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# NOTES ON "PRIMARY" AND "SECONDARY" SCHOOLS IN LATE ANTIQUITY

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The standard histories of ancient education teach us that a student pursuing a full course of literary instruction typically passed through three stages of schooling and attribute to each stage its own teacher and discrete curriculum: the "primary" school (*γραμματοδιδασκαλεῖον / ludus [litterarius]*), overseen by the "primary" teacher (*γραμματοδιδάσκαλος / γραμματιστής / magister ludi / litterator*), where one learned "letters"—the elements of reading and writing—and some arithmetic; the "secondary" or "grammar" school, where one received thorough and systematic instruction in language and literature, especially poetry, under the grammarian (*γραμματικός / grammaticus*); and the school of rhetoric.[1] The scheme is said to have had its origins in Hellenistic Greece, whence it was adopted by the Romans in the last century of the Republic, to endure thereafter throughout the history of the Empire.

Where the beginning stages are concerned, the substantive or curricular progression that can be pieced together from the ancient sources is in accord with common sense: "primary" education must necessarily have existed in some form, since one evidently needed to know one's ABCs (and syllables and words and sentences) before tackling the *ars* of grammar and the exegesis of the poets. But the important question of form—the institutional arrangements and the kinds of institutional differentiation through which common sense was put into practice—is more difficult to treat in a way both absolute and precise: primary education need not imply a primary school; and the tripartite sequence outlined above, especially in its neat distinction between "primary" and "secondary" levels, does not accurately reflect what our sources tell us.

[1] For the most complete, recent accounts, H.-I. Marrou, *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité* (Paris 1965[6]) 218ff., 389ff., S. F. Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1977) 34ff., 165ff., and (for grammar and rhetoric) M. L. Clarke, *Higher Education in the Ancient World* (London 1971), with, e.g., F. A. G. Beck, *OCD*[2] s.v. Education V.3 (1970) 372. On the terms *γραμματιστής / litterator* especially, see section II,a below.

Historians of education have recognized the problem; but their responses have differed. Thus, for example, H.-I. Marrou, whose presentation of the three stages was especially rigid, acknowledged that the distinctions were sometimes effaced, but regarded such instances as deviations from the norm, attributable variously to the encroachment of one level upon the curriculum of the next, or to a weakening of the social structure on which the schools were based.[2] Others have connected the inconstant differentiation between the "primary" and "secondary" levels (*γραμματιστική* and *γραμματική*) with the absence of a fundamental difference in their aims.[3] Most recently, however, a more basic criticism of the traditional scheme has been proposed: A. D. Booth has shown, more clearly than hitherto, the frequency with which our sources ignore the existence of the "primary" stage and present the "secondary" teacher as the student's first instructor, performing, where necessary, the functions customarily associated with both the *γραμματιστής* / *magister ludi* and the *γραμματικός* / *grammaticus*;[4] and he has suggested, more specifically, that in Rome of the first century A.D. the three schools—*ludus litterarius, schola grammatici, schola rhetoris*—did not normally form a sequence at all, but were separate parts of a socially segmented system composed of two tracks, one of which (the *ludus litterarius*) was intended primarily for the lower orders and "peddled craft literacy to children, slave and free, to enhance their employability," while the other provided a liberal education for upper-class children who received instruction in the elements either at home or in the lower reaches of the grammarian's school.[5]

[2] Encroachment: Marrou (above, note 1) 243f., cf. 259. Social structure: ibid. 597, note 1. The former notion, in general, involves a *petitio principii*, insofar as it assumes a norm for which the evidence is at best very mixed (sections I, II below), while the statement that the phenomenon was progressive or developmental is presented simply as a "general law," illustrated by the practice of modern schools in France.

[3] Cf. P. Wolf, *Vom Schulwesen der Spätantike: Studien zu Libanius* (Baden-Baden 1952) 34f.

[4] "Elementary and Secondary Education in the Roman Empire," *Florilegium* 1 (1979) 1–14 (add Galen, *περὶ ἐθῶν* 4 [2.25.14ff.] *γυμναζόμεθα γὰρ πρῶτα μὲν ὑπὸ τοῖς γραμματικοῖς ἔτι παῖδες ὄντες, εἶθ' ἑξῆς παρά τε ῥητορικοῖς διδασκάλοις καὶ γεωμετρικοῖς καὶ ἀριθμητικοῖς*); and cf. A. C. Dionisotti, "From Ausonius' Schooldays? A Schoolbook and Its Relatives," *JRS* 72 (1982) 120–21, following Booth.

[5] "The Schooling of Slaves in First-Century Rome," *TAPA* 109 (1979) 11–19 (the words quoted in the text appear on p. 19); cf. also below, p. 339, on Quintil. *Inst.* 1.4.27. Apart from the burden of some elementary instruction associated with the grammarian's school, Booth's view is rather a modification of than a break with received opinion, since even those historians who favor the sequential or three-stage model commonly modify their position by noting that many students of the *ludus* would not have gone on to the grammarian's school, while many upper-class students of the *grammaticus* would have received private tuition in the elements. For late antiquity see the brief but shrewd comments of A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* 2 (Norman, Okla. 1964) 997f.

The controversy evidently raises important questions concerning the social organization of education in antiquity. Not all the questions can be answered simply, and many require more thorough treatment than can be given in the present discussion, which is limited to the later Roman Empire: even within those limits it is clear that, while the available evidence does much to support the criticisms made by Booth, we are not dealing with a set of facts which resolve themselves into a clear picture simply faithful to one model or another. Rather, it is my main purpose here to collect more of the evidence for the relation between the "primary" and "secondary" stages of education in late antiquity than has been done previously and thereby emphasize the varieties of secular education available in the period. The paper is divided into four sections, for the sake of clarity and to make the material easily accessible to others interested in pursuing the matter: sections I and II draw together material which might be taken (respectively) to confirm or contradict the three-stage sequence usually described; sections III and IV then offer some observations on the different models of scholastic organization that have been proposed and on the neglected question of local variation. In sections I and II the evidence is presented first; analysis and comment follow.

## I

The following texts make a clear distinction, or note an evident progression, between "primary" and "secondary" stages or teachers:

(a) Diocletian's *Edict on Maximum Prices* (7.66, 70) ordains substantially lower fees for the teacher of elementary letters (*magister institutor litterarum* / χαμαιδιδάσκαλος) than for the *grammaticus*: with this distinction one can compare *Dig.* 50.5.2.8 and 50.4.11.4, which explicitly deny to the elementary teachers ("qui pueros primas litteras docent," "qui primis litteris pueros inducunt," respectively) immunities granted to the *grammaticus*; and *Dig.* 50.13.1, which differentiates between the *rhetores*, *grammatici*, and *geometrae*, who are by definition *praeceptores studiorum liberalium* (= *professores*, §§1,4,6,8) entitled to action *de mercedibus* before the provincial governor, and the *ludi litterarii magistri*, to whom the same privilege is customarily granted *licet non sint professores.*

(b) At *Inst.* 3.25 Lactantius presents a sequence of studies that begins with *communes litterae* (i.e. "vulgar" or non-liberal letters = common or elementary literacy) and extends through grammar and the rest of the liberal arts.[6]

[6] *Inst.* 3.25 "discendae istae communes litterae propter usum legendi . . . grammaticis quoque non parum operae dandum est, ut rectam loquendi rationem scias . . . nec oratoria quidem ignoranda est, ut ea quae didiceris proferre atque eloqui possis. geometria quoque ac musica et astrologia necessaria est, quod hae artes cum philosophia

(c) At *Conf.* 1.9.14ff. and 1.13.20f., Augustine describes the first stages of his education: his *primus magister* at Thagaste (concerned with mere *litterae*, cf. "a" above) is explicitly distinguished from the *grammaticus* at Madaurus (with whom he read Vergil).

(d) At *Hom.* 15.42 (ed. Dörries-Klostermann-Kröger), Symeon of Mesopotamia (s.IV 2/2) imagines the successive stages of a secular career, as an analogy for the spiritual man's gradual approach to the "heavenly mysteries": (1) ὁ θέλων μαθεῖν γράμματα ἀπέρχεται καὶ μανθάνει τὰ σημεῖα . . . , (2) ἀπέρχεται πρὸς τὴν σχολὴν τῶν Ῥωμαϊκῶν . . . , (3) ἀπέρχεται πρὸς τὴν σχολὴν τῶν γραμματικῶν . . . , (4) becomes a σχολαστικός / δικολόγος, (5) τότε γίνεται ἡγέμων. Once again the progress is clearly set out, from the "primary" stage of γράμματα, followed by Latin, to a separate, secondary stage of τὰ γραμματικά (τῶν γραμματικῶν is presumably neuter plural, as τῶν Ῥωμαϊκῶν certainly is in the preceding sentence): Symeon produces the whole sequence casually, as though the pattern would be expected to make immediate sense to his audience.[7]

(e) Whereas the historian Socrates regularly uses the phrase Ἑλληνικῶν / Ῥωμαϊκῶν λόγων διδάσκαλος γραμματικῶν (*vel sim.*) to denote the grammarian,[8] he describes the teacher Hierax of Alexandria (7.13.7) as γραμμάτων τῶν πεζῶν διδάσκαλος: the phrase, which probably means "teacher of common / vulgar letters" (γράμματα πεζά = γράμματα κοινά / *litterae communes* or *viles*), evidently serves in Socrates' vocabulary to characterize a type or stage of education distinct from the liberal studies of the grammarian.[9]

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habent aliquam societatem: quae universa perdiscere neque feminae possunt . . . neque servi . . . neque pauperes aut opifices aut rustici." For *communes litterae* (*communis sermo*, or the like) = "ordinary" letters or speech, distinct from the "liberal" language of the high culture, cf. *Inst.* 5.1, Petrus Chrysologus *serm.* 43 (*PL* 52.320A), *serm.* 132 (*PL* 52.561C), Caesar. Arel. *serm.* 1.13 (p. 12.13ff. Morin), *v. Amator. ep. Autissiod.*, *ASS* Mai 1.53; see also "e" below.

