

## SERVIUS AND VIRGIL: LESSONS IN GENDER AGREEMENT

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SERVIUS WROTE BOTH a commentary on Donatus<sup>1</sup> and commentaries on the works of Virgil.<sup>2</sup> His commentary on Virgil has for some time been the subject of lively interest, producing commentaries<sup>3</sup> as well as specific studies—including at least one dedicated to grammatical gender in Servius: Francisco González-Luis' article on grammatical gender in Servius' commentary on Virgil.<sup>4</sup> Grammatical gender is also one theme in Frances Foster's article on teaching Latin through Virgil.<sup>5</sup>

The present paper adds to earlier scholarship by examining the commentary with a focus on gender agreement. My intention is not to evaluate Servius' merits as a grammarian, his contribution to the history of linguistics, or his success as a teacher, but to amplify our picture of the teaching of grammatical gender; I suggest that Servius is in fact exceptional among the sources available to us, in that he gives us an idea of how gender agreement was actually presented in teaching Latin.<sup>6</sup> It is natural to think that the often lapidary technical language of the grammatical texts was somehow adapted for the classroom by using expressions that made it apparent to the pupils how the rules actually worked and what they meant from the point of view of active language use.

In their recent *Commentaire* on Servius' commentary on the first book of the *Aeneid*, Alban Baudou and Séverine Clément-Tarantino observe that the commentaries are a pretext: the glossing of Virgil provides an occasion to share all sorts of knowledge.<sup>7</sup> While explaining Virgil, Servius is also taking various opportunities

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1. For Servius and Donatus, see Holtz 2011.

2. Servius (early fifth century) was a teacher, a *grammaticus*, in Rome. See Holtz 1981, 223 for the reference. See also Kaster 1988, 357; Jeunet-Mancy 2017, xi–xiii.

3. Baudou and Clément-Tarantino 2015 on *Serv. Aen.* 1; Jeunet-Mancy 2017 on *Serv. Aen.* 6.

4. González-Luis 1991.

5. Foster 2017.

6. The so-called *Scholia Danielis* (*Serv. Dan.*) is mostly excluded from the present discussion. It is based on the now-lost commentary on Virgil by Donatus (or on a commentary related to it). Servius, too, made some use of Donatus' commentary as a source. For a recent account of the survival of these forms of the commentary, see Murgia and Kaster 2018, xi–xx. There are some indications of ways in which Servius' commentary on Virgil differs from that of Donatus: one difference is that Servius wrote his commentary for use in teaching *pueri*, and thus left out many things found in Donatus (or *Serv. Dan.*). On this, see Stok 2012. On *Scholia Danielis* and grammar, see Vallat 2011.

7. See Baudou and Clément-Tarantino 2015, 10–11.

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to make it clear to the *pueri* what they can and cannot say or write.<sup>8</sup> Servius' numerous comments on correct gender in current usage are a good example of this.<sup>9</sup>

In a recent article, Foster shows how Servius taught different registers of Latin, "always with an eye to the register of 'correct' classical Latin of late antiquity."<sup>10</sup> While teaching "correct" Latin meant teaching the active use of formal Latin, teaching Virgil's Latin meant providing students with a passive understanding of the poetic text.<sup>11</sup> The three gender-related passages discussed by Foster suggest that Servius took into account students of different abilities, as well as students who were non-native speakers of Latin. Foster also demonstrates that a comment on gender may at least partly be due to the change of language,<sup>12</sup> and that Servius' teaching is not necessarily relevant to the context in Virgil: the poet may not even have used the word in question as gendered at all.<sup>13</sup>

González-Luis' starting point in his chapter on congruence is the fact that, before Priscian, syntax is found in Latin grammar practically only in the form of vague allusions contained in accounts of solecism: in these, the issue is often incorrect gender.<sup>14</sup> Servius is following the lead of the previous grammarians and does not bring anything new to syntax, despite making observations on gender agreement. The point made by González-Luis is that Servius does not see hierarchical dependence or subordination but, in the manner of the writers of the *artes grammaticae*, refers to words united by proximity.<sup>15</sup> While I quite agree that Servius cannot be elevated as a pioneer of the study of Latin syntax, I nonetheless think that his observations are different from what we find in other sources, and are worth our attention—although "different" does not necessarily mean "better."

Servius and his colleagues lacked the concepts of dependence or subordination. The question then arises, how they managed to teach grammatical gender and gender agreement at all. In order to make this question of "how" more evident, I look at certain modern concepts and contrast them with their mostly implicit counterparts in ancient grammatical texts. I then present passages that illustrate how Servius was able to teach gender agreement through simple expressions, without any specific terminology; this is followed by a discussion of a few instances that contain a more direct or instructive reference to gender agreement, and that seem to occur for the first time in Servius. It seems clear that these references are connected with Servius' pedagogical aims and the need to clarify the concept of agreement to the *pueri*. While Servius' commentary on Donatus has a pedagogical character as

8. See Kaster 1988, 179. For the audience of Servius' commentaries, see Foster 2017, 275.

9. See González-Luis 1991, 251–55, who discusses here two passages, *Serv. Ecl.* 6.63 and *Serv. Aen.* 4.462 (examined in the present paper as well, although from a different point of view; see p. 467 below); see also González-Luis 1991, 250 and Foster 2017, 278 on *Aen.* 1.149; for *Serv. Aen.* 10.377, see p. 465 below. See Foster 2017, 275–77 for Servius' frequent comparisons of Virgil's usage to that of his own day in general.

