indefinite (*infinitus*) ones are so named because the persons referred to are not certain. Indefinite pronouns are used for those who are absent or undetermined, as *quis* ("anyone" (masc. or fem.)), *quae* ("any" (fem.)), *quod* ("any" (neut.)).[11] Some are called 'less than definite' (*minus quam finitus*), since they make mention of a known person, as *ipse* ("he himself"), *iste* ("that one") – for we know who is spoken of. 3. Possessives (*possessivus*) are so called because they show that we possess something, for when I say *meus* ("my"), *tuus* ("your"), I define something as mine, or yours. Correspondent (*relativus*) pronouns are so called because they are said in response (*refero*, ppl. *relatus*) to a question, as "who is?" (*quis est?*) is answered by "he is" (*is est*). Demonstratives (*demonstrativus*), because they have the sense of indicating (*demonstrare*). By them we indicate someone who is present, as *hic, haec, hoc* ("this one" (masc., fem., and neut.)); these three are also called articles. 4. Articles (*articulus*) are so called because they are 'pressed together' (*artare*), that is, they are connected, with nouns, as when we say *hic orator* ("the orator"). There is this difference between the article and the pronoun: it is an article when it is joined to a noun, as *hic sapiens* ("the wise man"). But when it is not joined, then it is a demonstrative pronoun, as *hic et*

10 The terms are derived from Greek numerical prefixes and the root of πτῶσις, "grammatical case." *Unus* has six distinct forms for the six cases in the singular; *doctus* has five forms, with the dative and ablative singular sharing the same form; *latus* has four, with the nominative, accusative, and vocative singular sharing one form; *templum* has three, with the nominative, accusative, and vocative singular sharing one form, and the dative and ablative singular sharing another; *frugi* is "indeclinable," with only the one form. The conception seems to shift with the noun *Iuppiter*, which actually has only the one form, used only in the nominative and vocative; its oblique forms are supplied by the synonymous noun *Iovis*, which itself has four forms.

11 *Quis* is the masculine and feminine substantive form of the indefinite pronoun; *quae* and *quod* are adjectival forms, sometimes used substantively.

haec et hoc ("this one (masc.) and this (fem.) and this (neut)").

5. All pronouns are either primary or derived. Primary (*primogenis*, lit. "born first") are so called because they do not take their origin from elsewhere. There are twenty-one of these. Three are definite: *ego* (I), *tu* (you), *ille* (he). Seven are indefinite: *quis* (who), *qualis* (what sort), *talis* (such), *quantus* (how much), *tantus* (so much), *quotus* (where in order), *totus* (such in order). There are six that are less than definite: *iste* (that one), *ipse* (he himself), *hic* (this one), *is* (he), *idem* (the same one), *se* (oneself, i.e. the 3rd person reflexive). There are five possessives: *meus* (my), *tuus* (your (sing.)), *suus* (his or her or their), *noster* (our), *vester* (your (pl.)). The rest are called derived, because they are derived and compounded from these, as *quis-piam* (whoever), *ali-quis* (someone), and the rest.

ix. The verb (De verbo) 1. The verb (*verbum*) is so called because it resounds by means of reverberation (*verberatus*) in the air, or because this part of speech often 'is involved' (*versare*) in a speech. Moreover, words (*verbum*) are signs of the mental processes with which people show their thoughts to one another in speaking.[12] And just as a noun indicates a person, so a verb indicates the doing or speaking of a person. With respect to the subject of a verb, there is an indication of active or passive. Thus *scribo* ("I write") is what a person is doing. *Scribor* ("I am written") also shows what a person is doing, but in this case a person who is undergoing the action.

2. There are two meanings for the Latin *verbum*: grammatical and rhetorical. The *verbum* (i.e. the verb) of the grammarians conjugates in three tenses: preterit, present and future, as *fecit* ("he did"), *facit* ("he does"), *faciet* ("he will do"). In the case of rhetoricians *verba* ("words") is used of their speech as a whole, as in *verbis bonis nos cepit* ("he captivated us with good words"), *verba bona habuit* ("he had good words"), where what is meant is not only the *verba* that fall into three tenses (i.e. the verbs), but the entire speech.

The qualities of verbs are: derivational forms, moods, conjugations, and voices [and tenses]. 3. 'Derivational forms' (*forma*) of verbs are so called because they inform (*informare*) us about some particular deed, for through them we show what we are doing. The meditative (*meditativus*) is named from the sense of someone intending (*meditari*), as *lecturio* ("I intend to read," formed on *legere*, ppl. *lectus*), that is, "I want to read." Following on from intention, the inchoative (*inchoativus*) verb is so called from its indication of beginning (*incohare*), as *calesco* ("I become warm," formed on *calere*, "be warm"). The frequentative (*frequentativus*) is so called from acting rather often, as *lectito* ("I read a lot"), *clamito* ("I yell a lot," formed on *clamare*). The derivational forms have a bearing on the meaning, and the moods have a bearing on the inflection. Furthermore, you do not know what the inflection should be unless you have already learned what the meaning is.

4. The moods (*modus*) of the verb are so called from the modality (*quemadmodum*, lit. "in what manner") of their sense. Thus the indicative (*indicativus*) mood is so called because it has the sense of someone indicating, as 'I read' (*lego*). The imperative (*imperativus*), because it has the tone of someone commanding (*imperare*), as 'read!' (*lege*). The optative (*optativus*), because through it we desire (*optare*) to do something, as 'would that I might read' (*utinam legerem*). The subjunctive (*coniunctivus*), because something is joined (*coniungere*) to it, so that the statement will be complete. Thus when you say, "when I yell" (*cum clamem*), the sense is left hanging. But if I say, "when I yell, why do you think I am silent?" (*cum clamem, quare putas quod taceam?*), the sense is complete. 5. The infinitive (*infinitus*) [mood] is so called because, while it defines (*definire*) tenses, it does not define a person of the verb, as 'to yell' (*clamare*), 'to have yelled' (*clamasse*). If you add a person to it – 'I ought, you ought, he ought to yell' (*clamare debeo, debes, debet*) – it becomes a quasi-finite verb. The non-personal (*impersonalis*) is so called because it lacks the person of a noun or pronoun, as 'it is read' (*legitur*): you may add a person, as 'by me, by you, by him' (*a me*, *a te*, *ab illo*), and the sense is filled out. But the infinitive mood lacks a marker of person as part of its verb form, while the non-personal lacks a pronoun or noun to mark person.

6. The conjugation (*coniugatio*) is so called because through it many things are joined (*coniungere*) to one root sound. It shows the endings of the future tense, lest through ignorance one should say *legebo* for *legam* ("I will write"). Now the first and second conjugation indicate the future tense by the endings *-bo* and *-bor*, while the third conjugation shows it with *-am* and

12 We translate *verbum* with either of its senses, "verb" or "word," depending on the context; see section 2 below.

-*ar*. 7. The voices (*genus*) of verbs are so named because they 'bring forth' (*gignere*, ppl. *genitus*). Thus you add *r* to the active and it brings forth the passive; conversely, you remove *r* from the passive and it brings forth the active. These are called active (*activus*) verbs because they act (*agere*, ppl. *actus*), as 'I whip' (*verbero*), and passive (*passivus*) verbs because they 'undergo action' (*pati*, ppl. *passus*), as 'I am whipped' (*verberor*); neutral (*neutralis*) verbs, because they neither act nor undergo action, as 'I am lying down' (*iaceo*), 'I am sitting' (*sedeo*) – for if you add the letter *r* to these, they do not sound Latin. Common-voiced (*communis*) verbs are so called because they both act and undergo action, as *amplector* ("I embrace, I am embraced"). Similarly, these, if the letter *r* is removed, are not Latin. Deponent (*deponens*) verbs are so called because they 'set aside' (*deponere*) the passive meaning of their future participles; this form ends in -*dus*, as *gloriandus* ("worthy of boasting").[13]

x. The adverb (De adverbio) 1. The adverb (*adverbium*) is so named because it 'comes near the verb' (*accedere* < *ad-cedere verbum*), as in 'read well' (*bene lege*). 'Well' (*bene*) is the adverb, and 'read' (*lege*) is the verb. Therefore, the adverb is so called because it is always completed when joined to the verb, for a verb by itself has complete sense, as 'I write' (*scribo*). But an adverb without a verb does not have a full meaning, as 'today' (*hodie*). You 'add a verb' (*adicis . . . verbum*) to this, 'I write today' (*hodie scribo*), and with the added verb you have completed the sense.

xi. The participle (De participio) The participle (*participium*) is so called because it takes (*capere*) the functions (*partes*) of both the noun and the verb, as if it were *parti-capium* – for from the noun it takes gender and case, and from the verb tense and meaning, and from both, number and form.

xii. The conjunction (De conjunctione) 1. The conjunction (*coniunctio*) is so called because it 'joins together' (*coniungere*) meanings and phrases, for conjunctions have no force on their own, but in their combining of other words they present, as it were, a certain glue. They either link nouns, as "Augustine and (*et*) Jerome", or verbs, as "he writes and (*et*) he reads." Conjunctions all share a single power: either they join, or they disjoin. 2. Copulative (*copulativus*) conjunctions are so called because they join meaning or persons, as "let's go, you and (*et*) I, to the forum." The *et* joins the meanings. Disjunctive (*disiunctivus*) conjunctions are so called because they disjoin things or persons, as "let's do it, you or (*aut*) I." Subjoined (*subiunctivus*) conjunctions are so called because they are attached behind (*subiungere*), as -*que* ("and"). Thus we say *regique hominique Deoque* ("and for the king and the person and God"); we do not say *que regi, que homini*.

3. Expletive (*expletivus*) conjunctions are so called because they 'fill out' (*explere*) the topic proposed, as in "if you don't want this, 'at least' (*saltim*) do that." Common (*communis*) conjunctions are named thus, because they are placed [and joined] anywhere, as *igitur hoc faciam* ("therefore I will do this"), *hoc igitur faciam* ("this therefore I will do"). 4. Causal (*causalis*) conjunctions are named from the reason (*causa*) that people intend to do something, for example, "I kill him, because (*quia*) he has gold"; the second clause is the reason. Rational (*rationalis*) conjunctions are so called from the reasoning (*ratio*) that someone uses in acting, as, "How may I kill him 'so that' (*ne*) I won't be recognized? By poison or blade?"

xiii. The preposition (De prepositione) The preposition (*praepositio*) is so called because it is placed before (*praeponere*, ppl. *praepositus*) nouns and verbs. Accusative (*accusativus*) and ablative (*ablativus*) prepositions are so called from the cases that they govern. *Loquellares* – so called because they always join to an utterance (*loquella*), that is, to words – have no force when they stand alone, as *di*-, *dis*-. But when joined to a word, they make a word-form, as *diduco* ("I divide"), *distraho* ("I pull apart").

xiv. The interjection (De interjectione) The interjection (*interiectio*) – so called because it is interjected (*intericere*, ppl. *interiectus*), that is, interposed, between

13 In late use the verbal form ending in -*dus*, i.e. the gerundive, became the future passive participle. Both this participle and the gerundive proper are passive in meaning; the literal meaning of *gloriandus* is "worthy of being boasted of." Isidore is right to single out the gerundive as the exception to the general rule for deponent verbs (i.e. passive in form but active in sense), but its difference lies in keeping, not losing, the passive sense gerundives normally have: it is the only part of a deponent verb that has a passive meaning.

meaningful phrases – expresses the emotion of an excited mind, as when *vah* is said by someone exulting, *heu* by someone grieving, *hem* by someone angry, *ei* by someone afraid. These sounds are specific to each language, and are not easily translated into another language.

xv. Letters in grammar (De litteris apud grammaticos) [There are as many of these as there are articulated sounds. And one is called a letter (*littera*), as if the word were *legitera*, because it provides a road (*iter*) for those reading (*legere*), or because it is repeated (*iterare*) in reading.] (See iii.3 above.)

xvi. The syllable (De syllaba) 1. The Greek term 'syllable' (*syllaba*) is called a combination (*conceptio*) or gathering (*complexio*) in Latin. It is named 'syllable' from συλλαμβάνειν τὰ γράμματα, that is, 'to combine letters,' for συλλάμβανειν means "combine." Hence a true syllable is one made up of several letters, for a single vowel is improperly spoken of as a syllable, but not correctly: it should be called not so much a syllable as a marking of time. Syllables are short, long, or common. 2. Short (*brevis*) are so called because they can never be drawn out. Long (*longus*), because they are always drawn out. Common (*communis*), because they are either drawn out or shortened according to the writer's judgment as exigency compels. On this read Donatus.[14] Syllables are called long and short because, due to their varying lengths of sound, they seem to take either a double or single period of time. 'Diphthong' (*dipthongus*) syllables are so called from the Greek word (i.e. from δι-, "double" + φθόγγος, "sound"), because in them two vowels are joined. 3. Of these, we have four true diphthongs: *ae*, *oe*, *au*, *eu*. *Ei* was in common use only among the ancients.

A syllable is called a semi-foot (*semipes*) by those who analyze meter, because it is half of a metrical foot: since a foot consists of two syllables, a single syllable is half a foot. Dionysius Lintius (i.e. Dionysius Thrax) devised the most appropriate individual patterns for all syllables, and on this account was honored with a statue.

xvii. Metrical feet (De pedibus) 1. Feet (*pes*) are what last for a certain time-span of syllables, and never alter their fixed span. They are called 'feet' because in using them the meters 'walk.' Just as we step with our feet, so the meters also advance, as it were, by means of feet. There are 124 different feet in all: four two-syllable feet, eight three-syllable, sixteen four-syllable, thirty-two five-syllable, and sixty-four six-syllable. Up to four syllables they are called feet; the rest are called syzygies (*syzygia*). 2. These feet have specific reasons for the names by which they are called.

The pyrrhic (*pyrrichius*) foot is so called because it was used habitually in contests or quite often in children's games.[15] The spondee (*spondeus*) is so called because it has a prolonged sound, for *spondeus* is the name of a certain droning, that is, the sound that would flow over the ears of those performing a sacrifice. Hence those who would play the pipes in the pagan rites were named 'spondials.' 3. The trochee (*trochaeus*) is so called because it makes speedy alternations in a song, and runs quickly in meters like a wheel – for a wheel is called τροχός in Greek. 4. The iamb (*iambus*) is so called because the Greeks say ἰαμβόζειν for 'detract' (*detrahere*, ppl. *detractus*). Poets were accustomed to perform all their invective or abuse (*detractio*) with poetry of this type. And the name comes from this, in that in some way it infuses a sort of poison of malediction or spite.

5. The tribrach (*tribrachys*), which is also called *chorius*, is named tribrach because it consists of three short syllables (see section 9 below). 6. The molossus (*Molossus*) is named from the dancing of the Molossians, which they performed while armed. 7. The anapest (*anapaestus*) [is so called because this foot is dedicated more to relaxation and games].[16] 8. The dactyl (*dactylus*) is named from 'finger' (cf. δάκτυλος), because it begins with a longer measure, and ends in two shorts. Thus this foot has one long joint and two shorts. Also an open hand is called a palm, and the dangling fingers are dactyls. 9. The amphibrach (*amphibrachys*, cf. ἀμφί, "on both sides"), because it has a short on either side and a long lying in the middle – for a short is called βραχύς. 10. The *amphimacrus*, because two longs have a short enclosed between them, for a long is called μακρός. 11. The *bacchius* is so called because with this foot the Bacchanals, that is, the rites of the god Liber (i.e. Bacchus), are celebrated. 12. The *antibacchius*, or *palimbacchius*, is so called because it is a reversal of the

14 The fourth-century grammarian Aelius Donatus wrote textbooks that became standard. Here see *Ars Grammatica*, ed. Keil 4.368–69.

15 The reference is to the *pyrrhica*, a war-dance or reel.

16 Greek ἀνάπαιστος means "reversed," as the foot is a reversed dactyl.

bacchius. 13. The proceleusmatic (*proceleumaticus*, i.e. *proceleusmaticus*), because it is appropriate for the 'work chant' (*celeuma*) of people singing. 14. The *dispondeus* and *ditrochaeus* and *diiambus* are so called because they are double iambs, spondees, and trochees. 15. The *antispastus*, because it is made of opposing syllables: from a short and a long, then a long and a short. 16. The choriamb (*choriambus*), because the song most appropriate for 'a band of singers and dancers' (*chorus*) is composed with this foot. 17. The ionic (*ionicus*) feet are with good reason named from the uneven (*inaequalis*) sound of their rhythm, for they have two long syllables and two short. 18. The paeonic (*paeon*) feet are named from their inventor. [They consist of one long and three shorts, and the long syllable is placed in various positions corresponding to the name (i.e. first paeon, second paeon, etc.)]. 19. Epitrites (*epitritus*) are so called because they always have three long syllables and one short. 20. Syzygies (*syzygia*) are feet with five and six syllables, and they are called συζυγίαι in Greek, as are certain declensions. These are not actually feet, but they are called pentasyllables and hexasyllables, since they do not exceed five and six syllables. Hence it is not possible for any word in a poem to exceed this number of syllables, such as *Carthaginiensium* ("of Carthaginians"), *Hierosolymitanorum* ("of Jerusalemites"), and *Constantinopolitanorum* ("of Constantinopolitans").

21. In each foot there occurs an arsis (*arsis*) and a thesis (*thesis*), that is, a raising and lowering of the voice – for the feet would not be able to follow a road unless they were alternately raised and lowered. For example, in *arma* (arms), *ar-* is the raising, and *-ma* the lowering. Properly constituted feet are comprised of a distribution of these two. The proportion is equal (*aequus*) whenever arsis and thesis are cut with an equal division of time. 22. The proportion is duple (*duplus*) whenever one of them exceeds the other twofold. The proportion is sescuple (*sescuplus*) whenever one exceeds the other by half again as much (i.e. a proportion of two and three). In the smaller member of this foot one unit more than the minimum is found, and in the larger member one unit less than the maximum, for *sescum* is a word for 'half.' The proportion is triple (*triplus*) when the larger part contains the entire smaller part three times: that is, a proportion of three to one. It is epitrite (*epitritus*), when the smaller part is contained in the larger, plus a third part of the smaller (i.e. a proportion of three and four, since four is equal to three plus one third of three). The members of feet are divided either in equal proportion, or double, or sescuple, or triple, or epitrite.

23. We divide these into equal members:

Spondee	––	Pyrrhic	˘˘
Dactyl	–∣˘˘	Anapest	˘˘∣–
Dispondeus	––∣––	Proceleusmatic	˘˘∣˘˘
Diiambus	˘–∣˘–	*Ditrochaeus*	–˘∣–˘
Antispastus	˘–∣–˘	Choriamb	–˘∣˘–

24. Further, we divide these feet in a duple rhythm:

Trochee	–∣˘	Iamb	˘∣–
Molossus	–∣––	Tribrach	˘∣˘˘
Ionic major	––∣˘˘	Ionic minor	˘˘∣––

25. [There is only one that has triple proportion, which is the most extreme proportion and is therefore present in few meters.]

Amphibrach ˘∣–˘

26. The ones with sescuple division are these:

Amphimacrus	–∣˘–	*Bacchius*	˘–∣–
Antibacchius	–∣–˘	First Paeon	–∣˘˘˘
Second Paeon	˘–∣˘˘	Third Paeon	˘˘∣–˘
Fourth Paeon	˘˘˘∣–		

27. We divide the rest into the epitrite proportion:

First Epitrite	˘–∣––	Second Epitrite	–˘∣––
Third Epitrite	––∣˘–	Fourth Epitrite	––∣–˘

There are, therefore, ten feet with equal proportion, six with duple proportion, one with triple proportion, seven with sescuple proportion, and four with epitrite proportion. And there is only one that has triple proportion, which is the most extreme proportion and is therefore present in few meters. 28. The number of syllables possible in a foot ranges from two to six; it proceeds no further, because feet extend to six syllables only.

There are time-intervals in feet, corresponding to the quantity that each foot has. Resolution (*resolutio*) of feet occurs when two shorts take the place of one long, or four shorts the place of two longs, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 2.16):

> *Sectaque intexunt abiete costas.*
> (They frame the ribs with sawn fir.)

Abiete here is a resolution of a spondee into a proceleusmatic; it is always following a synaloephis (i.e.

a fusion of two vowels into one syllable) that Vergil uses this resolution. 29. Although two shorts can take the place of one long, one long can never take the place of two shorts,[17] for solid things can be divided, but divided things cannot be made solid.

There is a notation by whose mark syllables are recognized, for when you see the lower half of a circle written twice, it is a Pyrrhic foot: ˘˘, where you see two horizontal **I**s, it is a spondee: – –. So a short is marked with a lower half-circle, and a long with a horizontal **I**. 30. Meter is built from feet, such as trochaic meter from the trochee, dactylic from the dactyl, iambic from the iamb; we will speak a little later concerning this.

xviii. Accents (De accentibus) 1. The accent (*accentus*), which is called 'prosody' (*prosodia*) in Greek, [takes its name from Greek], for the Greek word πρός is the Latin *ad* ("to"), and the Greek ᾠδή is the Latin *cantus* ("song"; i.e. *accentus* < *ad* + *cantus*) – so this term is translated word for word. Latin speakers also have other names for it. They say 'accent' and 'pitch' (*tonus*) and 'tenor' (*tenor*), because at that place the sound increases and falls away. 2. 'Accent' is so called because it is joined to song (*cantus*), in the same way that the 'adverb' is so called because it is joined to the verb (see chapter x above). The acute (*acutus*) accent is so called because it sharpens (*acuere*) and raises the syllable; the grave (*gravis*, lit. "heavy") accent, because it depresses and lowers, for it is the opposite of the acute. The circumflex (*circumflexus*) is so called because it consists of an acute and a grave. Thus beginning as an acute it ends as a grave, and when it thus rises and then falls, it makes a 'turning around' (*circumflexus*). 3. The acute and the circumflex are similar, for they both raise the syllable. The grave accent is regarded as opposite to both of them, for it always lowers the syllable, while they raise it, as (Lucan, *Civil War* 1.15):

> *Unde venit Titan, et nox ibi sidera condit.*
> (Whence Titan comes, and there night conceals the stars.)

Unde ("whence") is grave here, (i.e. its pitch lowers as we move from the first to the second syllable). It has a lower sound than the acute and the circumflex.

4. A monosyllabic word will have an acute accent if it is short by nature, as *vir* ("man"), or long by position, as *ars* ("art"). But if it is long by nature, as *rēs* ("thing"), then it has a circumflex.[18] A disyllabic word, if its first syllable is long by nature and the second short, has a circumflex, as *Mūsa*; otherwise it has an acute. If a three-syllable word has a short middle syllable, as *tibia* ("shin"), then we make the first syllable acute. If it has a second syllable long by nature, and a short final syllable, as *Metēllus*, then we make the middle syllable circumflex. 5. Four- and five-syllable words are controlled by the pattern for three-syllable words. The grave accent can occur with another single accent in a single word, but never with two, as [*Catullus*]. In a compound word there is a single accent.[19]

6. Accents were invented either for the sake of distinguishing, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 8.83):

> *Viridique in litore conspicitur sus*
> (And a pig is seen on the green shore)

so that you won't say *ursus* ("bear");[20] or for the sake of pronunciation, lest you pronounce *meta* as short and not as *mēta*, with its *a* lengthened; or because of an ambiguity which must be resolved, as *ergo*. When the -*go* is lengthened, the word signifies a reason (i.e. "on account of"); when it is short, it signifies a conjunction (i.e. "therefore").[21]

xix. Accent marks (De figuris accentuum) 1. There are ten accent marks, which are supplied by grammarians to distinguish words. Ὀξεῖα, that is the acute accent, a line drawn upwards from the left side to the right, is made thus: ´. 2. Βαρεῖα, that is, grave, a line drawn from the upper left down to the right, is made thus: `. 3. Περισπωμένη, that is, circumflex, a line made of an acute and a grave, is represented thus: ^. 4. Μακρός, that is, a long mark (i.e. macron), is a horizontal stroke, thus: ¯. 5. Βραχύς, that is, the short, is the lower part of a

17 Isidore means that a long syllable cannot replace two shorts when the latter are required by a particular verse form, as, with rare exceptions, in the fifth foot of a dactylic hexameter.

18 A syllable's vowel is short or long "by nature," but a syllable is generally long "by position" if its vowel is followed by two consonants.

19 The remarks about accent (pitch?) here pertain to Greek pronunciation, and less clearly to Latin. The details are controversial. The last two sentences may refer to the rule in Greek that a word may have two accents if it is followed by an enclitic. See Donatus, ed. Keil 4.371–72.

20 The pitch or stress would rise on -*ur sus* but fall on *ursus*.

21 The text should read "mēta, with its *e* lengthened." *Ergo* "therefore" occurs with a short *o* only rarely in the classical poets, but commonly in later ones.

circle, lying thus: ᵕ. 6. ‘Ὑφέν, that is, a joining (*coniunctio*), because it connects (*conectere*) two words, is a stroke drawn down that curves back at the line, thus: ╯. 7. *Diastole*, that is, a distinction (*distinctio*), which separates something from its opposite: the right half of a circle drawn down to the line: ˀ. 8. The ‘apostrophe’ (*apostrophus*), also the right half of a circle, and placed at the upper part of a letter, is thus: ’. By this mark it is shown that the final vowel in a word is lacking, as *tribunal’* for *tribunale*. 9. Δασεῖα, which is translated as “aspiration” (*aspiratio*, i.e. the rough breathing), that is, where the letter **H** ought to be put, is marked by this shape: ⊢. 10. Ψιλή, which is translated as “dryness” (*siccitas*, i.e. the smooth breathing), or “a pure sound” – that is, where the letter **H** ought not to be – is expressed with this shape: ⊣. 11. Latin speakers made the shapes of these two accent-marks from the letter of aspiration itself. Whence, if you join them, you will have made that same mark of aspiration (i.e. **H**). Conversely, if you split it at the midpoint, you make a δασεῖα and a ψιλή.

xx. Punctuated clauses (De posituris) 1. A punctuated clause is a form for distinguishing meaning through colons, commas, and periods, which, when placed in their proper spot, show the sense of the reading to us.[22] They are called ‘punctuated clauses’ (*positura*) either because they are marked by points that are set down (*ponere*, ppl. *positus*), or because there the voice is lowered (*deponere*, ppl. *depositus*) to make an interval with a pause. Greek speakers call them θέσεις, and Latin speakers, *posituræ*. 2. The first punctuated clause is called the subdivision, and it is the same as a comma. The middle punctuation follows: it is the colon. The final punctuation, which closes the entire sentence, is the period.

The colon and the comma are parts of the sentence, as we have said. The difference between them is indicated by points placed in different spots. 3. For where the speech has begun and the sense is not yet complete, but it is necessary to take a breath, a comma occurs, that is, a part of the sense, and a point is placed even with the bottom of the letter. This is called the ‘subdivision’ (*subdistinctio*) because it takes the point below (*subtus*), that is, at the bottom of the line. 4. And where, in the following words, the sentence now makes sense but something still remains for the completion of the sentence, a colon occurs, and we mark it by a point even with the middle of the letter. And we call this the ‘middle’ (*medius*) punctuation, because we place the point at the middle of the letter. 5. But when, by proceeding through the speech, we make a complete closure of the sentence, a period occurs, and we place a point even with the top of the letter. This is called a *distinctio*, that is, a disjunction, because it sets apart a whole sentence. 6. This is the usage among orators. On the other hand, among the poets, a comma occurs in the verse when, after two feet, there is still a syllable remaining in the word, because a break in the word is made there according to metrical scansion. But when no part of the speech still remains after two feet, it is a colon. And the entire verse is a period.[23]

xxi. Critical signs (De notis sententiarum) 1. In addition to these, there were certain critical signs (*nota*) used in writing the works of the most famous authors; the ancients placed these in poems and histories to annotate the writing. The critical sign is a specific shape placed in the manner of a letter, to show a particular judgment about a word or sentences or verses. There are twenty-six marks which may be placed in verse, given below with their names:

2. ⁜ The asterisk is placed next to omissions, so that things which appear to be missing may be clarified through this mark, for star is called ἀστήρ in Greek, and the term ‘asterisk’ (*asteriscus*) is derived from this. 3. – The *obolus*, that is, a horizontal stroke, is placed next to words or sentences repeated unnecessarily, or by places where some passage is marked as false, so that, like an arrow, it slays the superfluous and pierces the false, for an arrow is called ὀβελός in Greek. 4. ∸ An *obolus* with a point above it is put next to those places, about which there is some doubt as to whether they ought to be taken out or kept. [It is marked as false.] 5. ÷ The *lemniscus*, that is, a horizontal stroke between two points, is put next to those places that translators of Holy Writ

22 In this section Isidore uses the terms ‘colon,’ ‘comma,’ and ‘period’ to refer both to the actual parts of the sentence and to the marks of punctuation used to terminate them.

23 Isidore equates the signs for the metrists’ caesura and diaeresis with the signs for the comma and colon. The caesura is the ending of a word within a metrical foot, especially within the third foot, or within both the second and fourth feet, of a hexameter line, and the diaeresis is the coincidence of the end of foot and word. Isidore defines the comma/caesura as the ending of a metrical foot within a word; the sense is generally the same.

have rendered with the same meaning but with different words.

6. The *antigraphus* with a point is placed where there is a different meaning in the translations. 7. The asterisk with *obolus*: Aristarchus used this specifically next to those verses not placed in their proper location. 8. The paragraph (*paragraphus*) is placed so as to separate topics which run on in sequence, just as in a catalog, places are separated from each other, and regions from each other, and in the competitions, prizes are separated from each other, and contests from other contests. 9. The *positura* is a mark opposite to the paragraph. It is shaped this way because, just as the paragraph marks beginnings, this one separates ends from beginnings. 10. The *cryphia*, the lower half of a circle with a point, is put next to those places where a difficult and obscure question cannot be answered or solved. 11. The *antisimma* is placed at those verses whose order should be transposed. It is found so placed in ancient authors also. 12. The *antisimma* with a point is put next to those places where there are two verses with the same meaning, and it is doubtful which one should be selected.