[7] In this regard it should also be noted that, unless τὰ γραμματικά is meant here in the very broad sense of "literary studies," including rhetoric (which seems unlikely), the passage provides interesting evidence for the possibility of a student's pursuing a career as advocate directly after the grammarian's school, without benefit of formal rhetorical training: for a similar career-pattern, from grammatical study to service as a *praefectianus*, cf. *Vie d'Alexandre l'Acémète*, *PO* 6.660f. παιδεύεται δὲ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει πᾶσαν τὴν γραμματικὴν ἐπιστήμην καὶ ἀναχθεὶς . . . τὴν τελείαν ἡλικίαν στρατεύεται ἐπαρχικός.

[8] *H. E.* 2.46.2; 3.1.10; 4.9.4; 5.25.1; and cf. 7.17.2.

[9] For the sense, "common/ordinary letters" (πεζά = κοινά/*communia/vilia*), see esp. Greg. Naz. *or.* 4 *c. Iulian.* 1.155 (*PG* 35.640C) (τὰ ἐν μέσῳ καὶ πεζὰ . . . ῥήματα καὶ τῆς τῶν πολλῶν χρήσεως, contrasted with τὸ κομψόν τε καὶ ὑπεραῖρον accessible only to the liberally educated, οἱ κατὰ παίδευσιν διαφέροντες); cf. also *LSJ* s.v. πεζός II.3, and note 6 above. *PLRE* 2, p. 556, identifies Hierax as a "teacher of prose" (evidently taking γράμματα πεζά as = λόγοι πεζοί/*sermo pedestris*): I do not know what a "teacher of prose" would be (not a teacher of rhetoric: the phrase is not so used elsewhere; and

(f) At *GL* 5.96.12ff., the grammarian Pompeius draws the distinction between *litterae*, which in one way or another are the common concern of the *orator* (= teacher of rhetoric), the *grammaticus*, and the *magister ludi* (mentioned in that order), and the parts of speech (*de partibus tractare*), which are the special concern of the *grammaticus*.[10] The intended distinction of the *grammaticus* from the other two teachers is clear; it is possible (but not necessary) to infer that Pompeius thought of the three teachers as forming a sequence of three stages.

(g) Recalling the precocious aptitude of his predecessor Procopius, the sophist Choricius of Gaza alludes to the three stages in Procopius' education: the stages are marked off, periphrastically but unmistakably, as "first letters" (*τὰ πρῶτα παιδεύεσθαι γράμματα*), grammar (*ἐπὶ θύρας ἥκειν ποιητικάς / τὰ Μουσῶν μανθάνειν*), and rhetoric (*εἰς Ἑρμοῦ παλαίστραν φοιτᾷν / τὰ ῥητόρων τελεῖσθαι*).[11]

(h) According to his biography, Fulgentius of Ruspe, after learning his Greek, acquired (at home) the "[Latinae litterae] quas magistri ludi docere consueverunt," and then entered the *artis grammaticae auditorium*.[12]

(i) Paul of Aegina (s.VII) prescribes the first two stages of scholastic education in the following terms: 1.14 (*CMG* 9.1.13) *ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν ϛ καὶ ζ ἐτῶν τούς τε παῖδας καὶ τὰς κόρας γραμματισταῖς παραδιδόναι πραέσι καὶ φιλανθρώποις . . . τοὺς δὲ δυοδεκαετεῖς τῶν παίδων πρός τε γραμματικοὺς φοιτᾷν ἤδη καὶ γεωμέτρας καὶ τὸ σῶμα γυμνάζειν. . . .*

(j) Although of dubious value, the following three texts might also be mentioned: (1) Georg. Alex., *v. Chrysost.*, *ap.* Phot. *Bibl.* cod. 96, draws the distinction between two stages in John Chrysostom's education, first *φοιτᾷν εἰς διδασκάλου*, then *τὰ γραμματικὰ καὶ ῥητορικὰ παιδεύεσθαι*: although George (after 600?) is not a reliable source for Chrysostom's life, he might be repeating a scheme familiar from his own experience; (2) a late life of Eugippius (*PL* 62.555C) distinguishes the *primum litterarum tirocinium* (ending in the twelfth year) from *κυκλοπαιδεία* (= liberal studies); (3) Hierocles and Philagrius, *Philogelos* 136 *Σιδόνιος γραμματικὸς ἠρώτα τὸν διδάσκαλον* [*μαθητὴν* coni. Thierfelder]· *"ἡ πεντακότυλος λήκυθος πόσον χωρεῖ;" ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· "οἶνον λέγεις ἢ ἔλαιον;"* If the transmitted text is correct, the joke evidently assumes a distinction between the *γραμματικός*

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neither Socrates' usage nor his description of Hierax makes it very likely that the latter was a rhetorician or sophist).

[10] For the latter notion Pompeius is drawing immediately (if tacitly) on Servius, *comm. Don. GL* 4.405.4ff.

[11] *Or. fun. Procop.* 5 (p. 111.4ff. Foerster-Richtsteig) *τοιγαροῦν ἐπὶ μὲν θύρας ἧκε ποιητικὰς ἡλικίαν ἔχων ἣν οἱ τὰ πρῶτα παιδευόμενοι γράμματα, εἰς Ἑρμοῦ δὲ παλαίστραν ἐφοίτησε χρόνον ἄγων τοσοῦτον ὅσον οἱ τὰ Μουσῶν ἔτι μανθάνοντες, βῆμα δὲ καὶ νέων χορὸς αὐτὸν διεδέξατο τοῖς τὰ ῥητόρων τελουμένοις ὁμήλικα.*

[12] Ferrand, *v. Fulgent.* 1.4–5 (ed. Lapeyre).

and διδάσκαλος, the latter perhaps an elementary teacher imagined here in his role as teacher of simple calculation.[13]

These last, questionable cases aside, items "a"–"i" above provide less support for the customary notion of a three-stage sequence of schools than first meets the eye. First, and most obviously, the fact that different teachers were identified with different functions does not necessarily imply that they typically performed those functions in a regular scholastic sequence: thus, for example, the distinctions made by Diocl. *Ed. Pret.* and Socrates ("a" and "e" above) are at least equally consistent with a different configuration, involving a cleavage between "vulgar" and "liberal" schools or teachers (see section III). Conversely, the fact that different levels of instruction were conceived of as sequential does not necessarily imply that that instruction was received in schools attended in a regular sequence. For example, while the *vita* of Fulgentius ("h" above) places the "letters" taught by *magistri ludi* at a level below that of the grammarian's school, it also goes out of its way to point out that Fulgentius was taught those "letters" at home:[14] the passage, indeed, seems to suggest that Fulgentius' circumstances placed him a fortunate cut above the students of the *magistri ludi*, and in any event implies nothing about the further education—if any—ordinarily enjoyed by such students. Similarly, while both Lactantius and Choricius ("b" and "g" above) explicitly mention an elementary level of instruction (in *communes litterae* and τὰ πρῶτα γράμματα, respectively), nothing they say suggests that they associated such instruction with primary schools. In Choricius' case, moreover, there is positive reason to doubt that he would have made such an association: for his description of the education of the bishop Marcian, which corresponds to the passage concerning Procopius' training, clearly shows that the grammarian's school is the first encountered.[15]

Other items are less eloquent than they first seem, for other reasons. The passage of Paul of Aegina ("i" above) would require cautious

[13] If, on the other hand, Thierfelder's μαθητήν chanced to be correct, the passage would further attest the inconstant distinction between elementary teacher and grammarian: see section II below. The *Philogelos* was probably not compiled before the fourth century (*RE* Suppl. 11.1063.7ff. [A. Thierfelder]), but some items were certainly in circulation well before then; the dating of many of the jokes is accordingly uncertain.

[14] Cf. Eustrat. presb. *v. Eutych.* 8ff. (*PG* 86².2284Aff.) (Eutychius taught γράμματα by his uncle, presbyter of the church at Augustopolis, before being sent in his twelfth year to Constantinople for liberal studies [ἡ ἔξω παιδεία]); Callin. *v. Hypat.* 1 (Hypatius taught "letters" ἱκανῶς by his father, a σχολαστικός in Phrygia). For elementary letters taught in the home, see also section II,e and f, below.