10. Foster 2019, 70.

11. See Foster 2019, 63–64.

12. The instances discussed by Foster are those of *vulgus* (*Serv. Aen.* 1.149), *stirps* (*Serv. Aen.* 7.99), and *balteus* (*Serv. Aen.* 10.496): for instance, *vulgus* as a neuter was already archaic in Servius' time.

13. Foster 2017, 278–82. For an example in this paper, see p. 467 below (*Serv. Ecl.* 7.58).

14. Baratin (1989, 261) uses the word "paradox" in introducing the point that the Roman grammarians chose not to include the analysis of syntax in their *artes*, although they implicitly recognized it by discussing solecism. Swiggers and Wouters (2003, 25–27) speak about syntax as the "trou noir" or "black hole" of Western linguistics.

15. González-Luis 1991, 260–62. González-Luis also mentions Servius' commentary *Serv. Aen.* 1.159 as a passage showing the "relación espacial" between united words (p. 261); see p. 470 below for *Serv. Aen.* 1.159.

well, it was to a certain extent limited by what Donatus had presented in his *ars*: the commentary on Virgil provided Servius with an inexhaustible store of grammatical and lexical items to develop into lessons, without any such restraints.

#### MODERN CONCEPTS

From the modern point of view, gender agreement is “the way in which gender is realized in language use.”<sup>16</sup> Its existence is self-evident to anyone composing Greek or Latin prose or poetry today. Yet it is by no means to be expected that a syntactic concept such as gender agreement will be discussed with any specific terminology in ancient linguistics.

In his *Gender in Indo-European*, Ranko Matasović uses Virgil’s *genus unde Latinum / Albanique patres atque altae moenia Romae*<sup>17</sup> to illustrate the point that agreement is crucial for understanding the grammatical function of gender: “the fact that the nouns *genus*, *patres*, and *moenia* differ in gender helps us to recognize that *Latinum* modifies *genus*, *Albani* modifies *patres*, and *altae* is dependent on *Romae*.”<sup>18</sup> The notions used by Matasović, “modifying” and “dependence,” do not occur in ancient linguistics. In modern linguistics, grammatical gender is defined on the basis of gender agreement.<sup>19</sup> In ancient grammar, gender agreement is implicitly identified in connection with the definition of gender through the use of the forms of the article ὁ, ἡ, τό in Greek, or of the pronoun *hic*, *haec*, *hoc* in Latin.<sup>20</sup> Thus, according to Donatus’ definition of “masculine,” “[a] word is masculine when it is preceded in the nominative singular by the pronoun or article *hic*, for example *hic magister* (teacher).”<sup>21</sup> Explicit explanations would have been practically impossible, due to the lack of such concepts as “head,” “modifier,” “subordination,” “substantive,” “adjective,” and so on. The Latin *nomen* is both a substantive and an adjective and the *nomen adiectivum* (Donatus’ *adiecta nominibus*) found in Roman grammarians is an ill-defined (semantic) subcategory of *nomen*,<sup>22</sup> not an equivalent of our “adjective.”<sup>23</sup> The role of the adjective in showing the gender of a noun is nevertheless often evident in ancient sources.

#### IMPLICIT UNDERSTANDING

Servius’ comment on Virgil’s verse *ecce maris magna claudit nos obice pontus*<sup>24</sup> is a revealing example of the implicit understanding of gender agreement that

16. Corbett 1991, 105. The gender of a word necessarily involves the testimony of another, gender-variable word.

17. Verg. *Aen.* 1.6–7: “whence came the Latin race, the lords of Alba, and the lofty walls of Rome” (trans. Fairclough). The commentary of *Serv. Dan. Aen.* 1.6 concerns *unde*.

18. Matasović 2004, 19.

19. See Corbett 1991, 1.

20. For the role of the article in scholarly Greek, see Dickey 2007, 112–13.

21. All translations from Greek or Latin, unless otherwise stated, are my own. Donat. Keil *Gramm. Lat.* 4.375.13–18. For Donatus’ presentation of *genus nominum*, see Vaahtera 2000, 236–37.

22. Donat. Keil *Gramm. Lat.* 4.374.2–4 (*mediae significationis et adiecta nominibus . . . epitheta*); see Servius’ commentary on this (Keil *Gramm. Lat.* 4.430.12–13): *nomina adiectiva* appear among other subcategories, many of which also contain adjectives.