13. > The *diple*. Our scribes place this in books of churchmen to separate or to make clear the citations of Sacred Scriptures. 14. The *diple* περί στίχον ("with a point"). Leogoras of Syracuse first placed this next to Homeric verses to distinguish Mount Olympus from the heavenly Olympus. 15. The *diple* περιεστιγμένη, that is, with two points. The ancients set this next to the verses which Zenodotus of Ephesus incorrectly added, or removed, or transposed. Our scribes also have used this same sign next to those verses. 16. The diple ὀβολισμένη is interposed to separate the speeches in comedies and tragedies. 17. The reverse ὀβολισμένη, whenever the strophe and the antistrophe are introduced. 18. The reverse *diple* with *obolus* is placed next to those passages that refer back to something, as (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 10.88):

> Do I try to overturn the state of Troy from its foundation for you? I? Or is it he who threw the miserable Trojans to the Greeks?[24]

19. The *diple* with an *obolus* above it is placed next to passages representing changed conditions of places, times, and people. 20. The *diple* pointing right and reversed with an *obolus* above is used when a unit is completed in that place, and signifies that something similar follows.

21. The *ceraunium* is placed whenever a set of verses is rejected and not marked individually with an *obolus*; for lightning is called κεραύνιον in Greek. 22. The *chrisimon*: this is placed according to each person's individual desire to mark something. 23. Phi and Rho, that is, φροντίς (i.e. "attention"): this is placed where there is something obscure requiring close attention. 24. The upward anchor is placed where there is some exceedingly great subject matter. 25. The downward anchor, where something done most basely and improperly is denounced. 26. The mark of the *corona* is only placed at the end of a book. 27. The *alogus* is the mark [that] is placed beside errors.

28. There are also other small marks (i.e. signes de renvoi) made in books for drawing attention to things that are explained at the edges of the pages, so that when the reader finds a sign of this type in the margin he may know that it is an explanation of the same word or line that he finds with a similar mark lying above it when he turns back to the text.

xxii. Common shorthand signs (De notis vulgaribus) 1. Ennius first invented eleven hundred common signs. These signs were used in this way: several scribes standing by together would write down whatever was said in a trial or judgment, with the sections distributed among them so that each scribe would take down a certain number of words in turn. In Rome, Tullius Tiro, a freedman of Cicero's, first devised such signs, but only for prepositions. 2. After him, Vipsanius, Philargius, and Aquila, another freedman of Maecenas, added others. Then, after the total number of signs had been collected, set in order, and increased in number, Seneca produced a work with five thousand signs. They are called 'signs' (*nota*) because they would designate (*notare*) words and syllables by predetermined characters and recall them to the knowledge (*notitia*) of readers. Those who have learned these signs are properly called stenographers (*notarius*) today.

xxiii. Signs used in law (De notis iuridicis) 1. In books of law certain letters stand for words; in this way the writing becomes quicker and shorter. So, for instance, *bonum factum* ("good deed") would be written as **BF**, *senatus*

24 The lines from Vergil refer to events described in more detail earlier in his poem.

consultum ("senate decree") as **SC**, *respublica* ("republic") as **RP**, *populus Romanus* ("Roman people") as **PR**, *dumtaxat* ("at least") as **DT**, *mulier* ("woman") by the upside-down letter **M**, *pupillus* ("male orphan") by a regular **P**, *pupilla* ("female orphan") by a ¶ with the top reversed, *caput* ("head") by a single **K**, *calumniae causa* ("case of false accusation") by two joined **KK**, *iudex esto* ("let the judge be present") by **IE**, *dolum malum* ("grievous fraud") by **DM**. 2. We find very many similar signs of this type in ancient books. Recent emperors have ordained that these legal signs be abolished from codes of law, because shrewd people were cleverly deceiving many ignorant people by means of these signs. So the emperors ordered that full words should be used to write the laws, so that they would cause no errors or ambiguities, but would clearly show what must be obeyed and what must be avoided.

xxiv. Military signs (De notis militaribus) 1. The ancients also used a special sign in the rosters that contained the names of soldiers; by this sign it could be seen how many of the soldiers were still alive and how many had fallen in battle. The sign tau, Τ, placed at the beginning of the line indicated a survivor, while theta, Θ, was placed by the name of each of the slain. Therefore this letter has a spear through the middle, which is the sign of death. Concerning which Persius says (*Satires* 4.13):

> And he is able to affix the black theta to crime.

2. But when they wanted to indicate ignorance (i.e. as to whether a soldier was alive or dead), they used the letter lambda, just as they would indicate death when they would put theta at the head of the line. There were also special signs for the payment of stipends.

xxv. Epistolary codes (De notis litterarum) 1. Our predecessors also used to establish between themselves epistolary codes, so that they might write back and forth with these signs whatever they wanted to write secretly to each other. Brutus is an example: he used to indicate with these codes what he was about to do, while everyone else was unaware of what the coded letters meant for him. 2. Caesar Augustus also said to his son: "Since innumerable things are constantly occurring about which we must write to each other, and which must be secret, let us have between us code-signs, if you will, such that, when something is to be written in code, we will replace each letter with the following letter in this way: *b* for *a*, *c* for *b*, and then the rest in the same way. For the letter *z*, we will return to a double *aa*." Some also write with the words reversed.

xxvi. Finger signals (De notis digitorum) 1. There are also some signals for the fingers, and for eyes as well, by which those at a distance can silently communicate with each other. This is the custom with the military: when the army is agreeing on an action they signal assent with their hands, because they cannot use their voices. Some, because they cannot speak a greeting, use a motion of the sword. 2. Ennius, speaking of a certain shameless woman, says (Naevius, *Comedies* 52):

> Tossing from hand to hand in a ring of players like a ball,
> she gives herself and makes herself common. She
> embraces one, nods to another, and her hand is
> occupied with yet another, she pinches the foot of
> another, gives to another a ring to look at, calls another
> by blowing a kiss, sings with another, and to still others
> gives signals with her finger.

And Solomon (Proverbs 6:13): "He winketh with the eyes, presseth with the foot, and speaketh with the finger."

xxvii. Orthography (De orthographia) 1. The Greek term 'orthography' (*orthographia*) is translated into Latin as 'correct writing' [for *orto* means "correctly" and *graphia* "writing"]. This discipline teaches how we should spell, for just as grammatical art treats of the inflection of parts of speech, so orthography treats of the skill of spelling. For instance, *ad* ("to"): when it is a preposition it takes the letter **D**, but when it is a conjunction, the letter **T** (i.e. *at*, "but"). 2. *Haud* ("scarcely"), when it is an adverb of negation, ends in the letter **D** and is aspirated initially. But when it is a [disjunctive] conjunction, it is written with the letter **T** and without aspiration (i.e. *aut*, "or"). 3. The preposition *apud* ("at") is written with a **D**, as in *ad patrem* ("at the father"), because our predecessors often used *apud* for *ad* [having removed two of the middle letters.][25]

25 Isidore is advising against the common spelling *aput*. Keil, the editor of Isidore's source here in Cassiodorus, proposes reading "as '*ad*' *praepositio*" ("as is the preposition 'at'") for "as in *ad patrem*." The bracketed addition of course has it backwards; *apud* supposedly adds two letters to *ad*.

4. But sometimes letters are correctly put in place of other letters. There is a certain kinship between the letters **B** and **P**, for we say *Pyrrhus* for *Burrus*. [The letters] **C** and **G** have a certain kinship. Thus while we say *centum* ("hundred") and *trecentos* ("three hundred"), after that we say *quadringentos* ("four hundred"), putting **G** for **C**. Similarly there is a kinship between **C** and **Q**, for we write *huiusce* ("of this") with **C** and *cuiusque* ("of each") with a **Q**. The preposition *cum* ("with") should be written with a **C**, but if it is a conjunction ("while"), then it should be written with a **Q**, for we say *quum lego* ("while I speak"). *Deus* ("God") is written with an **E** alone, but *daemon* ("demon") should be marked by the diphthong **AE**. 5. *Equus* ("horse"), which is the animal, should be written with **E** alone, but *aequus*, which means "just," should be written with the diphthong **AE**. *Exsul* ("exile") should be written with the **S** added, because an exile is someone who is 'outside the land' (*extra solum*). *Exultat* ("he exults) is better written without the letter **S**. For, since **X** is made up of **C** and **S**, why, when the sound is already contained in it, should a second one be added to it?

6. *Aequor* ("the level sea") should be written with a diphthong (i.e. not with **E** alone), because the name is made from *aqua* ("water"). 7. *Forsitan* ("perhaps") should be written with **N** at the end, because its full form is *si forte tandem* ("if by chance indeed"). 8. *Fedus*, that is, 'deformed,' should be written with an **E** alone; *foedus*, that is, 'pact,' should be written with the diphthong **OE**. 9. *Formosus* ("beautiful") is written without an **N** (i.e. not *formonsus*), because it is so called from *forma* ("beauty"), [or from *formus*, that is, 'warm'; for warmth of blood produces beauty]. *Gnatus* ("offspring"), that is, 'son,' should be written with a **G**, because it represents *generatus* ("begotten"). 10. **H**, which is the letter of aspiration, is joined in Latin only to vowels, as *honor*, *homo* ("man"), *humus* ("soil"), [*humilitas* ("humility")]. There is also aspiration with consonants, but only in Greek and Hebrew words. The interjections *heus* and *heu* should also be written with an **H**.

11. Some think that the letter **I** occurring between two vowels, as in *Troia*, *Maia*, should be written twice. Logic, however, does not permit this, for three vowels are never written in a single syllable. But the letter **I** occurring between two vowels does have a double sound (i.e. in metrical scansion). 12. The neuter pronoun *id* ("it") is written with a **D**, because the paradigm is *is, ea, id* ("he, she, it") since it makes the word *idem* ("the same"). But if it is a third person verb, it is identified by the letter **T**, because the paradigm is *eo, is, it* ("I go, you go, he/she/it goes") [since it makes the form] *itur* ("is traveled").[26]

13. The ancients placed the letter **K** first whenever an **A** followed, as in *kaput* ("head"), *kanna* ("reed"), *kalamus* ("cane"). But now only *Karthago* ("Carthage") and *kalendae* ("Calends") are written with this letter. However, all Greek words with a following vowel of any sort are written with a **K**. 14. *Laetus* ("joyful") is written with a diphthong, because 'joyfulness' (*laetitia*) is so called from 'wideness' (*latitudo*), the opposite of which is sorrow, which causes constriction. We sometimes use the letter **L** for the letter **D**, as in *latum* ("carried") for *datum* ("given") and *calamitatem* for *cadamitatem*, for the word 'calamity' is derived from 'falling' (*cadendum*).

15. There is a question about how *maxumus* or *maximus* ("greatest"), and any similar pairs, ought to be written. Varro relates that Caesar was accustomed to pronounce and write words of this type with an **I**. Hence, based on the authority of so great a man, it became the practice that *maximus*, *optimus* ("best"), *pessimus* ("worst") were written. 16. *Malo* ("I prefer") should be written with one **L**, because it is *magis volo* ("I wish rather"). But the infinitive *malle* ("to prefer") has two **L**s because it is *magis velle* ("to wish rather"). *Nolo* ("I am unwilling") also with one **L**, and *nolle* ("to be unwilling") with two, for *nolo* is *ne-volo* ("I do not want") and *nolle* is *ne-velle* ("not to want").

17. *Os*, if it means "face" or "bone" should be written with an **O** alone; if it refers to a person, an **H** should be put first (i.e. *hos*, plural accusative of the demonstrative). 18. *Ora* ("shores"), associated with boundaries, should be written with an **O**; *hora* ("hour"), associated with days, with an **H**. *Onus*, if it means "burden," should be written with an **O** alone; if it means "honor," written with the aspiration of an **H** (i.e. *honos*). 19. *Praepositio* ("preposition") and *praeterea* ("besides") should be written with diphthongs. Further, *pene* ("almost"), which is a conjunction, with **E**; *poena*, which is 'punishment' with **OE**.

20. The letter **Q** is correctly placed when it has the letter **U** immediately following, and they are followed by any other vowel or vowels, so that a single syllable

26 The forms that Isidore cites, *idem* and *itur*, are significant because they show the consonants in question when they are followed by a vowel. The *d*/*t* distinction, although evidently being lost in word-final position, was still preserved medially.

is made. The rest are written with **C**. 21. The pronoun *quae* ("which, who") should be written with an **A**, the conjunction -*que* ("and") without an **A**. 22. *Quid* ("what") is written with a **D** when it is a pronoun, and with a **T** when it is the verb whose paradigm appears simply, as *queo, quis, quit* ("I can, you can, he/she/it can"), and in the compound *nequeo, nequis, nequit* ("I cannot, you cannot, he/she/it cannot"). *Quod* ("that") when it is a pronoun should be written with **D**, when a numeric term with **T** (i.e. *quot*, "as many"), because *totidem* ("just as many") is written with **T**. *Quotidie* ("daily") should be written with **Q**, not **C** (i.e. *cotidie)*, since it is *quot diebus* ("on as many days").

23. The letter **R** has a connection with the letter **S**, for the ancients said *honos*, *labos*, *arbos*, but now we say *honor*, *labor*, *arbor* ("tree"). 24. *Sat* ("enough") must be written with **T**, because its complete form is *satis*. *Sed* ("but") must be written with a **D**, for *sed* was pronounced as *sedum* by the ancients; we have cut off the final two letters. 25. *Tantus* ("so much") as well as *quantus* ("as much") used to have the letter **M** in the middle, for it was from *quam* ("as") and *tam* ("so") – whence also *quamtitas*, *quamtus*, *tamtus*. 26. The interjection *vae* ("woe") should be written with an **A**, the conjunction *ve* ("or") without. 27. *Xp̄s* ("Christ"),[27] because it is Greek, should be written with an **X**, so also *xrisma* ("chrism"). 28. Only Greek words are written with the letters **Y** and **Z**, for although the letter **Z** expresses the sound in *iustitia* ("justice"), still, because the word is Latin, it must be written with a **T**.[28] So also *militia* ("military"), *malitia* ("malice"), *nequitia* ("worthlessness"), and other similar words. 29. Also, the practice among our predecessors for ambiguous words was this: when it has one meaning with a short vowel, and another with the same vowel lengthened, they would place a macron over the long syllable. For example, whether *populus* would mean 'the poplar tree' (i.e. *pōpulus*) or 'a multitude of people' would be distinguished by the macron. Moreover, whenever consonants were doubled, they placed a mark called *sicilicus* (i.e. a mark shaped like a sickle, Ↄ) above, as in the words *cella*, *serra*, *asseres*. Our predecessors did not use double letters, but they would write a *sicilicus* above, and by this mark the reader was alerted that the letter would be doubled.

xxviii. Analogy (De analogia) 1. The Greek term 'analogy' (*analogia*) is called in Latin the comparison (*conparatio*) or 'regular relation' (*proportio*) of similar things. Its force is that something doubtful is compared to a similar thing that is not doubtful, and uncertain things are explained by means of things that are certain. A comparison by analogy can be drawn from eight features: that is, from quality, from the comparative degree, from gender, from number, from form, from case, from endings with similar syllables, and from the similarity of tenses. 2. If any one of these is lacking, it is no longer analogy, that is, similarity, but rather anomaly, that is, outside the rule, such as *lepus* ("hare") and *lupus* ("wolf"). They correspond entirely, except that they differ in case endings, as we say *lupi* ("of the wolf"), but *leporis* ("of the hare"). Thus the regular pattern is that when you ask whether *trames* ("footpath") is masculine or feminine, it is similar to *limes* ("boundary-path") in its entire declension, and so must be masculine.

3. And again, if you think that *funis* ("rope") is of uncertain gender, it is similar to *panis* ("bread") in its entire declension, and so must be masculine. And again, from a comparison of the positive degree, so if you say *doctus* ("learned"), you will also say *magnus* ("big"), for they are both positives and similar to each other. This also occurs with diminutives. For example, *funiculus* ("small rope," with an obviously masculine ending) shows that *funis* ("rope") is masculine, just as *marmusculum* ("small block of marble," with an obviously neuter ending) shows that *marmor* ("marble") is of neuter gender. 4. For the gender of the principal form is usually also the gender of the diminutive. But this is not always so, as in *pistrinum* ("pounding-mill" – neuter), but *pistrilla* ("little pounding-mill" – feminine). Nevertheless, just as we ought to know the declension by comparison of the ending, [that is, from the primary form], we ought to infer the gender from the diminutive.

xxix. Etymology (De etymologia) 1. Etymology (*etymologia*) is the origin of words, when the force of a verb or a noun is inferred through interpretation. Aristotle called this σύμβολον (sign), and Cicero *adnotatio* (symbolization),[29] because by presenting their model it makes known (*notus*) the names and words for things.

27 The abbreviation derives from Greek chi-rho-sigma, from Χριστός.

28 The pronunciation at this time of *z* and of the Latin -*t*- in words like *militia* was /ts/. Compare Italian *milizia*, *malizia*.

29 Cicero, *Topics* 35, commonly reading *nota* for *adnotatio*.

For example, *flumen* ("river") is so called from *fluendum* ("flowing") because it has grown by flowing. 2. The knowledge of a word's etymology often has an indispensable usefulness for interpreting the word, for when you have seen whence a word has originated, you understand its force more quickly. Indeed, one's insight into anything is clearer when its etymology is known.[30] However, not all words were established by the ancients from nature; some were established by whim, just as we sometimes give names to our slaves and possessions according to what tickles our fancy. 3. Hence it is the case that etymologies are not to be found for all words, because some things received names not according to their innate qualities, but by the caprice of human will.

Etymologies of words are furnished either from their rationale (*causa*), as 'kings' (*rex*, gen. *regis*) from ['ruling' (*regendum*) and] 'acting correctly' (*recte agendum*); or from their origin, as 'man' (*homo*) because he is from 'earth' (*humus*), or from the contrary, as 'mud' (*lutum*) from 'washing' (*lavare*, ppl. *lutus*), since mud is not clean, and 'grove' (*lucus*), because, darkened by its shade, it is scarcely 'lit' (*lucere*). 4. Some are created by derivation from other words, as 'prudent' (*prudens*) from 'prudence' (*prudentia*); some from the sounds, as 'garrulous' (*garrulus*) from 'babbling sound' (*garrulitas*). Some are derived from Greek etymology and have a Latin declension, as 'woods' (*silva*), 'home' (*domus*). 5. Other words derive their names from names of places, cities, [or] rivers. In addition, many take their names from the languages of various peoples, so that it is difficult to discern their origin. Indeed, there are many foreign words unfamiliar to Latin and Greek speakers.

xxx. Glosses (De glossis) 1. 'Gloss' (*glossa*) receives its name from Greek, with the meaning 'tongue.' Philosophers call it *adverbum*, because it defines the utterance in question by means of one single word (*verbum*): in one word it declares what a given thing is, as *contiscere est tacere* ("'to fall still' is 'to be silent'"). 2. Again in (Vergil, *Aen.* 10.314):

Latus haurit apertum (gouges the exposed flank),

'gouges' (*haurit*, lit. "drinks") is glossed as 'pierces through' (*percutit*). And again, as when we gloss 'termination' (*terminus*) as 'end' (*finis*), and we interpret 'ravaged' (*populatus*) to be 'devastated' (*vastatus*), and in general when we make clear the meaning of one word by means of one other word.

xxxi. Differentiation (De differentiis)[31] A differentiation (*differentia*) is a type of definition, which writers on the liberal arts call 'concerning the same and the different.' Thus two things, of the kind that are confused with each other because of a certain quality that they have in common, are distinguished by an inferred difference, through which it is understood what each of the two is. For instance, one asks what is the difference between a 'king' and a 'tyrant': we define what each is by applying a differentiation, so that "a king is restrained and temperate, but a tyrant is cruel." Thus when the differentiation between these two has been given, then one knows what each of them is. And so on in the same way.

xxxii. Barbarism (De barbarismo) 1. A barbarism (*barbarismus*) is a word pronounced with a corrupted letter or sound: a corrupted letter, as in *floriet* (i.e. the incorrect future form of *florere*, "bloom"), when one ought to say *florebit* ("will bloom"); a corrupted sound, if the first syllable is lengthened and the middle syllable omitted in words like *latebrae* ("hiding places"), *tenebrae* ("shadows"). It is called 'barbarism' from barbarian (*barbarus*) peoples, since they were ignorant of the purity of the Latin language, for some groups of people, once they had been made Romans, brought to Rome their mistakes in language and customs as well as their wealth. 2. There is this difference between a barbarism and a borrowing (*barbarolexis*), that a barbarism occurs in a Latin word when it is corrupted, but when foreign words are brought into Latin speech, it is called 'borrowing.' Further, when a fault of language occurs in prose, it is called a barbarism, but when it occurs in meter, it is called a metaplasm (*metaplasmus*). 3. In addition, a barbarism can occur in written or spoken language. In written language it occurs in four ways: if someone adds, changes, transposes, or removes a letter in a word or syllable. In spoken language it may occur in length, intonation, aspiration, and other ways that will follow. 4. A barbarism by length is made if someone says a short syllable for a long, or a long for a short. A barbarism by intonation, if the accent

30 Fontaine 1981:100 notes that this sentence is adapted from a legal maxim cited by Tertullian, *De Fuge* 1.2: "Indeed, one's insight into anything is clearer when its author is known" – substituting *etymologia cognita* for *auctore cognito*.

31 Isidore wrote a separate treatise, *De differentiis*, on this subject.

is moved to another syllable. By aspiration, if the letter **H** is added where it should not be, or omitted where it should occur. 5. A barbarism by hiatus, whenever a verse is cut off in speaking before it is completed, or whenever a vowel follows a vowel, as in *Musai Aonides*.[32] Barbarisms also occur by motacism, [iotacism], and lambdacism. 6. A motacism (*motacismus*) occurs whenever a vowel follows the letter **M**, as *bonum aurum* ("good gold), *iustum amicum* ("just friend"), and we avoid this fault either by suspending the letter **M**, or by leaving it out.[33] 7. Iotacism (*iotacismus*) occurs in words with the sound of the letter iota doubled, as *Troia*, *Maia*, where the pronunciation of these letters should be weak, so that they seem to sound like one iota, not two. 8. Lambdacism (*labdacismus*) happens if two **L**s are pronounced instead of one, as Africans do, as in *colloquium* instead of *conloquium*, or whenever we pronounce a single **L** too weakly, or a double **L** too strongly. This is backwards, for we ought to pronounce a single **L** strongly and a double **L** weakly. 9. *Conlisio* occurs whenever the end of the last syllable is the beginning of the next, as in *matertera* ("mother's sister").[34]

xxxiii. Solecisms (De soloecismis) 1. A solecism (*soloecismus*) is an unsuitable construction made up of more than one word, just as a barbarism is the corruption of a single word. Thus a solecism is a group of words that are not joined by the correct rule, as if someone were to say *inter nobis* ("between us," with *nobis* in the wrong case) instead of *inter nos*, or *date veniam sceleratorum* ("grant forgiveness of sinners") instead of *sceleratis* ("to sinners"). 2. It is called solecism from the Cilicians, who came from the city Soloe, now called Pompeiopolis; when, while dwelling among other peoples, they mixed their own and other languages incorrectly and incongruously, they gave their name to solecism. Whence those who speak like this are said to commit solecisms.

3. Among poets, a solecism is called a schema (*schema*) whenever it is committed in the verse due to the demands of the meter. But when no such demand is present, it remains a fault of solecism. 4. A solecism occurs in two manners: either in parts of speech, or in accidence. It occurs in parts of speech, if we use one part of speech instead of another, for instance, if we join prepositions to adverbs. It occurs in accidence, that is, in those things that are connected to the parts of speech, as, for example through qualities, genders and numbers, forms, and cases. Solecism may be committed in all of these, as Donatus has explained (ed. Keil 4.393). 5. It is committed in many ways besides these, for Lucilius spoke of one hundred kinds of solecisms, all of which anyone who is eager to obey the rules of speaking correctly ought to avoid rather than commit.

xxxiv. Faults (De vitiis) 1. Grammarians call the things that we ought to be wary of when we speak 'faults' (*vitium*). And these are: barbarism, solecism, acyrology, *cacenphaton*, and the rest. 2. A barbarism is the corruption of a single word, [as if someone were to lengthen the third syllable in *ignoscere*]. 3. A solecism is a faulty construction of words [as if someone were to say *inter hominibus* ("between men," with *hominibus* in the wrong case) instead of *inter homines*]. 4. Acyrology (*acyrologia*) is the use of an inappropriate word, as (Lucan, *Civil War* 2.15):

> Let the fearful one hope.

To be strictly correct, however, a fearful one dreads, and does not hope. Also (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 5.287):

> *Gramineo in campo* (In a field of grass).

It is correct to refer to a field as 'grassy' (*graminosus*), not 'made of grass' (*gramineus*). 5. *Cacemphaton* is speech which is obscene or sounds disorderly. Obscene as (Vergil, *Aen.* 1.579):

> *His animum arrecti dictis* (Aroused in their hearts by these words).[35]

Disorderly, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 2.27):

> *iuvat ire et Dorica castra* (And it is a pleasure to go to the Doric camps).

For it is poor composition to begin with the same syllable with which the preceding word has ended.

6. Pleonasm (*pleonasmos*) is the superfluous addition of a single word, as (Vergil, *Geo.* 2.1):

> (So far, the cultivation of fields and the stars of the sky).

32 Hiatus is the suspension of vowel elision where it would be expected.

33 "Suspending the letter **M**" probably means a loss of the final *m* with accompanying nasalization of the preceding vowel. In classical metrics, a final *m* did not inhibit elision of vowels, so that *bonum est* scans as two syllables.

34 Early editors produce better sense here with the reading *mater terra*, "mother earth."

35 *Arrigere* (ppl. *arrectus*) can be used in a sexual sense.

For stars are in no other place than in the sky. 7. Perissology (*perissologia*) is the superfluous addition of several words, as (Deuteronomy 33:6): "Let Ruben live, and not die . . ." – since to live is nothing other than not to die. 8. Macrology (*macrologia*) is speaking at length, and including unnecessary matters as (Livy, cited in Quintilian, *Inst. or.* 8.3.53): "The legates, not having achieved peace, returned back home whence they had come." 9. A tautology (*tautologia*) is a repetition of the same thing as (Vergil, *Aen.* 1.546):

> If the fates preserve the man, if he is nourished by the etherial air, and does not yet recline in the cruel shades . . .

For everything that is repeated has the same theme, but is delivered with a crowd of words. 10. Ellipsis (*eclipsis*) is a gap in speech, in which necessary words are lacking, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 4.138):

> Whose quiver out of gold . . . ,

for the verb 'was' is lacking.

11. *Tapinosis* is a lowering, reducing the state of a great subject by words as (Vergil, *Aen.* 1.118):

> Here and there men appear, swimming in the vast whirlpool.

For he uses 'whirlpool' (*gurges*) instead of 'ocean' (*mare*). 12. *Cacosyntheton* is a faulty arrangement of words as (Vergil, *Aen.* 9.609):

> *Versaque iuvencum*
> *terga fatigamus hasta*
> (And we goad the flanks of our bullocks with reversed spears).[36]

13. *Amphibolia* is ambiguous speech that occurs with the accusative case, as in this answer of Apollo to Pyrrhus (Ennius, *Annals* 179):

> *Aio te , Aeacida, Romanos vincere posse*
> (I say that you, scion of Aeacus, can conquer the Romans – or – I say that the Romans can conquer you, scion of Aeacus).

In this verse it is not clear whom he has designated as the victor. 14. It can also occur due to a distinction that is not clear, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 1.263):

> *Bellum ingens geret Italia*
> (Italy will wage an immense war – or – Immense Italy will wage war).

The distinction is unclear, whether it is 'immense war' or 'immense Italy.' 15. This also occurs due to a common verb,[37] as *Deprecatur Cato, calumniatur Cicero, praestolatur Brutus, dedignatur Antonius* ("Cato denounces, Cicero slanders, Brutus expects, Anthony scorns"; or, "Cato is denounced," etc.). In this ambiguity it is not disclosed whether these people denounce or slander others, or others denounce or slander them. 16. It also occurs with homonyms, in which one word has many meanings, such as *acies* ("edge, keenness, front line"), when you do not add 'of the sword, of the eyes, of the army.'

xxxv. Metaplasm (De metaplasmis) 1. Metaplasm (*metaplasmus*) in the Greek language is called 'transformation' (*transformatio*) in Latin. It occurs in a single word due to the requirements of meter and to poetic license; its varieties are as follows. 2. *Prothesis* is an addition to the beginning of a word, as [*gnatus*, for *natus* ("born"), *tetulit* for *tulit* ("carried")]. *Epenthesis* is an addition in the middle of the word, as [(Vergil, *Aen.* 3.409):

> *Maneant in relligione nepotes*
> (May the descendants continue in the religious duties),

instead of *religione*,[38] and *relliquias* for *reliquias* ("relics"), *induperator* for *inperator* ("ruler")]. 3. *Paragoge* is an addition at the end of the word, as [*admittier* (i.e. the archaic middle or passive form) for *admitti* ("to be admitted"), *magis* for *mage* ("more"), and *potestur* for *potest* ("is able")]. *Aphaeresis* is an excision from the beginning of the word, as *temno* for *contemno* ("despise"). Syncope (*syncope*) is an excision from the middle, as *forsan* for *forsitan* ("perhaps"). Apocope (*apocope*) is an excision from the end, as *sat* for *satis* ("enough"). 4. *Ectasis* is an improper lengthening, as [(Vergil, *Aen.* 1.499):

> *Exercet Dīana choros* (Diana oversees the dancers),[39]

and (Vergil, *Aen.* 1.2):

> *Ītaliam fato* (. . . to Italy, by fate . . .),

36 Scarcely a fault, but the adjective and noun *versa hasta* ("with reversed spear") might have been placed closer together.

37 That is, a verb with both an active and a passive sense; see ix.7 above.

38 The first vowel of *religio* was regularly short in Isidore's time, but the addition of a consonant makes it long by position, for the sake of meter.