[15] *Laud. Marc.* 2.7 (p. 29.17ff.) τεκοῦσα τοίνυν ἡ πόλις . . . καὶ πρὸς ἡλικίαν ἤδη παιδεύεσθαι δυναμένην ἀνεγκοῦσα παρὰ θύρας ἦγε ποιητικὰς καὶ τῆς ἐκεῖθεν ἐμφορηθέντα σε Μούσης τῷ κορυφαίῳ παρεδίδου τῶν Ἑρμοῦ χορευτῶν: i.e., first grammar, then rhetoric (for the metaphors, cf. note 11 above).

treatment in any case, since it is professedly a prescription, not a description of actual circumstances; but in fact, it is copied verbatim from Oribasius,[16] who in turn took it over from Athenaeus of Attalia (s.I 2/3).[17] The passage may therefore less accurately reflect the circumstances known to Paul than the corresponding, but significantly different passage of Aetius of Amida reflects the circumstances known to him (see section II,m below). Or again, while the passages from the *Confessions* noted above ("c") are regularly cited as evidence (and sometimes as the only late antique evidence) for the normal three-stage sequence of the schools, their usefulness as the grounds for generalization is seriously limited, for Augustine's own activity as a *grammaticus* at Thagaste rather obscures the simplicity and clarity of the picture drawn from the *Confessions* (see section II,g below).

Among the sources above, then, only Symeon of Mesopotamia ("d") provides something resembling unequivocal evidence for the sequential organization of primary and secondary schools that is customarily presented as the norm;[18] and to Symeon's evidence one can perhaps add that of Pompeius ("f"). These passages are nonetheless important for being relatively isolated, and with (e.g.) the evidence of Augustine's *Confessions* must obviously be taken into account (see section III below). But in view of the far greater mass of countervailing evidence to which we will now turn, they cannot be assumed to reveal the norm.

## II

For evidence which suggests that the boundaries between the "primary" teacher and the *grammaticus* were blurred and that the teachers' functions overlapped, or which presents the grammarian as the student's first teacher, we can consider the following:

(a) Although the modern handbooks simply list the terms *γραμματιστής* / *litterator* (in effect, "agent of literacy," "teacher of letters") among the titles of the "primary" teacher,[19] their use in antiquity was much more fluid. *Litterator* was applied both to the "primary" teacher (as traditionally defined) and to the *grammaticus*, and is in fact attested rather more frequently in the latter sense than in the former.[20] The use of *γραμματιστής* differs slightly, insofar as certain Atticizing authors (e.g., Aelius

[16] *Lib. inc.* 39 (*CMG* 5.2.2.13f.), cf. *syn. ad Eustath.* 5.14 (*CMG* 6.3.158).

[17] So *lib. inc.* 39, "*ἐκ τῶν Ἀθηναίου*."

[18] Although Symeon in fact only mentions a *σχολή* in connection with instruction in Latin and grammar, I assume that his phrasing—*ἀπέρχεται καὶ μανθάνει*—means that he associated normal instruction in *γράμματα* with some place other than the home, i.e., a school.

[19] See above, note 1.

[20] See E. W. Bower, "Some Technical Terms in Roman Education," *Hermes* 89 (1961) 462–77; A. D. Booth, "Litterator," *Hermes* 109 (1981) 371–78 (with some reservations concerning the discussion of H. A. *M. Ant.* 2.2f. [p. 375f.], Apul. *Flor.* 20.3 [p. 377]).

Aristides, Themistius, Libanius) evidently preferred it as their regular way of saying "grammarian": γραμματιστής provided a stylistically acceptable substitute for γραμματικός, which classical diction did not sanction as a technical or professional title.[21] But this stylistic preference itself probably involved a modification of common usage rather than a willful deviation from it: for γραμματιστής, like *litterator*, was capable of being applied to either elementary or more advanced "teachers of letters," depending on the kind or level of "letters" to which reference was being made. Indeed, the flexibility of the term is such that we can find the same author using it in its different senses at different points in his work. Thus Procopius of Caesarea, for example, remarks that Iunilius (*QSP* in 543) Ἑλληνικῶν μέντοι [sc. γραμμάτων] ἕνεκα οὐδὲ πεφοιτηκότα πρὸς γραμματιστοῦ πώποτε οὐδὲ τὴν γλῶσσαν αὐτὴν Ἑλληνίζειν δυνάμενον (*anecd.* 20.17). Since Iunilius is supposed to be completely ignorant of Greek, γραμματιστής here should denote the elementary teacher of the language: one might compare the use of γραμματιστής in the story told by Simplicius of one of his contemporaries, an educated man of Palestine, who suffered profound amnesia as the result of an illness and had to start his education over from the very beginning after his recovery.[22] But at *BG* I.24.12, Procopius says of John the Cappadocian, λόγων μὲν τῶν ἐλευθερίων καὶ παιδείας ἀνήκοος ἦν· οὐ γὰρ ἄλλο οὐδὲν ἐς γραμματιστοῦ φοιτῶν ἔμαθεν ὅτι μὴ γράμματα . . . : the logical sequence (γάρ) and the substance of the second clause clearly imply that one *could* learn something more than mere, elementary γράμματα—that one was in fact expected to become familiar with λόγοι οἱ ἐλευθέριοι καὶ παιδεία—under the γραμματιστής, a notion that has little to do with the function of the γραμματιστής (= "primary" teacher), as it is usually conceived, but which makes sense if the meaning of γραμματιστής here approaches that of γραμματικός.[23] The use of γραμματιστής in these passages, where its basic meaning, "teacher of letters," receives more precise definition only from the context in which it is used, and the similarly variable use of *litterator* (which appears to have been unaffected by classicizing motives: there is no apparent stylistic bias against *grammaticus* in Latin authors) are particularly significant: such

[21] P. Wolf (above, note 3) 32ff., and cf. P. Petit, *Les Étudiants de Libanius* (Paris 1956) 85, note 194. I have collected additional examples, from authors of the fifth and sixth centuries, in a paper to appear elsewhere.

[22] *Comm. in categ.* 8 (*CAG* 8.230.2ff.) καὶ γὰρ νοήσαντές τινες ἀπέβαλον τὰς ἐπιστήμας, ὥσπερ ἐφ' ἡμῶν ἐν Παλαιστίνῃ προκεκοφώς τις ἐν λόγοις ἤδη καὶ νοήσας πάντων ἐπελάθετο, ὡς δεηθῆναι μετὰ τὴν ἀνάληψιν αὖθις εἰς γραμματιστοῦ φοιτῆσαι. For other, comparable uses in Procopius, see *BP* 2.15.7 (concerning Peter of Arzanene), *BG* 1.2.6 (concerning Athalarich), 4.19.8 (on the illiteracy of the Huns).

[23] For the similarly flexible use of *litterator* in the same work, see, e.g., H. A. *M. Ant.* 2.2 (= teacher of *elementa*), *Comm.* 1.6 (= *grammaticus*, at the stage preceding the *orator*).

usages imply that the authors either were not sensitive to a fundamental, *functional* distinction between the two types of "teachers of letters," or at least were not concerned that the casually flexible use of the terms would create confusion or nonsense.[24] By way of contrast, one might think, for example, of the strictly differentiated functions of the solicitor and barrister in the British legal profession, and the potential for confusion if one or the other of those titles were used with a similar indifference.

(b) In the *Professores* of Ausonius we not only learn that Ausonius' own first teacher was a *grammaticus*,[25] but are specifically told that several of the grammarians taught the *prima elementa*.[26] In fact, there appears to have been a division of labor, amounting to a hierarchical distinction, among the Latin *grammatici* at Bordeaux: the distinction between those who gave elementary instruction and those who taught at a more advanced level. Although the difference is not noted in so many words by Ausonius, the distinct function of the latter[27] can be inferred from Ausonius' specific mention of the former, and especially from the careers of Ausonius himself and his nephew Herculanus. Recalling his experience as a teacher in the letter to his grandson (see "f" below), Ausonius reveals that he began as a teacher of the very youngest students (so, presumably, at an elementary level), then went on to teach older boys (in grammar), before finally advancing to his chair of rhetoric.[28]

[24] For γραμματιστική and γραμματική regarded in antiquity as two aspects of the same field of expertise, see Wolf (above, note 3) 34, M. L. Clarke, "ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΙΚΗ and ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΙΣΤΙΚΗ," *CR* 18 (1969) 270 (on the concept of διττὴ γραμματική in the scholia to Dionysius Thrax). Compare also Ioan. Philop. *comm. in phys.* 2.8 (*CAG* 16.321.1ff.) (on the proposition, οὐδὲ αἱ τέχναι βουλεύονται: ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὁ γραμματιστὴς βουλεύεται πῶς δεῖ τὸ 'α' ἢ τὸ 'β' γράψαι, οὐδ' ὅταν γράφῃ τὸ 'Σωκράτης' ὄνομα βουλεύεται ποῖον δεῖ πρῶτον τῶν στοιχείων γράψαι, ποῖον δὲ δεύτερον καὶ τρίτον) with Simplicius, *comm. in phys.* 2.8 (*CAG* 9.385.17ff.) (on the same proposition: τὶ γὰρ δεῖται βουλῆς ὁ γραμματικός, ἵνα οὕτως γράψῃ τὸ 'Δίωνος' ὄνομα ὡς γράφει): both are speaking of the teacher of beginning "letters" (as the examples 'Σωκράτης' and 'Δίων' show: for the same names used in this connection, see W. Headlam, *Herodas* [Cambridge 1922] 134), the one using the term γραμματιστής, the other γραμματικός. Cf. note 26 below.