23. The English translations from Latin in this article translate *nomen* as “noun” (except for Pseudo-Probus’ passage in n. 93 below, where *nomen* is a comparative form). For adjectives in ancient linguistics, see, e.g., Basset 2002; for the different ways in which adjectives are described in ancient grammar, see Luhtala 2005, esp. 49.

24. Verg. *Aen.* 10.377: “See, the ocean hems us in with mighty barrier of sea” (trans. Fairclough).

was required of the ancient reader, teacher and pupil alike (Serv. *Aen.* 10.377 MAGNA CLAUDIT NOS OBICE PONTVS):

(*Serv. Dan.*: periphrasis, id est mari claudimur. et) modo usus habet, ut “hic obex” dicamus, unde quidam “magno obice” legunt. antiqui etiam “haec obex” dicebant, secundum quod est “magna obice.” hinc est quod non nulli vitant generis dubietatem et legunt “magni,” scilicet “maris.” Caper tamen in libris dubii generis probat dici et “hic obex” et “haec obex,” quod, ut diximus, hodie de usu recessit.

The usage now is that we should say *hic obex* [masc., “barrier”] and therefore some read in the passage *magno obice*. Ancient authors said also *haec obex* [fem.], and *magna obice* in the text is in accordance with this. Hence, some avoid the dubious gender and read *magni*, namely *maris* [*magni maris*, sg. gen.]. But Caper, in his work on dubious gender, approves the use of both *hic obex* and *haec obex*—the latter, as I said, having nowadays receded from usage.

Using *hic* and *haec*, Servius is able to determine whether the noun is of masculine or feminine gender. By presenting the form of the adjective as resulting from the gender of the noun (*unde, secundum*) Servius is able to bring gender agreement into focus. If *hic obex*, then *magno obice*, if *haec obex*, then *magna obice*. This is a reference to the “causal” link between the gender of a noun and that of its adjective. The passage also illustrates the endeavor to avoid dubious gender, and reveals a method for accomplishing this: the method consists in attaching the adjective to another noun altogether, the gender of which is in no doubt (*mare* “sea” is always neuter). There is also the lesson that usage may override an authority: Flavius Caper had, in the second century CE, written a treatise on *Latinitas*.<sup>25</sup>

Passages dealing with gender agreement usually demand quite a lot of amplification in order to be understandable. Servius’ audience, whether native speakers or not, had to have a more than instinctive grasp of gender agreement in order to understand his comment on Virgil’s line *frigida sub terra tumidum quem bruma tegebat*.<sup>26</sup> In Servius’ comment, “this passage” (*hic locus*) has an active role (Serv. *Aen.* 2.472):

BRVMA id est hiemps. dicta autem “bruma” quasi βραχὺ ἡμῶν, id est brevis dies. est autem, ut hic locus indicat, generis feminini, numeri singularis.

*Bruma* means winter. It is called *bruma* because it is almost βραχὺ ἡμῶν, which means “short day.” It is, as this passage indicates, feminine and singular.

In the Virgilian verse, *bruma* is *frigida*; this is how the *locus* indicates the gender and number of the word, but the crucial adjective is not found in the comment. This idea of the text actively “doing” something, that is, indicating linguistic or grammatical facts about its component, is important, since it shows how gender agreement was in no acute need of terminology: it was visible in the text itself.

Although operating without modern concepts, Servius occasionally implicitly indicates the head of a noun phrase (NP):<sup>27</sup> this is the case when, as we

25. For Caper, see Zetzel 2018, 85, 286: *De dubiis generibus* may have been part of Caper’s *De Latinitate*.

26. Verg. *Aen.* 2.472: “whom cold winter kept swollen underground” (trans. Fairclough).

27. Pinkster 2015, 933: “The term ‘noun phrase’ is *sensu stricto* used for a structure in which a noun functions as the head and at least one other constituent is a modifier (or ‘attribute’) of that noun.” This is the sense in which noun phrase (NP) is used in the current article.

saw above, *magna obice* is presented as resulting from *haec obex*.<sup>28</sup> The concept of “head noun” is also quite close when Servius discusses what we would call “substantivized adjectives,” and actually gives a lesson on the subject, with examples (Serv. *Aen.* 1.417 SERTIS):

sertum et sarta cum nihil adicitur dicimus, ut hoc loco: item alibi expressius “serta procul, tantum capiti delapsa, iacebant.” si autem sertos dixerō, addo flores, si sertas, addo coronas, ut Lucanus “accipiunt sertas nardo florente coronas.” et hoc in multis nominibus observandum est, ut genus ex adiectione formetur: qua detracta in neutrum cedat necesse est, ut piscinalis locus, piscinalis cella, piscinale; sagmarius mulus, sagmaria mula, sagmarium.