39 The first syllable of *Diana*, originally long but normally short, is taken as long in this line for the sake of meter.

while *Italiam* ought to be said with short syllables.]

Systole is an improper shortening, as [(Vergil, *Aen.* 6.773):

> *urbemque Fidenam* (and the city of Fidena),

where the first syllable ought to be long (i.e. *Fīdenam*). As also when we say *Orion* with short syllables, when it should be said with lengthened ones]. Diaeresis (*diaeresis*) is the splitting of one syllable into two, as [(Vergil, *Aen.* 9.26):

> *dives pictaï vestis* (rich with embroidered clothes)

instead of *pictae*, and (Ennius, *Annals* 33):

> *Albaï longaï* (of Alba Longa)

for *Albae longae.*] 5. *Episynaloephe* is the slurring of two [syllables] into one, as [*Phæthon* for *Phaëthon*, *Neri* for *Nereï*, and *æripedem* for *aëripedem*].

Synaloepha (*synaloephe*) is the combining of vowels from adjacent words, as [(Vergil, *Aen.* 9.1):

> *Atque ea diversa penitus dum parte geruntur*
> (And while those things were happening far away)].

6. Ellipsis (*eclipsis*) is the combining of consonants with vowels as [(Vergil, *Aen.* 1.3):

> *Multum ille et terris iactatus et alto*
> (Much tossed about on lands and sea)].

Antithesis is the substitution of one letter for another, as [*inpete* for *impetu* ("with a rush"), *olli* for *illi* ("they")]. Metathesis (*metathesis*) is the transposition of letters, as [*Thymbre* for *Thymber*, *Evandre* for *Evander*]. 7. Between the barbarism and the figure, that is, a polished Latin utterance, is the metaplasm, which may occur as a fault in speech in a single word. Likewise, between the solecism and the schema, that is, a polished construction of words, is the figure, which may become a fault in speech in a group of words. Therefore metaplasms and schemas are midway, and distinguished by skill and by lack of skill.[40] They also are used as ornament.

xxxvi. Schemas (De schematibus) 1. Schemas (*schema*, plural *schemata*) are translated from Greek into Latin as 'figures of speech' (*eloquium figurae*), which occur in words and phrases in various forms of speaking, for the sake of ornamenting speech. While there are many of these according to the grammarians, the following are met with. 2. Prolepsis (*prolempsis*) is an anticipation, where those things that ought to follow are placed first, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 12.161):

> *Interea reges ingenti mole, Latinus . . .*
> (In the meantime, the kings, in mighty pomp, as Latinus . . .).

It ought to say, *Interea reges ingenti mole* ("In the meantime, the kings in mighty pomp"), and immediately add what logically follows (12.169), *procedunt castris* ("proceed to camp"), and then say *Latinus . . .*, etc. But an anticipation of subject has been made for the sake of ornament, and those things which ought to follow the statement about the kings are interposed for seven verses, and after that 'proceed to camp' is added. It is therefore an anticipation, because what ought to follow is put first. 3. Zeugma (*zeugma*) is a phrase where several thoughts are encompassed in one word. There are three types, for the word which links the phrases is either placed first, last, or in the middle. Placed first as (Lucilius 139):

> *Vertitur oenophoris fundus, sententia nobis*
> (The bottom is inverted by the wineholders, the sentence by us).

In the middle, as (Ennius, *Annals* 329):

> *Graecia Sulpicio sorti data, Gallia Cottae*
> (Greece was given by lot to Sulpicius, Gaul to Cotta).

At the end as in (Terence, *Andria* 68):

> *Namque hoc tempore*
> *obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit*
> (For in our times, obsequiousness does friends, and truth does hatred beget).

4. *Hypozeuxis* is the figure opposite to the one above, where there is a separate phrase for each individual meaning, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 10.149):

> *Regem adit et regi memorat nomenque genusque*
> (He approaches the king and tells the king both his name and family).

5. Syllepsis (*syllempsis*) is the use of an expression completed by a singular verb with dissimilar or plural phrases, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 1.553):

> *Sociis et rege recepto*

40 It appears that "metaplasms and figures" would better fit the context than "metaplasms and schemas."

(“When companions and king be found”; *recepto* is singular),

or a singular phrase is supplied with a plural verb, as (Vergil, *Ecl.* 1.80):

Sunt nobis mitia poma,
. . . et pressi copia lactis
(There are for us ripe fruits, . . . and an abundance of cheese).

For he said *sunt* (“are”) above. He ought to say this: *est et pressi copia lactis* (“and there is an abundance of cheese”). 6. Syllepsis occurs not only with parts of speech, but also with things incidental to the parts of speech. Where one is used for many, and many for one, that is syllepsis. One for many, as this (Vergil, *Aen.* 2.20):

And they fill the belly with an armed soldier,

when the Trojan horse was not filled with one soldier, but many. And again, many for one as in the Gospel (Matthew 27:44): “The thieves, that were crucified with him, reproached him,” where instead of merely the one, both of them are represented as having blasphemed.

7. Anadiplosis (*anadiplosis*) occurs when a following verse begins with the same word that ended the previous verse, as in this (Vergil, *Ecl.* 8.55):

Certent et cygnis ululae, sit Tityrus Orpheus,
Orpheus in silvis, inter delphinas Arion
(And let the screech-owls compete with the swans, let Tityrus be Orpheus, an Orpheus in the woods, an Arion among the dolphins).

8. Anaphora (*anaphora*) is the repetition of the same word at the beginning of several verses, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 3.157):

Nos te Dardania incensa tuaque arma secuti,
nos tumidum sub te permensi classibus aequor
(We followed you and your troops from burning Dardania, we traversed the swollen sea in a fleet under your command).

9. *Epanaphora* is the repetition of a word at the beginning of each phrase in a single verse, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 7.759):

Te nemus Anguitiae, vitrea te Focinus unda,
te liquidi flevere lacus
(For you the forest of Anguitia wept, for you Lake Fucinus with its glassy wave, for you the clear lakes).

10. *Epizeuxis* is a doubling of words with a single sense, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 4.660):

Sic, sic iuvat ire per umbras
(Thus, thus it is a joyful thing to go through the shades).

11. *Epanalepsis* is a repetition of the same word at the beginning and end of the verse, as in this (Juvenal, *Satires* 14.139):

Crescit amor nummi quantum ipsa pecunia crescit
(The love of money grows as wealth itself grows).

12. Paronomasia (*paronomasia*) is the use of nearly the same word with a different meaning, as in this: *Abire an obire te convenit*? (“Are you to pass on or to pass away?”), that is, ‘to become an exile’ or ‘to die.’ 13. *Schesis onomaton* is a group of linked nouns, joined in a kind of parade, as (cf. Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things* 5.1192):

Nubila, nix, grando, procellae, fulmina, venti
(Clouds, snow, hail, tempests, lightning, winds).

14. Alliteration (*paromoeon*) is a group of words beginning with the same letter; such a sort is found in Ennius (*Annals* 109):

O Tite tute Tati tibi tanta tyranne tulisti
(O Titus Tatius, you tyrant, you yourself have brought such things on yourself).

But Vergil moderates this well, when he uses this figure not through the entire verse, like Ennius, but sometimes only at the beginning of a verse, as in this (*Aen.* 1.295):

Saeva sedens super arma (Sitting over his savage weapons),

and at other times at the end, as (*Aen.* 3.183):

Sola mihi tales casus Cassandra canebat
(Cassandra alone foretold to me such calamities).

15. *Homoeoptoton* occurs when many words in the same grammatical case are used, as in this (Vergil, *Aen.* 12.903):

Sed neque currentem, sed nec cognoscit euntem,
tollentemque manu saxumque inmane moventem
(But he does not know (himself) while running or walking, and lifting and moving the huge rock with his hand).

16. Homoeoteleuton (*homoeon teleuton*) occurs when several verbs terminate in the same way, as (Cicero, *Against Catiline* 2.1): *abiit, abcessit, evasit, erupit* (“he left, he walked off, he escaped, he burst forth”). 17. Polyptoton (*polyptoton*) occurs when a sentence is varied with different grammatical cases, as (Persius, *Satires* 3.84):

> *Ex nihilo nihilum, ad nihilum nil posse reverti*
> (Nothing from nothing, nothing can be returned to nothing)

and (Persius, *Satires* 5.79):

> *Marci Dama. – Papae! –Marco spondente, recusas? . . .*
> *Marcus dixit. – Ita est. – Adsigna, Marce, tabellas.*
> (Marcus Dama: What? although Marcus stands surety, do you refuse? . . . Marcus has said it, it must be so. Make out the tablets, Marcus.)[41]

18. *Hirmos* is a phrase of continuous speech reserving its sense until the very end as in (Vergil, *Aen.* 1.159):

> *Est in secessu longo locus, insula portum . . .*
> (There is a place in a long inlet, an island (making) a harbor . . .),

and so on. Here the sense proceeds at length up to this point (1.165):

> *Horrentique atrum nemus inminet umbris*
> (A black grove looms with bristling shade).[42]

19. Polysyndeton (*polysyntheton*) is a passage linked by many conjunctions, as (Vergil, *Geo.* 3.344):

> *Tectumque, laremque,*
> *armaque, Amicleumque canem*
> (the house and the Lares and the weapons and the Amiclean dog).

20. *Dialyton*, or asyndeton (*asyntheton*), is a figure that is composed in the opposite way, simply and freely without conjunctions, as *venimus, vidimus, placuit* ("we came, we saw, it was good"). 21. Antithesis (*antitheton*) occurs where opposites are placed against each other and bring beauty to the sentence, as this (Ovid, *Met.* 1.19):

> *Frigida pugnabant calidis, humentia siccis:*
> *mollia cum duris, sine pondere habentia pondus*
>
> (Cold things battled with hot ones, moist with dry, soft with hard, those having weight with the weightless).

22. *Hypallage* occurs whenever words are taken in the opposite way as (Vergil, *Aen.* 3.61):

> *Dare classibus Austros* (Give the east wind to the fleet),

when we should give the ships to the winds, not the winds to the ships.

xxxvii. Tropes (De tropis) 1. The grammarians designate tropes (*tropus*) with a Greek name; they are translated into Latin as 'modes of speech' (*modus locutionum*). They shift from their proper meaning to a similar sense that is less strict. It is most difficult to record the names of all of them, but Donatus has written down thirteen to be handed down for use (ed. Keil 4.399–402).
2. Metaphor (*metaphora*) is an adopted transference of some word, as when we say "cornfields ripple," "the vines put forth gems," although we do not find waves and gems in these things; in these phrases, terms have been transferred from elsewhere. But these expressions, and others that also use tropes, are veiled in figural garb with respect to what should be understood, so that they may exercise the reader's understanding, and lest the subjects grow common from being stripped bare and obvious. 3. And metaphors occur in four ways: from animate to animate, as (anon., Courtney fr. 6):

> He mounted winged horses;

speaking metaphorically it associates the wings of a bird with a quadruped. Also (Vergil, *Ecl.* 6.80):

> With what running (i.e. with what flight) she (i.e. Philomela transformed into a bird) sought deserted places;

this associates the running of a quadruped with a winged creature. From the inanimate to the inanimate, as (anon., Courtney fr. 4):

> The pine-wood plows the sea, the lofty keel cuts a furrow;

this associates the use of land with water, since plowing and cutting a furrow have to do with the land, not the sea. 4. From inanimate to animate, as "blooming youth"; this associates inanimate flowers with youth, which is living. From animate to inanimate, as (anon., Courtney fr. 5; cited from Augustine, *Christian Doctrine* 3.7.11):

> You, father Neptune, whose white temples, wreathed with crashing brine, resound; to whom the great Ocean flows forth as your eternal beard, and in whose hair rivers wander.

For 'beard,' 'temples,' and 'hair' pertain not to the Ocean but to men. 5. In this way, some terms for things are transferred very elegantly from one kind to another for

41 The received text of Persius begins the quotation with *Marcus*, not the genitive *Marci*, which is unintelligible in context.
42 The translation reflects the received text of Vergil, as well as some Isidore manuscripts, with *umbra*, not (unintelligible) *umbris*.

the sake of beauty, so that the speech may be greatly adorned. Metaphor is either of one direction, as 'the cornfields are rippling' – for you cannot say 'the ripples are cornfielding' – or it is an *antistropha*, that is reciprocal, as *remigium alarum* ("oarage of wings"; Vergil, *Aen.* 6.19). We can speak of both wings (i.e. oars) of ships and oarages (i.e. beatings) of wings.

6. Catachresis (*catachresis*) is a name applied to an unrelated thing. And this differs from a metaphor in that metaphor enlarges on something having a name, while catachresis makes use of an unrelated name because it does not have one of its own; as (Vergil, *Geo.* 2.131):

> And most similar to a laurel with respect to its (i.e. a tree's) face,

and (Vergil, *Aen.* 5.157):

> . . . Centaur (i.e. a ship's name); now the two are carried as one with brows (i.e. bows) united, and they plow the salt seas with long keels.

Now a 'face' and a 'brow' pertain only to animals and men. And if the poet had not applied this name to a ship, he would not have had a word that he could use which was appropriate for that part.

7. Metalepsis (*metalempsis*) is a trope designating what follows from what precedes it, as (Persius, *Satires* 3.11):

> The hand of this sheet came, and a knotty reed pen.

For by 'hand,' words are meant, and by 'reed pen,' letters are meant.

8. Metonymy (*metonymia*) is a designation (*transnominatio*) that is transferred from one meaning to another similar meaning. It is made in many ways. For instance, it expresses what is contained by what contains, as "the theater applauds," "the meadows low," when in the first instance people applaud and in the second, cows low. In the opposite way, it also expresses that which contains by that which is contained, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 2.311):

> Now the nearby Ucalegon burns,

when it is not Ucalegon (i.e. a Trojan citizen), but his house, that burns. 9. Also, it expresses what has been discovered by the discoverer, as (Terence, *Eunuch* 732);

> Without Ceres and Liber, Venus grows cold,

and (Vergil, *Aen.* 9.76):

> Vulcan sends mingled embers to the stars.

For by Ceres, the discoverer of grain, he means "bread"; by Liber, the discoverer of the vine, "wine"; by Venus, "desire"; and by Vulcan, "fire." In the opposite way, it expresses the discoverer by the discovery as (Plautus, fr. 159):

> We pray to wine (for the god is present here),

in place of 'Liber,' who, according to the Greeks, invented wine. 10. Also, metonymy expresses that which is caused by its cause, as 'sluggish cold,' because it makes people sluggish, and 'pale fear,' since it makes people pale. In the opposite way, it expresses the cause by that which is caused, as (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 5.817):

> The father yokes the horses and puts foaming bits made of gold on them, spirited as they are.

He said 'foaming bits,' although they themselves certainly do not make foam, but rather the horse that wears them sprinkles them with scattered foam.

11. Antonomasia (*antonomasia*) is a trope applied for a name, that is, instead of a name, as 'begotten of Maia' for Mercury. This trope occurs in three manners: from the spirit, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 5.407):

> And the large-souled son of Anchises;

from the body as (Vergil, *Aen.* 3.619):

> That lofty one;

from something extrinsic, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 1.475):

> Unlucky boy, no match for Achilles when he met him.

12. An epithet (*epitheton*) is in addition to the name, for it is placed before its noun, as 'bountiful Ceres,' and (Vergil, *Geo.* 1.470):

> Unclean dogs and ominous birds.

There is this difference between antonomasia and an epithet, that antonomasia is used in place of a name, while an epithet is never used without the name. With these two tropes we may revile someone, or describe him, or praise him.

13. Synecdoche (*synecdoche*) is the conceit by which the whole is understood from the part, or the part from the whole. With it a genus is designated by its species, and a species by its genus [while species is the part and genus is the whole]. The part is understood from the whole, as in (Vergil, *Aen.* 6.311):

> As many as the birds that flock together, when the frigid year chases them to sea.

Indeed, it is not the whole of year that is frigid, but only part of the year, that is, winter. In the opposite way, the whole is designated by the part, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 2.256):

> When the royal helm had raised the torches,

when it is not merely the helm, but the ship, and not the ship, but those in the ship, and not all of those in the ship, but a single one who brings forth the torches.

14. Onomatopoeia (*onomatopoeia*) is a word fashioned to imitate the sound of jumbled noise as the *stridor* ("creaking") of hinges, the *hinnitus* ("whinnying") of horses, the *mugitus* ("lowing") of cows, the *balatus* ("bleating") of sheep. 15. Periphrasis (*periphrasis*) is a circumlocution (*circumloquium*), when a single topic is expressed with many words, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 1.387):

> He plucks the vital airs.

A single meaning is expressed by this combination of words, that is, "he lives." This trope is twofold, for either it splendidly brings forth the truth, or it avoids foulness by indirection. It splendidly brings forth the truth in (Vergil, *Aen.* 4.584 and 9.459):

> And now, early Aurora was scattering new light on the earth, leaving the saffron bed of Tithonus.

He means, "now it grew light," or, "it was daybreak." It avoids foulness by indirection, as in (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 8.405):

> And he sought what was pleasing, relaxed in his wife's embrace.

By this indirection he avoids obscenity, and decently expresses the act of sexual intercourse.

16. Hyperbaton (*hyperbaton*) is a transposition (*transcensio*), when a word or sentence is changed in its order. There are five types of this: *anastrophe*, hysteron proteron, parenthesis, tmesis, and synthesis. *Anastrophe* is a reversed order of words as *litora circum* ("the shores around"; Vergil, *Aen.* 3.75), instead of *circum litora.* 17. Hysteron proteron (*hysteron proteron*) is a sentence with the order changed, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 3.662):

> Then he touched the deep waves, and came to the water.

For he came to the water first, and thus touched the waves. 18. Parenthesis (*parenthesis*) occurs when we interrupt our sentence, so that the sentence remains entire when this interruption is removed from the middle, as (Vergil *Aen.* 1.643):

> Aeneas – for his paternal love could not permit his mind to rest – quickly sends Achates to the ships.

[For this is the order: "Aeneas quickly sends Achates."] And that which intervenes is the parenthesis. 19. Tmesis (*tmesis*) is a division of one word by the interposition of other words, as (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 1.412):

> *Multum nebulae <u>circum</u> dea <u>fudit</u> amictum*
> (The goddess <u>surrounded</u> (them) with a thick mantle of mist),

instead of *circumfudit.* 20. Synthesis (*synthesis*) occurs when words from every part of the thought are jumbled up, as in this (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 2.348):

> *Iuvenes, fortissima frustra*
> *pectora, si vobis audendi extrema cupido est*
> *certa sequi, quae sit rebus fortuna videtis.*
> *Excessere omnes aditis arisque relictis*
> *dii, quibus inperium hoc steterat; succurritis urbi*
> *incensae; moriamur et in media arma ruamus.*
>
> (Young men, in vain your stout hearts; if your desire for daring the final battle is fixed on following me, you see what the outcome of the matter will be. They have all left the abandoned shrines and altars, the gods on whom this empire was established; you are helping a burning city; let us die and rush into the midst of the fray).

For the order is like this: "Young men with stout hearts, in vain you would be helping a burning city, because the gods have left. So if you firmly wish to follow me as I attempt a final battle, let us rush into the midst of the fray and die." 21. Hyperbole (*hyperbole*) is a loftiness that exceeds credibility, beyond what can be believed, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 3.423):

> She strikes the stars with a wave,

and (Vergil, *Aen.* 1.107):

> It lays open the sea bottom between the waves.

In this way something is magnified beyond belief; yet it does not stray from the path of expressing truth, even though the words go beyond what is referred to, so that the intention may seem to be of one speaking, not of one deceiving. By this trope something may not only be magnified, but also diminished. Magnified as in 'faster than

the East Wind'; diminished as in 'softer than a feather,' 'harder than a rock.'

22. Allegory (*allegoria*) is 'other-speech' (*alieniloquium*), for it literally says one thing, and another thing is understood, as in (Vergil, *Aen.* 1.184):

> He saw three stags wandering on the shore,

where either the three leaders of the Punic wars are meant, or the three Punic wars themselves. Also in the *Bucolics* (*Ecl.* 3.71):

> I have sent ten golden apples,

that is, ten pastoral eclogues to Augustus. This trope has many types, seven of which stand out: irony, antiphrasis, riddle, *charientismos*, *paroemia*, sarcasm, *astysmos*.

23. Irony (*ironia*) is an expression wherein by one's tone of voice the meaning is understood as the contrary. Thus with this trope something is said cleverly as an accusation or as an insult, as in this (Vergil, *Aen.* 1.140):

> Your home, East wind; let Aeolus take pride in that palace, and rule in that closed prison of winds.

And yet in what way is it a palace, if it is a prison? This is answered by the tone of voice, for the normal tone of voice applies to 'prison' and the irony is in 'take pride in' and 'palace.' And so, by a different tone of voice, the entire thing is made known through a display of irony, by which one derides by praising.

24. Antiphrasis (*antiphrasis*) is a term to be understood from its opposite, as 'grove' (*lucus*) because it lacks light (*lux*, gen. *lucis*), due to the excessive shade of the forest; and 'ghosts' (*manes*, from old Latin *mani*, "benevolent ones"), that is, 'mild ones' – although they are actually pitiless – and 'moderate ones' – although they are terrifying and savage (*immanes*); and the *Parcae* and *Eumenides* (lit. in Greek "the gracious ones"), that is, the Furies, because they spare (*parcere*) and are gracious to no one. By this trope also people call dwarves by Atlas's name, and call the blind 'the seers,' and commonly, call Ethiopians 'the silver ones.' 25. Between irony and antiphrasis there is this difference: that irony expresses what one intends to be understood through the tone of voice alone, as when we say to someone doing everything poorly, "You're doing a *good* job," while antiphrasis signifies the contrary not through the tone of voice, but only through its words, whose source has the opposite meaning.

26. A riddle (*aenigma*) is an obscure question that is difficult to solve unless it is explained, as this (Judges 14:14): "Out of the eater came forth food, and out of the strong came forth sweetness," meaning that a honeycomb was taken from the mouth of a (dead) lion. Between allegory and the riddle there is this difference, that the force of allegory is twofold and figuratively indicates one subject under the guise of other subjects, while a riddle merely has an obscure meaning, and its solution is hinted at through certain images.

27. *Charientismos* is a trope by which harsh things are made more pleasing in speech, as when someone asking, "Has anyone missed us?" is answered, "Good Fortune missed you." From this it is understood that no one has missed us. 28. *Paroemia* is a proverb appropriate to the subject or situation. To the subject, as in, "You kick against the pricks," when resisting adversity is meant. To the situation, as in "the wolf in the story": peasants say that a person would lose his voice if he saw a wolf in front of him. Thus the proverb, "the wolf in the story," is said to someone who suddenly falls silent. 29. Sarcasm (*sarcasmos*) is hostile ridicule with bitterness, as (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 2.547):

> Therefore you will report these things, and you will go as a messenger of my father to the son of Peleus; remember to tell him of my sorry deeds and that Neoptolemus is degenerate.[43]

30. The opposite of this is *astysmos*, pleasantry without anger, as in this (Vergil, *Ecl.* 3.90):

> Whoever does not hate Bavius, may he love your songs, Maevius, and may he likewise yoke foxes and milk billy-goats.

That is, whoever does not hate Bavius is doomed to like Maevius – for Maevius and Bavius were terrible poets, and Vergil's enemies. Therefore, whoever loves them would do things contrary to nature, that is, he would yoke foxes and milk billy-goats.

31. *Homoeosis*, which is translated in Latin as similitude (*similitudo*), is that by which the description of some less known thing is made clear by something better known which is similar to it. There are three types: icon, parabola, and paradigm, that is, image, comparison, and

43 The received text of Vergil, with *genitori* rather than *genitoris*, means "to my father, the son of Peleus."

model. 32. Icon (*icon*, cf. εἰκών, "image") is an image (*imago*), when we attempt to explain the shape of a thing from a similar kind as (Vergil, *Aen.* 4.558):

> Similar to Mercury in all respects: in voice and color and blonde hair and graceful youthful limbs.

Thus similarity with regard to appearance is fitting for the one whose character is introduced. 33. Parabola (*parabola*) is a comparison (*comparatio*) from dissimilar things, as (Lucan, *Civil War* 1.205):

> Like a lion seen hard by in the fields of heat-bearing Libya, he beset the enemy,

where he compares Caesar to a lion, making a comparison, not from his own kind, but from another. 34. Paradigm (*paradigma*) is a model (*exemplum*) of someone's word or deed, or something that is appropriate to the thing that we describe either from its similar or from its dissimilar nature, thus: "Scipio perished at Hippo as bravely as did Cato at Utica."

35. A comparison (*similitudo*) may be made in three ways: from an equal, from a greater, from a lesser. From an equal (Vergil, *Aen.* 1.148):

> And just as often when rebellion has broken out in a great populace.

From a greater to a lesser (Lucan, *Civil War* 1.151):

> Just as lightning is forced down by the winds through the clouds.

And from a lesser to a greater (Vergil, *Aen.* 6.119):

> If Orpheus could summon the spirit of his wife, relying on a Thracian cithara and its melodious strings,

as if he meant, relying on a small unimportant object; that is, if he relies on a cithara, I rely on my piety.

xxxviii. Prose (De prosa) 1. Prose (*prosa*) is an extended discourse, unconstrained by rules of meter. The ancients used to say that prose is extended (*productus*) and straightforward (*rectus*).[44] Whence Varro in his work on Plautus says that *prosis lectis* (read as prose) means 'straightforwardly,' and thus a discourse that is not inflected by meter, but is straightforward, is called prose in that it extends (*producere*) directly. Others say that prose is so called because it is profuse (*profusus*), or because it 'rushes forth' (*proruere*) and runs expansively with no set limit to it. 2. Moreover, for the Greeks as well as the Romans, the interest in poems was far more ancient than in prose, for at first all things used to be set in verse, and enthusiasm for prose flourished later. Among the Greeks, Pherecydes of Syros was first to write with unmetered speech, and among the Romans, Appius Caecus, in his oration against Pyrrhus, was first to use unmetered speech. Straightway after this, others competed by means of eloquence in prose.

xxxix. Meters (De metris) 1. Meters (*metrum*) are so called because they are bounded by the fixed measures (*mensura*) and intervals of feet, and they do not proceed beyond the designated dimension of time – for measure is called μέτρον in Greek. 2. Verses are so called because when they are arranged in their regular order into feet they are governed within a fixed limit through segments that are called caesurae (*caesum*) and members (*membrum*). Lest these segments roll on longer than good judgment could sustain, reason has established a measure from which the verse should be turned back; from this 'verse' (*versus*) itself is named, because it is turned back (*revertere*, ppl. *reversus*). 3. And related to this is rhythm (*rhythmus*), which is not governed by a specific limit, but nevertheless proceeds regularly with ordered feet. In Latin this is called none other than 'number' (*numerus*), regarding which is this (Vergil, *Ecl.* 9.45):

> I recall the numbers (*numerus*), if I could grasp the words!

4. Whatever has metric feet is called a 'poem' (*carmen*). People suppose that the name was given to it either because it was pronounced 'in pieces' (*carptim*), just as today we say that wool that the scourers tear in pieces is carded (*carminare*), or because they used to think that people who sang those poems had lost (*carere*) their minds.

5. Meters are named either after their feet, or after the topics about which they are written, or after their inventors, or after those who commonly use them, or after the number of syllables. 6. Meters named after feet are, for example, dactylic, iambic, trochaic, for trochaic meter is constructed from the trochee, dactylic from the dactyl, and others similarly from their feet. Meters are named after number, as hexameter, pentameter, trimeter – as

44 In fact the old form of the word *prorsus*, "straight on," was *prosus*, the source of the word *prosa*.

we name one kind of verse *senarius* (i.e. 'of six') from the number of feet. But the Greeks call them trimeters, because they pair them. Ennius is said to be the first to have written Latin hexameters; people call them 'long' verses. 7. Meters are said to be named for their inventors, as Anacreontic, Sapphic, Archilochian. Thus Anacreon composed Anacreontic meters, the woman Sappho published Sapphic meters, a certain Archilochus wrote Archilochian meters, and a certain Colophonian practiced Colophonian meters. And the deviser of Sotadean meters is Sotades, a Cretan by family. And the lyric poet Simonides composed Simonidian meters.

8. Meters are named for those commonly using them, as, for example, Asclepiadian meters. Now Aesclepius did not invent them, but they were named thus from his time on because he used them most elegantly [and most often]. 9. Meters are named for the topics about which they are written, as heroic, elegiac, bucolic. For instance, a poem is called heroic (*heroicus*) because the acts and deeds of strong men are recounted in it, for celestial (*aerius*) men, as it were, worthy of the skies because of their wisdom and strength, are called heroes (*heros*). This meter (i.e. dactylic hexameter) takes precedence over the others in importance. It alone of all the meters is suited for great works as much as for small, equally capable of smoothness and sweetness. 10. On account of these powers, it alone receives this name, as it is called 'heroic' so that the deeds of heroes will be remembered. It is considered the simplest of all meters, and is composed using two feet, the dactyl and the spondee. It often consists almost entirely of either the former or the latter, except that the most well balanced verse is made with a mixture of both rather than being formed by a single type of foot.

11. The heroic is also the earliest of all meters. Moses is shown to have composed this meter first in his song in Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 32–33) long before Pherecydes and Homer. Whence it appears that the practice of poetry is more ancient among the Hebrews than among the pagans, seeing that Job, a contemporary of Moses, also took up hexameter verse, with its dactyl and spondee. 12. Achatesius of Miletus is said to have been first among the Greeks to compose this, or, as others suppose, Pherecydes of Syros. This meter was called Pythian before Homer, and after Homer was called heroic. 13. People choose to call it Pythian because the oracles of Apollo were proclaimed in this kind of meter. When he attacked the serpent Python with arrows on Parnassus, to avenge his mother, the dwellers at Delphi cheered him on with this meter, saying, as Terentianus has it (*On Meter* 1591): [ἰὴ παιάν, ἰὴ παιάν, ἰὴ παιάν].