[25] Macrinus, *grammaticus Latinus*, commemorated at *prof.* 10.12–13 *huic mea principio/credita puerities.*

[26] Ammonius, *prof.* 10.36–37 "qui rudibus pueris / prima elementa docebat"; the *grammaticus Graecus et Latinus* Crispus, *prof.* 21.4–6 "primaevos fandique rudes / elementorum prima docebas / signa novorum": and so, by implication, the other *grammaticus Graecus et Latinus* Urbicus (said to have been less skilled in Latin than in Greek, *prof.* 21.10–11: since his colleague Crispus, whose expertise in Latin is especially praised, gave elementary instruction, Urbicus' instruction will not have been more ambitious).

[27] Correctly recognized but somewhat misleadingly called "de echte *grammatici*" by L. A. A. Jouai, *De Magistraat Ausonius* (Nijmegen 1938) 32.

[28] *Epist.* 22.67–75 "multos lactantibus annis / ipse alui gremioque fovens et murmura solvens / eripui tenerum blandis nutricibus aevum [= "elementary" stage]. / *mox* pueros molli monitu et formidine leni / pellexi, ut mites peterent per acerba profectus, / carpturi dulcem fructum radicis amarae [= "advanced" *grammaticus*]. / *idem* vesticipes motu iam

A similar sequence can be deduced from what we are told of his nephew. While still very young, Herculanus was a *grammaticus* at Bordeaux,[29] yet Ausonius hoped that he would succeed to his own chair:[30] since this implies some significant difference between their two positions, we can conclude that Herculanus taught the "elements," with prospects for advancement, just as Ausonius had moved on from elementary teaching to more advanced instruction as a *grammaticus* before becoming a rhetor. Bordeaux thus provides evidence of an entire school of liberal studies so organized as to efface the distinction between the "primary" or "elementary" teacher and the *grammaticus*, with some of the latter performing the main function usually associated with the former.

(c) A similar blurring of the functions of the γραμματιστής (*qua* "primary" teacher) and the γραμματικός (*qua* "secondary" teacher) may be documented for Antioch. Apart from Libanius' regular practice of using the term γραμματιστής in place of γραμματικός (see "a" above), the best evidence is found in the persons of three men who are known to have been *grammatici*: Calliopius and his father, who taught Libanius' son when the latter was no more than seven years old, and so of an age to receive no more than elementary instruction; and Cleobulus, who had played Phoenix to Bassianus' Achilles—i.e., had been the latter's teacher in his earliest childhood (so *Il.* 9.485–95).[31]

(d) Prudentius describes his education as consisting only of two stages, grammar and rhetoric, the former beginning in his *aetas prima*.[32]

(e) Similarly, Paulinus of Pella (*Euchar.* 72ff.) states that his schooling began in his sixth year (*exacto primi . . . tempore lustri*), with Greek (73–74), followed by the reading of Vergil—i.e., the grammarian's school

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puberis aevi / ad mores artesque bonas fandique vigorem / produxi . . . [=*rhetor*]." On the correct interpretation of the passage, Booth (above, note 4) 6, 7f.; the sequence in Ausonius' career is clearly marked by *mox . . . idem* (for his advance from *grammaticus* to *rhetor*, see also *prof.* 24.6 and note 30 below; for *idem* similarly used to mark the same kind of professional advancement, *prof.* 15 tit., on Nepotianus); line 72 *dulcem fructum radicis amarae* perhaps alludes to the *sententia* of Cato as it was used in the grammatical exercise of the *chriae* (so Diom. *GL* 1.310.3ff., the *chria* based on the sentence, *Marcus Porcius Cato dixit litterarum radices amaras esse, fructus iocundiores*). On lines 67–69, see also note 40 below.

[29] *Prof.* 11 tit., cf. ibid. 3 *particeps scholae*.

[30] *Prof.* 11.3; the hope was frustrated by Herculanus' early death (ibid. 4–5, *par.* 17.9), and Acilius Glabrio became Ausonius' successor, *prof.* 24.6.

[31] For Calliopius (= *PLRE* 1, s.n. 3, p. 175) and his father, Lib. *ep.* 625.4–6, 678.2, for Cleobulus (= *PLRE* 1, s.n. 1, p. 215f.), *ep.* 155.2 (cf. 231.1: note also *ep.* 1492.2, where Libanius again uses the Phoenix-Achilles conceit, quoting *Il.* 9.485), and esp. Wolf (above, note 3) 34f., 71–73; cf. also P. Petit (above, note 21) 85f., H. Bouchery, *Themistius in Libanius' Brieven* (Antwerp 1936) 128ff.

[32] *Praef.* 7–9 "aetas prima crepantibus / sub ferulis [= grammar, cf. note 47 below], mox docuit toga / infectum vitiis falsa loqui non sine crimine" [= rhetoric; with *docuit toga*, cf. Auson. *epist.* 22.73 *vesticipes*, note 28 above].

(75–80).[33] He mentions no primary teacher, but speaks of the *alphabeti . . . prima elementa* (65) only in connection with his parents' care: he probably received this instruction at home.[34]

(f) Ausonius (*Epist.* 22 [*carm. protrept. ad nepot.*] 45ff.) prescribes the same educational *cursus* for his homonymous grandson, beginning with Greek (46ff.) and going on to Latin grammar (55–60, Horace, Vergil, Terence). The similarity is not surprising, since the recipient of *Epist.* 22 was the brother of Paulinus of Pella; and like his brother, he probably would have been taught his ABCs at home.[35]

(g) As was remarked above (section I *ad fin.*), the supposedly normal pattern of schooling deduced from Aug. *Conf.* 1.9.14ff. and 13.20f. is notably at odds with Augustine's own teaching activity at Thagaste. The most lucid and specific evidence here is provided not by Augustine himself, but by his biographer Possidius and by Paulinus of Nola:[36] Possidius (*v. Aug.* 1) states that Augustine taught first as a *grammaticus* in his home town (i.e., ca. 372/3, cf. *Conf.* 4.1.1), then as a rhetor at Carthage; and Paulinus, writing in 396 to Licentius, Augustine's one-time pupil at Thagaste,[37] speaks of Augustine as the one "qui te tantillum sinu gestavit suo et a parvulis primo lacte sapientis saecularis imbutum."[38] Augustine the *grammaticus*, therefore, was evidently the first teacher of Licentius—a fact consistent both with the likely age of Licentius in 372/3,[39] and with the early stage of, e.g., Ausonius' career as a *grammaticus*.[40]

(h) Paulinus of Nola (*c.* 31) eulogizes the boy Celsus, who, in his eighth year, had been under the "*imperium*" of a *grammaticus*: Paulinus evidently regards this as the first stage of his schooling.[41] One should also

[33] Cf. lines 113–17 and Booth (above, note 4) 6f.

[34] Cf. p. 328 and note 14 above.

[35] For the grammatical schooling of Ausonius *nepos* ("carmina prima tibi cum iam puerilibus annis / traderet adsidui permulcens cura magistri"), see also *epist.* 21.1–5.

[36] Augustine's general reference to his secular career at *Conf.* 4.2.2 (*docebam in illis annis artem rhetoricam*) has sometimes been taken to mean that he taught as a rhetor at Thagaste; but see further below.

[37] Cf. esp. Aug. *c. Acad.* 2.2.3, with *beat. vit.* 1.6, *ep.* 26, and G. Bardy, "Un Élève de Saint Augustin: Licentius," *AThAug.* 14 (1954) 55–79.

[38] *Ep.* 8.1, cf. *ep.* 7.3 (to Licentius' father Romanianus) [*Augustinus*] *tunc se et exauditum sentiet ab Excelso, si,* quem tibi dignum genuit in litteris, *hunc et sibi digne filium pariat in Christo.*

[39] His birth is placed ca. 368, on other grounds, by Bardy (above, note 37) 58 and note 2, and could easily have occurred a year or two earlier.

[40] See "b" above; with Paulinus' characterization of Augustine's tender care, compare Ausonius' metaphorical description of his beginnings as a *grammaticus* teaching the youngest pupils, *epist.* 22.67–69 (quoted above, note 28), and *Il.* 9.485–98, the basis of the Phoenix-Achilles conceit used by Libanius (see above, at note 31).

[41] *C.* 31.23–26 "coeperat octavum producere parvulus annum, / prima citis agitans tempora curriculis. / iam puerile iugum tenera cervice ferebat, / grammatici duris subditus imperiis. . . ."

note that if, as seems likely, Ausonius became imperial tutor ca. 367, Gratian too would have been in his eighth year, or not long past his eighth birthday, when he began his lessons, first in grammar, then in rhetoric, under Ausonius.[42]

(i) Along with the systematic study of language, the careful reading of poetry is usually taken to have been the distinguishing feature that set the school of the *grammaticus* off from the "primary" school, the *ludus litterarius*; and no poet was more closely associated with the Latin *grammatici* than Vergil.[43] Yet Orosius emphatically associates his knowledge of Vergil with the *ludus litterarius*; and his phrasing suggests that the acquaintance was not limited to odd lines excerpted for the copy-book, but was as thorough as that received in the grammarian's school (*adv. pagan.* 1.18.1, the tale of Aeneas' labors *ludi litterarii disciplina nostrae quoque memoriae inustum est*).