we say *sertum* [sg.] and *sarta* [pl.] when nothing is added, as here: similarly, more clearly, in another place, *sarta procul, tantum capiti delapsa, iacebant*.<sup>29</sup> If I say *sertos* [masc.], I add *flores* [flowers], if *sertas* [fem.], I add *coronas* [garlands], as Lucanus does in *accipiunt sertas nardo florente coronas* [10.164]. And this can be observed in many words, that the gender depends from the addition of another word: in case the addition is removed, the word necessarily becomes a neuter, as in *piscinalis locus, piscinalis cella* [bathing room], *piscinale* [pool]; *sagmarius mulus, sagmaria mula* [baggage mule], *sagmarium* [pack-saddle].<sup>30</sup>

Servius even uses the verb *rego* in connection with gender agreement: the noun *decus* takes neuter modifiers (*neutrum regit genus, non masculinum*, Serv. *Aen.* 7.231 INDECORES).<sup>31</sup> In what follows, I introduce some more expressions and strategies used by Servius in discussing phenomena connected with gender agreement.

#### SERVIVS ON GENDER AGREEMENT

Learning Latin involves learning about agreement according to sense, or notional agreement. This is dealt with in the comment on Virgil’s *Centaurus invehitur magna*:<sup>32</sup> the adjective form *magna* agrees not with *Centaurus*, but with *navis*. Here, Servius simply says that “it [*Centaurus*] is of feminine gender in case you refer to the *navis*” (*feminini est generis, si de navi dicas*). The discussion involving *Centaurus magna* is found, in almost identical form, in many authors: cases like this must have been standard matter in schools and thus in no need of explanation.<sup>33</sup> The case of *sola bubo* is, in Servius’ interpretation, similar in that agreement is based on a word not found in the verse (Serv. *Aen.* 4.462 SOLA BVBO):

28. See also Serv. *Aen.* 5.122 (below: *Centaurus* is *magna* when it is the name of a *navis*); see Serv. *Dan. Aen.* 4.521 for “*memor* [remembering] is in neuter gender because Virgil speaks about *numen* [neuter, ‘divinity’].”

29. Verg. *Ecl.* 6.16: “Hard by lay the garlands, just fallen from his head” (trans. Fairclough).

30. See Baudou and Clément-Tarantino 2015, ad loc. 1.417 (2015, 422 n. 527) for the words discussed by Servius, especially *piscinale* and *sagmarium*.

31. The verb *rego* is used by grammarians in reference to nouns, adjectives, prepositions, and especially verbs governing a case; see Schad 2007, s.v. *rego*. I have not found it used of gender in other grammarians, and in Schad 2007 this (Serv. *Aen.* 7.231) is the only mentioned instance of *rego* with the meaning “govern, take” used of gender. For the verb, see also Magallón-García 2013, 87.

32. Verg. *Aen.* 5.122: “rides in the great Centaur” (trans. Fairclough).

33. Servius draws an analogy with *in Eunuchum suam* (Ter. *Eun. prol.* 32), where *Eunuchus* is feminine since “Terence means the comedy” (*comoedia* is fem.). Donatus had commented on the name of the comedy in his commentary on Terence (Don. *Eun. prol.* 32: *ad fabulam, non ad hominem rettulit*), drawing an analogy with *Centaurus magna*; the examples of *Eunuchus comoedia, Centaurus navis*, and others like it are found in Donatus’ grammar (Keil *Gramm. Lat.* 4.375.24–25: these are *sono masculina, intellectu feminina*) and in other grammarians as well.

. . . “sola” contra genus posuit. Lucanus “et laetae iurantur aves bubone sinistro,” item Ovidius “infandus bubo.” et hoc est in usu; sed Vergilius mutavit, referens ad avem: plerumque enim genus relicta specialitate a generali sumimus, ut si dicas “bona turdus” referendo ad avem: item si dicas “prima est a,” id est littera, cum “a” sit neutri generis.

Virgil wrote *sola* [fem.] against the gender [of the word *bubo*, “owl”]. Lucan [5.396] wrote: *et laetae iurantur aves bubone sinistro* and Ovid: *infandus bubo*.<sup>34</sup> And this is according to usage; but Virgil changed it, referring to *avis* [fem., “bird”]: and it is often that we assume the gender from the genus, abandoning the species, in the manner of saying *bona turdus* [*bona* fem., “good,” *turdus* masc., “thrush”], in reference to *avis*. It is the same if you say *prima est a*, “a is the first one,” namely the *littera* [fem., “letter”], although *a* is of neuter gender.

Here, Servius’ audience had to understand what it means that *sola* is *contra genus*. The comment turns into a lesson: the adjective *sola* is brought into focus and thereby also the fact that it is the adjective that shows the gender of the noun *avis*, the understood head. Servius’ *referens ad avem* is basically similar to Donatus’ expression *ad fabulam . . . rettulit* in the commentary on Terence’s *in Eunuchum suam*.<sup>35</sup> The expression *genus . . . sumimus* comes close to being a statement about choosing the controller gender.<sup>36</sup> Here, a word not found in the text is explained as the controller: the possible explanation that Virgil simply chose to use *bubo* as a feminine would not have permitted the lesson on notional agreement.