14. The 'elegiac' (*elegiacus*) meter is so called because the measure of this particular song is suited for mournful subjects. Terentianus (*On Meter* 1799) used to call those meters 'elegiacs' because such a rhythmic closure, as they say, is more suited to sorrowful modes. 15. But by whom this was invented there is hardly any agreement, except that Ennius was the first among us Latin speakers to use it. Moreover, a dispute among the grammarians continues to this day about who was first among Greeks, so it may be set aside as a matter *sub iudice*. Some of them claim a certain Colophonian as the inventor and author, and some of them Archilochus.

16. And many people believe the bucolic (*bucolicus*), that is, the pastoral (*pastoralis*) poem, was first composed by shepherds in Syracuse, and some believe by shepherds in Sparta. As Xerxes, king of the Persians, crossed into Thrace, and the Spartan maidens, in fear of the enemy, neither left the city nor performed the solemn procession and rustic dance of Diana according to custom, a crowd of shepherds celebrated this with artless songs, lest the religious observance should pass unmarked. And it is called bucolic for the most part, although speeches and songs of the shepherds and goatherds are contained in it.[45]

17. It is clear that David the prophet first composed and sang hymns (*hymnus*) in praise of God. Then, among the pagans, Memmia Timothoe – who lived in the time of Ennius, long after David – first made hymns to Apollo and the Muses. 'Hymns' are translated from Greek into Latin as "praises" (*laudes*). 18. Epithalamiums (*epithalamium*) are wedding songs, which are sung by rhetoricians in honor of the bride and groom. Solomon first composed these in praise of the church and of Christ (i.e. the Song of Songs). From him the pagans appropriated the epithalamium for themselves, and a song of this type was taken up. This kind of song was first performed by pagans on the stage, and later was associated only with weddings. It is called epithalamium because it is sung in bedchambers (*thalamus*).

45 Isidore refers to the inconsistency that the term 'bucolic' is derived in Greek from βουκόλος ("cowherd"), although it has its origin in songs of shepherds and goatherds rather than cowherds.

19. Jeremiah first composed the threnody (*threnos*), which is called 'lament' (*lamentum*) in Latin, in a poem on the city of Jerusalem [when it was destroyed] and on the people [Israel] when they [were destroyed and] were led captive. After this, among the Greeks, Simonides the lyric poet was first. It was associated with funerals and laments, as it is today. 20. 'Epitaph' (*epitaphium*) in Greek is translated in Latin as "over the grave" (*supra tumulum*), for it is an inscription about the dead, which is made over the repose of those who are now dead. Their life, conduct, and age are written there. 21. A work consisting of many books is called a *poesis* by its Greek name; a poem (*poema*) is a work of one book, an idyll (*idyllion*), a work of few verses, a distich (*distichon*) of two verses, and a monostich (*monostichon*) of one verse. 22. An epigram (*epigramma*) is an inscription, which is translated into Latin as "a writing upon something" (*superscriptio*), for ἐπί is translated as "upon" (*super*) and γράμμα as "letter" or "writing" (*scriptio*). 23. An epode (*epodon*) is a short 'concluding passage' (*clausula*) in a poem. It is called epode because it is sung after the manner of elegiac verse, which consists of a longer line set down first, and then another, shorter, line. The shorter ones that follow each of the longer are used as a refrain, as if they were *clausulae*. 24. The lyric poets speak of *clausulae* as cutoff verses substituted for whole verses, as with Horace (*Epodes* 2.1):

> *Beatus ille, qui procul negotiis*
> (O happy he who, far from busyness),

and then a cutoff verse follows:

> *Ut prisca gens mortalium*
> (Like the first race of mortals),

and thus alternate verses in succession lack some part: similar to the verse preceding, but shorter (i.e. iambic trimeters alternate with iambic dimeters).

25. The grammarians are accustomed to call those poems 'centos' (*cento*) which piece together their own particular work in a patchwork (*centonarius*) manner from poems of Homer and Vergil, making a single poem out of many scattered passages previously composed, based on the possibilities offered by each source. 26. In fact, Proba, wife of Adelphus, copied a very full cento from Vergil on the creation of the world and the Gospels (i.e. *Cento Probae*), with its subject matter composed in accordance with Vergil's verses, and the verses fitted together in accordance with her subject matter. Thus also a certain Pomponius, among other compositions of his leisure hours, written in his own style, composed his *Tityrus* out of this same poet, in honor of Christ; likewise he composed a cento from the *Aeneid*.

xl. The fable (De fabula) 1. Poets named 'fables' (*fabula*) from 'speaking' (*fari*), because they are not actual events that took place, but were only invented in words. These are presented with the intention that the conversation of imaginary dumb animals among themselves may be recognized as a certain image of the life of humans. Alcmeon of Croton is said to have been the first to invent these, and they are called Aesopian, because among the Phrygians, Aesop was accomplished in this area. 2. And there are both Aesopian fables and Libystican fables. They are Aesopian fables when dumb animals, or inanimate things such as cities, trees, mountains, rocks, and rivers, are imagined to converse among themselves. But they are Libystican fables when humans are imagined as conversing with animals, or animals with humans. 3. Poets have made up some fables for the sake of entertainment, and expounded others as having to do with the nature of things, and still others as about human morals. Those made up for the sake of entertainment are such as are commonly told, or that kind that Plautus and Terence composed. 4. People make up fables about the nature of things, like 'crooked-limbed Vulcan,' because by nature fire is never straight, and like the animal with three shapes (Lucretius *On the Nature of Things* 5.905):

> A lion in front, a dragon in the rear, and in the middle, the Chimaera itself,

that is, a she-goat.[46] With this, people intend to distinguish the ages of man: the first, adolescence, is ferocious and bristling, like a lion; the midpart of life is the most lucid, like a she-goat, because she sees most acutely; then comes old age with its crooked happenstances – the dragon. 5. Thus also the fable of the Hippocentaur, that is, a human being mixed with a horse, was invented to express the speedy course of human life, because it is known that a horse is very fast.

46 That is, the middle of the creature has the form of a she-goat. Lucretius took the basic form of the Chimaera, and hence its torso, to be a she-goat (*capra*), from the Greek χίμαιρα, "she-goat" or "the monster Chimaera." Here and elsewhere Isidore uses the word *caprea*, regularly meaning "roe-deer," for "she-goat" (regularly *capra*).

6. Then there are fables with a moral, as in Horace a mouse speaks to a mouse, and a weasel to a little fox, so that through an imaginary story a true meaning may be applied to the story's action. Whence also Aesop's fables are the kind told for the purpose of a moral, just as in the book of Judges (9:8) the trees seek a king for themselves and speak to the olive tree, the fig tree, the grape vine, and the bramble-bush. The whole story is made up especially for the moral, so that we arrive at the matter that is intended with the true meaning, though, to be sure, by means of a made-up narrative. 7. Thus the orator Demosthenes used a fable against Philip: when Philip had ordered the Athenians to give him ten orators, and only then would he depart, Demosthenes invented a fable by which he dissuaded the Athenians from yielding. He said that once upon a time wolves persuaded shepherds whose attentiveness they wished to lull that they should meet in friendship – but with the condition that the shepherds would duly hand over their dogs, which were a cause of strife, to the wolves. The shepherds agreed to this and in the hope of security handed over their dogs, who had kept the most vigilant watch over their sheep. Then the wolves, since the source of their fear had been removed, tore to pieces all that were in the shepherds' herds, not only to satisfy their hunger, but also their wantonness. He said that Philip also was making a demand of the leaders of the people so that he might the more easily oppress a city deprived of its protectors.

xli. History (De historia) 1. A history (*historia*) is a narration of deeds accomplished; through it what occurred in the past is sorted out. History is so called from the Greek term ἱστορεῖν ("inquire, observe"), that is, from 'seeing' or from 'knowing.' Indeed, among the ancients no one would write a history unless he had been present and had seen what was to be written down, for we grasp with our eyes things that occur better than what we gather with our hearing, 2. since what is seen is revealed without falsehood. This discipline has to do with Grammar, because whatever is worthy of remembrance is committed to writing. And for this reason, histories are called 'monuments' (*monumentum*), because they grant a remembrance (*memoria*) of deeds that have been done. A series (*series*) is so called by an analogy with a garland (*serta*) of flowers tied together one after the other.

xlii. The first authors of histories (De primis auctoribus historiarum) 1. Among us Christians Moses was the first to write a history, on creation. But among the pagans, Dares the Phrygian was first to publish a history, on the Greeks and Trojans, which they say he wrote on palm leaves. 2. After Dares, Herodotus is held as the first to write history in Greece. After him Pherecydes was renowned, at the time when Ezra wrote the law.

xliii. The utility of history (De utilitate historiae) Histories of peoples are no impediment to those who wish to read useful works, for many wise people have imparted the past deeds of humankind in histories for the instruction of the living. Through history they handle a final reckoning back through seasons and years, and they investigate many indispensable matters through the succession of consuls and kings.

xliv. The kinds of history (De generibus historiae) 1. There are three kinds of history. The events of a single day are called an 'ephemeris' (*ephemeris*); we call this a 'diary' (*diarium*). What the Romans call 'daily' (*diurnus*), the Greeks call *ephemeris*. 2. Histories that are distributed into individual months are called 'calendars' (*kalendarium*). 3. Annals (*annales*) are the actions of individual years (*annus*), for whatever domestic or military matters, on sea or land, worthy of memory are treated year by year in records they called 'annals' from yearly (*anniversarius*) deeds. 4. But history (*historia*) concerns itself with many years or ages, and through the diligence of history annual records are reported in books. There is this difference between history and annals, namely, that history is of those times that we have seen, but annals are of those years that our age has not known. Whence Sallust consists of history, and Livy, Eusebius, and Jerome of annals and history. 5. And history, 'plausible narration' (*argumentum*),[47] and fable differ from one other. Histories are true deeds that have happened, plausible narrations are things that, even if they have not happened, nevertheless could happen, and fables are things that have not happened and cannot happen, because they are contrary to nature.

47 On the term *argumentum* as "possible fiction" see E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Trask (NY, 1953), 452–55.

Book VII

God, angels, and saints (De deo, angelis et sanctis)

i. God (De deo) 1. The most blessed Jerome, a most erudite man and skilled in many languages, first rendered the meaning of Hebrew names in the Latin language. I have taken pains to include some of these in this work along with their interpretations, though I have omitted many for the sake of brevity. 2. Indeed, exposition of words often enough reveals what they mean, for some hold the rationale of their names in their own derivations.

First, then, we present the ten names by which God is spoken of in Hebrew. 3. The first name of God in Hebrew is El. Some translate this as "God," and others as ἰσχυρός, that is, "strong" (*fortis*), expressing its etymology, because he is overcome by no infirmity but is strong and capable of accomplishing anything. 4. The second name is Eloi (i.e. Elohim), 5. and the third Eloe, either of which in Latin is 'God' (*Deus*). The name *Deus* in Latin has been transliterated from a Greek term, for *Deus* is from δέος in Greek, which means φόβος, that is, "fear," whence is derived *Deus* because those worshipping him have fear. 6. Moreover 'God' is properly the name of the Trinity, referring to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. To this Trinity are referred the remaining terms posited below of God.

7. The fourth name of God is Sabaoth, which is rendered in Latin "of armies" or "of hosts," of whom the angels speak in the Psalm (23:10 Vulgate): "Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts." 8. Now there are in the ordination of this world many hosts, such as angels, archangels, principalities, and powers, and all the orders of the celestial militia, of whom nevertheless he is Lord, for all are under him and are subject to his lordship. 9. Fifth, Elion, which in Latin means "lofty" (*excelsus*), because he is above the heavens (*caelum*), as was written of him (Psalm 112:4 Vulgate): "The Lord is high (*excelsus*) . . . his glory above the heavens (*caelus*)." Further, *excelsus* is so called from 'very lofty' (*valde celsus*), for *ex* is put for *valde*, as in *eximius* ("exceptional"), as it were *valde eminens* ("very eminent").

10. Sixth, Eie, that is, 'He who is.' For only God, because he is eternal, that is, because he has no origin, truly holds the name of Being. Now this name was reported to the holy Moses by an angel, 11. for when Moses asked what was the name of the one who was commanding him to proceed with the liberation of his people from Egypt, he answered him (Exodus 3:14): "I am who I am: and thou shalt say to the children of Israel: 'He who is' hath sent me to you." It is just as if in comparison with him, who truly 'is' because he is immutable, those things that are mutable become as if they were not. 12. That of which it is said, "it was," 'is' not, and that of which it is said, "it will be," 'is' not yet. Further, God has known only 'is', and does not know 'was' and 'will be.' 13. For only the Father, with the Son and Holy Spirit, truly 'is.' Compared with his being, our being is not being. And for this reason we say in conversation, "God lives," because his Being lives with a life that death has no hold over.

14. Seventh, Adonai, which broadly means "Lord" (*Dominus*), because he has dominion (*dominari*) over every creature, or because every creature is subservient to his lordship (*dominatus*). Lord, therefore, and God, either because he has dominion over all things, or because he is feared by all things. 15. Eighth, Ia (i.e. Yah), which is only applied to God, and which sounds as the last syllable of 'alleluia.' 16. Ninth, the Tetragrammaton, that is, the 'four letters' that in Hebrew are properly applied to God – *iod*, *he*, *iod*, *he* – that is, 'Ia' twice, which when doubled forms that ineffable and glorious name of God.[1] The Tetragrammaton is called 'ineffable' not because it cannot be spoken, but because in no way can it be bounded by human sense and intellect; therefore, because nothing can be said worthy of it, it is ineffable. 17. Tenth, Shaddai, that is, "Almighty." He is called Almighty (*omnipotens*) because he can do all things (*omnia potest*), but by doing what he will, not by suffering what he does

1 The Tetragrammaton actually consists of the Hebrew consonants yodh, he, waw, he.

not will. If that were to happen to him, in no way would he be Almighty – for he does whatever he wishes, and therein he is Almighty. 18. Again, 'Almighty' because all things in every place are his, for he alone has dominion over the whole world.

Certain other names are also said for God substantively, as immortal, incorruptible, immutable, eternal. Whence deservedly he is placed before every creature. 19. Immortal, as was written of him (I Timothy 6:16): "Who only hath immortality," because in his nature there is no change, for every sort of mutability not improperly is called mortality. From this it follows that the soul also is said to die, not because it is changed and turned into body or into some other substance, but because everything is considered mortal that in its very substance is now, or once was, of a different sort, in that it leaves off being what it once was. And by this reasoning only God is called immortal, because he alone is immutable. 20. He is called incorruptible (*incorruptibilis*) because he cannot be broken up (*corrumpere*, ppl. *corruptus*) and dissolved or divided. Whatever undergoes division also undergoes passing away, but he can neither be divided nor pass away; hence he is incorruptible.

He is immutable (*incommutabilis*) because he remains forever and does not change (*mutare*). 21. He neither advances, because he is perfect, nor recedes, because he is eternal. 22. He is eternal because he is without time, for he has neither beginning nor end. And hence he is 'forever' (*sempiternus*), because he is 'always eternal' (*semper aeternus*). Some think that 'eternal' (*aeternus*) is so called from 'ether' (*aether*), for heaven is held to be his abode. Whence the phrase (Psalm 113:16 Vulgate), "The heaven of heaven is the Lord's." And these four terms signify one thing, for one and the same thing is meant, whether God is called eternal or immortal or incorruptible or immutable.

23. 'Invisible,' because the Trinity never appears in its substance to the eyes of mortals unless through the form of a subject corporeal creature. Indeed, no one can see the very manifestation of the essence of God and live, as it was told to Moses (Exodus 33:20), whence the Lord says in the Gospel (John 1:18), "No man hath seen God at any time." Indeed, he is an invisible thing, and therefore should be sought not with the eye, but with the heart. 24. 'Impassible,' because he is affected by none of the disturbances to which human fragility succumbs, for none of the passions touch him, not desire, wrath, greed, fear, grief, envy, and the other things with which the human mind is troubled. 25. But when it is said that God is angry or jealous or sorrowful, it is said from the human point of view, for with God, in whom is utmost tranquillity, there is no disturbance.

26. Further he is called 'single' (*simplex*), either from not letting go of what he has, or because what he is and what is in him are not distinct, in the way that being and knowing are distinct for a human. 27. A human can be, and at the same time not have knowledge. God has being, and he also has knowledge; but what God *has* he also *is*, and it is all one. He is 'single' because there is nothing accidental in him, but both what he is and what is in him are of his essence, except for what refers to each of the three persons. 28. He is the 'ultimately good' (*summe bonus*) because he is immutable. What is created is good, to be sure, but it is not consummately good because it is mutable. And although it may indeed be good, it still cannot be the highest good. 29. God is called 'disembodied' (*incorporeus*) or 'incorporeal' (*incorporalis*) because he is believed or understood to exist as spirit, not body (*corpus*, gen. *corporis*). When he is called spirit, his substance is signified.

30. 'Immeasurable' (*immensus*) because he encompasses all things and is encompassed by nothing, but all things are confined within his omnipotence. 31. He is called 'perfect' (*perfectus*) because nothing can be added to him. However, 'perfection' is said of the completion of some making; how then is God, who is not made (*factus*), perfect (*perfectus*)? 32. But human poverty of diction has taken up this term from our usage, and likewise for the remaining terms, insofar as what is ineffable can be spoken of in any way – for human speech says nothing suitable about God – so the other terms are also deficient. 33. He is called 'creator' because of the matter of the whole world created by him, for there is nothing that has not taken its origin from God. And he is 'one' (*unus*) because he cannot be divided, or because there can be no other thing that may take on so much power. 34. Therefore what things are said of God pertain to the whole Trinity because of its one (*unus*) and coeternal substance, whether in the Father, or in his only-begotten Son in the form of God, or in the Holy Spirit, which is the one (*unus*) Spirit of God the Father and of his only-begotten Son.

35. There are certain terms applied to God from human usage, taken from our body parts or from lesser things, and because in his own nature he is invisible and incorporeal, nevertheless appearances of things, as the effects of causes, are ascribed to him, so that he might more easily make himself known to us by way of the usage of our speech. For example, because he sees all things, we may speak of his eye; because he hears all, we may speak of his ear; because he turns aside, he walks; because he observes, he stands. 36. In this way and in other ways like these a likeness from human minds is applied to God, for instance that he is forgetful or mindful. Hence it is that the prophet says (Jeremiah 51:14), "The Lord of hosts hath sworn by his soul" – not that God has a soul, but he speaks in this way as from our viewpoint. 37. Likewise the 'face' of God in Holy Scripture is understood not as flesh, but as divine recognition, in the same way in which someone is recognized when his face is seen. Thus, this is said in a prayer to God (Psalm 79:4 Vulgate), "Shew us thy face," as if he were to say, "Grant us thy recognition."

38. Thus the 'traces' of God are spoken of, because now God is known through a mirror (I Corinthians 13:12), but he is recognized as the Almighty at the culmination, when in the future he becomes present face to face for each of the elect, so that they behold his appearance, whose traces they now try to comprehend, that is, him whom it is said they see through a mirror. 39. For in relation to God, position and vesture and place and time are spoken of not properly, but metaphorically, by way of analogy. For instance (Psalm 98:1 Vulgate), "He that sitteth on the cherubims" is said with reference to position; and (Psalm 103:6 Vulgate) "The deep like a garment is its clothing," referring to vesture; and (Psalm 101:28 Vulgate) "Thy years shall not fail," which pertains to time; and (Psalm 138:8 Vulgate) "If I ascend into heaven, thou art there," referring to place. 40. Again, in the prophet (Amos 2:13), "As a wain laden with hay," an image is used of God. All these refer to God figuratively, because nothing of these things refers properly to his underlying being.

ii. The Son of God (De Filio Dei) 1. In the divine writings Christ is also found to be named in many ways, for he, the only-begotten Son of God the Father, although he was the equal of the Father, took the form of a slave (Philippians 2:7) for our salvation. Whence some names are given to him with regard to the substance of his divinity, and some with regard to the dispensation of his assumed humanity.

2. He is named 'Christ' (*Christus*) from 'chrism' (*chrisma*), that is, 'anointed one,' for it was a precept among the Jews that they would confect a sacred ointment by which those who were called to the priesthood or the kingship might be anointed. Just as nowadays for kings to be clothed in the purple is the mark of royal dignity, so for them anointing with sacred ointment would confer the royal title and power. Hence they are called 'anointed ones' (*christus*) from chrism, which is unction, 3. for the Greek *chrisma* is 'unction' (*unctio*) in Latin. When this anointing was done spiritually, it accommodated the name 'Christ' to the Lord, because he was anointed by the Spirit from God the Father, as in Acts (4:27): "For there assembled together in this city against thy holy child . . . whom thou hast anointed" – by no means with visible oil, but by the gift of grace, for which visible ointment is a sign. 4. 'Christ' is not, however, a proper name of the Savior, but a common-noun designation of his power. When he is called 'Christ,' it is a common designation of his importance, but when he is called 'Jesus Christ' it is the proper name of the Savior. 5. Further, the name of Christ never occurred at all elsewhere in any nation except in that kingdom alone where Christ was prophesied, and whence he was to come. 6. Again, in Hebrew he is called 'Messiah' (*Messias*), in Greek 'Christ,' in Latin 'the anointed' (*unctus*).

7. The Hebrew 'Jesus' is translated σωτήρ in Greek, and "healer" (*salutaris*) or "savior" (*salvator*) in Latin, because he has come for all nations as the 'bearer of salvation' (*salutifer*). 8. The Evangelist renders the etymology of his name, saying (Matthew 1:21), "And thou shalt call his name Savior (*salvator*; cf. Vulgate *Iesus*), for he shall save his people." Just as 'Christ' signifies a king, so 'Jesus' signifies a savior. 9. Not every kind of king saves us, but a savior king. The Latin language did not have this word *salvator* before, but it could have had it, seeing that it was able to when it wanted. 10. The Hebrew *Emmanuel* in Latin means "God is with us," undoubtedly because, born of a Virgin, God has appeared to humans in mortal flesh, that he might open the way of salvation to heaven for the inhabitants of earth.

Christ's names that pertain to the substance of his divinity are as follows: God (*Deus*), Lord (*Dominus*). 11. He is called God because of his unity of substance with

the Father, and Lord because of the creation subservient to him. 12. And he is God and man, for he is Word and flesh. Whence he is called the Doubly-Begotten (*bis genitus*), because the Father begot (*gignere*, ppl. *genitus*) him without a mother in eternity, and because a mother begot him without a father in the temporal world. 13. But he is called the Only-Begotten (*unigenitus*) according to the peerless quality of his divinity, for he is without brothers; he is called the First-Begotten (*primogenitus*) with regard to his assuming of human nature, in which he deigned through the grace of adoption to have brothers, among whom he was the first begotten.

14. He is called 'of one substance' (*homousion*, i.e. ὁμοούσιος) with the Father because of their unity of substance, because in Greek substance or essence is called οὐσία and ὁμο- means "one." The two joined together therefore denote 'one substance.' For this reason he is called *Homousion*, that is (John 10:30), "I and the Father are one" – that is, of the same substance with the Father. 15. Although this name is not written in Sacred Scripture, nevertheless it is supported in the formal naming of the whole Trinity because an account is offered according to which it is shown to be spoken correctly, just as in those books we never read that the Father is the Unbegotten (*Ingenitus*), yet we have no doubt that he should be spoken of and believed to be that.[2] 16. *Homoeusion* (i.e. ὁμοιούσιος), that is "similar in substance," because as God is, so also is God's image. Invisible is God, and invisible his image (i.e. the divinity latent in Jesus).

17. The Beginning (*Principium*), because all things are from him, and before him nothing was. 18. The End (*Finis*), either because he deigned at the end (*finis*) of time to be born and to die humbly in the flesh and to undertake the Last Judgment, or because whatever we do we refer to him, and when we have come to him we have nothing further to seek. 19. He is the 'Mouth of God' (*Os Dei*) because he is his Word, for just as we often say 'this tongue' and 'that tongue' for 'words,' which are made by the tongue, so 'Mouth' is substituted for the 'Word of God,' because words are normally formed by the mouth. 20. Further, he is called the Word (*Verbum*) because through him the Father established or commanded all things. 21. Truth (*Veritas*), because he does not deceive, but gave what he promised. Life (*Vita*) because he created. He is called the Image (*Imago*) because of his equivalent likeness to the Father. 22. He is the Figure (*Figura*) because although he took on the form of a slave, he portrayed in himself the Father's image and immeasurable greatness by his likeness to the Father in his works and powers.

23. He is the 'Hand of God' (*Manus Dei*) because all things were made through him. Hence also the 'Right Hand' (*Dextera*) because of his accomplishment of the work of all creation, which was formed by him. The Arm (*Brachium*), because all things are embraced by him. 24. The Power (*Virtus*), because he contains in himself all the authority of the Father, and governs, holds, and rules the whole creation of heaven and earth. 25. Wisdom (*Sapientia*), because he himself reveals the mysteries of knowledge and the secrets of wisdom. But although the Father and the Holy Spirit may be 'Wisdom' and 'Power' and 'Lamp' and 'Light,' nevertheless strictly speaking it is the Son who is designated by these names. 26. Again, he is called Clarity (*Splendor*) because of what he plainly reveals. Lamp (*Lumen*), because he illuminates (*illuminare*). Light (*Lux*), because he unlocks the eyes of the heart for gazing at the truth. Sun (*Sol*), because he is the illuminator. 27. The Orient (*Oriens*, i.e. "East," "Sunrising") because he is the source of light and the brightener of things, and because he makes us rise (*oriri*) to eternal life. 28. The Fount (*Fons*), because he is the origin of things, or because he satisfies those who thirst.

He is also the Α and Ω. He is Alpha because no letter precedes it, for it is the first of the letters, just as the Son of God is first, for he answered the Jews interrogating him that he was the beginning (John 8:25). Whence John in the Apocalypse, properly putting down the letter itself, says (22:13), "I am Α and Ω, first and last." First, because before him nothing is. Last, because he has undertaken the Last Judgment. 29. Mediator (*Mediator*), because he has been constituted a mean (*medius*) between God and humanity, so that he might lead humanity through to God – whence the Greeks also call him μεσίτης ("mediator"). 30. Paraclete, that is, advocate, because he intercedes for us with the Father, as John says of him (I John 2:1), "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just." 31. For Paraclete (*Paracletus*) is a Greek word that means "advocate" in Latin. This name is ascribed to

2 Isidore's care with the concept of the unity of substance of Jesus and the Father reflects the recent conversion of the Visigothic king from Arianism, which was heretical on this point, to Catholicism. Isidore's brother Leander was instrumental in this conversion.

both the Son and the Holy Spirit, as the Lord says in the Gospel (John 14:16), "I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete."

32. Also the Son is called Intercessor (*Intercessor*), because he devotes care to remove our sins, and he exerts effort to wash away our crimes. 33. Bridegroom (*Sponsus*), because descending from heaven he cleaves to the Church, so that by the grace of the New Covenant they might be two in one flesh. 34. He is called an Angel (*Angelus*, i.e. 'messenger') because of his announcing of his Father's and his own will. Whence it is read in the Prophet (cf. Isaiah 9:6), "Angel of great counsel," although he is God and Lord of the angels. 35. He is called the 'One Sent' (*Missus*) because he appeared to this world as the Word made flesh, whence also he says (John 16:28), "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world." 36. He is also called the 'Human Being' (*Homo*) because he was born. Prophet (*Propheta*), because he revealed future things. Priest (*Sacerdos*), because he offered himself as a sacrifice for us. Shepherd (*Pastor*), because he is a guardian. Teacher (*Magister*), because he shows the way. Nazarene (*Nazarenus*) from his region, but Nazarite (*Nazareus*) is an earned title meaning "holy" or "clean," because he did no sin.

37. Further, Christ attracts to himself types of names from other lesser things so that he might more easily be understood. 38. For he is called Bread (*Panis*) because he is flesh. Vine (*Vitis*), because we are redeemed by his blood. Flower (*Flos*), because he was picked. The Way (*Via*), because by means of him we come to God. The Portal (*Ostium*), because through him we make our approach to God. Mount (*Mons*), because he is mighty. Rock (*Petra*), because he is the strength of believers. 39. Cornerstone (*Lapis angularis*), because he joins two walls coming from different directions, that is from the circumcised and the uncircumcised, into the one fabric of the Church, or because he makes peace in himself for angels (*angelus*) and humans. 40. The Stumbling-stone (*Lapis offensionis*), because when he came in humility unbelievers stumbled (*offendere*) against him and he became a 'rock of scandal' (Romans 9:33), as the Apostle says (I Corinthians 1:23), "Unto the Jews indeed a stumbling block (*scandalum*)."

41. Further he is called the Foundation (*Fundamentum*) because faith on him is most firm, or because the Catholic Church was built upon him. 42. Now Christ is the Lamb (*Agnus*) for his innocence, and the Sheep (*Ovis*) for his submissiveness, and the Ram (*Aries*) for his leadership, and Goat (*Haedus*) for his likeness to sinful flesh, 43. and the Calf (*Vitulus*) because he was made a sacrificial victim for us, and Lion (*Leo*) for his kingdom and strength, and Serpent (*Serpens*) for his death and his sapience (*sapientia*), and again Worm (*Vermis*) because he rose again, 44. Eagle (*Aquila*) because after his resurrection he returned to the stars.

Nor is it a wonder that he should be figured forth by means of lowly signs, he who is known to have descended even to the indignities of our passions or of the flesh. 45. For although he is coeternal with God the Father before worldly time, when the fullness of time arrived, the Son for our salvation took the form of a slave (Philippians 2:7), and the Son of God became a son of humankind. 46. For this reason some things are said of him in Scripture according to the form of God, some according to the form of a slave. Two of these should be kept in mind for an example, so that particular instances may severally be connected with these particular forms. So, he spoke of himself according to the form of God (John 10:30), "I and the Father are one"; according to the form of a slave (John 14:28), "For the Father is greater than I."