(j) According to his biographer, Proclus was sent to Alexandria to study grammar (with Orion of Thebes) and rhetoric (with the sophist Leonas). We are told that he had received his earlier schooling from a γραμματικός in Lycia; there is no indication that he received any "primary" schooling in the sense usually meant.[44]

(k) Sidonius Apollinaris describes the education and early career of Consentius[45] in the following terms (*c.* 23.204ff.):

> *iam primo* tenero calentem ab ortu
> excepere sinu novem sorores,
> et te de genetrice vagientem
> tinxerunt vitrei vado Hippocrenes:
> *tunc* hac mersus aqua loquacis undae
> pro fluctu mage *litteras bibisti.*
> *hinc tu iam puer* aptior magistro

[42] Auson. *praef.* 1.24–27 (mentioning *only* grammar and rhetoric). For the date (367) see R. Étienne, *Bordeaux antique* (Bordeaux 1962) 342f.; J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court A.D. 364–425* (Oxford 1975) 51. For studies begun in the eighth year, see also Procop. Caes. *BG* 1.2.1ff. (on Athalarich); Agath. *Hist.* 5.21.3 (ed. Keydell) (on Germanus); and Georg. Presb. *Vie de Théodore de Sykéon* §§5ff. (ed. Festugière) (see below, pp. 344–45).

[43] See R. A. Kaster, "The Grammarian's Authority," *CP* 75 (1980) 216–41; cf. section I,c above, and items "e," "f," "k" in this section.

[44] Marin, *v. Procli.* 8 ἐπ' ὀλίγον δὲ ἐν Λυκίᾳ φοιτήσας γραμματικῷ ἀπῆρον εἰς τὴν πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ Ἀλεξάνδρειαν κτλ. For comparable patterns: Jer. *v. Hilar.* 2 (Hilarion sent from Tabatha in the hinterland of Gaza to the grammarian's school in Alexandria); Rufin. *H.E.* 2.14 (Athanasius was *a notario integre et a grammatico sufficienter . . . instructus*; beyond that, no "primary" teacher is mentioned); Eustrat. presb. *v. Eutych.* 8ff. (see note 14 above); and for strong argument that Jerome's education followed a similar pattern, beginning under a grammarian (= *Orbilius saeviens*: *c. Rufin.* 1.30) at Rome, see A. D. Booth, "The Date of Jerome's Birth," *Phoenix* 33 (1979) 346–53.

[45] Born ca. 410: K. F. Stroheker, *Der senatorische Adel im spätantiken Gallien* (Tübingen 1948) 162 no. 96; *PLRE* 2, s.n. 2, p. 308f.

*quidquid rhetoricae institutionis*
*quidquid grammaticalis aut palaestrae est,*
*sicut iam tener hauseras, vorasti.*

According to Sidonius, Consentius was immersed in liberal studies—i.e., grammar and rhetoric—from birth:[46] *litteras* (209) must by implication = *liberal* "letters"; and (apart from a slight shift in metaphor, *bibisti* / *hauseras* vs. *vorasti*) the only difference between Consentius' infancy (*tenero . . . ab ortu* / *iam tener*) and his boyhood (*hinc tu iam puer . . .*) lies in the fact that, as a boy, Consentius was already superior to his teachers (210, *aptior magistro*). The hyperbole that runs throughout the passage does not affect the fact that Sidonius automatically associates the education of a man of Consentius' standing with only two *magistri*, the grammarian and the rhetor, and only two stages of formal schooling, in liberal studies.[47]

(l) According to Choricius, when Marcian, later bishop of Gaza, came of an age to be educated, he "approached the doors of poetry," i.e., went to the grammarian's school.[48]

(m) With the prescription for the first two stages of schooling given by Paul of Aegina,[49] one should compare the corresponding remarks of Aetius of Amida (s.V/VI), 4.29 (*CMG* 8.1.370): ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν ἑπτὰ ἐτῶν ἐπὶ γράμματα φέρειν παραδοῦναί τε πραέσι καὶ φιλανθρώποις διδασκάλοις. While the passages that immediately precede and follow (as well as the adjectives πραέσι καὶ φιλανθρώποις in the passage quoted) make it certain that Aetius too is drawing on Oribasius, there are important differences: the two age-cohorts in the prescription of Oribasius/Paulus (ages 6/7–11, 12–13) have become one; the distinction between "primary" and "secondary" education has been replaced by a single stage, concerned with γράμματα in general; for the titles γραμματισταί and γραμματικοί the completely undifferentiated term, διδάσκαλοι, has been substituted; and the provisions for γεωμέτραι and τὸ σῶμα γυμνάζειν have been suppressed completely. All these changes are most naturally explained as Aetius' accommodation of his source to the circumstances familiar to him; and apparently those circumstances did not normally include a distinction between "primary" and "secondary" schools.

(n) From sources of dubious reliability, the following may be added: (1) *v. Eustath.* 2, according to which Eustathius, son of a βεστιοπράτης

[46] So the Muses, lines 204–9, and so line 213 sicut *iam tener hauseras.*

[47] Lines 204–9 ("tunc . . . litteras bibisti") probably allude to tuition at home, which would not be surprising, cf. "e," "f" above; with lines 204–13, cf. *ep.* 5.5.1ff., on the attainments of Syagrius (= Stroheker [above, note 45] 221 no. 369, *PLRE* 2, s.n. 3, p. 1042) in grammar (= *ferulae lectionis Maronianae*) and rhetoric (= *desiderata varicosi Arpinatis opulenta loquacitasque*), the only stages mentioned in Sidonius' sketch of his subject's education.

[48] Choric. *laud. Marc.* 2.7 (quoted at note 15 above).

[49] From Oribasius: see section I,i above, and p. 329, notes 16, 17.

and martyr under Maximian, was the only one of three brothers to receive any schooling and was taught only by a γραμματικός at Nicomedia;[50] (2) *v. Ioan. Calybit.* 2 (*PG* 114.568), concerning an education supposedly received at Constantinople in the first half of the fifth century, and sketching the progression from τὰ τῆς παιδείας πρότερα γράμματα[51] to τὸ περὶ τῆς ῥητορικῆς καὶ φιλοσοφίας ἀναγινώσκειν βίβλους, with only one stage of undifferentiated πρότερα γράμματα noted before rhetoric and philosophy; and (3) *v. Alex.* 2,[52] in which Alexander, on reaching the age appropriate to instruction (ἐν καιρῷ διδαχῆς), is said to have been educated in ἡ γραμματικὴ ἐπιστήμη, ἡ ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία, and rhetoric.

The information gathered above appears to lend substantial support to the arguments of Booth. On the one hand, the evidence suggests that the distinction between the "primary" and "secondary" teacher, in title or function, was far from iron-clad, and that the grammarian was prepared to provide elementary instruction to the youngest pupils among his clientele (see items "a"–"c," and cf. "m"). On the other hand, we see children beginning their formal schooling, as early as their sixth to eighth years, with the grammarian as their first teacher (see esp. items "c"–"h," "j"–"l"). The evidence, moreover, shows an interesting geographic and social spread, with the examples ranging from the high aristocracy of Gaul (e.g., "k") to the upper classes in the cities of the East ("c," "j," "l"). While some children from these privileged strata of society may have been taught their elementary "letters" in the home or (in the case of Latin-speakers) learned their Greek before their Latin grammar (cf. "e," "f"), there is no indication that the "primary" school (in the sense usually meant) formed a normal part of the experience of a child destined for a liberal education.

In section III we will consider the implications of the evidence gathered and summarized thus far. In closing this section, however, I would like to draw particular attention to the passage from Orosius ("i" above), which provides what is perhaps the most striking piece of information, insofar as it runs counter to the general tendency of the testimony: while much of the evidence in this section shows that the *grammatici* might regularly perform the functions associated with the teacher in the *ludus litterarius*, Orosius' reminiscence attributes to the latter institution one of the roles most closely associated with the *grammaticus*. This kind of fusion also has important implications, both for the concept of a segmented or "two-track" system of schools and for the problem of local variation, and will be discussed further in the final section of the paper.

[50] *AnalBoll.* 93 (1975) 292; on the historicity of the *passio* (one of the "passions épiques"), cf. the comments of F. Halkin, p. 288.

[51] *Pueritiae litteras* in the Latin version, *AnalBoll.* 15 (1896) 260.

[52] *AnalBoll.* 19 (1900) 244: a late Greek version (before s.IX), based on a Syriac life of s.V 3/4.

## III

At the beginning of this paper I referred to two different models that have been proposed to describe the regular institutional arrangement of the schools. The difference between the two views can be presented graphically, in the figures below.

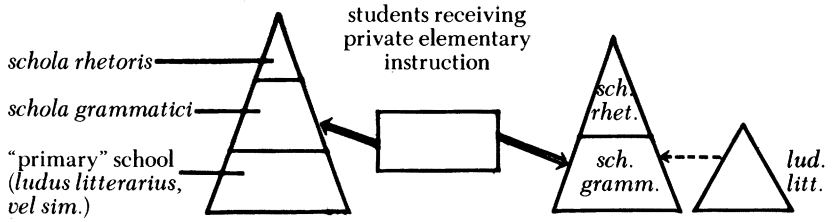


Fig. A Fig. B

Fig. A corresponds to the sequence customarily described, with the three schools formally distinct but providing a regular progression from one to the other, and with allowances made both for a significant rate of attrition along the sequence and for lateral entry into the sequence by students whose circumstances would have allowed for private elementary tuition. Fig. B corresponds to the system suggested by A. D. Booth for Rome of the first century, a socially segmented system laid out along two essentially separate tracks. The most important formal distinction here is the division between the two tracks or segments: the *ludus litterarius*, providing common literacy for students of relatively humble origins on the one hand; and the *scholae liberales*, catering to a more privileged part of the population on the other. A certain rate of attrition is assumed for each segment, and allowance is made for lateral entry into the schools of liberal studies both by upper-class students instructed in the elements at home and by students—an irregular trickle rather than a steady stream—able to cross the institutional divide.