Servius refers to “usage” (*usus*), according to which *bubo* has masculine modifiers. Virgil’s contrary usage (which is actually a rare exception), explained as based on the feminine gender of *avis*, leads Servius to claim that “we” often act similarly.<sup>37</sup> From poets, Servius then moves to “us,” who “assume” a certain gender in contemporary usage. A comment on Virgil leads to non-contextual information for the *pueri* on how gender agreement can sometimes be *contra genus*.<sup>38</sup>

Not knowing the gender of a word often meant a grave error. Servius teaches, perhaps inadvertently, how to cope with this kind of situation (Serv. *Ecl.* 7.58 *INVIDIT COLLIBVS VMBRAS*):

. . . sane sciendum, Vergilium pampinos numquam [*Serv. Dan.*: cum genere] dicere, sed Varronem uti frequentius feminino.

. . . it is to be known that Virgil never uses the word *pampinus* “vine-tendrill” revealing its gender, but Varro uses it more often as a feminine.

The meaning of the expression *cum genere*—appearing only once in the Servian commentaries—must either have been clear or was made clear to the *pueri*; otherwise

34. Probably Ov. *Met.* 5.550, where the reading, however, is *ignavus bubo*.

35. See n. 33 above.

36. For controller and target gender, see Corbett 1991, 150–54. Schad (2007, s.v. *sumo*) lists different grammatical categories under the sense “take, receive”; these include gender.

37. On Servius and *usus*, see Uhl 1998, 329–33, and esp. 331 on *usus*–Vergilius mutavit.

38. Servius’ commentary on Virgil shows no lack of non-contextual comments on the gender of a word: in Serv. *G.* 2.50 and Serv. *G.* 2.288, for instance, Servius comments on the gender of the word *scrobis*, which is not revealed by Virgil in either passage (González-Luis [1991, 250] mentions the latter passage as an example of Servius’ preference for older authorities); see also Serv. *G.* 3.330 on *canalis* (González-Luis mentions this as an example of a comment where Servius expresses his own opinion on the gender to be used: *canalis*, according to Servius, is a feminine rather than a masculine [p. 259]).

the comment would have been incomprehensible.<sup>39</sup> The remark is an excellent example of the non-contextuality of some of the information in the commentary, since, in the verse in question, Virgil uses the adjective *pampineus* (*pampineas umbras*), not the word *pampinus* at all.<sup>40</sup> Servius is right in saying that Virgil never uses the word *cum genere*.<sup>41</sup> Although Servius probably did not mean it, the commentary here includes a piece of advice for the future writer: do not use a word *cum genere*, that is, do not reveal its gender, unless you are certain of it.

It needs to be acknowledged here that it is possible, although unlikely, that the *cum genere* is not Servian, but from *Scholia Danielis*. Without *cum genere*, Servius' comment does not make sense and Thilo notes that *cum genere* seems to be Servian on the basis of Serv. *Aen.* 5.380.<sup>42</sup> This is where Servius speaks about "concealing the gender" of *pampinus*: this, too, is a totally non-contextual remark on *pampinus* made in connection with a discussion over *alacris*. According to Servius, Virgil never uses *alacer* since he wants to avoid confusion (*vitat enim confusionem*): the adjective is either *alacer*, *alacris*, *alacre* or *alacris*, *alacre*, and thus *alacris* is either feminine or masculine and feminine. According to Servius, it is for the same reason that Virgil conceals the gender (*supprimit genus*) of *pampinus*, since it is uncertain (Serv. *Aen.* 5.380).<sup>43</sup>

Not revealing the gender of a word is one choice; a different choice is necessary, for instance, in the case of two or more genders in a conjoined NP. A rule is needed that would enable one to choose the gender of the common modifier without offending *Latinitas*. The Latin gender resolution rules, according to Greville Corbett, are "a mixture of syntactic and semantic criteria."<sup>44</sup> In what follows we see that although terminology is lacking, rules can still be formulated (Serv. *Aen.* 1.17 HIC ILLIVS ARMA, HIC CVRRVS FVIT):

quotienscumque nomina pluralis et singularis numeri conectuntur, respondemus viciniore, ut ecce hoc loco currui, non armis respondit. eadem et in diversis generibus est observatio, ut magis vicino, sive masculinum sit sive femininum respondeamus, ut puta "vir et mulier magna ad me venit." si autem plurali numero velimus uti, ad masculinum transeamus necesse est, ut "vir et mulier magni ad me venerunt." [Serv. *Dan.*: sane "fuit" pro fuerat].

Whenever nouns in plural and singular are connected, we make the number agree [*respondemus*] with the nearer one, as here in this passage, where Virgil made the number agree [*respondit*] with *currus* instead of *arma*. The same rule [*observatio*] applies when diverse genders are in question, that we make the gender agree [*respondeamus*] with the nearer one, whether it is masculine or feminine, e.g., *vir* [masc. sg.] *et mulier* [fem. sg.] *magna* [fem. sg.] *ad me venit* [third-person sg.] "a great man and a great woman came to me." If, however,

39. For the significance of the absence of a qualifying adjective, see Serv. *Aen.* 10.377 on p. 465 above; see also Serv. *Aen.* 5.380, below.