47. But people who little understand how one thing may be said for another wish to transfer to the Son's character as God what has been said with regard to his character as a slave. Again, they want what has been said relating the Persons to one another to be names for God's nature and substance, and they make an error in their faith. 48. For human nature was so conjoined to the Son of God that one Person was made from two substances. Only the man endured the cross, but because of the unity of Person, the God also is said to have endured it. 49. Hence we find it written (I Corinthians 2:8), "For if they had known it, they never would have crucified the Lord of glory." Therefore we speak of the Son of God as crucified, not in the power of his divinity but in the weakness of his humanity, not in his persistence in his own nature but in his acceptance of ours.

iii. The Holy Spirit (De Spiritu Sancto) 1. The Holy Spirit is proclaimed to be God because it proceeds from the Father and the Son, and has God's substance, for no other thing could proceed from the Father than what is itself the Father. 2. It is called the Spirit (*spiritus*, i.e. 'breath' or 'spirit') because when it is breathed (*spirare*, ppl. *spiratus*) it is transferred to something else;

moreover, its action inspires with its breath, so to speak, and consequently it is called the Spirit. It is called the Holy Spirit for a certain appropriate reason, in that the term is related to the Father and the Son, because it is their *spiritus*. 3. Now this name 'Spirit' is also conferred not because of what is imparted to something, but because of what signifies some kind of nature. 4. Indeed, every incorporeal nature in Holy Scripture is called spirit, whence this term suits not only the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, but also every rational creature and soul. 5. Therefore the Spirit of God is called Holy, because it is the holiness of the Father and Son. Although the Father is spirit and the Son is spirit, and the Father is holy and the Son is holy, properly nevertheless this one is called Holy (*sanctus*) Spirit, as the co-essential and consubstantial holiness (*sanctitas*) of both the others.

6. The Holy Spirit is not spoken of as begotten (*genitus*) lest it should be thought that there are two Sons in the Trinity. It is not proclaimed as unbegotten (*ingenitus*), lest it should be believed that there are two Fathers in that same Trinity. 7. It is spoken of, however, as proceeding (*procedere*), by the testimony of the Lord's saying (cf. John 16:12–15), "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot hear them now. But he, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, will come, and he shall receive of mine; he shall show everything to you."[3] This Spirit moreover proceeds not only by its nature, but it proceeds always in ceaselessly performing the works of the Trinity. 8. Between the Son who is born and the Holy Spirit who proceeds is this distinction, that the Son is born from one, the Holy Spirit proceeds from both. Therefore the Apostle says (Romans 8:9), "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

9. In its work the Holy Spirit is also understood to be an angel, for it is said of it (John 16:13), "And the things that are to come, he shall announce (*adnuntiare*) to you" – and the Greek term 'angel' means "messenger" (*nuntius*) in Latin. Hence also two angels appeared to Lot, and to these the name 'Lord' was given in the singular; we understand them to have been the Son and the Holy Spirit, for we never read that the Father is 'sent.'

10. The Holy Spirit, because it is called the Paraclete, is named from 'consolation,' for the Greek term παράκλησις in Latin means "consolation." Thus Christ sent the Spirit to the mourning apostles, after he ascended from their eyes to heaven. 11. For it is sent as a consoler to those who grieve, and according to the saying of the same Lord (Matthew 5:5), "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be consoled." Again he said (Matthew 9:15), "Then the children of the bridegroom shall mourn, when the bridegroom shall have been taken away from them." 12. Again, Paraclete, because it offers consolation to souls that have lost temporal joy. Others say that 'Paraclete' in Latin means "orator" or "advocate," for one and the same Holy Spirit speaks; it teaches; through it are given words of wisdom; by it Holy Scripture has been inspired.

13. The Holy Spirit is named the Sevenfold (*septiformis*) because of the gifts that all have a claim to attain from the fullness of its unity, one by one, according as they deserve. Thus it is the Spirit of wisdom and intellect, the Spirit of counsel and courage, the Spirit of knowledge and holiness, the Spirit of the fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11:2–3). 14. Further, we read of the 'perfect Spirit' (*principalis Spiritus*) in the fiftieth Psalm, where because *spiritus* is repeated thrice, some understand the Trinity, since it is written (John 4:24), "God is a spirit." Indeed, because he is not a body, and yet he exists, it seems to remain that he is a spirit. Some understand that the Trinity is signified in Psalm 50: in the "perfect Spirit" (vs. 14) the Father, in the "right Spirit" (vs. 12) the Son, in the "holy spirit" (vs. 13) the Holy Spirit.

15. The Holy Spirit is called a Gift because it is given, for 'gift' (*donum*) takes its name from 'giving' (*dare*). Now it is very well known that our Lord Jesus Christ, when he had ascended into heaven after his resurrection from the dead, gave the Holy Spirit, and filled with this Spirit the believers spoke in the tongues of all nations. 16. Moreover it is a gift of God to the extent that it is given to those who love God through the Spirit. In itself, it is God; with regard to us, it is a gift – but the Holy Spirit is forever a Gift, handing out the gifts of grace to individuals as it wishes. 17. It imparts the gift of prophecy to whomever it wishes, and it forgives sins for whomever it wishes – for sins are not pardoned without the Holy Spirit. 18. The Holy Spirit is appropriately named Charity (*caritas*) either because by its nature it joins with those from whom it proceeds and shows itself to be one with them, or because it brings it about in us that we remain in God and he in us. 19. Whence among the gifts of God nothing is greater than charity, and there is no greater gift

3 The second sentence quoted departs from the Vulgate.

of God than the Holy Spirit. 20. It is also Grace (*gratia*), and has this name because it is given freely (*gratis*) not according to our merits, but according to divine will.

Further, just as we speak of the unique Word of God properly by the name of Wisdom, although generally both the Holy Spirit and the Father himself are wisdom, so the Holy Spirit is properly named by the word Charity, although both the Father and the Son are in general charity. 21. The Holy Spirit is very clearly declared in the books of the Gospel to be the Finger (*Digitus*) of God, for when one Evangelist said (Luke 11:20), "I by the finger of God cast out devils," another said the same thing in this way (Matthew 12:28), "I by the Spirit of God cast out devils." Wherefore also the law was written by the finger of God, and it was granted on the fiftieth day after the slaughter of the lamb, and on the fiftieth day after the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ came the Holy Spirit. 22. Moreover it is called the Finger of God to signify its operative power with the Father and the Son. Whence also Paul says (I Corinthians 12:11), "But all these things one and the same Spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as he will." Just as through Baptism we die and are reborn in Christ, so we are sealed by the Spirit, which is the Finger of God and a spiritual seal. The Holy Spirit is written to have come in the form of a dove (*columba*) in order that its nature might be expressed through a bird of simplicity and innocence. Whence the Lord said (Matthew 10:16), "Be ye simple as doves" – for this bird is without bile in its body, and has only innocence and love.

23. The Holy Spirit is referred to by the name of Fire (*ignis*) because it appeared as fire in the distribution of tongues in the Acts of the Apostles (2:3), and it settled on each of them. 24. Moreover it gave the gift of diverse tongues to the apostles so that they might be made capable of instructing the faithful people. 25. But the Holy Spirit is remembered as having settled upon each of them so that it may be understood not to have been divided into many, but to have remained whole with respect to each one, as is generally the way with fire. 26. For a kindled fire has this nature, that however many should behold it, however many should behold that mane of purple splendor, to that same number would it impart the sight of its light, and offer the ministry of its gift, and still it would persist in its integrity.

27. The Holy Spirit is referred to by the name Water (*aqua*) in the Gospel, as the Lord cries out and says (John 7:37–38), "If any man thirst, let him come to me, and drink. He that believeth in me, *Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*" Moreover, the Evangelist explained his words, for in the following sentence (39) he says, "Now this he said of the Spirit which they should receive, who believed in him." 28. But the water of the sacrament (i.e. of Baptism) is one thing, and the water that signifies the Spirit of God is another, for the water of the sacrament is visible, the water of the Spirit is invisible. The former cleanses the body, and symbolizes what takes place in the soul; but through the latter, the Holy Spirit, the soul itself is purified and fed.

29. As the apostle John witnesses, the Holy Spirit is called Unction (*unctio*) because, just as oil floats above every liquid because of its physical weight, so in the beginning the Holy Spirit floated above the waters (Genesis 1:2). Whence we read that the Lord was anointed with the 'oil of gladness' (Hebrews 1:9, etc.), that is with the Holy Spirit. 30. But the apostle John also calls the Holy Spirit 'unction,' saying (I John 2:27): "And as for you, let the unction, which you have received from him, abide in you. And you have no need that any man teach you; but as his unction teacheth you of all things." Now that is the Holy Spirit, an invisible unction.

iv. The Trinity (De Trinitate) 1. The Trinity (*Trinitas*) is so named because from a certain three (*tres*) is made one (*unum*) whole, as it were a 'Tri-unity' (*Triunitas*) – just like memory, intelligence, and will, in which the mind has in itself a certain image of the divine Trinity. Indeed, while they are three, they are one, because while they persist in themselves as individual components, they are all in all. 2. Therefore the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are a trinity and a unity, for they are both one and three. They are one in nature (*natura*), three in person (*persona*). One because of their shared majesty, three because of the individuality of the persons. 3. For the Father is one person, the Son another, the Holy Spirit another – but another person (*alius*), not another thing (*aliud*), because they are equally and jointly a single thing (*simplex*), immutable, good, and coeternal. 4. Only the Father is not derived from another; therefore he is called Unbegotten (*Ingenitus*). Only the Son is born of the Father; therefore he is called Begotten (*Genitus*). Only the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son; therefore it alone is referred to as 'the Spirit of both the others.'

5. For this Trinity some names are appellative (*appellativus*), and some are proper (*proprius*). The proper ones name the essence, such as God, Lord, Almighty, Immutable, Immortal. These are proper because they signify the very substance by which the three are one. 6. But appellative names are Father and Son and Holy Spirit, Unbegotten and Begotten and Proceeding. These same are also relational (*relativus*) because they have reference (*referre*, ppl. *relatus*) to one another. When one says "God," that is the essence, because he is being named with respect to himself. But when one says Father and Son and Holy Spirit, these names are spoken relationally, because they have reference to one another. 7. For we say 'Father' not with respect to himself, but with respect to his relation to the Son, because he has a son; likewise we speak of 'Son' relationally, because he has a father; and so 'Holy Spirit,' because it is the spirit of the Father and the Son. 8. This relationship is signified by these 'appellative terms' (*appellatio*), because they have reference to one another, but the substance itself, in which the three are one, is not thus signified.

Hence the Trinity exists in the relational names of the persons. Deity is not tripled, but exists in singleness, for if it were tripled we would introduce a plurality of gods. 9. For that reason the name of 'gods' in the plural is said with regard to angels and holy people, because they are not his equal in merit. 10. Concerning these is the Psalm (81:6 Vulgate), "I have said: You are gods." But for the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, because of their one and equal divinity, the name is observed to be not 'gods' but 'God,' as the Apostle says (I Corinthians 8:6): "Yet to us there is but one God," or as we hear from the divine voice (Mark 12:29, etc.), "Hear, O Israel: the Lord thy God is one God," namely inasmuch as he is both the Trinity and the one Lord God.

11. This tenet of faith concerning the Trinity is put in this way in Greek: 'one οὐσία,' as if one were to say 'one nature' (*natura*) or 'one essence' (*essentia*); 'three ὑποστάσεις,' which in Latin means "three persons" (*persona*) or "three substances" (*substantia*). 12. Now Latin does not speak of God properly except as 'essence'; people say 'substance,' indeed, but metaphorically, for in Greek the term 'substance' actually is understood as a person of God, not as his nature.[4]

v. Angels (De angelis) 1. Angels (*angelus*) are so called in Greek (i.e. ἄγγελος); they are *malachoth* in Hebrew, but translated in Latin as "messengers" (*nuntius*), because they announce (*nuntiare*) the will of God to people. 2. The term for angels is thus the name of their function, not of their nature. Indeed they are always spirits, but when they are commissioned they are called angels. 3. For this reason the license of artists makes wings for them, to signify their swift course on all their missions, just as in poetic fiction the winds are said to have wings to indicate their speed. Whence also Holy Scripture says (Psalm 103:3 Vulgate), "Who walketh upon the wings of the winds."

4. Holy Scripture witnesses moreover that there are nine orders of angels, that is Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominations, Virtues, Principalities, Powers, Cherubim, and Seraphim (*angelus*, *archangelus*, *thronus*, *dominatio*, *virtus*, *principatus*, *potestas*, *cherub*, *seraph*). As to why these names are given to their offices, I shall go through them with explanations. 5. Angels are so called because they are sent from heaven in order to announce (*nuntiare*) things to humans, for the Greek 'angel' means "messenger" (*nuntius*) in Latin.

6. Archangels are translated from Greek as "highest messengers" (*summus nuntius*), for those who announce small or trifling things are Angels, but those who announce the highest (*summus*) things are named Archangels. Archangels are so called because they hold primacy among the angels, for ἀρχός in Greek is translated "prince" (*princeps*) in Latin. Indeed they are the leaders and princes, and under their Archangel order the tasks for each of the Angels are assigned. 7. That Archangels take precedence over Angels the prophet Zechariah bears witness, saying (2:3–4), "Behold the angel that spoke in me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him. And he said to him: Run, speak to this young man, saying: Jerusalem shall be inhabited without walls." 8. But if the higher powers did not assign their duties as angels to the lower ones, in no way would one angel have come to know from another what he should say to a human.

9. Moreover certain archangels are called by individual names, so that how they successfully discharge their duties might be designated through their names themselves. 10. 'Gabriel' in Hebrew is rendered in our language "Strength of God," because where divine power or

4 Isidore here speaks of the potentially misleading literal translation of the Greek ὑπό-στασις as the Latin *sub-stans.*

strength is displayed, Gabriel is sent. 11. Hence at the time when the Lord was about to be born and triumph over the world, Gabriel came to Mary to announce him who deigned to come as a humble person to conquer the aerial powers. 12. 'Michael' means "Who is like God," for when something of wonderful power is done in the world, this archangel is sent. And his name comes from the work itself, because no one is strong enough to do what God can do. 13. 'Raphael' means "Healing" or "Medicine of God," for whenever there is need of healing and curing this archangel is sent by God – hence he is called "Medicine of God." 14. Hence this same archangel, sent to Tobit, brought healing to his eyes, and restored his sight to him as his blindness was wiped away. Thus the office of the angel is designated by the interpretation of his name. 15. 'Uriel' means 'Fire of God,' as we read that he appeared as a fire in a bush (cf. Exodus 3:2). We read, indeed, that as fire he was sent from above, and fulfilled what was commanded.

16. Further, Thrones and Dominations and Principalities and Powers and Virtues are understood to be orders and ranks of angels, in which orders the apostle Paul includes the whole heavenly company (Ephesians 1:21, Colossians 1:16, etc.). Because of this same distribution of offices some are called Thrones, some Dominations, some Principalities, some Powers, for the sake of the particular ranks by which they are distinguished from one another.

17. Angelic Virtues are named as the specific ministries through which signs and miracles are made in the world, and because of this they are called Virtues (*Virtutes*). 18. The Powers are those angels to which opposing forces are subject, and hence they are named with the term Powers (*Potestates*) because evil spirits are restrained by their power (*potestas*) so that they may not do as much harm in the world as they wish. 19. Principalities (*Principatus*) are those who preside over the bands of angels, and they take the name of Principality because they charge the angels below them with fulfilling the divine ministry. Thus there are some who administer (*administrare*) and others who assist (*adsistere*), as is said in Daniel (7:10), "Thousands of thousands ministered (*ministrare*) to him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before (*adsistere*) him."

20. Dominations are those who surpass even Virtues and Principalities. They are called Dominations (*Dominationes*) because they dominate (*dominari*) other bands of angels. 21. Thrones are bands of angels that in Latin are called 'seats' (*sedes*), and they are called Thrones because the Creator 'sits over' (*praesidere*) them, and discharges his judgments through them. 22. Cherubim too are reckoned as lofty powers indeed in heaven, and an angelic retinue. Translated from Hebrew into Latin they are 'Multitude of Knowledge' (*multitudo scientiae*), for they are a higher band of angels, and because, placed nearer, they have been more amply filled with divine knowledge than the others, they are called Cherubim, that is, "Fullness (*plenitudo*) of Knowledge." 23. They are represented in metal as the two animals resting on the mercy seat of the ark in order to signify the presence of angels in whose midst God is manifested.

24. Likewise the Seraphim are a multitude of angels whose name, translated from Hebrew into Latin, is "Ardent Ones" or "Fiery Ones." They are called 'Ardent Ones' because no angels are stationed between them and God, and therefore, the more nearly they are stationed to his presence, the more they are inflamed with the brightness of the divine light. 25. Whence they veil the face and feet of the one who sits on the throne of God (Isaiah 6:2); for that reason the crowd of other angels cannot fully see the essence of God, because the Cherubim (*sic*, for 'Seraphim') cloak it.

26. These terms for the bands of angels are specific for the individual orders in such a way that they still may be to some extent common to all. Thus, whereas the Thrones are specifically designated as the seats of God in a particular order of angels, nevertheless the Psalmist says (79:2 Vulgate), "Thou that sittest upon the cherubims." 27. But these orders of angels are called by their individual names because they have more fully received that particular function in their own order. Although common to them all, still these names are strictly speaking assigned to their own orders. 28. For to each order, as has been said, has been enjoined its proper functions, which they are known to have deserved at the beginning of the world.

Because angels preside over both places and humans an angel witnesses through a prophet, saying (Daniel 10:13), "The prince of the kingdom of the Persians resisted me." 29. Whence it is apparent that there is no place over which angels are not set. Moreover they have charge of the outcome of all endeavors. 30. This is the hierarchy or the array of the angels who stood in their celestial vigor after the Fall of the bad angels, for after the

apostate angels fell, these were made firm in the steadfastness of eternal blessing. Whence we find, after the creation of heaven in the beginning (Genesis 1:6, 8), "Let there be a firmament (*firmamentum*) . . . and the firmament was called, Heaven." 31. This is surely the saying of one who is showing that after the Fall of the bad angels those who were steadfast strove for the firmness (*firmitas*) of eternal perseverance; diverted by no lapse, falling in no pride, but firmly (*firmiter*) holding steady in the love and contemplation of God, they consider nothing sweet except him by whom they were created.

32. Further, we read of two Seraphim in Isaiah (6:2); they figuratively signify the Old and New Testaments. We also read that they cover the face and feet of God, because we cannot know the past before the world or the future after the world, but we contemplate only the middle by their witness. 33. Each of them has six wings because in this present age we know concerning the fabric of this world only those things that were made in the six days. That each cries "Holy" three times to the other (Isaiah 6:3) shows the mystery of the Trinity in the one divinity.

vi. People who received their name from a certain presaging (De hominibus qui quodam praesagio nomen acceperunt) 1. Many of the early humans take the origin of their names from conditions specific to them. Their names were imparted to them prophetically in such a way that they concord with their future or their previous conditions. 2. While a holy and spiritual character abides in these names, we are now describing the meaning of their stories only with regard to the literal. Moreover, where we have not touched on the meaning of the etymology, we have merely set it forth in Latin. 3. Further, because of the diversity of accents and letters, it happens that one Hebrew name is transliterated in one way or another, so that the names are rendered with various meanings.

4. Adam, as blessed Jerome informs us, means "human" or "earthling" or "red earth," for from earth was flesh made, and humus (*humus*) was the material from which the human (*homo*) was made. 5. Eve (*Eva*) means "life" or "calamity" or "woe" (*vae*).[5] Life, because she was the origin of being born; calamity and woe because by her lying she was the cause of death – for 'calamity' (*calamitas*) takes its name from 'falling' (*cadere*). 6. But others say Eve is called 'life' and 'calamity' because often a woman is the cause of salvation for a man, often the cause of calamity and death, which is woe.

7. Cain is interpreted as "possession," whence, expressing this very etymology, his father says 'Cain,' that is (Genesis 4:1), "I have gotten (lit. 'I have possessed,' *possidere*) a man through God." And the same name means "lamentation," because he was killed for the killing of Abel, and he paid the penalty for his own crime. 8. Abel means "mourning," and by this name it was prefigured that he would be killed. Likewise it means "emptiness," because he was quickly removed and taken away.

9. Seth is translated "resurrection," because he was born after the killing of his brother, as if he triggered the resurrection of his brother from the dead. It also means "putting," because God put him in place of Abel. 10. Enos in a variation in his own language means "human being" or "man," and he had this name fittingly, for it is written of him (Genesis 4:26), "Then was the beginning of calling upon the name of the Lord" – although many of the Hebrews think rather that it was at that time that idols were first made in the name of the Lord and in his likeness. 11. Enoch means "dedication," for afterwards Cain built a city in his name (Genesis 5:17). 12. Cainan (i.e. Kenan) means "lamentation" or "possession of those," for as Cain means "possession," so the derivative name, which is Cainan, forms "possession of those." 13. Methuselah is translated "he has died." The etymology of his name is obvious, for some think that he was translated with his father[6] and that he lived past the time of the Flood. Against this it is significantly translated "he has died" to show that he did not live beyond the Flood, but died in that same cataclysm. Indeed, only the eight humans in the ark escaped the Flood.

14. Lamech means "striking down," for he struck down and killed Cain, and indeed afterwards he confesses to his wives that he did this (cf. Genesis 4:23–24). 15. Noah means "rest," since under him all past works came to rest because of the Flood. Whence his father, calling his name Noah, said (Genesis 5:29), "This same makes us rest from all our works." 16. Shem means "renowned," because he got his name as a presaging of his posterity, for out of him came the patriarchs and apostles and people of God. Also from his stock came Christ, whose name is great among the nations from the rising of the sun to its setting. 17. Cham (i.e. Ham) means "warm," and he was

5 The ancient anagram connects *Eva* and *vae*.

6 Methuselah's father Enoch was thought, on the basis of Genesis 5:24, to have passed on without death.

so named as a presaging of his future, for his posterity possessed that part of the land which is warmer because the sun is near. Hence still today Egypt, in the Egyptian language, is called *Kam.* 18. Japheth means "width," for from him were born the pagan nations, and because wide is the multitude of believers from among the gentiles, Japheth was named from that width. 19. Canaan the son of Ham is translated "their movement" – and what is this other than "their action"? – for because of the "motion" of his father Ham, that is, because of his action, he was cursed (Genesis 9:25).

20. Arpachshad means "the healer of the ravaging." 21. Cush in Hebrew is interpreted "the Ethiopian"; his name was allotted him from the posterity of his family, for from him issued the Ethiopians. 22. Nimrod means "tyrant," for first he seized unwonted tyrannical power among the people, and then himself advanced against God to build the tower of impiety. 23. Heber (i.e. Eber) means "passage." His etymology is mystical, because God passed away from his stock, nor would God remain among them when his grace was transferred to the gentiles – for from Heber rose the Hebrews. 24. Peleg means "division," and his father imposed such a name on him because he was born when the earth was divided by its languages. Terah means "investigation of the ascension." 25. Melchizedech means "righteous king." "King," because afterwards he ruled Salem. "Righteous," because distinguishing between the sacraments of the Law and the Gospel, he offered as a sacrifice not victims of cattle, but an oblation of bread and the chalice. 26. Lot means "shunning," for he did not consent to the doings of the Sodomites, but he shunned their illicit passions of the flesh. 27. Moab means "from the father." And the (compound) name as a whole has this etymology, for Lot's firstborn daughter conceived him from her father.

28. Ammon, whose name for good reason is rendered "the son of my people," is so derived that partly its sense is of a proper name, and partly it is an expression in itself, for *ammi*, after which the Ammonites are named, is the word for "my people." 29. Sarai means "my princess," because she was the materfamilias of only one household. Afterwards, as the rationale for her name has changed, with the letter *i* taken away from the end, she is called Sara (i.e. Sarah), that is, "princess." Indeed she was to be the princess of all nations, as the Lord had promised to Abraham (Genesis 17:16), "I will give thee from Sara a son, whom I will bless, and he shall become nations, and kings of people shall spring from her." 30. Hagar is "alien" or "turned back," for she was [as an alien given to the embrace of Abraham for the sake of bearing children, and after her display of contempt, when the angel rebuked her, she turned back to Sara]. 31. Keturah, "incense." 32. Ishmael is translated "listening of God," for thus it is written (Genesis 16:11), "And she called his name Ishmael, because God listened to him."

33. Esau is three-named, and is variously named for appropriate reasons. He is called Esau, that is, "red," so named for his stewing specifically of the red lentil, for the eating of which he lost his birthright. Also he was called Edom, which means "bloody" in Latin, for the ruddiness of his body. But Seir, because he was bristly and hairy, for when he was born he was all hairy as if with a hide. 34. So he was named with three names: Esau, that is, "red"; Edom, that is, "bloody"; Seir, that is, "hairy," because he did not have smooth skin. 35. Rebecca, "patience," or "she who accepts much." 36. Leah, "burdened by labor" as of childbearing, for she in her fecundity of childbearing experienced more pangs than Rachel. 37. Rachel means "sheep," for Jacob put the sheep of Laban to pasture for her sake. 38. Zilpah, "yawning mouth." Bilhah, "inveterate." Dinah is translated as "cause," for she was the cause of the quarrel in Shechem. 39. Tamar, "bitterness," because of the death of her husbands, and also "she who changes," because she changed herself into the garb of a prostitute when she lay with her father-in-law.

40. Perez (*Phares*), "division": because he divided the membrane of the afterbirth, he was allotted the name of "divider," that is, *phares.* Whence also the Pharisees, who would separate themselves from the people as if they were righteous, were called "the divided ones." 41. Perez's brother Zerah, in whose hand was the scarlet thread, is interpreted "rising." Either because he appeared first, or because many righteous people sprang from him, as is contained in the book of Paralipomenon (I Chronicles 9:6), he was called Zerah, that is, "rising." 42. Job is rendered in Latin as "the grieving one," and rightly the grieving one (*dolens*), for the smiting of his flesh and his endurance of afflictions (*dolor*). Indeed the etymology of his name prefigured his calamities.

43. Pharaoh is the name not of a person, but of a position of rank, just as among us kings are called 'Augustus,' although they are listed by their proper names. Further, in Latin 'Pharaoh' expresses "one denying him," to wit, God, or "his scatterer," for he was the afflicter of the

people of God. 44. Jannes, "the mariner," or "where is the sign," for his sign ceased and failed before the signs of Moses, whence the magicians said (Exodus 8:19), "This is the finger of God." 45. Mambres (i.e. Jambres), "the sea made of skins" or "the sea in the head." 46. Then, Moses means "taken from the water." The daughter of Pharaoh found him exposed at the bank of the river, and picking him up she adopted him for herself, and she called his name 'Moses' because she took him from the water.

47. Aaron means "mountain of strength," because taking his censor he stood in the way between the survivors and those who had been killed, and as a kind of mountain of strength he prevented the destruction of death (Numbers 16:46–48). 48. Eleazar, "the help of God." Balak, "the one falling headlong" or "the devouring one." Balaam, "the idle people." 49. Phinehas, "one who spares the mouth," for with a dagger he pierced Zimri along with his Madianite harlot, and appeased the fury of the Lord, so that he might be sparing (Numbers 25:6–15). 50. This Zimri is "the provoker" or "the one who causes bitterness," and his name is appropriately figured by bitterness, because by sinning he embittered the people. 51. Rahab, "breadth" or "hunger" or "onslaught."

Joshua means "savior," for he, adumbrating Christ, saved the people from the wilderness and led them into the promised land. 52. Caleb, as it were "heart" or "dog." Othniel, "his time, God" or "the answer of God." Ehud, "glorious." Barak, "one who sends lightning." 53. Deborah, "bee" or "the talkative one." "Bee," because she was most quick to act, as she was struggling against Sisera, at whose slaying she sang her song – hence "the talkative one." Jael, "ascension." 54. Gideon, "proof of their iniquity," for he was informed, with repeated instances, by what kind of forewarning he might achieve a future victory over his enemies; from this proof of what would happen he got the etymology of his name.

Abimelech, "my father the king." 55. Tola, "little worm" or "scarlet cloth." Jair, "one who sheds light." Jephthah, "the opener" or "the one opened." Ezbon, "thought" or "fetters of grief." Abdon "his slave." 56. Samson, "their sun" or "the strength of the sun," for he was famous for his strength and liberated Israel from its enemies. Dalilah, "poor girl" or "bucket." Boaz, "in strength" [or] "in whom is toughness." 57. Naomi, which we can interpret as "she who is consoled," because when her husband and children had died in a foreign country she clung to her Moabite daughter-in-law as a consolation for herself. 58. Ruth means "hastening," for she was an alien from a non-Israelite people, who hastened, her homeland abandoned, to cross into the land of Israel, saying to her mother-in-law (Ruth 1:16), "Whithersoever thou shalt go, I will go." 59. Hannah is interpreted as "his grace" because, while first she was sterile by nature, afterwards by the grace of God she became fertile.

Eli, "my God." 60. Hophni, "unshod," for this son of Eli was chosen for the ministry of priesthood, and he represented his loss of the priesthood by his own name, for the Apostle says (Ephesians 6:15), "Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." 61. And the Prophet (cf. Isaiah 52:7), "How beautiful are the feet that bringeth tidings of peace!" Therefore the name means "unshod," in order that by his name might be signified the removal of the priesthood of the Old Testament from the ancient nation. 62. Phinehas, the brother of Hophni, means "mute mouth," in which is signified the silence of the old priesthood and doctrine.

Samuel, "his name God." Jesse, "sacrifice of the island" or "incense." 63. Saul [means] "petition," for it is well known how the Hebrew people petitioned for him as a king for themselves, and received him not according to God, but according to their own will. 64. David, "strong in his hand," in that he was very strong in battles. And the name means "desirable," namely in his progeny, about which the Prophet made his prediction (Haggai 2:8), "And the desired of all nations shall come." 65. Solomon is said to have three names. His first name is Solomon, that is, "peacemaking," because there was peace in his reign. His second name was Jedidiah, because he was esteemed and beloved of the Lord. His third name was Coheleth, which in Greek is called 'Ecclesiastes,' in Latin 'the Preacher,' because he would speak to the people.