Although some of the testimony reviewed in section I above presumed or was consistent with the arrangement described in fig. A, the evidence considered in sections I and II together should surely discourage us from regarding that arrangement as "typical": at most, we can say that in some circumstances—those, for example, known to Symeon of Mesopotamia (section I,d)—the direct progression from a school of "letters" to a school of "grammar" was a familiar option. Would we be justified, then, in turning to fig. B and identifying it as the typical or generalized scheme? The pattern has its attractions; and it was, I believe, a pattern which existed in some circumstances. But to the question as put, with the stress on the phrase "typical or generalized," the answer must finally be no. I will try to explain and justify this answer in the pages that follow.

The idea of a socially segmented arrangement of schools is attractive, first, because it is less obviously anachronistic than the single-track progression usually described. The sequential arrangement of "primary" and "secondary" schools—in the proper sense of those terms, with the former designed to feed into the latter, and both schools integrated in the same general system—is fully a development of the last three or four generations in the history of secular education in the West; and its existence in the highly stratified society of antiquity would anyway be surprising. Viewed against the pyramid of ancient society, the social differentiation implied by fig. B above appears *prima facie* more plausible: on the one hand, the *scholae liberales* providing instruction in rhetoric and grammar—*and*, when necessary, the *prima elementa*—for an elite clientele; on the other hand, a largely anonymous clientele drawn from the lower levels of the population and served by equally anonymous "teachers of letters." The pattern has a further attraction as well; for if such an arrangement of schools is imagined, we would be able to place certain measures of the imperial government more firmly in their social context. So, for example, the exclusion of the "teachers of letters" from the immunities enjoyed by *grammatici* and rhetors, or the radically lower fees established for the former by Diocletian's Edict (section I,a above), could be taken to reflect not only the value ascribed to the different teachers' skills but their relative importance in the life of the upper classes. Similarly, the imperial government's general and often-noted lack of concern for the (so-called) primary schools would become a bit more intelligible, insofar as that indifference would have affected not primary education—since the elite would have received their "elements" in the schools of the favored *grammatici*, if they did not receive them at home—but the education *tout court* of the lower orders within the larger cities and of much of the general population outside them.

As I remarked above, I believe that the socially segmented arrangement of schools did exist in some circumstances. I should expand that remark now, in the following terms. First, and in general, the schools of "vulgar" and "liberal" letters were surely segregated socially, in the sense that only the latter were regularly frequented by the upper classes:[53] the evidence gathered in sections I and II shows clearly enough that students from this segment of the population had little to do with the "school of letters," but met the grammarian as their first teacher in the formal setting of a school, whether they attended that school in their native town or were sent off to some other city. Moreover, there probably did exist, in *some* settings, a full complement of schools arranged according to the two, socially distinct tracks described in fig. B above.

[53] For late antiquity, "roughly from decurions upwards," Jones (above, note 5) 997: I know of no evidence that would require a serious adjustment of that estimate.

So, for example, A. D. Booth has already argued, powerfully, for the presence of this arrangement in first-century Rome; and his arguments could be extended. Consider the implications of Quintil. *Inst.* 1.4. When passing in review the different components of the grammarian's instruction, as part of his general theme that there is more to that instruction than meets the eye (*Inst.* 1.4.2), Quintilian includes the basic attributes of the verb (*genera et qualitates et personas et numeros*) and remarks, *litterarii paene ista sunt ludi et trivialis scientiae* (1.4.27); he then goes on to emphasize the underlying complexities of the subject, as it falls within the grammarian's domain. The clause just quoted is usually taken to mean that the elements of verbal flexion were taught in the "primary" schools;[54] that interpretation is possible, however, only if one considers the words out of context and imposes on them prior assumptions regarding "primary" and "secondary" schools. In fact, Quintilian otherwise associates the first stages of education, not with the *ludus litterarius* (which he mentions only here) or with any other school, but with the home. Thus his discussion of the relative merits of private and public education, and his arguments in favor of the latter (*Inst.* 1.2), occur only after the child has been taken through his ABCs (1.1), and as a prelude to his comments on the teacher's need to evaluate his students' capabilities (1.3) and the grammarian's instruction (1.4): it is clear that the grammarian is the first teacher the future orator is expected to meet.[55] In his comments at *Inst.* 1.4.27 Quintilian is not thinking of the *ludus litterarius* as a "primary" school: *trivialis* means, not "rudimentary," but "common," *vulgaris*;[56] and the comments themselves do not concern two *successive* stages of schooling ("primary" and "secondary," with some of the subject matter of the latter being anticipated by, or trickling down to, the former), but two *distinct types* of school, the "school of letters," providing a "common" or "vulgar" literacy, and the grammarian's school, including elements of "common knowledge" in its instruction and in that respect overlapping with the "school of letters," but also providing more complete and exquisite knowledge.

Quintilian was able to make the distinction so casually and allusively because he could assume that his audience was as aware as he of the different kinds of school and teacher, and their different clienteles; and one can point to later authors who seem to make similar allusions to similar distinctions. We saw earlier that Libanius uses the term γραμματιστής as a term of honor, to denote a teacher of liberal letters

[54] "Such subjects belong to the elementary school and the rudiments of knowledge," trans. Butler (Loeb); "C'est là, à peu près, le programme de l'école élémentaire et du savoir commun," trans. Cousin (Budé); and cf., among recent histories of education, Clarke (above, note 1) 17, Bonner (above, note 1) 178.

[55] Cf. Booth (above, note 4) 3; and note that when Quintilian discusses the question of the child's first school, the term he uses is *schola* (1.2.1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 16), not *ludus*.

[56] So Cousin more correctly than Butler, above, note 54.

(= γραμματικός), and that Libanius also gives evidence of such teachers performing the function of "primary" teachers, taking very young pupils in charge (section II,a and c): it is particularly suggestive, then, that at *or.* 42.26–27, in his attack on the memory of Fl. Optatus (= *PLRE* 1, s.n. 3, p. 650), Libanius contemptuously refers to him as nothing more than a jumped-up "teacher of letters," γραμμάτων διδάσκαλος. The phrase is not at all part of Libanius' usual vocabulary for referring to the sort of teacher with whom he himself associated; and it is in fact Libanius' purpose in this passage to defame his antagonist (Optatus' homonymous nephew) by attributing to him shamefully low origins. One might therefore reasonably assume that, by calling the elder Optatus a γραμμάτων διδάσκαλος, Libanius means to suggest—and assumes that his audience will understand—that he was a teacher of *vulgar* letters (like the proprietor of Quintilian's *ludus litterarius*, with his *trivialis scientia*) and that he was, in his expertise and his station, quite distinct from the honorable γραμματισταί of Libanius' acquaintance.[57] One can also suggest (for another example) that the usage of the historian Socrates, differentiating between Ἑλληνικῶν / Ῥωμαϊκῶν λόγων διδάσκαλοι γραμματικῶν and Hierax of Alexandria, the γραμμάτων τῶν πεζῶν διδάσκαλος (section I,e above), is based upon a similar distinction.[58]

It must be admitted, however, that these are only hints, and that they are only consistent with, not direct evidence for, a two-track arrangement of the schools. This is the first reason for my unwillingness, above, to accept the proposition that the socially segmented system was "typical": we simply do not have the evidence, especially for the schools that, according to that scheme, would be the "vulgar" counterparts to the *scholae liberales.* For example, we know the schools of grammar and rhetoric at Bordeaux better than any other schools in antiquity, thanks to the memoirs of Ausonius; but we are still in no position to claim with any certainty that the city was provided with a two-track system of schools: although we know that the municipal *professores* could take on and provide with the *elementa* even very young children marked out for a liberal education, we do not know whether private "schools of (vulgar) letters" also existed, to provide a more limited literacy to a less privileged studentry. We might suspect that, as a provincial capital and city of some consequence in its region, Bordeaux had the need and resources to support a socially differentiated pattern of schooling; but suspicions

[57] For γραμμάτων διδάσκαλος as a term of contempt, see esp. Demosth. *de cor.* 258 (perhaps Libanius' inspiration here), with Dio Chrys. *or.* 7.114; on Libanius' treatment of Fl. Optatus, cf. A. D. Booth, "Some Suspect Schoolmasters," *Florilegium* 3 (1981) 5f. The justice of Libanius' invective and the question of Optatus' actual status do not affect the point being made here.