40. On *pampinus*, Cledonius (Keil *Gramm. Lat.* 5.40.15) observes, *pampinus et dies generis sunt communis*, i.e., *pampinus* and *dies* both appear as either masculine or feminine. On *genus commune* in the context of *genus nominum*, see, e.g., Vaahtera 2000, 237–38.

41. The word *pampinus* is found in Verg. *G.* 1.448 and 2.333 without an adjectival modifier; Servius does not comment on the gender of the word in these passages.

42. Thilo ad loc. Serv. *Ecl.* 7.58: "cum genere *Servii esse videntur. cf. ad Aen.* V 380."

43. For the strategy, see Uhl 1998, 270–71.

44. Corbett 1991, 287. On gender resolution rules, see Corbett 1991, 261: "a rule which specifies the form of an agreeing element (or target) when the controller consists of conjoined noun phrases" and "resolution is generally not obligatory; instead agreement is often with one conjunct only, and so resolution is not involved."

we want to use the plural number, it is necessary to change to the masculine gender, e.g., *vir et mulier magni* [masc. pl.] *ad me venerunt* [third-person pl.] “great men and women came to me.”

Here, Servius used Virgil as a “pretext” to teach something important about grammatical gender from the point of view of composition. To accomplish this, he employed the verb *respondeo*, which, according to Alexander Souter, here means “agree in gender, etc.”<sup>45</sup> Alban Baudou and Séverine Clément-Tarantino’s translation has “l’accord se fait avec le plus proche”;<sup>46</sup> González-Luis uses the first person: “concertamos con el mas próximo.” He also mentions the use of the verbs *conectere* and *respondere* in Serv. *Aen.* 1.17 as the elements that render agreement visible,<sup>47</sup> but does not discuss this aspect further. Since I think Servius’ use of *respondeo* in similar contexts deserves attention, I return to it below.<sup>48</sup>

The contextual comment in the passage discussed concerns a standard instance of two or more subjects, where the predicate agrees, normally, with the closest one, as here (*arma* pl. and *currus* sg. *fuit* sg.). The invented example is a case of a conjoined NP with conjuncts referring to persons of different genders, and Servius teaches that agreement is with the nearer conjunct in the singular (no gender resolution), while in the plural we use the masculine (according to the gender resolution rule).<sup>49</sup> He thus made a special effort to teach gender agreement and used an example not drawn from Virgil or other literature.

Donatus had utilized the same Virgilian expression, *hic illius arma, / hic currus fuit*, to illustrate syllepsis.<sup>50</sup> Servius does not include a commentary on the third part of grammar in his Donatus commentary, and consequently does not discuss syllepsis in it at all.<sup>51</sup> He does not speak of syllepsis in Serv. *Aen.* 1.17 either: here he is not operating with figures which are, basically, optional choices related to style.<sup>52</sup> This is not to suggest that figures are not important for Servius: quite the reverse, he repeatedly recurs to them in order to explain, for instance, a deviation from the norm in Virgil. But here he is talking about “us” making certain choices, choices not connected with figures or style. Servius’ point of view is that of rules, or *observatio*. This links the passage to an observable

45. Souter 1949, s.v. *respondeo*. For the meaning of the verb, see p. 473 below. There is no lemma for *respondeo* in Schad 2007.

46. Baudou and Clément-Tarantino 2015, ad loc. 1.17; 2015, 53.

47. In Serv. *Aen.* 1.159, discussed below (p. 470), González-Luis (1991, 261 n. 54) translates *respondemus* with “concordamos.”

48. See p. 473 below.

49. Using the plural and the masculine in a case of two or more subjects of different genders united, e.g., by *et* and referring to persons is the common choice when the predicate follows the subjects, while agreement to the closest one (in singular or plural according to the number of the closest one) is also possible. See Kühner and Stegmann 1962, 44–45 (§ 13.2) with the respective examples: *quam pridem pater mihi et mater mortui essent; viri feminaeque ex censu libertinum coactae (sunt) dare militem*; underlining mine, used instead of cursive in Kühner and Stegmann.

50. Keil *Gramm. Lat.* 4.397.23–25.

51. There is actually a very brief account of the third part of grammar in Servius’ commentary on Donatus (Keil *Gramm. Lat.* 4.443.28–448.17); see Holtz 1981, 228 n. 34 and 429; Holtz suggests that Servius’ ideas may have differed from those of Donatus in regard to the names of figures and the Virgilian examples.