66. Jonathan, "gift of a dove." 67. Absalom, "peace of the father" by antiphrasis, because he waged war against his father, or because in that war David is read to have been brought to peace with his son, so much that he lamented his death with huge grief. 68. Rehoboam, "breadth of the people," and that signification by antiphrasis, because when the ten tribes were separated from him, only two remained for him. 69. Abijam, "father Lord" or "he was father." Asa, "one who lifts" or "one who raises up." Jehoshaphat, "judgment of the Lord." Jehoram, "he who is lofty." Ahaziah, "he who grasps the Lord." 70. Athaliah, "time of the

Lord." Joash, "he who breathes" or "the toughness of the Lord." Amaziah, "he who lifts up the people." 71. Uzziah, "strength of the Lord." Azariah, "help of the Lord." Uzziah and Azariah are the same person with two names. It is he who, having tried to lay claim to an unlawful priesthood for himself, was stricken with leprosy in the face.

72. Jotham, "he is perfect," making a fine etymology of his name, for he did right in the sight of the Lord, and built a lofty gate for the Temple. 73. Ahaz, "he who grasps." Hezekiah, "strong Lord." Manasseh, "forgetful," for with many impieties and sacrileges he forsook and was forgetful of God, [or because God was forgetful of his sins]. 74. Amon, "faithful" or "burdened." Josiah, "where is the kindling of the Lord" – an appropriate etymology for his name, for it was he who burnt up the idols. 75. Jehoahaz, "tough." Jehoiakim, "where is the preparation."

Eliakim, "resurrection of God." Jehoiachin, "preparation of the Lord." Zedekiah, "righteous of the Lord." 76. Jeroboam, "judgment" or "cause of the people," or, as some say, it means "division," because in his reign the people of Israel were divided and cut off from the reign of the line of David – for he stood out as the cause of the division of the people. 77. Zimri, "psalm" or "my song." Omri, "my curled one." Ahab, "brother of the father." 78. Jezebel, "flux of blood," or "she who streams with blood"; but better, "where is the dung-heap" – for when she was hurled down headlong, dogs devoured her flesh, as Elijah had predicted (IV Kings 9:37 Vulgate): he said, "And the flesh of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the earth."

79. Ahaziah, "he who grasps God." Jehu, "that one" or "he is." Jotham, "the tough one." Shallum, "his shadow," or "petition." Menahem, "the consoler." Pekah, "he who opens." 80. Nebuchadnezzar, "prophecy of the narrow flask," or "one who prophesies" a symbol of this kind, namely with regard to the dream of future things that he is reported to have seen, which Daniel interpreted; or, "a lingering in the recognition of difficulties," with regard to those who were led by him into captivity. 81. The name Zerubbabel is said to have been composed in Hebrew from three whole words: *zo*, "that," *ro*, "master," *babel*, properly "Babylonian"; and the name is compounded Zorobabel, "that master from Babylon," for he was born in Babylon, where he flourished as prince of the Jewish people.

vii. The patriarchs (De patriarchis) 1. The etymologies of certain patriarchs ought to be noted, so that we may know what is reflected in their names, for many of them took their names from specific causes. 'Patriarchs' means "chiefs among the fathers" (*patrum principes*), for ἀρχός in Greek means 'chief' (*princeps*). 2. At first "Abram" was so called – "father seeing the people" – with regard to Israel only. Afterwards he was called 'Abraham,' which is translated "father of many nations," which was yet to come to pass through faith. However, "nations" is not contained in the name but is understood, according to this (Genesis 17:5): "Thy name shall be Abraham, because I have made thee a father of many nations." 3. Isaac took his name from "laughter," for his father had laughed when Isaac was promised to him, astonished in joy. And his mother laughed, doubting in joy, when Isaac's birth was promised by the three men. Therefore he took the name Isaac for this reason, for it means "laughter."

4. It should moreover be known that four people in the Old Testament were given their names without any concealment before they were born: Ishmael, Isaac, Solomon, and Josiah. Read the Scriptures (Genesis 16:11, Genesis 21:6, II Kings 12:25, III Kings 13:2 Vulgate – see vi.74 above). 5. Jacob means "the supplanter," either because in birth he clutched the heel (*planta*) of his newborn brother, or because afterwards he deceived his brother by a stratagem. Whence Esau said (Genesis 27:36), "Rightly is his name called Jacob, for he hath supplanted me lo this second time." 6. Israel, "the man seeing God," for he received this name at the time when having wrestled all night he beat the angel in a struggle, and was blessed at daybreak. Hence because of his vision of God he was called Israel, as he himself says (Genesis 32:30), "I have seen God and my soul has been saved." 7. 'Reuben' means "son of the vision." Indeed, when Leah gave birth to him, she called his name Reuben, saying (Genesis 29:32), "For God saw my affliction."

8. 'Simeon' is interpreted "the hearing," for thus Leah said when she gave birth to him (Genesis 29:33), "For God heard me." 9. Levi, "the added one," for Leah said when she gave birth to him, not doubting the love of her husband (Genesis 29:34), "Now my husband will be with me, because I have borne him three sons." 10. Judah is called "the proclamation," for when Leah gave birth to him she offered up praise to the Lord, saying (Genesis 29:35), "Now over this I will proclaim the Lord," and for this he was called Judah. Accordingly his name was so

called from "proclamation," because it is a rendering of thanks.

11. Issachar means "he is a recompense"; *is* indeed means "he is," and *sachar* means "recompense." This is because Leah purchased for herself intercourse with her husband, which was owed to Rachel, with the mandrakes of her son Reuben. Whence when Issachar was born Leah said (Genesis 30:18), "God hath given my recompense." 12. Zebulun means "dwelling place," for Leah gave birth to him as her sixth son, and therefore now assured she said (Genesis 30:20), "My husband shall dwell with me." Whence her son was called "habitation." 13. Naphtali: the principle in his name has to do with "conversion" or "comparison" (*comparatio*), whence Rachel said, when her maid Bilhah had given birth to him, "God hath made me live in a dwelling with my sister."[7]

14. Dan means "judgment," for when Bilhah gave birth to him, her mistress Rachel said (Genesis 30:6), "The Lord hath judged for me, and hearing my voice he hath given me a son." She expressed the principle in his name in that, because the Lord had judged, she imposed the name 'judgment' on the son of her maidservant. 15. Gad was named from "outcome" or "disposition," for when Zilpah had given birth to him, her mistress Leah said (Genesis 30:11), "Happily," that is, meaning with regard to his disposition or to his outcome. 16. Asher means "blessed," for when Zilpah had given birth to him, Leah said (Genesis 30:13), "Blessed am I, and women bless me." She called Asher 'blessed' in the etymology of his name because she is called blessed.

17. Joseph: because his mother had wanted to add another for herself, she called him "the addition." Pharoah called him Zaphanath, which in Hebrew signifies "discoverer of hidden things," because he laid bare the obscure dreams and predicted the blight. 18. Still, because this name was imposed on him by the Egyptian, it ought to have a rationale in the Pharoah's own tongue. Therefore in Egyptian speech Zaphanath is interpreted "savior of the world," because he liberated the land from imminent destruction by famine. 19. Benjamin means "son of the right hand," that is, "of valor," for the right hand is called *iamin*. Indeed his dying mother gave him the name Benoni, that is, "son of my pain." His father changed this, naming him "son of the right hand." 20. Manasseh was so called because his father was unmindful of his hardships, for this is the word for "unmindfulness" in Hebrew. 21. Ephraim, because God added him on, and the name is translated in our language as "addition."

viii. The prophets (De prophetis) 1. Those whom the pagan world calls bards (*vates*) we call prophets (*propheta*), as if they were 'pre-speakers' (*praefator*), because indeed they speak (*fari*, ppl. *fatus*) and make true predictions about the future. Those whom we call prophets were called 'seers' (*videns*) in the Old Testament, because they saw (*videre*) things that others did not see, and would foresee things that were hidden in mystery. 2. Hence it is written in Samuel (I Kings 9:9), "Let us go to the seer (*videns*)." Hence Isaiah says (6:1), "I saw (*videre*) the Lord sitting on a throne high and elevated," and Ezekiel (1:1), "The heavens were opened and I saw (*videre*) the visions of God."

3. The etymologies of the names of certain prophets should be remarked, for their names well display what they foretold about future things by their deeds and words. 4. Elijah means "the Lord God." He was so called as an omen of the future, for when he contended about the sacrifice with the four hundred priests of Baal, as the name of the Lord was invoked, fire descended from heaven on the burnt offering (III Kings 18:39), "And when all the people saw this, they fell on their faces and said: The Lord he is God." 5. For this reason he received such a name beforehand, because afterwards through him the people recognized the Lord God. The same name means "strong Lord," either because he killed those same priests, or because he endured the enmity of Ahab.

6. Elisha means "salvation (*salus*) of the Lord." He too got his name as an omen of the future, and accordingly worked many miracles, and in driving away the famine he saved (*salvare*) the people from death. 7. Nathan, "he gave" or "of the giver." Isaiah means "savior of the Lord," and deservedly, for more fully than others he heralded the Savior of the whole world and his holy mysteries. 8. Jeremiah, "lofty of the Lord," because of what was said to him (Jeremiah 1:10), "I have set thee over the nations, and over kingdoms." 9. Ezekiel, "strength of God." Daniel, "judgment of God," either because in his judgment of the elders he delivered a judgment based on divinely inspired consideration when he freed Susanna

7 The received text of Genesis 30:8, to which Isidore alludes, reads, "God hath compared (*comparare*) me with my sister."

from destruction by uncovering their falsity, or because, discerning with shrewd intelligence, he disclosed visions and dreams in which the future was revealed by certain details and riddles. And he was called (Daniel 9:23) "a man of desires," because he did not eat the bread of desire, nor drink the wine of concupiscence.

10. Hosea, "savior," or "he who saves" (*salvans*), for when he prophesied the wrath of God against the people Israel for their crime of idolatry, he announced the safety (*salus*) of the house of Judah. Because of this Hezekiah, king of Judah, is shown to have purged and purified the Temple of the Lord once the idols that preceding kings had consecrated were removed. 11. Joel, "Lord God," or "beginning in God," or "he was of God" – these because his name reflects an uncertain etymology. 12. Amos, "the people torn away," for his prophecy was directed toward the people Israel, because they were already torn away from the Lord, and worshipped golden calves, or they were torn from the reign of the line of David.

13. Nahum, "the groaning one" or "the consoler," for he cries out against the "city of blood" (Nahum 3:1), and after its overthrow he consoles Zion, saying (Nahum 1:15), "Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, and that preacheth peace." 14. Habakkuk, "the one who embraces." He is either called "embrace" because he was beloved of God, or, because he engaged in contention with God, he was allotted the name of "the one who embraces," that is, of "the one who wrestles." Indeed, no other dared with such bold voice to provoke God to a debate about justice, as to why such great iniquity is involved in human affairs and in the affairs of this world.

15. Micah, "who is this?" or "who is that one?" 16. Zephaniah is interpreted "looking-glass" (*speculum*) or "hidden thing of the Lord"; either is appropriate for a prophet because they know the mysteries of God. Whence it is said to Ezekiel (3:17), "I have made thee a watchman (*speculator*)." And elsewhere (cf. Amos 3:7), "For the Lord will do nothing without revealing to his servants the prophets." 17. Obadiah, "slave of the Lord," for as Moses was servant of the Lord and the apostle Paul was the slave of Christ, so Obadiah, sent as the "ambassador to the nations" (Obadiah 1:1), comes and preaches what befits his prophetic ministry and servitude – hence, "slave of the Lord."

18. Jonah means "dove" or "the mourner." "Dove" for his groaning, when he was in the belly of the huge fish for three days, and "the mourner" either because of the grief he felt for the safety of the Ninevites or because of the suddenly withered ivy in the shade of which he took cover against the heat of the sun. 19. And he is also, as the Jews affirm, Amittai, the son of the widow of Zarephath whom Elijah resuscitated, as his mother afterwards said to him (III Kings 17:24 Vulgate), "Now I know that thou art a man of God, and the word of God in thy mouth is of truth." For this reason the boy was called Amittai, for Amittai, from the Hebrew, means "truth" in Latin, and because Elijah spoke a true thing, the boy who was resuscitated was named "the son of truth."

20. Zechariah, "memory of the Lord," for at the end of the seventieth year after the destruction of the Temple was finished, while Zechariah was preaching, the Lord remembered his people, and by the command of Darius the people of God returned, and both the city and the Temple were rebuilt. 21. Haggai in Latin signifies "hasty" (*festinus*)[8] and "joyful," for he prophesies that the destroyed Temple is to be built, and after the grief of the captivity he preaches the joy of the return. 22. Malachi means "angel of the Lord," that is, "messenger," for whatever he said was trusted as if commanded by the Lord. Hence the Septuagint translates his name in this way, saying (Malachi 1:1), "The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by the hand of his angel."

23. Ezra, "the helper." Nehemiah, "the consoler from the Lord." These names were allotted as a certain omen of the future, for they were a help and a consolation for his whole people as they returned to their homeland. Indeed these same two rebuilt the Temple of the Lord, and they restored the works of the walls and towers. 24. Hananiah, "the grace of God." The same person is also Shadrach in the Chaldean language, which means "my handsome one." 25. Azariah, "help of the Lord," and he is the same as Abednego, which is turned into Latin as "as a slave I am silent." 26. Mishael, "who is the people of the Lord," and he is also Meshach, which means "laughter" or "joy."

27. Ahijah, "my brother." Shemaiah, "he who hears the Lord." Asaph, ["he who gathers"]. Ethan, ["the tough one" or "he who has ascended"]. 28. Jeduthun, "he who leaps across those" or "he who jumps those," for this person called 'the leaper across' leapt by his singing across certain people who were cleaving to the ground, bent

8 The reading *festivus*, "festive," seems preferable.

down to the earth, thinking about things that are at the lowest depths, and putting their hope in transient things. 29. Heman, "he who accepts" or "their dread." Ethan, "the tough one." Berechiah, "blessed of the Lord" or "blessed Lord." Huldah, "distraction" or "diversion." Judith, "she who praises" or "she who proclaims." Esther, "the hidden one."

30. Zechariah, ["memory of the Lord," for what he sings (Luke 1:72), "to remember his holy testament"]. 31. John [the Baptist, "grace of the Lord," because he was the end of prophecy, the herald of grace, or the beginning of baptism, through which grace is administered]. 32. These are the prophets of the Old and New Testament, of whom the last is Christ, to whom it is said by the Father (Jeremiah 1:5), "I made thee a prophet unto the nations."

33. Moreover, there are seven kinds of prophesy. The first kind is ecstasy (*ecstasis*), which is a passing beyond of the mind, as when Peter in a stunned state of mind saw that vessel let down from heaven with various animals (see Acts 10:11–12). 34. The second kind is vision (*visio*), as when Isaiah says (Isaiah 6:1), "I saw (*videre*, ppl. *visus*) the Lord sitting upon a high throne." The third kind is dream (*somnium*), as Jacob while sleeping saw the ladder reaching up to heaven. The fourth kind is through a cloud, as God speaks to Moses and to Job after he was stricken. 35. The fifth kind is a voice from heaven, like that which sounded to Abraham saying (Genesis 22:12), "Lay not thy hand upon the boy," and to Saul on the road (Acts 9:4), "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" 36. The sixth kind occurs when an oracle (*parabola*) is received, as with Solomon in Proverbs, and with Balaam when he was called upon by Balak. The seventh kind is being filled (*repletio*) with the Holy Spirit, as with nearly all the prophets.

37. Others have said that there are three kinds of visions (*visio*). One, according to the eyes of the body, as Abraham saw three men under the holm-oak of Mambre, and Moses saw the fire in the bush, and the disciples saw the transfigured Lord on the mountain between Moses and Elijah, and others of this kind. 38. A second, according to the spirit, in which we imagine what we sense through the body, as Peter saw the dish sent down from heaven with the various animals (Acts 10:11–12), and as Isaiah saw God on the highest seat, not bodily but spiritually (Isaiah 6:1). 39. For no bodily form limits God, but in the same way that many things are said not properly but figuratively, so also many things are shown figuratively.

40. Then there is a third kind of vision, which is neither by bodily senses nor by that part of the soul where images of corporeal things are grasped, but by insight (*intuitus*) of the mind where intellectual truth is contemplated, as the gifted Daniel saw with his mind what Belshazzar had seen with his body. Without this kind of vision the other two are either fruitless or positively lead into error. Still, the Holy Spirit governs all these kinds of vision. 41. Further, not only a good person, but also a bad person can have prophecy, for we find that King Saul prophesied, for he was persecuting the holy David, and filled with the Holy Spirit he began to prophesy.

ix. The apostles (De apostolis) 1. Apostle (*apostolus*) means "one who is sent," for the name indicates this. Just as in Greek ἄγγελος means "messenger" (*nuntius*) in Latin, so 'one who is sent' is called an 'apostle' in Greek (i.e. ἀπόστολος), for Christ sent them to spread the gospel through the whole world, so that certain ones would penetrate Persia and India teaching the nations and working great and incredible miracles in the name of Christ, in order that, from those corroborating signs and prodigies, people might believe in what the Apostles were saying and had seen. Most of them receive the rationale for their names from these activities.

2. Peter (*Petrus*) took his name from 'rock' (*petra*), that is, from Christ, on whom the Church is founded. Now *petra* is not given its name from *Petrus*, but *Petrus* from *petra*, just as 'Christ' is so called not from 'Christian,' but 'Christian' from 'Christ.' Therefore the Lord says (Matthew 16:18), "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock (*petra*) I will build my church," because Peter had said (Matthew 16:16), "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Then the Lord said to him, "Upon this rock" which you have proclaimed "I will build my church," for (I Corinthians 10:4) "the rock was Christ," on which foundation even Peter himself was built. 3. He was called Cephas because he was established as the head (*caput*) of the apostles, for κεφαλή in Greek means 'head,' and Cephas is the Syrian name for Peter. 4. Simon 'Bar-Jonah' in our tongue means "son of a dove," and is both a Syrian and a Hebrew name, for *Bar* in the Syrian language is "son," 'Jonah' in Hebrew is "dove," and Bar-Jonah is composed of both languages. 5. Some people simply take it that Simon, that is Peter, is the son of

John, because of that question (John 21:15), "Simon of John, lovest thou me?" – and they consider it corrupted by an error of the scribes, so that *Bar-Iona* was written for *Bar-Iohannes*, that is, 'son of John,' with one syllable dropped. 'Johanna' means "grace of the Lord." 6. So Peter was three-named: Peter, Cephas, and Simon Bar-Jonah; further 'Simon' in Hebrew means "he who listens."

7. Saul in Hebrew speech means "temptation," because he was at first involved in temptation of the Church, for he was a persecutor; hence he had that name when he was persecuting Christians. 8. Afterwards, with the name changed, from Saul was made Paul, which is interpreted "the wonderful one" or "the chosen one." Wonderful, because he performed many signs or because from east to west he preached the gospel of Christ to all the nations. 9. Chosen, as the Holy Spirit says in the Acts of the Apostles (13:2), "Separate me Barnabas and Paul, for the work whereunto I have chosen them." Further in Latin speech Paul (*Paulus*; cf. *paulus*, "little") is so called from "little," whence he himself says (I Corinthians 15:9), "For I am the least of all the apostles." Thus when he was Saul he was proud and haughty; when Paul, humble and little. 10. Therefore we speak thus, "after a little (*paulo*) I will see you," that is, after a short time. Now because he became little, he himself says (cf. I Corinthians 15:8), "For I am the last [of all] the apostles," and (Ephesians 3:8), "To me, the least of all the saints." Both Cephas and Saul, then, were called by a changed name so that they would indeed be new even in their names, like Abraham and Sarah.

11. Andrew, the brother of Peter in the flesh, and his co-heir in grace; according to its Hebrew etymology 'Andrew' means "handsome one" or "he who answers," and further in Greek speech he is called "the manly one" from the word for "man" (cf. Greek ἀνήρ, gen. ἀνδρός, "man"). 12. John with a certain prophetic foresight deservedly got his name, for it means "in whom is grace" or "grace of the Lord." Indeed, Jesus loved him more fully than the other apostles. 13. James of Zebedee has his surname from his father, and leaving his father he with John followed the true Father. These are (Mark 3:17) the "Sons of Thunder" who were named 'Boanerges' from the strength and greatness of their faith. This James is the son of Zebedee, the brother of John, who is revealed to have been killed by Herod after the ascension of the Lord.

14. James of Alphaeus, surnamed so as to be distinguished from the other James who is called the son of Zebedee, as this second one is the son of Alphaeus. Therefore both took their surnames from their fathers. 15. The latter is James the Less, who is called the brother of the Lord in the Gospel, because Mary the wife of Alphaeus was the sister of the mother of the Lord, and the evangelist John surnamed the former Mary 'of Clopas' after her father, assigning her this name either from the nobility of her family or for some other reason. Further, 'Alphaeus' in Hebrew speech means "the thousandth" or "the learned one" in Latin. 16. Philip, "mouth of lamps" or "mouth of hands." Thomas, "the abyss" or "the twin," whence in Greek he is also called Didymus. Bartholomew, "son of the one supporting the waters" or "son of the one supporting me." This is Syriac, not Hebrew. 17. 'Matthew' in Hebrew expresses "the one granted." This same person was also called Levi after the tribe from which he sprang. Further, in Latin he got the name of 'the publican' from his work, for he was chosen from among the publicans and brought into the apostolate.

18. Simon the Cananean, as distinct from Simon Peter, is named after the Galilean township Cana where the Lord changed water into wine. It is this one who by another evangelist is designated 'the Zealot'; indeed 'Cana' means "zeal." 19. Judas of James, who elsewhere is called Lebbaeus, has his symbolic name from the word for 'heart,' which we can call "little heart" in the diminutive. Another Gospel writer (Matthew 10:3) calls this Judas 'Thaddaeus.' Church history relates that he was sent to Edessa to the king of the Abgars. 20. Judas Iscariot got his name either from the township in which he was born or from the tribe of Issachar, with a certain omen of the future as to his own condemnation, for 'Issachar' means "payment," to signify the traitor's price for which he sold the Lord, as it is written (cf. Matthew 27:9), "And they took" my payment, "the thirty pieces of silver, the price that I was prized by them."

21. Matthias, who is considered the only one among the apostles to be without a surname, means "the one granted," so that it may be understood: "in place of Judas," for he was elected in Judas's place by the apostles, when lots were cast to decide between two people. 22. Mark, "lofty in his mandate," especially for the Gospel of the Most High that he preached. 23. Luke, "the one who rises" or "the one lifting up" [because he lifted up the

preaching of the gospel after the others]. 24. Barnabas, "son of the prophet" or "son of consolation."

x. Other names in the Gospel (De reliquis in Evangelio nominibus) 1. Mary, "she who illuminates" or "star of the sea (*mare*)," for she gave birth to the light of the world. Further, in Syrian speech 'Mary' means "mistress" – and beautifully – for she gave birth to the Lord. 2. Elizabeth, "fullness of my God" or "oath of my God." 3. Magdalene, "tower." Martha, "one who incites" or "one who provokes," and in Syrian speech it means "one who dominates." 4. Nathanael, "gift of God" [because by the gift of God there was no guile, that is, pretense, in him]. 5. Zebedee, "the one granted" or "the one who flows." Zacchaeus, "the just one" or "the justified one" or "the one who should be justified." It is a Syrian, not Hebrew, name. 6. Lazarus, "the one helped" [because he was resuscitated from death]. Herod, "the hairy one' or 'the vainglorious one."

7. Caiaphas, "the investigator" or "the shrewd one" or "he who vomits from the mouth" – for wickedly he condemned the righteous one with his mouth, although he had announced this by a prophetic mystery. 8. Pontius, "he who shuns counsel," especially that of the Jews, for, taking water, he washed his hands, saying (Matthew 27:24), "I am innocent of the blood of this just man." 9. Pilate, "mouth of the hammerer" [because when he both justified and condemned Christ with his mouth, he struck on both sides in the manner of a hammerer]. 10. Barabbas, "son of their teacher," doubtless "of the teacher of the Jews," who is the devil, the instigator of the murderers, who reigns among them still today.

xi. Martyrs (De martyribus) 1. 'Martyrs' (*martyr*) in the Greek language (i.e. μάρτυρ) are called 'witnesses' (*testis*) in Latin, whence 'testimonials' are called *martyria* in Greek. And they are called witnesses because for their witness (*testimonium*) of Christ they suffered their passions and struggled for truth even to the point of death. 2. But because we call them not *testes*, which we certainly could do, using the Latin term, but rather 'martyrs' in the Greek, this Greek word sounds quite familiar in the ears of the Church, as do many Greek terms that we use in place of Latin.

3. The first martyr in the New Testament was Stephen, whose name in Hebrew speech is interpreted "standard," because in his martyrdom he was the first standard for the imitation of the faithful. The same name is rendered from the Greek tongue into Latin as "the crowned one," and this by way of prophecy, because through a certain foreseeing of the future his name signified beforehand what would come to pass, for he suffered, and what he was called, he received. Thus 'Stephen' means "crown"; he was in humility stoned, but in sublimity crowned.

4. Further there are two kinds of martyr: one in manifest passion, the other in hidden valor of the soul. Indeed, many people, suffering the snares of the enemy and resisting all carnal desires, because they sacrificed themselves in their hearts for almighty God, became martyrs even in times of peace – those indeed who, if a period of persecution had occurred, could have been martyrs.

xii. Clerics (De clericis) 1. The clergy (*clerus*) and clerics (*clericus*) are so called because Matthias, who as we read was the first person ordained by the apostles, was chosen by lot – for κλῆρος in Greek means "allotment" or "inheritance." 2. Therefore they are called clerics because they are of the allotment of the Lord, or because they have a portion of the Lord. And in general all who serve in the Church of Christ are named 'clerics.' Their ranks and names are these: 3. doorkeeper (*ostiarius*), psalmist (*psalmista*), reader (*lector*), exorcist (*exorcista*), acolyte (*acolythus*), subdeacon (*subdiaconus*), deacon (*diaconus*), priest (*presbyter*), bishop (*episcopus*).

4. The order of bishops is fourfold, that is, of patriarchs, archbishops, metropolitans, and bishops (*patriarcha*, *archiepiscopus*, *metropolitanus*, *episcopus*). 5. 'Patriarch' in the Greek language means "chief of the fathers," because he holds the chief, that is, the apostolic place. And therefore, because he is employed in the office of highest honor, he is judged worthy of such a name as the 'Roman' or 'Antiochene' or 'Alexandrian' patriarch. 6. 'Archbishop' is so named with a Greek term because he is "highest of the bishops," for he holds an apostle's place and presides over metropolitans as well as other bishops. 7. ['Metropolitan' is so called from "the measure of cities."] Archbishops are placed above the several provinces, and other priests are subject to their authority and doctrine, and without them the other bishops may do nothing; indeed the care of the whole province is committed to archbishops.

8. Moreover, all the orders designated above are named by one and the same term, 'bishop,' but beyond

that some use a particular name to distinguish the powers that they have received individually. 9. Patriarch, "father of chiefs," for ἄρχων is 'chief.' 10. Archbishop, "chief of bishops." Metropolitan . . . 11. Further, the term 'episcopacy' (*episcopatus*) is so called because he who is placed over it has oversight (*superintendere*), exercising pastoral care, that is, over his subjects, for the term σκοπεῖν in Latin means "watch over" (*intendere*). 12. 'Bishop,' then, in Greek, means "overseer" (*speculator*) in Latin, for he is set over the Church as an overseer. He is so called because he keeps watch (*speculari*), and oversees (*praespicere*) the behavior and lives of the people placed under him.

13. The 'pontifex' is the chief of priests, as if the word were 'the way' of his followers.[9] And he is also named the 'highest priest' and the *pontifex maximus*, for he creates priests and levites (i.e. deacons); he himself disposes all the ecclesiastical orders; he indicates what each one should do. 14. Indeed, in former times pontifexes were also kings, for this was the custom of our ancestors, that the king was himself a priest or pontifex – hence the Roman emperors were also called pontifexes.

15. *Vates* are so called from 'force of mind' (*vis mentis*), and the meaning of the word is manifold, for now it means "priest," now "prophet," now "poet." 16. A 'high priest' (*antistes sacerdos*) is so called because he 'stands before' (*ante stare*), for he is first in the hierarchy of the Church, and he has no one above him.

17. A priest (*sacerdos*) has a name compounded of Greek and Latin, as it were 'one who gives a holy thing' (*sacrum dans*), for as king (*rex*) is named from 'ruling' (*regere*), so priest from 'making sacrifice' (*sacrificare*) – for he consecrates (*consecrare*) and sanctifies (*sanctificare*). 18. Further, priests of the gentiles were called flamens. They wore on their heads a felt cap (*pilleus*), and on top of this there was a short stick holding a piece of wool. Because they could not bear it in the heat, they began to bind their heads with a fillet only, 19. for it was an abomination for them to go about with a completely bare head. Hence from the fillet (*filum*) that they used they were called flamens (*flamen*, plural *flamines*), as if it were *filamines*. But on feast days, with the fillet laid aside they would put on the *pilleus* out of respect for the eminence of their priesthood.

9 Isidore alludes to the presumed etymology of *pontifex* from *pons*, 'bridge,' hence 'way.'

20. 'Priest' (*presbyter*) in Greek is interpreted "elder" (*senior*) in Latin. They are named elders not because of their age, or their exhausted senility, but rather for the honor and status that they have received. 21. Elders (*presbyter*) are also called priests (*sacerdos*), because they perform the sacraments (*sacrum dare*), as do bishops; but although they are priests (*sacerdos*) they do not have the highest honor of the pontificate, for they neither mark the brow with chrism nor give the Spirit, the Comforter, which a reading of the Acts of the Apostles shows may be done by bishops only. Whence, among the ancients, bishops and priests (*presbyter*) were the same, for the former name is associated with rank, the latter with seniority.