[58] Cf. the distinction between (mere) *eruditio scholaris* and *liberales litterae* at Rufin. *Trans. Orig. in Ios.* hom. 5.1 (p. 323.8f. Baehrens).

are not enough. Moreover, if we can venture so little in the case of Bordeaux, then *a fortiori* our hesitation must be still greater in the case of a more modest city like the Gaza of Choricius (cf. section I *ad fin.* and II,l above); and in the case of a still humbler town, like Augustine's Thagaste, the outlines of one or another neat model dissolve before our eyes (see section I,c and II,g above). If Augustine's education and early career offer any general lesson at all, the lesson does not concern some "typical" pattern of schooling, but the local variations of resources and supply. The son of a *curialis* of no great means, Augustine began his schooling with the local *magister litterarum*, who appears to have constituted the town's entire educational apparatus; and Augustine could easily have ended his schooling with the same teacher, to be classed with his cousins Lastidianus and Rusticus among those who *nullum vel grammaticum passi sint*,[59] but for the ambitious sacrifices of his father and the favor of the local magnate Romanianus.[60] On the other hand, Romanianus' own son, Licentius, happened to begin his education when Thagaste's resources were temporarily augmented by the presence of Augustine, the budding *grammaticus*.[61]

But these last considerations bring me to the second reason for my earlier negative answer—a reason based on what we do know. We catch our clearest glimpses, or receive our strongest hints, of a two-track arrangement from sources who belong or refer to the greatest centers of administration and education—Quintilian of Rome,[62] or Libanius of Antioch, or Socrates in his notice of Hierax of Alexandria. The social and economic life of such cities could demand and support a differentiated system of schools: but there would be few cities indeed in which we could expect to find replicated the pattern of schooling that might be found in the great metropolitan centers. If the *ludi litterarii* in Rome simply provided the lower orders with a vulgar "craft literacy," they were evidently run on different lines from the *ludus litterarius* in Spain where the *Aeneid* was burned into Orosius' memory (section II,i above). Hence the question of local variation, on which a few comments will be offered in the final section of the paper.

## IV

By way of urging against the mechanical use of the literary sources to define a single, uniform framework of primary and secondary education, P. J. Parsons has well remarked that "there is a world between Quintilian

[59] *Beat. vit.* 1.6.

[60] *Conf.* 2.3.5, *c. Acad.* 2.2.3.

[61] Similarly Licentius' relative (Aug. *ep.* 27.5, Paulin. Nol. *ep.* 8 [lines 83–84]) Alypius, who had Augustine as his teacher, first at Thagaste, then at Carthage, *Conf.* 6.7.11.

[62] Booth (above, note 5), and above, p. 339, on Quintil. *Inst.* 1.4.27.

and the Egyptian market town."[63] The comment could be extended to include many other areas of the Empire, where instruction would have been carried out, not so much with reference to strict curricular divisions or educators' prescriptions, but according to what the local traffic would bear, or local needs demand, or local teachers could offer.

We can catch sight of the relatively undifferentiated state of some local schools in the titles claimed by their teachers. So, for instance, the style *magister liberalium litterarum* of Domitius Rufinus, who taught at Iomnium on the coast of Africa (= *PLRE* 1, s.n. 16, p. 777), suggests that his expertise and teaching were more likely a blend of studies than commodities neatly packaged and labelled. Much the same might be suspected of several other late antique teachers: Annius Namptoius (= *PLRE* 1, s.n., p. 615), a man of some legal expertise (*iuris consultus*) who was also a *magister studiorum* at Thuburbo Maius[64] (compare L. Terentius Iulianus *signo* Concordius, a *grammaticus* at Trier in the third or fourth century, whose style—*magister studiorum, grammaticus Latinus*—shows the species distinguished from the genus);[65] or Aurelius Trophimus, who was a "teacher of wisdom" (*σοφίης διδάσκαλος*) in central Phrygia some time in the late third or early fourth century;[66] or the Clamosi, father and son, "boys' masters" (*magister puerorum*) at Parentium in the early and middle fifth century, whose very name—evidently derived from a verse of Martial—suggests that the men themselves, and so presumably their instruction, had some contact with the classical tradition.[67] A somewhat

[63] *JEA* 61 (1975) 301; cf. also Booth (above, note 4) 8, Dionisotti (above, note 4) 121.

[64] *AE* 1916, 87, 88 (= 20 bis) = *ILAfr.* 273a,b (an. 361) *fl(a)m(en) p(er)p(etuus), iuris consultus, magister studiorum, cur(ator) rei p(ublicae).*

[65] H. Cüppers and W. Binsfeld, "Eine zweiseitig beschriftete Grabplatte aus der St.-Matthias-Basilika in Trier," *TZ* 35 (1972) 135–40, U. Schillinger-Häfele, "Vierter Nachtrag zu *CIL* XIII und zweiter Nachtrag zu Fr. Vollmer, Inscriptiones Bavariae Romanae," *BRGK* 58 (1977) 453; for *magister studiorum*, cf. also *CTh.* 13.3.5 (an. 362) (*magistri studiorum doctoresque*), *CJ* 3.28.37.1e (an. 531) (*magistri studiorum liberalium*).

[66] *SEG* 6.137.4f., cf. 28f. (Altıntas [Kurtköy]). Since Trophimus was not a Christian (ibid. 6ff.), *σοφίη* should = secular "wisdom," and Trophimus was probably a small-town schoolmaster (cf. W. H. Buckler, W. M. Calder, C. W. M. Cox, "Monuments from Central Phrygia," *JRS* 17 [1927] 53ff.): for *σοφίη* in this sense, Bergk, *PLG*[4] (1914) 3.362f. (line 13 *σοφέ, γραμμάτων ανάσσεις*, line 29 *σοφίης ἄνακτα*, of the *γραμματικός* Coluthus), *RIGCE* no. 325.ii.5 (a reference to the *σοφί[η]* of the *γραμματικός* Theodosius of Panopolis [= *PLRE* 1, s.n. 2, p. 902]), and cf. p. 344 below on the Galatian teacher Philumenus; for the style *σοφίης διδάσκαλος*, cf. F. K. Dörner, *Bericht über eine Reise in Bithynien* Denkschr. Akad. Wissensch. Wien, Philos.-hist. Kl. 75,1 (1952) no. 137.1f. (Bithynion / Claudiopolis) *σοφίης πανάριστε / διδάσκαλε*. On cultural attainments in the Upper Tembris Valley in s.III/IV, see E. Gibson, *The "Christians for Christians" Inscriptions of Phrygia* (Missoula, Mont. 1978) 94–96.

[67] *ILCV* 719 = *Inscr.Ital.* 10.2.58 (commemorating the donation of *Clamosus mag(ister) puer(orum) et Successa* to the *basilica primitiva* at Parentium), *Inscr.Ital.* 10.2.74 (commemorating the donation of *[C]lamosus magister puerorum et Victorina* to the *basilica praeeuphrasiana*): in view of the chronology of the two basilicas (s.IVex./Vin. and s.V

more precise idea of the range of studies varying from place to place is provided by two examples from literary sources: on the one hand, Cassianus, a "teacher of letters" in charge of "boys' studies" at Forum Cornelii (Imola) in Italy, whose instruction evidently included the useful, technical skill of shorthand;[68] on the other hand, Orosius, whose experience in the "school of letters" (*ludus litterarius*) provided him with a knowledge of Vergil (section II,i above).

In these cases, and others noted below, the form taken by the local "school of letters" (*vel sim.*) was no doubt affected by the variable definition of "letters" themselves: in such places the instruction available would have been a function of what can be called situational literacy. The idea of being "(il)literate" was at least as flexible in antiquity as it is today, capable of meaning anything from "(not) knowing one's basic letters" to "(not) fully educated in the high culture."[69] The sense would depend on geographic or social context: when Jerome smears Rufinus and his followers by charging that they "have not learned their letters," when he calls Rufinus a συγγραφεὺς ἀγράμματος and recommends that he go back to the grammarian's school (*n.b.*) to "learn his letters," he clearly means that Rufinus is deficient in more exquisite literary skills than his ABCs;[70] it is equally clear that, by virtue of his background and

med.: A. Degrassi, *Inscr.Ital.* 10.2. pp. 26,31, B. Molajoli, *La basilica Eufrasiana di Parenzo* [Padua 1943²] 11ff., 17ff.) and the different names of the wives, the two Clamosi should probably be regarded as father and son. The connection of the name with Mart. 5.84.1f. (*puer . . . clamoso revocatur a magistro*) was noted by Diehl, at *ILCV* 719, who suggested that the name was assumed as a professional *supernomen* (cf. *SEG* 13.472 [s.II, Ostia], the epitaph of the sophist P. Aelius Samius Isocrates, with the comments of J. and L. Robert, *Bull. ép.* 1949, 233; and a fourth-century διδάσκαλος of Antinoopolis with the "appropriately poetic name" Arethusius, *P.Ant.* 2.93 [H. Zilliacus]). With the style *magister puerorum*, compare διδάσκαλος παιδῶν (*P.S.I.* 3.157), παιδοδιδάσκαλος (Georg. presb. *Vie de Théodore de Sykéon* §26.7ff., with p. 344 below); cf. also *Testament. D.N. Iesu Christi* 2 Clement., 2, p. 115 ed. Rahmani = *CSCO* Scr. Syr. 162, p. 49, and immediately below, on Cassianus of Imola.

[68] Prudent. *perist.* 9.21–24 "praefuerat studiis puerilibus et grege multo / saeptus magister litterarum sederat, / verba notis brevibus conprendere cuncta peritus / raptimque punctis dicta praepetibus sequi," 35–36 "agmen tenerum ac puerile gubernat / fictis notare verba signis inbuens": since lines 23–24, 35–36 clearly refer to notarial skills, and since *magister litterarum* itself never means "teacher of shorthand," we should probably conclude that Cassianus taught both regular "letters" and shorthand. For shorthand joined with other forms of schooling, see, e.g., note 44 above (on the education of Athanasius), note 81 below (on Protogenes at Antinoopolis), Amm. Marc. 29.1.8, M. M. Hauser-Meury, *Prosopographie zu den Schriften Gregors von Nazianz* (Bonn 1960) 131; more generally, Marrou (above, note 1) 448ff. and id., *Christiana tempora: Mélanges d'histoire, d'archéologie, d'épigraphie et de patristique* (Paris 1978) 55ff.