52. Baudou and Clément-Tarantino (2015, 396 n. 76) ad loc. Serv. *Aen.* 1.17 comment that syllepsis is about agreement which is made according to sense or vicinity, and refer to Donatus’ account of syllepsis; this seems to mean that they think Servius is ultimately speaking of syllepsis, even though he does not mention it. It seems more likely, however, that Servius is here deliberately addressing the community of language users, from the point of view of correct usage rather than style. See p. 475 below for Servius’ syllepsis *per genus* (Serv. *Aen.* 10.31 and 10.672).

norm, something “we” both create and obey.<sup>53</sup> Instead of pointing out the figure, Servius seizes the opportunity to teach Latin composition; thus a verse undoubtedly familiar as an example of syllepsis (in number) inspires him to teach in terms of *Latinitas*. This is one of the instances where Servius speaks of contemporary usage, about what “we want to use.”

The item discussed next, Serv. *Aen.* 1.159, is a good specimen of less than satisfactory commentary by Servius. Its importance, however, does not lie in what it successfully achieves; it lies in what Servius is trying to achieve and in how he goes about it. The Virgilian verses *est in secessu longo locus: insula portum / efficit obiectu laterum*<sup>54</sup> receive from Servius first a comment on *topothesia* and then an explanation of *secessu* (recess) with *sinu secreto*. Servius then comes to the word *locus* (Serv. *Aen.* 1.159 LOCVS):

subaudis “quem,” ut superius “urbs antiqua fuit.” et sciendum est, quia, quotiens praemittimus nomen cuiuslibet generis et interposito pronomine (proprium) sequitur nomen alterius generis, medium illud pronomem proprii nominis genus sequitur, ut Sallustius “est in carcere locus, quod Tullianum appellatur.” ecce proprio iunxit, non appellativo; Tullianum enim proprium est, carcer appellativum. si autem utraque nomina appellativa fuerint, licenter cui volumus respondemus.

You understand *quem*, as in the case of *urbs antiqua fuit* before. And it should be known that when we place first a noun of whichever gender, and then place in between a pronoun followed by a (proper)<sup>55</sup> noun of another gender, the pronoun in the middle follows the gender of the proper name, as in Sallust’s *est in carcere locus, quod Tullianum appellatur* [Cat. 55.3]. He connects the pronoun with the proper name, not with the common noun; *Tullianum* is the proper name, *carcer* a common noun. If, however, both nouns were common nouns, we might freely make the gender agree [*respondemus*] with which one we wanted.

The comment starts as a contextual one, but then shifts to the question of the gender of a pronoun placed between its antecedent and another word. The starting point is the *quem* that Servius adds to the Virgilian expression (instead of *ubi*): *locus, quem insula portum efficit* (“a place which an island forms into a harbor”). The reference to *urbs antiqua fuit* is to Serv. *Aen.* 1.12, where Servius comments on the ellipsis of the pronoun.<sup>56</sup> We may imagine here a quick recollection of this passage in the classroom, made easy by the fact that it occurs at the beginning of the *Aeneid* and had therefore probably been studied most strenuously.<sup>57</sup> Servius then seems to be inspired by the relative pronouns not only in ellipsis but in other

53. See Uhl 1998, 114–15 on *observare* in Servius.

54. Verg. *Aen.* 1.159–60: “There in a deep inlet lies a spot, where an island forms a harbour with the barrier of its sides” (trans. Fairclough).

55. The *proprium* in the text is an addition by Thilo (approved by Baudou and Clément-Tarantino 2015).

56. What the class needed to remember was the following (Verg. *Aen.* 1.12): *urbs antiqua fuit (Tyrii tenuere coloni)* (“There was an ancient city, the home of Tyrian settlers,” trans. Fairclough). In the commentary, the words *urbs antiqua fuit* lead Servius first to discuss the etymology of *urbs* and then the history of the town. Next follows the part concerning the ellipsis of the pronoun: *TYRII TENVERE COLONI deest “quam,” (Serv. Dan.: vel ut alii volunt “hanc”): amant namque antiqui per epexegetin dicere quod nos interposito pronomine exprimumus* (“*quam* is lacking, [or as others think, *hanc*]: for the ancient authors were fond of expressing through epexegetis that which we express by placing a pronoun in between”).

57. The teaching probably started with the *Aeneid*, and the important issues had already been discussed in the course of its commentary; Kaster (1988, 172) observes that within the commentary on *Aeneid*, the instruction appears at the beginning of the first book.

respects as well, and continues with the rule involving the sequence correlate noun + pronoun + proper name as predicative noun.<sup>58</sup>