22. Levites were named after their originator, for the levites descended from Levi, and by them the ministries of the mystic sacraments were performed in the Temple of God. In Greek these are called deacons (*diaconus*), in Latin ministers (*minister*), for just as *sacerdos* is related to 'consecration (*consecratio*), *diaconus* (cf. διακονεῖν, "minister," "do service") is related to 'dispensing of service' (*ministerii dispensatio*). 23. *Hypodiacones* in Greek are what we call subdeacons (*subdiaconus*), who are so called because they are subject to the regulations and offices of levites. They receive offerings from the faithful in the Temple of God, and bring them to the levites for placing on the altars. In Hebrew they are called Nathanians (*Nathaneus*).

24. Readers (*lector*) are named from 'reading' (*legere*, ppl. *lectus*) and psalmists (*psalmista*) from singing psalms, for the former pronounce to the people what they should follow, and the latter sing to kindle the spirits of their audience to compunction – although some readers also declaim in so heart-rending a way that they drive some people to sorrow and lamentation. 25. These same people are also called 'announcers' (*pronuntiator*) because they announce from far away (*porro adnuntiare*), for their voice will be so loud and clear that they fill the ears even of those placed far away.

26. Further, a chanter (*cantor*) is so called because he modulates his voice in singing (*cantus*). There are said to be two types of chanter in the art of music, corresponding with the names learned people have been able to give them in Latin, the precentor (*praecentor*) and the succentor (*succentor*). 27. The precentor is so called, naturally, because he leads the singing; the succentor because he follows in response. 28. We also speak of a co-chanter (*concentor*), one who 'sings at the same time'

(*consonare*), but he who sings at the same time but does not 'sing jointly' (*concinere*) will not be called co-chanter.

29. 'Acolytes' (*acolythus*) in Greek are called torch-bearers (*ceroferarius*) in Latin, from their carrying candles (*cereus*) when the Gospel is to be read or mass is to be offered. 30. For at that time lights are kindled and carried by them, not in order to put darkness to flight, since at the same time there is daylight, but in order to display a symbol of joy, so that under the figure of the physical candlelight that light may be displayed concerning which it is read in the Gospel (John 1:9), "That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world."

31. 'Exorcists' (*exorcista*) are rendered from Greek into Latin as "swearers" (*adiurans*) or "rebukers," for they invoke, upon the catechumens or upon those who have an unclean spirit, the name of the Lord Jesus, swearing (*adiurare*) through him that it may depart from them. 32. Doorkeepers are the same as porters (*ianitor*), who in the Old Testament were chosen to guard the Temple, lest someone unclean in any way should enter it. They are called doorkeepers (*ostiarius*) because they are present at the doors (*ostium*) of the Temple. 33. Keeping the key, they watch over everything inside and out, and making judgment between the good and the bad they receive the faithful and reject the unfaithful.

xiii. Monks (De monachis) 1. The term 'monk' (*monachus*) has a Greek etymology, because a monk is alone (*singularis*), for μονάς in Greek means "oneness" (*singularitas*). Therefore if the word for monk means 'a solitary' (*solitarius*), what is someone who is alone (*solus*) doing in a crowd? There are, however, several kinds of monks. 2. Cenobites (*coenobita*), whom we can call those living 'in a community' (*in commune*), because a convent (*coenobium*) is of several people. 3. Anchorites (*anchorita*) are those who after a community life seek out deserted places and live alone in the wilderness. Because they withdraw far from people (cf. ἀναχωρεῖν, "withdraw") they are named with this name. Anchorites imitate Elijah and John (the Baptist), cenobites imitate the apostles. 4. Hermits (*eremita*) are also anchorites who, removed (*removere*, ppl. *remotus*) from the gaze of people, seek out the desert (*eremum*) and deserted solitary places, for the term *eremum* is used as if it were 'remote' (*remotum*). 5. Abbot (*abba*), moreover, a Syriac term, signifies "father" in Latin, as Paul made clear in writing to the Romans (8:15), "Whereby we cry: Abba, Father," having used two languages for the one name, for he says "Father" with the Syriac word *abba*, and then again names the same person in Latin, *Pater*.

xiv. Other faithful people (De ceteris fidelibus) 1. 'Christian' (*Christianus*), as the meaning of the word indicates, is derived from 'unction' (*unctio*) or from the name of their originator and creator. Now Christians are surnamed from Christ, as Jews (*Iudaei*) from Judah (*Iuda*). Indeed, the surnames of adherents have been given from the name of their teacher. 2. Further, Christians were formerly called Nazarenes (*Nazaraeus*) by the Jews as if in opprobrium, because our Lord and Savior was called 'the Nazarene' after a certain township of Galilee. 3. Let no one glorify himself as a Christian, however, who has the name and does not have the deeds. But where the name accords with one's work, most surely that person is a Christian, because he shows himself to be a Christian by his deeds, one who walks as Christ walked, from whom he took the name.

4. 'Catholic' (*catholicus*) means "universal" or "general," for the Greeks call the universal καθολικός. 5. An 'orthodox person' (*orthodoxus*) is one who believes rightfully, and who lives [righteously] as he believes. Now ὀρθῶς in Greek means "rightly" (*recte*), δόξα is "good repute" (*gloria*): an orthodox person is a man "of good and right repute" (*recta gloria*). He who lives otherwise than as he believes cannot be called by this name.

6. 'Neophyte' (*neophytus*) from the Greek can be translated into Latin as "a new beginner" and "of uncultivated faith" or "one recently born again." 7. A catechumen is so called because he is still hearing (*audire*) the teaching of the faith, and has not yet received baptism, for κατηχούμενος in Greek means "auditor." 8. A 'fit seeker' (*competens*) is so called because after instruction in the faith he 'fitly seeks' (*competere*) the grace of Christ; hence from 'seeking' (*petere*) they are called 'fit seekers.' 9. 'Lay' (*laicus*) means "of the people" (*popularis*), for λαός in Greek means "people" (*populus*). 10. 'Proselyte' (*proselytus*) – that is, one who is a foreigner and circumcised, who is mixed in with the people of God – is a Greek term.

Book IX

Languages, nations, reigns, the military, citizens, family relationships (De linguis, gentibus, regnis, militia, civibus, affinitatibus)

i. The languages of nations (De linguis gentium) 1. The diversity of languages arose with the building of the Tower after the Flood, for before the pride of that Tower divided human society, so that there arose a diversity of meaningful sounds, there was one language for all nations, which is called Hebrew. The patriarchs and prophets used this language not only in their speech, but also in the sacred writings. But at the outset[1] there were as many languages as there were nations, and then more nations than languages, because many nations sprang from one language stock. 2. The term 'languages' (*lingua*) is used in this context for the words that are made by the tongue (*lingua*), according to the figure of speech by which the thing that produces is named after the thing that is produced.[2] Thus we will say 'mouth' for 'words,' as we speak of the letters we form as 'a hand.'

3. There are three sacred languages – Hebrew, Greek, and Latin – which are preeminent throughout the world. On the cross of the Lord the charge laid against him was written at Pilate's command in these three languages (John 19:20). Hence – and because of the obscurity of the Sacred Scriptures – a knowledge of these three languages is necessary, so that, whenever the wording of one of the languages presents any doubt about a name or an interpretation, recourse may be had to another language. 4. Greek is considered more illustrious than the other nations' languages, for it is more sonorous than Latin or any other language. We can distinguish five varieties of Greek. The first of these is called κοινή, that is, 'mixed' or 'common,' which everyone uses. 5. The second is Attic (*Atticus*), namely the Greek of Athens (*Atheniensis*), which all the authors of Greece used. The third is Doric, which the Egyptians and Syrians employ. The fourth, Ionic; the fifth, Aeolic, which they say the Eolisti spoke.[3] In examining the Greek language we find settled differences of this kind, because their speaking communities were dispersed in this way.

6. Some say there are four varieties of Latin, that is, Ancient (*Priscus*), Latin, Roman, and Mixed. The Ancient is that uncouth language that the oldest people of Italy spoke in the age of Janus and Saturn, and it is preserved in the songs of the Salii. Then Latin, which the Etruscans and others in Latium spoke in the age of Latinus and the kings, and in this variety the Twelve Tables were written. 7. Then Roman, which arose after the kings were driven out by the Roman people. In this variety the poets Naevius, Plautus, and Vergil, and the orators Gracchus and Cato and Cicero, and others produced their work. Then Mixed, which emerged in the Roman state after the wide expansion of the Empire, along with new customs and peoples, corrupted the integrity of speech with solecisms and barbarisms.

8. All the nations of the East – like the Hebrews and the Syrians – crunch together their speech and words in their throats. All the Mediterranean nations – like the Greeks and the people of Asia Minor – strike their speech on the palate. All the Western nations – like the Italians and Spaniards – gnash their words against their teeth. 9. Syrian and Chaldean are close to Hebrew in speech, mostly agreeing in sound and in the pronunciation of their letters. But some think that Hebrew is Chaldean, because Abraham sprang from the Chaldeans. However, if this is accepted, how is it that the Hebrew children in the Book of Daniel (1:4) are ordered to be taught the Chaldean language, which they do not know? 10. Every human is able to pick up any human language – whether

1 Presumably "at the outset" here means "immediately after the division of Babel."

2 Isidore apparently interchanges the terms of the figure by mistake.

3 The last clause loosely translates a corrupted text.

Greek, or Latin, or that of any other nation – by hearing it, or to learn it by reading with a tutor. Although knowing all languages is difficult for anyone, yet no one is so indolent that, placed among his own people, he does not know the language of his own nation. Indeed, how else should such a one be considered but as worse than brute beasts? Beasts produce their own cries, and the human who is ignorant of his own language is worse.

11. It is hard to determine what sort of language God spoke at the beginning of the world, when he said (Genesis 1:3), "Be light made," for there were not yet any languages. Or again, it is hard to know with what language he spoke afterwards to the outer ears of humans, especially as he spoke to the first man, or to the prophets, or when the voice of God resounded in bodily fashion when he said (Mark 1:11), "Thou art my beloved Son." It is believed by some that the language in these places was that single one which existed before the diversity of tongues. As for the various language communities, it is rather believed that God speaks to them in the same language that the people use themselves, so that he may be understood by them. 12. Indeed, God speaks to humans not through an invisible substance, but through a bodily creature, through which he even wished to appear to humans when he spoke. Now the Apostle says (I Corinthians 13:1), "If I speak with the tongues of men, and of angels." Here the question arises, with what tongue do angels speak? But Paul is saying this by way of exaggeration, not because there are tongues belonging to angels. 13. It is also asked with what language will humans speak in the future; the answer is nowhere to be found, for the Apostle says (1 Corinthians 13:8), "Or tongues shall cease."

14. We have treated languages first, and then nations, because nations arose from languages, and not languages from nations.

ii. The names of nations (De gentium vocabulis) 1. A nation (*gens*) is a number of people sharing a single origin, or distinguished from another nation (*natio*) in accordance with its own grouping, as the 'nations' of Greece or of Asia Minor.[4] From this comes the term 'shared heritage' (*gentilitas*). The word *gens* is also so called on account of the generations (*generatio*) of families, that is from 'begetting' (*gignere*, ppl. *genitus*), as the term 'nation' (*natio*) comes from 'being born' (*nasci*, ppl. *natus*). 2. Now, of the nations into which the earth is divided, fifteen are from Japheth, thirty-one from Ham, and twenty-seven from Shem, which adds up to seventy-three – or rather, as a proper accounting shows, seventy-two.[5] And there are an equal number of languages, which arose across the lands and, as they increased, filled the provinces and islands.

3. The five sons of Shem each brought forth individual nations. The first of these was Elam, from whom descended the Elamites, princes of the Persians. The second Asshur, from whom sprang the empire of the Assyrians. The third Arpachshad, from whom the nation of the Chaldeans arose. The fourth Lud, from whom came the Lydians. The fifth Aram, from whom descended the Syrians, whose capital city was Damascus. 4. There are four sons of Aram, the grandsons of Shem: Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. Uz was the founder of Trachonitis – a principate between Palestine and Celesyria – from which came Job, as it is written (Job 1:1): "There was a man in the land of Uz." The second, Hul, from whom came the Armenians. The third, Gether, from whom came the Acarnanians or Curians. The fourth Mash, from whom descended those who are called Maeones. 5. The posterity of Arpachshad the son of Shem follows. The grandson of Arpachshad was Heber (i.e. Eber), from whom descended the Hebrews. The son of Eber was Joktan, from whom the nation of the Indians arose. The son of Joktan was Sheleph, from whom came the Bactrians – although others suspect that these were Scythian exiles. 6. A son of Abraham was Ishmael, from whom arose the Ishmaelites, who are now called, with corruption of the name, Saracens, as if they descended from Sarah, and the Agarenes, from Agar (i.e Hagar). 7. A son of Ishmael was Nebaioth, from whom descended the Nabatheans, who live between the Euphrates and the Red Sea. 8. The sons of Lot were Moab and Ammon (i.e. Ben-ammi), from whom came the Moabites and the Ammonites. 9. The son of Esau was Edom, from whom descended the Edomites. These are the nations that descend from the

4 The word *gens* essentially means "people generated together, people of one stock." It may be translated "nation," "race," "tribe," "people," "family," etc., depending on the context.

5 The number of nations was traditionally seventy-two, taking Eber and Phaleg as progenitors of a single nation. In several particulars Isidore departs from the accounts in Genesis 10 and Paralipomenon (Chronicles) 1. Often he follows Jerome's *Liber Quaestionum Hebraicarum in Genesim.*

stock of Shem, holding the southern lands from the east to the Phoenicians.

10. There were four sons of Ham, from whom sprang the following nations. Cush, from whom the Ethiopians were begotten. Mesraim (i.e. Egypt), from whom the Egyptians are said to have risen. 11. Put, from whom came the Libyans – whence the river of Mauretania is called Put still today, and the whole region around it is called Puthensis. 12. Finally Canaan, from whom descended the Africans and the Phoenicians and the ten tribes of Canaanites. 13. Again, the sons of Cush, grandsons of Ham – the grandchildren of Ham were six. The sons of Cush: Saba (i.e. Seba), Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, Seba, and Cuza.[6] 14. Saba, from whom the Sabaeans were begotten and named, concerning which Vergil (*Geo.* 2.117):

> The bough of frankincense is the Sabaeans' alone.

These are also the Arabians. 15. Havilah, from whom descended the Getulians, who cling together in a desert region of farthest Africa. 16. Sabtah, from whom came the Sabathenes, who now are called the Astabarians. 17. But Raamah, Seba, and Cuza gradually lost their ancient names, and the names that they now have, instead of the ancestral ones, are not known. 18. The sons of Raamah were Saba (i.e. Sheba) and Dedan. This Saba is written in Hebrew with the letter *shin*, whereas the Saba above is written with a *samekh*, and from him the Sabaeans were named – but now Saba is translated "Arabia." 19. Dedan, from whom arose the Ethiopians in the western region.

The sons of Mesraim (i.e. Egypt): Lahabim, from whom came the Libyans, who formerly were called Putheans. 20. Casluhim, from whom sprang the Philistines, whom the ancients called Ἀλλόφυλοι (lit. "foreigners"), and whom we now call, corruptly, Palestinians. 21. The other six nations are unknown because their past names fell into oblivion when they were overthrown in the Ethiopian War.

22. There were eleven sons of Canaan, from whom descended the ten tribes of Canaanites, whose land the Jews occupied when the Canaanites were expelled. The firstborn of these was Sidon, from whom came the Sidonians – whence also their city in Phoenicia is called Sidon. 23. The second, Heth, from whom came the Hethites. Third, Jebus, from whom descended the Jebusites, who possessed the city Jerusalem. Fourth, Emor, from whom came the Amorites. Fifth, Girgash, from whom the Girgashites. Sixth Hivah, from whom the Hivites. Those same were the Gibeonites, from the city of Gibeon, who came as suppliants to Joshua (Joshua 9:3–15). 24. Seventh, Arkah, who founded the city of Arcas opposite Tripoli, situated at the foot of Mount Lebanon. Eighth, Sinah, from whom the Sinites. Ninth Arvadah, from whom are the Arvadites, who occupied the island Aradum, separated by a narrow strait from the Phoenician coastline. 25. The tenth, Zemarah, from whom came the noble city of Syria called Coeles. The eleventh, Hamath. These are the nations from the stock of Ham, which extend across the whole southern region from Sidon to the Gaditanian Strait (i.e. the Straits of Cadiz).

Now the tribes of the sons of Japheth. 26. Seven sons of Japheth are named: Gomer, from whom sprang the Galatians, that is, the Gauls (*Galli*). 27. Magog, from whom people think the Scythians and the Goths took their origin. 28. Madai, from whom people reckon the Medes came to be. Javan, from whom the Ionians, who are also the Greeks – hence the 'Ionian' Sea. 29. Tubal, from whom came the Iberians, who are also the Spaniards, although some think the Italians also sprang from him. 30. Meshech, from whom came the Cappadocians; hence to this day a city in their territory is called Mazaca. 31. Tiras, from whom the Thracians; their name is not much altered, as if it were Tiracians. 32. Then the sons of Gomer, the grandsons of Japheth. Ashkenaz, from whom descended the Sarmatians, whom the Greeks call Rheginians. 33. Riphath, from whom came the Paphlagonians. Gotorna (i.e. Togarmah), from whom are the Phrygians. 34. The sons of Javan: Elishah, from whom came the Greek Eliseans, who are called Aeolides. Hence also the fifth language in Greece is called Αἰολίς ("Aeolic"). 35. Tarshish, from whom descended the Cilicians, as Josephus thinks. From his name their capital city is called Tarsus. 36. Kittim, from whom the Citians, that is the Cypriots, whose city today is named Citium. Dodanim (i.e. Rodanim), from whom came the Rhodians. 37. These are the nations from the stock of Japheth, which occupy the middle region of Asia Minor from Mount Taurus to the north and all of Europe up to the Britannic Ocean, bequeathing their names to both places and peoples.

6 Genesis 10:7 lists five sons of Cush. One of these, Sabteca, has erroneously become two, Seba and Cuza.

Afterwards many of these names were changed, others remain as they were. 38. Indeed, the names for many nations have partially remained, so that their derivation is apparent today, like the Assyrians from Assur and the Hebrews from Heber (i.e. Eber). But partly, through the passage of time, they have been so altered that the most learned people, poring over the oldest historical works, have not been able to find the origin of all nations from among these forebears, but only of some, and these with difficulty. 39. Thus no original sound of the word remains to show that the Egyptians arose from the son of Ham named Mesraim (i.e. Egypt), or similarly with regard to the Ethiopians, who are said to descend from that son of Ham named Cush.

If all this is taken into account, there appear to be more names of nations that have been altered than names remaining, and afterwards a rational process has given diverse names to these. So the Indians were named from the river Indus, which bounds them on the western side. 40. The Serians (i.e. Chinese, or East Asians generally), a nation situated in the far East, were allotted their name from their own city. They weave a kind of wool that comes from trees, hence this verse (Courtney fr. 7):

> The Serians, unknown in person but known for their cloth.

41. The Gangarides are a people between the Assyrians and the Indians, living around the Ganges River – hence they were named Gangarides. 42. The Hircanians are named for the Hircanian forest, where there are many tigers. 43. The Bactrians were Scythians who were driven from their territory by a faction of their own people. They settled by the river Bactron in the East, and derived their name from the name of the river. The king of this nation was Zoroaster, inventor of the art of magic. 44. The Parthians likewise take their origin from the Scythians, for they were Scythian exiles, which is still evident from their name, for in the Scythian language exiles are called *parthi*. Like the Bactrians, after being driven by civil dissension from Scythia they first stealthily occupied the empty territory adjacent to the Hircanians, and then seized more land by force. 45. The Assyrians were named for Assur, the son of Shem – a very powerful nation, which held sway over the whole middle region between the Euphrates and the Indian border.

46. The Medes are thought to have been named after their king. Jason, brother of King Peliacus, was driven by Pelias's children from Thessaly with his wife Medea. Jason's stepson was Medus, king of the Athenians, who after the death of Jason conquered the territory of the East. He founded there the city Media, and he named the nation of Medes after his own name. But in the Book of Genesis we find that Madai was the progenitor of the nation of Medes, and also that they were named for him, as was said above (section 28 above). 47. The Persians were named after King Perseus, who crossed into Asia from Greece and there dominated the barbarian nations with heavy and prolonged fighting. Right after his victory he gave his name to the conquered people. Before Cyrus, the Persians were an ignoble people and considered of no rank among the nations of the area. The Medes were always very powerful. 48. The Chasdeans, who are now called the Chaldeans, were named after Chesed, the son of Nahor, Abraham's brother. 49. The Sabaeans were named after the word σέβεσθαι, that is, "supplicate" and "worship," because we worship the divinity with Sabaean incense. They are also called Arabs, because they live in the mountains of Arabia called Libanus and Antilibanus, where incense is gathered. 50. The Syrians are held to be named from Surim (i.e. Asshurim), who was the grandson of Abraham from his wife Keturah. The people whom the ancients called Assyrians we now call Syrians, making a whole name from the part.

51. The Hebrews were so named from Heber (i.e. Eber), the great-grandson of Shem. 52. The Israelites were named after Israel, the son of Isaac, for Israel was the patriarch of the Hebrews, and from him the twelve tribes of Jews were given the name of Israel. In the division of the kingdom his name was given to the Jews of the ten tribes, for before they were all called either Hebrews or Israelites. 53. However, from the time when the people of God were divided into two kingdoms, the two tribes that had kings from the stock of Judah were given the name of Jews (*Iudaeus*). The residue of ten tribes, who established a king for themselves in Samaria, kept the original name of Israel because of their large population. 54. The nation of the Samaritans took its origin from Assyrians who lived as immigrants in Samaria. In Latin their name means "guardians," because when the kingdom of Israel was taken captive the Samaritans were stationed in Israel's territory as a guard.

55. After Phoenix, the brother of Cadmus, moved from Egyptian Thebes to Syria, he reigned at Sidon and named

those people Phoenicians and the province Phoenicia after his own name. 56. Moreover, the Sidonites are thought to have drawn their name from the city called Sidon. 57. The Saracens are so called either because they claim to be descendants of Sarah or, as the pagans say, because they are of Syrian origin, as if the word were *Syriginae*. They live in a very large deserted region. They are also Ishmaelites, as the Book of Genesis teaches us, because they sprang from Ishmael. They are also named Kedar, from the son of Ishmael, and Agarines, from the name Agar (i.e. Hagar). As we have said, they are called Saracens from an alteration of their name, because they are proud to be descendants of Sarah.

58. Philistines are the same as Palestinians, because the Hebrew language lacks the letter *p* and uses the Greek phi in its place. Hence they say Philistine for Palestinians, expressly from the name of their city. They are also called Allophyli, that is, "of foreign descent," because they were always enemies of Israel and were set far apart from their race and society. 59. Canaanites were named after Canaan the son of Ham, and the Jews occupied their land. From this origin came Emor, the father of Sichem, for whom the Amorites were named. 60. The Egyptians were named after a certain King Aegyptus, whereas earlier they were called Aerians. In the Hebrew language 'Egyptians' means "afflicters," because they afflicted the people of God before they were liberated with divine assistance. 61. Armenius of Thessaly was one of Jason's generals who set out for Colchis with a gathered multitude that wandered here and there upon the loss of their king Jason. He founded Armenia, and gave that nation its name after his own name.

62. The Persian boundary, which divides the Scythians from them, is named Scytha, and the Scythians are regarded by some people as having been named from that boundary – a nation always held to be very ancient. They were ancestors of the Parthians and Bactrians; further, Scythian women founded the kingdom of the Amazons. 63. The Massagetes are of Scythian origin, and they are called Massagetes because they are 'weighty,' that is, 'strong' Getae – for Livy speaks of silver as weighty, that is, as 'masses' (cf. *massa*, "mass"). They live in northern regions between the Scythians and the Albanians. 64. The Amazons are so called either because they live together without men, as if the word were ἅμα ζῶν ("living together"), or because they had their right breasts burnt off so that their shooting of arrows would not be hindered, as if it were ἄνευ μαζῶν ("without breasts"). Indeed, they would expose the breast that they had burned off. Titianus calls them 'One-Breasted' (*Unimammae*), for that is 'Amazon,' as if the term were ἄνευ μαζοῦ, that is, "without a breast."[7] Amazons no longer exist, because they were wiped out partly by Hercules and partly by Achilles or Alexander.

65. The Scythian peoples in regions of Asia Minor, who believe that they are descendants of Jason, are born with white (*albus*) hair because of the incessant snow, and the color of their hair gave the nation its name – hence they are called Albanians. A blue-gray, that is, colored pupil is present in their eyes, so that they see better by night than by day. Also, the Albanians were neighbors of the Amazons. 66. The Hugnians were formerly called Huns, and afterwards – after the name of their king – Avars, and they first lived in farthest Maeotis, between the icy Tanais (i.e. the Don) and the savage peoples of the Massagetes. Then, with their nimble horses, they burst forth from the crags of the Caucasus, where Alexander's Gates had been keeping the fierce nations back. They held the East captive for twenty years, and exacted an annual tribute from the Egyptians and the Ethiopians.

67. The Trojan nation was formerly named the Dardanian, from Dardanus. The brothers Dardanus and Jasius emigrated from Greece, and Jasius came to Thrace, Dardanus to Phrygia, where he was the first ruler. After him succeeded his son Ericthonius, and then his grandson Tros, from whom the Trojans were named. 68. The Galatians are also known as the Gauls, and when they were called to the aid of the king of Bithynia they divided the kingdom with him when victory was attained. Then, mixed with the Greeks in this way, they were first called Gallogreeks, but now they are named Galatians after their ancient name of *Galli* (i.e. Gauls).

69. The Greeks were formerly named Thessalians, from Thessalus, and afterwards called Greeks, from King Graecus – for Greeks are properly Thessalians. 70. Further, people say that the Lapiths were a nation of Thessaly who once lived by the river Penios and were named after Lapitha, the daughter of Apollo. 71. The Greek nation of Sicyonians was named after King Sicyon. These were

7 The writings of Julius Titianus, second century CE, are lost; Isidore cites him at second hand from Servius on *Aeneid* 11.651.

first called Agialeans, after King Agealeus, who first ruled over the Sicyonians. The city of Agealea is named after him, and this is now called the Peloponnesus, after its king Pelops. These are also called Arcadians, named after King Arcas, the son of Jupiter and Callista. 72. The Danai were named after King Danaus. They are the same as the Argives, named after their founder Argos. After Apis, the king of the Greeks, died, his son Argos succeeded to the kingship, and the Argives were named after him. After his death he began to be regarded as a god by them, honored with a temple and sacrifices. 73. The Achaians, also known as Achivians, were named after Achaeus, son of Jupiter. 74. The Pelasgians were so named because they seemed to have arrived in Italy in springtime with sails spread, like birds (cf. πελαργός, "stork"). Varro records their first landing in Italy. But the Greeks maintain that the Pelasgians were so called after the son of Jupiter and Larissa.

75. The Myrmidons were allies of Achilles, and the Dolopians of Pyrrhus. The Myrmidons were so called for their cleverness, as if the word were μύρμηκες, that is, "ants." But Eratosthenes says they are called Myrmidons after their leader Myrmido, son of Jupiter and Eurymedusa. 76. Cranaus succeeded to Cecrops, king of the Athenians; his daughter Atthis gave her name to the region and the nation. Also from her the Attic people were named, and they are the Athenians. 77. Ion was a powerful man, and he called those same Athenians 'Ionians,' from his own name. 78. The Macedonians were earlier named the Emathians, after the name of King Emathio, and afterwards called Macedonians. 79. The Epiroteans were earlier named the Pyrrhideans after Pyrrhus, the son of Achilles, but afterwards after King Epirus . . .[8] they ventured to cross over to Italy. 80. Dorus was the son of Neptune and Ellepis, whence the Dorians take their origin and their name. Moreover, they are a part of the Greek nation, and after them is named the third language of the Greeks, called Doric.

81. The Lacedaemonians are named from Lacedaemon, the son of Semela. These people engaged for a long time in battle against the Messenians and, fearing that they would lose any hope of offspring because of the prolongation of the conflict, they commanded that their virgins should lie with the young men remaining at home. Thus, because of the promiscuous intercourse of these virgins, the youths, born of uncertain parentage, were named Spartans after the stigma of their mothers' shame.[9] The Spartans are the same as the Lacedaemonians.

82. The Thracians are thought to have descended and taken their name from the son of Japheth named Tiras, as was said above (section 31 above), although the pagans judge that they were named for their behavior, because they are ferocious (*trux*, gen. *trucis*). Indeed, they were the most savage of all nations, and many legends are recorded about them: that they would sacrifice captives to their gods, and would drink human blood from skulls. About them, Vergil (*Aen.* 3.44):

> Alas, flee those cruel lands, flee that greedy coast –

as if it were the land of cruel and greedy people. 83. The Istrian nation originated from the Colchians, who were sent to hunt down the Argonauts. They went up the river Ister from the Pontus (i.e. the Black Sea), and thus they were called after the name of the river by which they left the sea.

84. The Romans were named after Romulus, who founded the city of Rome and gave his name to both nation and city. These people were earlier called Saturnians, from Saturn, and Latins, from Latinus – for Latinus was king of Italy, who named the Latins from his own name – and they afterwards were called Romans. They are also called Quirites, because Romulus is also named Quirinus, since he would always use a spear that in the language of the Sabines is called *curis*. 85. Also, Italus, Sabinus, and Sicanus were brothers, after whom names were given to both peoples and regions. From Italus, the Italians; from Sabinus, the Sabines; from Sicanus, the Sicani were named – these last were also named Siculi, that is, Sicilians. 86. The Tuscans (i.e. Etruscans) are a nation of Italy named for their frequent use of rituals and incense (*tus*), that is, from the word θυσιάζειν ("offer sacrifice").