[69] For a general survey of the concepts *litteratus* and *illiteratus* in literary sources of antiquity and the Middle Ages, H. Grundmann, "Litteratus-illiteratus: Der Wandel einer Bildungsnorm von Altertum zum Mittelalter," *Arch. f. Kulturgesch.* 40 (1958) 1–65.

[70] *C. Rufin.* 1.17; 3.6; and cf. 1.30 (*litteras discere* covering the whole of Jerome's education, from its beginnings through rhetoric); with Jerome's oxymoron, συγγραφεὺς

education, Jerome meant by "illiterate" something different than his many contemporaries who described themselves as ἀγράμματοι in contracts or deeds on papyri.[71] As we have seen in the case of the terms γραμματιστής / *litterator* (section II,a above), a similar flexibility is apparent in the tendency for context to determine the precise meaning of "teacher of letters." It is perhaps only reasonable, then, to expect that the definition of "learning letters" would differ from one social context to another and from place to place, according to local needs and local perceptions of "literacy," with the schools affected accordingly.

Some idea of the possible variations is given by the examples of Cassianus and Orosius noted above. It is more difficult to penetrate the classroom of some other local teachers: for example, from the earlier Empire, the *magistri ludi* in southern Lusitania who received immunities in the *lex metalli Vipascensis*,[72] or Cotonius from Campania, a veteran of *legio XV Apollinaris* who taught as a *magister ludi* at Scarbantia (Sopron) not far south of the *limes* on the border of Noricum and Pannonia;[73] from late antiquity, Ausonius' friend and former pupil Tetradius, who taught for a time at the Gallic backwater of Iculisma (Angoulême),[74] or Philumenus, a παιδοδιδάσκαλος at Mossyna / Epistraton,[75] and the unnamed teacher of Theodore at Syceon,[76] both active at towns in the hinterland of Anastasiopolis in Galatia I. Nonetheless, there are some hints. Philumenus is said to have commanded "all the wisdom of letters":[77] even if some allowance is made for hagiographic exaggeration, it is possible to suppose that Philumenus' σοφία, and the γράμματα he taught, consisted of more than the limited expertise usually assigned to the "primary" teacher. Theodore,

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ἀγράμματος (3.6), compare the younger Pliny's characterization of his *inlitteratissimae litterae, ep.* 1.10.9 (a conceit taken over by Sidonius Apollinaris, *ep.* 4.3.10).

[71] For the latter, see E. Majer-Leonhard, ΑΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΟΙ (Frankfurt 1913), R. Calderini, "Gli ἀγράμματοι nell' Egitto greco-romano," *Aegyptus* 30 (1950) 14–41, and esp. the series of articles by H. C. Youtie, "Pétaus, fils de Pétaus, ou le scribe qui ne savait pas écrire," *CÉ* 41 (1966) 127–43 (= *Scriptiunculae* 2.677ff.); "Βραδέως γράφων: Between Literacy and Illiteracy," *GRBS* 12 (1971) 239–61 (= *Script.* 2.629ff.); "ΑΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΟΣ: An Aspect of Greek Society in Egypt," *HSCP* 75 (1971) 161–76 (= *Script.* 2.611ff.); "ΥΠΟΓΡΑΦΕΥΣ: The Social Impact of Illiteracy in Graeco-Roman Egypt," *ZPE* 17 (1975) 201–21; "'Because They Do Not Know Letters,'" *ZPE* 19 (1975) 101–8.

[72] *CIL* 2 Suppl., p. 792.57 = *ILS* 6891.57 = *FIRA*² 1.105 (p. 507) (now re-edited by D. Flach, "Die Bergwerksordnungen von Vipasca," *Chiron* 9 [1979] 399–448): a singular advantage, cf. section I,a above.

[73] *AE* 1914,6 = *RIU* 1.184 (probably s.I 2/2 / II 1/2, to judge from the posting of *leg. XV Apoll.*).

[74] *PLRE* 1, s.n., p. 885: see esp. Auson. *epist.* 11.21ff.

[75] Georg. presb. *Vie de Théodore de Sykéon* §26.7ff.; cf. the *magister puerorum* above, note 67.

[76] *Vie de Théodore* §§5ff.

[77] *Vie de Théodore* §26.20ff. πεπειραμένος δὲ κατὰ ἄκραν πάσης τῆς τῶν γραμμάτων σοφίας (cf. note 66 above). Philumenus taught the author, Georgius, his "letters" after turning to the ascetic life (ibid.).

whose case is perhaps a bit more revealing, spent the time from his eighth to his twelfth year learning "the wisdom of letters" under his teacher at Syceon, with classes in both the morning and afternoon:[78] it is difficult to believe that in all that time he learned no more than the rudiments, especially when we compare the experience of late Latin-speaking students of Greek such as Ausonius' grandsons or Fulgentius of Ruspe, who progressed, in what was probably a shorter period, from the elements through Homer and Menander—that is, from the "primary" to the "secondary" level, according to the customary distinction;[79] and there is, at very least, no reason to assume that Theodore's experience in "learning letters" would have simply conformed to anything described in the modern handbooks. Another case in point is Jerome: one might choose to reject the argument that Jerome began his schooling with a *grammaticus* at Rome, and maintain the received view, that Jerome received some sort of literary training at Stridon before studying with Donatus at Rome;[80] but there is still little that would allow one to decide *a priori* whether that initial training provided a simple "primary" education (as is usually assumed) or the beginnings of "grammatical" education (compare the sequence of Proclus' schooling, section II,j above), or some less easily definable blend of the two. And all this is to say nothing of the evidence found for still more exotic, local guises under which "letters" were taught and learned: the combination of spiritual and secular education (including shorthand) provided by Protogenes in Antinoopolis;[81] a *cahier scolaire*[82] in which *Ps.* 146.1–10 is found among school exercises of familiar types; or a similar document[83] which shows exercises in Coptic written by a native Greek-speaker inserted in the midst of standard literary exercises.

If the examples collected above have the effect of softening the outlines of both institutional schemes discussed earlier in this paper, so much the better. Precisely because our most prominent sources persistently draw our attention to the great cities, it is important to remember that the local schools and teachers passed under review in these last paragraphs were by

[78] Loc. cit. note 76 (and note that Theodore ended his schooling in his twelfth year only out of a precocious turn to asceticism); compare the regime of (undifferentiated) γράμματα prescribed for students from the age of seven by Aetius of Amida, section II,m above.

[79] Cf. Paulin. Pell. *Euchar.* 72–74 (Homer), Auson. *epist.* 22.46ff. (Homer and Menander), Ferrand. *v. Fulgent.* 1.4 (the same).

[80] See the article of Booth, cited at note 44 above, with, e.g., J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome* (New York 1975) 7f.

[81] Thedoret. *H.E.* 4.18 (shorthand and τὰ θεῖα λόγια).

[82] Published by B. Boyaval, "Le Cahier scolaire d' Aurelios Papnouthion," *ZPE* 17 (1975) 225–35 and "Le Cahier de Papnouthion et les autres cahiers scolaires grecs," *RA* (1977) 215–30.

[83] Published by P. J. Parsons, "A School-Book from the Sayce Collection," *ZPE* 6 (1970) 133–49.

far the most numerous in antiquity. Their diversity is therefore the most "typical" feature of ancient education, often overlooked amid the modern concern with pattern and regularity, and perhaps for that reason the most rewarding area for further investigation.

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In summary, the evidence collected in the first two sections above tends to support recent arguments that (1) the organization of schools under the Empire did not regularly conform to the three-stage sequence presented in modern histories of ancient education, and, more specifically, that (2) the assumption of a normal differentiation between schools described as "primary" and "secondary" is seriously flawed: for in the education of the upper classes, the distinction between the "primary" teacher (*γραμματιστής* / *litterator*) and the "secondary" teacher (*γραμματικός* / *grammaticus*) would frequently have been effaced, with the latter performing the function of both.[84] It is possible to suggest, further, that in some circumstances the schools associated with the usual three-stage sequence—the "school of letters," the *schola grammatici*, and the *schola rhetoris*—conformed rather to a two-track or socially segmented pattern, with the "school of letters" providing the lower classes with a basic literacy while the "liberal schools" provided a more privileged clientele with more refined skills. Yet one should beware of rejecting one overly-generalized scheme only to replace it with another: this socially segmented arrangement of schools, where it can be glimpsed at all, appears only in sources which derive from the greatest cities of the Empire; and in the final section of the paper I have pointed to the local variations that informed the mass of ancient schools, which cannot automatically be assumed to fit neatly within one or another institutional framework described by modern scholarship. Indeed, *all* the evidence presented in this paper is consistent with one view only: that there were throughout the Empire schools of all shapes and kinds, depending on local needs, expectations, and resources. And in a world without centralized direction of education of any sort, that is only what we should expect.

[84] I myself would no longer equate the "passage from the first to second level of education" with the passage from the *ludus litterarius* to the grammarian's school, as I had occasion to do at *HSCP* 84 (1980) 220.