87. The Umbrians are a nation of Italy, but they are the offspring of the ancient Gauls, and they inhabit the Apennine mountains. The histories maintain that because in a period of destructive flooding they survived the rains they were called Ὄμβριοι ("rain people") in Greek. 88. The Marsian nation of Italy is so called from Marsyas, the companion of Liber, who revealed the

8 A lacuna occurs here in the early manuscripts.

9 Isidore may derive 'Spartan' from the Greek παρθένος, "virgin," or possibly from Latin *spargere*, "scatter" (as seed).

practice of viticulture to them. Because of this they built a statue to him, which afterwards the Romans carried off when the Marsians had been conquered. Moreover, the Greeks call the Marsians 'Oscians,' as if it were ὀφσκοι, because they had many serpents, and ὄφις means "serpent." They are also said to be invulnerable to the sorcery of spells. Like the Umbrians they inhabit the region of the Apennine mountains. [The historian Alexander says, "Some say that the Volscians were named after Vulscus, son of Antiphates the Laestrygonian. Fabius also says that the Volscians migrated from the Sicolicians and were so called by a corruption of that name."][10]

89. The Goths are thought to have been named after Magog, the son of Japheth, because of the similarity of the last syllable. The ancients called them Getae rather than Goths. They are a brave and most powerful people, tall and massive in body, terrifying for the kind of arms they use. Concerning them, Lucan (*Civil War* 2.54):

> Let here a Dacian press forward, there a Getan (*Getes*) rush at the Iberians.

90. The Dacians were offshoots of the Goths, and people think they were called Dacians (*Dacus*) as if the word were *Dagus*, because they were begotten 'from the stock of the Goths' (*de Gothorum stirpe*). Concerning them, this verse (Paulinus of Nola, *Poems* 17.17):

> You will go far, up to the northern Dacians.

91. The Bessians were a barbarian people who are thought to have been named after their great herds of cattle (*bos*). Concerning them, a certain poet (Paulinus of Nola, *Poems* 17.250):

> He who lives in the middle of the land, or he who dwells by the river, rich with many cattle and wearing a felt cap.

92. The Gipedes used to go to war on foot (*pedester*) rather than on horseback, and they are so named for this reason.

93. The Sarmatians rode armed (*armatus*) over the open fields before Lentulus restrained them at the Danube, and from their enthusiasm for weaponry (*arma*) they are thought to have received the name Sarmatians. 94. They say that the Lanus is a river beyond the Danube, after which the Alani were named, just as the people living by the river Lemannus (i.e. Lake Leman) are called Alemanni. About these, Lucan (*Civil War* 1.396):

> They abandoned their tents pitched by the deep-channeled Lemannus.

95. The Langobards are commonly said to have been named for their beards (*barba*), long and never cut. 96. The river Vindilicus springs out from the far frontier of Gaul, and people maintain that the Vandals lived by it and got their name from it.

97. The Germanic (*Germanicus*) nations are so called because they are immense (*immanis*) in body, and they are savage (*immanis*) tribes hardened by very severe cold. They took their behavior from that same severity of climate – fiercely courageous and ever indomitable, living by raiding and hunting. There are many tribes of Germani, varied in their weaponry, differing in the color of their clothes, of mutually incomprehensible languages, and with uncertain etymologies of their names – such as the Tolosates, the Amsivari, the Quadi, the Tuungri, the Marcomanni, the Bruteri, the Chamavi, the Blangiani, the Tubantes. The monstrosity of their barbarism gives a fearsome quality even to their names.

98. The Suevi were a segment of the Germanic nation at the northern frontier. Of them, Lucan (*Civil War* 2.51):

> (The Elbe and Rhine) pour the blond Suevi from the extreme north.

Many have reported that there were a hundred villages and communities of Suevians. The Suevi are thought to have been named from Mount Suevus, which forms the eastern boundary of Germania and whose territory they occupied. 99. Formerly, when the interior of Germania was subjected by the Romans, the Burgundians coalesced into a large nation after being placed at the frontier-line of the Roman camps by Tiberius Caesar. Thus they drew their name from their location, because in their vernacular they call the dense settlements along the frontier 'forts' (*burgus*). Afterwards they rebelled against the Romans and, comprising more than eighty thousand armed men, they settled on the banks of the Rhine, and took the name of a nation. 100. The Saxon people, situated on the shores of the Ocean in impassable marshes, are accomplished in strength and agility. Whence they were named (i.e. from *saxosus*, "stony"), because they are a hard and very powerful kind of people, standing out above the other piratical tribes.

10 Lindsay placed this bracketed passage here, expressing doubt about its proper location, moving it from its obviously wrong position in the family of early manuscripts where it occurs, at IV.vii.34.

101. The Franks (*Franci*) are thought to have been named after a certain chieftain of theirs. Others reckon that they were named for the brutality (*feritas*) of their behavior, for their behavior is wild, with a natural ferocity of spirit. 102. Some suspect that the Britons were so named in Latin because they are brutes (*brutus*). Their nation is situated within the Ocean, with the sea flowing between us and them, as if they were outside our orbit. Concerning them, Vergil (*Ecl.* 1.66):

> The Britons, separated from the whole world.

103. The Scotti (*Scottus*, i.e. the Irish) in their own language receive their name from their painted (*pictus*; cf. the Picts) bodies, because they are marked by tattoos of various figures made with iron pricks and black pigment. 104. The Gauls (*Galli*) are named for the whiteness of their bodies, for in Greek milk is called γάλα. Whence the Sibyl speaks of them thus, when she says of them (Vergil, *Aen.* 8.660):

> Then their milk-white necks are circled with gold.

105. People's faces and coloring, the size of their bodies, and their various temperaments correspond to various climates. Hence we find that the Romans are serious, the Greeks easy-going, the Africans changeable, and the Gauls fierce in nature and rather sharp in wit, because the character of the climate makes them so. 106. The Gauls were also called the Senones, and in ancient times the Xenones, because they offered hospitality to Liber (cf. ξένος, "guest"); afterwards the letter *x* was changed to *s*. 107. Vacca was a town near the Pyrenees, and the Vacceans were named after it. The poet is believed to have spoken about them (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 4.42):

> And the Vacceans ranging far.

They occupied the vast emptiness of the heights of the Pyrenees. They are the same people as the Vascones (i.e. the Basques), as if the word were *Vaccones*, with the letter *c* changed to *s*. 108. After he subdued Spain, Gnaeus Pompey, in his rush to come to his triumphal celebration, drove them down from the heights of the Pyrenees and gathered them into one city. Hence the city took the name of 'Assembled Refugees' (*Convenae*, i.e. Saint-Bertrand de Comminges).

109. The Spanish were first named Iberians, after the river Iberus (i.e. the Ebro), but afterwards they were named Spaniards (*Hispanus*) after Hispalus (i.e. the legendary founder of *Hispalis*, Seville). 110. The Galicians (*Gallecus*) were named for their whiteness (cf. γάλα, "milk") – and hence also the Gauls (*Gallus*) were named – for they are of whiter complexion than the other people of Spain. They claim a Greek origin for themselves, and hence are wise with a native wit. 111. They say that, after the Trojan War, Teucer was despised by his father Telamon because of the death of his brother Ajax. When he was not received into his kingdom, Teucer retired to Cyprus and there founded the city of Salamis after the name of his ancient homeland. From there he emigrated to Galicia, and when he had settled there he gave the name of the place to the nation. 112. The Astures are a nation of Spain, so called because they live along the river Astura, hedged in by mountains and thick forests. 113. The Cantabrians (*Cantaber*) are a nation of Spain named after the name of a city and the river Iberus (i.e. the Ebro) where they reside. They have a gritty spirit and are always as ready for brigandage and warfare as for enduring blows. 114. The Celtiberians descended from the Celtic Gauls, and from these names their district, Celtiberia, was named – for they were named Celtiberians after the river Iberus of Spain, where they are settled, and after the Gauls, who were called Celtic, with the two terms combined.

115. The Africans were named for one of the descendants of Abraham, who was called Afer. He is said to have led an army against Libya and to have settled there after he had conquered the enemy, and his descendants were named Africans, and the place named Africa, after their ancestor. 116. The Punic people are the Carthaginians, named after the Phoenicians who emigrated with Dido. 117. The Tyrians were named after Tyre, the city of the Phoenicians, whence they emigrated and came to the African coast. 118. The Getulians are said to have been Getae who, setting out from their homeland with a huge force on ships, occupied the region of the Syrtes in Libya and were named by derivation Getulians, because they came from the Getae. Hence also the idea among the Goths is to speak of the Moors as close blood-relatives of themselves from their ancient affinity. 119. Thus Africa was held initially by the Libyans, then the Africans, and after this the Getulians, and finally the Moors and Numidians.

120. The Moors and Numidians – so the Africans believe – got their origin and name in the following way. After Hercules perished in Spain, his leaderless army,

composed of various nations, sought homes for themselves in various places, and from this mass Medes and Persians and Armenians, having sailed across to Africa by ship, occupied the regions nearest the sea. 121. But the Persians, not finding wood in the fields for building houses, and with communication inhibited by the unknown language, wandered through open fields and diverse deserts. In accordance with their itinerant foraging they called themselves, in their own language, Numidians, that is, wandering and errant and without a city. 122. On the other hand, the Medes mingled with those Libyans who lived closest to Spain. Little by little the Libyans altered the name of these people, in their barbarous tongue calling the Medes 'Moors' (*Maurus*), although the Moors are named by the Greeks for their color, for the Greeks call black μαυρός (i.e. ἀμαυρός, "dark"), and indeed, blasted by blistering heat, they have a countenance of a dark color.

123. Massylia is a city of Africa, not far from Mount Atlas and the gardens of the Hesperides. The Massylians were named after this city, and we now call them, with alteration, Massulians. Concerning them, Vergil (cf. *Aen.* 4.483):

> Here a priestess of the Massylian people has been shown to me.

124. The nation of the Gaulalians consists of people wandering from the south up to the western Ocean. The island Gauloe gave them their name; it is next to Ethiopia, and no serpent is born or lives there. 125. Garamantes are a people of Africa living near the Cyrenians and named after the king Garamans, son of Apollo. He founded there the city named Garama after his own name. They are neighbors of the Ethiopian tribes. Concerning them, Vergil (*Ecl.* 8.44):

> The farthest Garamantes.

And 'farthest,' because they are savage and remote from human fellowship. 126. The Hesperians are those who live alongside Spain, for Hispania is Hesperia (see XIV.iv.19).

127. Ethiopians are so called after a son of Ham named Cush, from whom they have their origin. In Hebrew, *Cush* means "Ethiopian." 128. This nation, which formerly emigrated from the region of the river Indus, settled next to Egypt between the Nile and the Ocean, in the south very close to the sun. There are three tribes of Ethiopians: Hesperians, Garamantes, and Indians. Hesperians are of the West, Garamantes of Tripolis, and the Indians of the East. 129. The Trochodites (i.e. Troglodytes) are a tribe of Ethiopians so called because they run with such speed that they chase down wild animals on foot (cf. τροχάζειν, "run quickly"; τρέχειν, "run"). 130. The Pamphagians are also in Ethiopia. Their food is whatever can be chewed, and anything living that they come upon – whence they are named (cf. παν-, "all"; φαγεῖν, "eat"). 131. Icthyophagians (cf. ἰχθῦς, "fish"), who excel in fishing at sea and survive on fish alone. They occupy the mountainous regions beyond the Indians, and Alexander the Great conquered them and forbade them to eat fish. 132. Anthropophagians are a very rough tribe situated below the land of the Sirices. They feed on human flesh and are therefore named 'maneaters' (*anthropophagus*; cf. ἄνθρωπος, "man"). As is the case for these nations, so for others the names have changed over the centuries in accordance with their kings, or their locations, or their customs, or for whatever other reasons, so that the primal origin of their names from the passage of time is no longer evident.

133. Now indeed the people called Antipodes (i.e. "opposite-footed") – because they are thought to be contrary to our footprints, as if from under the earth they make footprints upside-down from ours – are on no account to be believed in, because neither the solidity nor the central space of the earth allows this. Indeed this is not confirmed by any knowledge of history, but poets conjecture it as it were by sheer inference. 134. Moreover, they say that the Titans of Greece were a robust people of preeminent strength who, the fables say, were created by the angry Earth for her revenge against the gods. 135. Hence Titans are so called from the word τίσις, that is, 'revenge,' for they lived in arms as if for the sake of avenging Mother Earth against the gods. The fables feign that in war the Titans were overwhelmed by Jupiter and made extinct, because they perished from thunderbolts hurled from the sky.

iii. Reigns and terms for military matters (De regnis militiaeque vocabulis) 1. A reign (*regnum*) is so named from a king (*rex*, gen. *regis*), for as kings are so called from governing (*regere*), so reigns are called after the word for kings. 2. Every nation has had its own reign in its own times – like the Assyrians, the Medes, the Persians, the Egyptians, the Greeks – and fate has so

rolled over their allotments of time that each successive one would dissolve the former. Among all the reigns on earth, however, two reigns are held to be glorious above the rest – first the Assyrians, then the Romans – as they are constituted differently from one another in location as much as time. 3. For as one began first and the other later, so one was in the East, the other in the West. Indeed, the beginning of the latter came close upon the end of the former. Other reigns and other kings are considered mere appendices of these two.

4. Kings are so called from governing, and as priests (*sacerdos*) are named from 'sacrificing' (*sacrificare*), so kings (*rex*, gen. *regis*) from governing (*regere*, also meaning "keep straight, lead correctly"). But he does not govern who does not correct (*corrigere*); therefore the name of king is held by one behaving rightly (*recte*), and lost by one doing wrong. Hence among the ancients such was the proverb: "You will be king (*rex*) if you behave rightly (*recte*); if you do not, you will not." 5. The royal virtues are these two especially: justice and mercy – but mercy is more praised in kings, because justice in itself is harsh.

6. Consuls (*consul*) are so called after 'taking counsel' (*consulere*), as kings from governing, laws (*lex*, gen. *legis*) from reading (*legere*). Because the Romans would not put up with the haughty domination of kings, they made a pair of consuls serve as the governing power year by year – for the arrogance of kings was not like the benevolence of a consul, but the haughtiness of a master. They were therefore called consuls either from their 'consulting the interests of' (*consulere*) the citizens, or from their governing everything by consultation (*consilium*). 7. Still, they elected new consuls each year so that a haughty one would not remain for long, but a more moderate one would quickly succeed to the office. Further, there were two with equal authority, for the one administered civil, the other military affairs. Consuls governed over a period of 467 years. 8. Proconsuls were substitutes for consuls, and were called proconsuls because they would function in place of consuls, as a procurator does in place of a curator, that is, an agent. 9. Exconsuls were likewise so named because they had already passed on (*exire*) from the consulate, or because they had departed when the year of their term expired.

10. The Romans established dictators for themselves in the fifth year after the kings were expelled, when the son-in-law of Tarquinius gathered a huge army against Rome to avenge the injustice done to his father-in-law. 11. Dictators held power for five-year terms. They had more honor, then, than consuls, who held office for only a year. And they were called 'dictators' as if they were both leaders and teachers (i.e. givers of dictation) – hence they were named '(school)-masters (*magister*) of the people.' Also from them 'edicts' (*edictum*) are named. 12. The name of the Caesars began with Julius, who was the first of the Romans to achieve sole personal dominion after civil war had been stirred up. And Caesar was so called because he was brought forth and drawn out of his dead mother's womb, which had been 'cut open' (*caedere*, ppl. *caesus*), or because he was born 'with a head of hair' (*caesarie*). After him the successive emperors were called Caesars, because they had abundant hair. Those who were drawn out from a womb that has been cut open were called *Caesones* and *Caesares*. 13. He was furthermore called Julius because he took his origin from Julus, the son of Aeneas, as Vergil confirms (*Aen*. 1.288):

> Julius, the name drawn from great Julus.

14. For the Romans, the title *imperator* was at first given only to those on whom supremacy in military affairs was settled, and therefore the *imperatores* were so called from 'commanding' (*imperare*) the army. But although generals held command for a long time with the title of *imperator*, the senate decreed that this was the name of Augustus Caesar only, and he would be distinguished by this title from other 'kings' of nations. To this day the successive Caesars have employed this title. 15. Indeed it is customary for later kings to use the name of the first one, as among the Albans all the kings of the Albans are called Silvii after the name of Sylvius; similarly for the Persians the Arsacidae, for the Egyptians the Ptolemies, for the Athenians the Cecropidae.

16. For the Romans, 'Augustus' is the name of the imperial office, because formerly the emperors 'enlarged' (*augere*) the republic by extending its borders. Originally the senate bestowed this name on Octavius Caesar, so that he might be honored in his very name and title for enlarging their territory. 17. Moreover, this same Octavius was now called Caesar and emperor, or Augustus. Afterwards, when it was announced to him while he was watching the games that he would also be called 'Lord' (*Dominus*) by the people, he immediately, by gesture and with face averted, repressed this indecorous adulation and, as a human being, declined the title of Lord. On the next day he rebuked the whole populace

with a very severe edict, and after this allowed no one to call him Lord, not even his own children. He was the son of Actia, who was the daughter of Julius Caesar's sister.

18. A king is called βασιλεύς in Greek because like a pedestal's base (*basis*) he supports the people (cf. λαός, "people"). Hence pedestals also have crowns (i.e. their cornices), for the higher a person is placed in command, just so much heavier is the burden of his responsibilities. 19. Tyrants (*tyrannus*) in Greek are the same as 'kings' in Latin, because for the ancients there was no distinction between a king and a tyrant, as (Vergil, *Aen.* 7.266):

> A condition of the peace for me will be to have touched the right hand of your ruler (*tyrannus*).

Strong kings were called tyrants, for a *tiro* is a strong young man. Of such people the Lord speaks, saying (cf. Proverbs 8:15): "By me kings reign, and tyrants (*tyrannus*) possess the earth by me." 20. Now in later times the practice has arisen of using the term for thoroughly bad and wicked kings, kings who enact upon their people their lust for luxurious domination and the cruelest lordship.

21. The term 'prince' (*princeps*) is a mark of rank and also of precedence in time, as in this Vergilian line (*Aen.* 9.535):

> Turnus was first (*princeps*) to hurl a burning torch,

where *princeps* means 'the first one.' Moreover, the term 'prince' derives from the sense of 'taking,' because he 'first takes' (*primus capit*), just as one speaks of a 'citizen of a municipality' (*municeps*) because he 'takes office' (*munia capit*). 22. A general (*dux*, gen. *ducis*) is so called because he is the 'commander' (*ductor*) of an army. But not everyone who is a prince or general can immediately be called a king. Moreover, in wartime it is better to be titled a general than a king, for the former title signifies the one in command in battle. Hence also Vergil (*Aen.* 10.370):

> Of General (*dux*) Evander.

And Sallust (*Histories* 4.7 M): "For everyone is more eager to seem brave in front of the general." He did not say, "in front of the consul."

23. Monarchs (*monarcha*) are those who wield supreme power alone, like Alexander among the Greeks and Julius among the Romans. From this term also derives the word 'monarchy' (*monarchia*). In Greek μονάς is "singleness" and ἀρχή is "governing power." 24. Tetrarchs (*tetrarches*) are those who hold the fourth part of a kingdom, for τέτταρα means "four." Such was Philippus in Judea. 25. The patricians (*patricius*) are so called because, as fathers (*pater*) watch over their children, so they watch over the state. 26. Prefects (*praefectus*) are so called because they 'preside' (*praeesse*) with praetorian (*praetorius*) power. 27. Praetors (*praetor*) are the same as prefects, as if the word were 'one placed in front' (*praepositor*). 28. Again, 'chief wardens' (*praeses*, i.e. provincial governors) are those who maintain the security of some location 'with chief custody' (*praesidialiter*). 29. Tribunes (*tribunus*) are so called because they dispense (*tribuere*) justice for soldiers or common people. 30. Chiliarchs (*chiliarches*) are those who preside over a thousand men; we call them *millenarii*, and the former term is Greek (i.e. χιλίαρχος). 31. Centurions are so called because they command a hundred (*centum*) soldiers; similarly *quinquagenarii*, because they are at the head of fifty (*quinquaginta*) soldiers, and *decani*, because they are set over ten (*decem*) soldiers.

32. A soldier (*miles*) is so called because formerly there were a thousand (*mille*) in one troop, or because one in a thousand was chosen. Romulus was the first to recruit soldiers from the populace and give them this name. Liber first taught military organization. 33. A soldier is called either a regular or an irregular. A regular (*ordinarius*) soldier is one who fights within the 'rank and file' (*ordo*), and has not yet reached any rank of honor, for he is in the ranks, that is, of the humble militia. But an irregular (*extraordinarius*) soldier is one who is promoted beyond the rank and file on account of his valor. 34. Veteran and discharged soldiers who no longer serve in battle are called *emeriti*, because *mereri* means "to serve in the military," with reference to the wages that they earn (*mereri*). They are also called veterans (*veteranus*; cf. *vetus*, gen. *veteris*, "old") because they no longer serve in battle, but after their many trials as soldiers they have attained the right to live in peace. 35. Cavalrymen (*equestri milites*) are so called because they ride horses (*equus*), and they fight in the equestrian order.

36. An able-bodied young soldier is called a *tiro* (i.e. a new recruit), and such are enrolled for military service and serve as skilled in arms. They are appraised not by their professed age alone, but by their looks and physical strength. Hence they are called tyros, and they are not soldiers until they have been approved by their oath

of allegiance. 37. The custom of the Roman army was that youths should first bear arms on reaching puberty, for tyros would begin to serve in their sixteenth year, though still at this age under instructors. Concerning them, Vergil (cf. *Aen.* 7.162):

> And youths in their first flower.

38. Of course, slaves never served in the military unless they were freed – except at the time of Hannibal, when the Romans were in such straits after the battle of Cannae that there was no possibility of freeing slaves. 39. Deserters (*desertor*) are so called because they wander, leaving their military duties deserted (*desertus*). They are prohibited from enlisting in other troops of soldiers, but if their crime was of short duration, after they have been flogged they are restored to their own troop. But there are those who desert (*deserere*) the army and pass over to the enemy, and they are also called deserters.

40. Conscript soldiers are so called because they are enrolled in the muster list by the officer who will command them, just as soldiers are called transcripts when they transfer from one legion to another – and hence transcript (*transcriptus*), because they give their names so that they may be transcribed (*transcribere*). 41. Adjutants (*optio*) are so called, because they are selected, for *optare* means "select," as in this verse (Vergil, *Aen.* 3.109):

> And he chose (*optare*) a site for the kingdom,

that is, he selected it. 42. Sentinels (*excubitor*) are so called because they always keep watch (*excubia*). They are members of a troop of soldiers who 'keep outdoor watch' (*excubare*) in sentry boxes as a royal guard. *Excubiae* are daytime watches, and *vigiliae* are nighttime. Hence also the term 'sentinel' (*vigil*). 43. Skirmishers (*veles*) are a type of fighter among the Romans, so called from their 'darting about' (*volitare*). Thus armed young men selected for their agility would ride seated behind mounted soldiers, and as soon as they encountered the enemy they would leap from the horses and now as foot soldiers would persistently harass the enemy while the mounted men who brought them would attack on the other side. Hannibal's elephants were once driven back by these skirmishers, and when their riders could not control them, the elephants were killed with a workman's knife driven between their ears.

44. A camp is where a soldier would be stationed. It is called a camp (*castra*) as if it were 'chaste' (*castus*), or because there sexual desire would be castrated (*castrare*) – for a woman never entered a camp. 45. 'Military service' (*militia*) is so called from 'soldiers' (*miles*, gen. *militis*), or from the word 'many' (*multus*), as if the term were *multitia*, being the occupation of many men, or from a mass (*moles*) of things, as if the word were *moletia*. 46. A legion (*legio*) is a troop of six thousand armed men, so called from 'selected' (*eligere*), as if it were 'picked out' (*legere*), that is, chosen for arms. Properly we speak of a *phalanx* of Macedonians, a 'band' (*caterva*) of Gauls, and a 'legion' (*legio*) of our (i.e. Roman) forces. 47. A legion has sixty centuries, thirty maniples, twelve cohorts, and two hundred squadrons.

48. A century (*centuria*) is a division of an army composed of a hundred (cf. *centum*, "hundred") soldiers. Hence those who command them are called centurions. 49. Reinforcements (*subcenturiatus*) are men not of the first, but of the second century, as if the word were 'below the first century' (*sub prima centuria*); nevertheless in battle they were formed up and placed in lookouts so that if the first century failed they, whom we have spoken of as the substitutes, would reinforce the first century in their efforts. Hence also a *subcenturiatus* would be stationed in ambush, as if he were trained in deceptive warfare (i.e. as *sub* can mean "secret"). 50. A maniple consists of two hundred soldiers. These troops are called maniples (*manipulus*) either because they would begin a battle in the first combat (*manus*), or because, before battle-standards existed, they would make 'handfuls' (*manipulus*) for themselves as standards, that is, bundles of straw or of some plant, and from this standard the soldiers were nicknamed 'manipulars.' Of them, Lucan (*Civil War* 1.296):

> Straightway he rallies the armed maniples (*maniplus*) to the standards.

51. A squadron (*turma*) consists of thirty horsemen. There were three hundred Roman horsemen in one 'tribe' (*tribus*; see iv.7 below) and each group of one hundred would give ten to make up the squadron. A cohort has five hundred soldiers.

52. There are three kinds of military service: by oath, by call to arms, and by communal oath. 53. In service by oath (*sacramentum*) each soldier after his election swears not to quit his service until after his hitch has been completed, that is, his period of service – and those are the ones who have a full service record, for they

are bound for twenty-five years. 54. By 'call to arms' (*evocatio*), when not only soldiers but also other people are called out (*evocare*) to a sudden battle. At such a time a consul would say, "He who wants the republic to be preserved, follow me." 55. By 'communal oath' (*coniuratio*): this is done when there is an uprising, and the city's imminent peril leaves no time for individuals to take an oath, but a multitude is suddenly assembled and is kindled into tumultuous wrath. This is also called an uproar (*tumultuatio*).

56. In a battle array these are the usual formations: an army, a levy, a knot, a wedge, the wings, the horns, a column. These borrow their shapes and their names from the objects from which the terms have been derived. 57. The 'battle array' (*acies*; also meaning "cutting edge") is so called because it is armed with iron and the sharpness (*acumen*) of swords. 58. An army (*exercitus*) is a multitude of one kind, so called from its training (*exercitatio*) for war. 59. A wedge (*cuneus*) is a company of soldiers gathered into one place. Hence, because it assembles in one place, this 'gathering in one place' (*coitio in unum*) is named a *cuneus*, as if the word were *couneus*, because all are assembled in one place. 60. Levies (*classis*, also meaning "fleet") are so called because they are segments of an army; later these were called maniples. Hence Vergil (cf. *Aen.* 2.30):

> Here the site for the divisions (*classis*), here the battle arrays (*acies*) would fight.

Nowadays *classis* also means a fleet (*classicum*) of ships.

61. A knot (*nodus*) properly is a dense crowd of foot soldiers, as a squadron (*turma*) is of cavalry. It is called a 'knot' for its intricacy, because it can scarcely be loosened. 62. The wings of an army are said to be thirty cavalrymen. The cavalry are called the wings (*ala*) because they cover the foot soldiers in the manner of wings. 63. The troops of an army who are farthest out are called horns (*cornu*), because their line is curved. 64. It is called a column (*agmen*) when an army marches, named from 'driving' (*agere*), that is, going. Plautus (*The Haunted House* 562): "Where are you going (*agere*)?" Thus it is an army on the march. It is called a column because it is arranged in a file, as it would be when an army passes through gates. In any other sense the term is used incorrectly.

iv. Citizens (De civibus) 1. We have spoken somewhat about reigns and military terms, and now we add a summary of terms for citizens. 2. Citizens (*civis*) are so called because they live 'assembled' (*coire*) in one body, so that their common life might be made richer and safer. 3. A house is the dwelling place of a family, as a city is the dwelling place of a single populace, and as the world is the domicile of the whole of humankind. But 'house' also refers to a lineage, a family, or the union of husband and wife. A house (*domus*) originates with these two (*duo*), and the term is Greek (i.e. δόμος, or δῶμα, "house, household, family").[11] A *familia* consists of the children of free parents legally begotten from the loins (*femur*).[12] 4. A 'race' (*genus*) is so called from begetting (*gignere*, ppl. *genitus*) and procreating (*progenerare*), or from the delimiting of particular descendants (*prognatus*), as are nations (*natio*) that, delimited by their own kinships, are called 'stocks of people' (*gens*). 5. A populace (*populus*) is composed of a human multitude, allied through their agreed practice of law and by willing association. A populace is distinct from the plebeians (*plebs*), because a populace consists of all the citizens, including the elders of the city. [But the plebeians are the remaining people apart from the elders of the city.] 6. Therefore the populace is the whole city, but the common people are the plebeians. The plebeians are named for their plurality (*pluralitas*), for there are more people of lesser status than there are elders. The populace is called the σουχναμοις, that is, σιτοασις, and hence the term *populus*.[13] In Greek the populace is called λαός, from the term 'stone' (*lapis*; cf. Greek λᾶας, "stone"). The 'common people' (*vulgus*) is the multitude living here and there – as if it were "each one where he wishes (*vult*, from *velle*, "wish")."

7. The separate courts and assemblies of the people are called tribes (*tribus*), and they are so called because in the beginning the Romans had been separated by Romulus 'into three groups' (*trifarie*): senators, soldiers, and plebeians. Although the tribes are now multiplied, they retain their original name. 8. Its members' age gave the senate (*senatus*) its name, because they were seniors (*senior*). Others have it that senators are so called from

11 An early manuscript adds, "for δώματα in Greek means 'houses.'"

12 See v.12 below. *Femur* literally means "thigh." It is used here as a euphemism for "genitals," as often in the Vulgate.

13 The Greek terms here are hopelessly garbled in the manuscripts. In his edition of Book IX (1984), Marc Reydellet ingeniously proposes συχνός ("dense") and ἀπὸ πολλοῦ ("numerous"), the latter phrase sounding like *populus*.