There is a problem with Servius' rule, perhaps caused by Sallust's authority. Servius' lesson seems to be about instances where a relative pronoun does not agree in gender and number with its antecedent (correlate), but with the predicative noun found in the relative clause. His rule is actually the reverse of what normally occurs, at least in Classical Latin: it is true that the pronoun often agrees with the predicative noun, but when the latter is a proper name, the pronoun usually agrees with the correlate. But then again, Servius' example from Sallust is an exception to this: the pronoun agrees with the predicative noun, even though this is a proper name.<sup>59</sup> Servius is not satisfied merely to cite the Sallustian words, *est in carcere locus, quod Tullianum appellatur*; to make sure the reader understands, he adds that Sallust made the connection (*iunxit*) to the proper name, not to the common noun (the correlate). Furthermore, to make quite sure that the reader will understand, he tells us that *Tullianum* is a proper name while *carcer* is a common noun. He adds that if both were common nouns, we could make the gender agree with either one, as we liked.<sup>60</sup> Thus, according to Servius, the alternative determiners of the gender of the pronoun are *carcer* from *in carcere* and *Tullianum*, not *locus* and *Tullianum*, even though it is clear that *locus* is the antecedent of the pronoun (*Tullianum* is the name of a *locus* "place" in the *carcer* "prison"). This may be a simple *lapsus*: both *carcer* and *locus* are masculine and singular.<sup>61</sup> It is, in any case, noteworthy that here, too, Servius refers to common usage by speaking in the first-person plural, thus making the passage a lecture on contemporary language. Sallust played a significant role in the canon of school texts in the imperial times,<sup>62</sup> and Servius' lesson might derive from a treatise that employed the Sallustian passage as a model of composition.

Default gender is a topical issue today, but in ancient grammatical texts it is rarely a subject of focus.<sup>63</sup> Servius, however, uses Virgil several times to impart a lesson concerning the choice of gender in case of NPs of mixed sex. We have already seen how a lesson took place in connection with *Serv. Aen.* 1.17. Virgil's verses *quattuor a stabulis praestanti corpore tauros / avertit, totidem forma superante iuencas. / atque hos . . .*<sup>64</sup> offer another occasion for instruction (*Serv. Aen.* 8.209 ATQVE HOS):

58. For this phenomenon of attraction or back agreement, see Pinkster 2015, 1278–82 (Pinkster uses the terms "subject complement" and "object complement"; here, predicative noun).

59. See, e.g., Menge, Burkard, and Schauer (2000) 2009, 328 (§259) and the examples therein: *Ad eum locum, qui appellatur Palaeste (locus masc., qui masc., Palaeste fem.)*, as well as an exception to the rule: *carcer a Dionysio factus, quae lautumiae vocantur (carcer masc., quae fem., lautumiae fem.)*.

60. Here, Baudou and Clément-Tarantino (2015, 137, ad loc. 1.159) retain the first-person plural in their translation: "nous accordons le pronom avec celui que nous voulons." Cf. p. 468 above on *Aen.* 1.17. See Uhl 1998, 124 on *velle (volumus)*, which, according to her, refers only this once (1.159) to a "Freiraum" allowed to the language user.

61. The same Sallustian expression serves Servius for a slightly altered rule in connection with *Aen.* 12.897; see p. 472 below.

62. Sallust is one of the four authors used by Arusianus Messius in his *Exempla elocutionum* (ca. 395 CE). See Zetzel 2018, 122, 281; on Arusianus, see Pugliarello 2003, 252, who observes that there must have been several treatises similar to the one by Arusianus Messius, since Servius, too, mentions one (*Serv. Aen.* 5.233).

63. See Vaahtera 2008, 258–59.

64. *Verg. Aen.* 8.207–9: "drove from their stalls four bulls of surpassing form, and as many heifers of peerless beauty. [And that there might be no tracks pointing forward, the rustler dragged] them [by the tail into his cave]" (trans. Fairclough).

quotiens masculinum et femininum iunguntur, haec disciplina est, ut etiam si posterius est femininum, masculino respondeamus.

whenever masculine and feminine are connected, the rule [*disciplina*] is that, even if the posterior is feminine, we make the gender agree with the masculine.

With *hos* (masc. acc. pl.), Virgil is referring to bulls (*tauros*) and heifers (*iuven-cas*), both words present in the Virgilian text.

Choice of gender is in question in the next passage as well, concerning Virgil's lines *saxum circumspicit ingens, / saxum antiquum ingens, campo quod forte iacebat, / limes agro positus*.<sup>65</sup> Here, Servius repeats the familiar (Serv. *Aen.* 1.159 above) Sallustian citation (Serv. *Aen.* 12.897 CAMPO QVOD FORTE IACEBAT LIMES AGRO POSITVS):<sup>66</sup>

secundum artem propiori<sup>67</sup> respondit, sicut "est in carcere locus, quod Tullianum appellatur."

according to grammar, Virgil made the word *positus* agree in gender with the nearer one, as in *est in carcere locus, quod Tullianum appellatur*.

Servius' point here is that *positus* agrees with the masculine word *limes* (the predicative noun), not with the neuter *saxum*. When the Poet speaks of Priamus and Hecuba as parents-in-law, Servius uses this as an occasion to speak about the choice of the proper (sex-differentiable) noun in reference to them both. The relevant nouns are found only in the *Scholia Danielis* (Serv. *Aen.* 2.457 AD SOCEROS):<sup>68</sup>

(*Serv. Dan.*: quare "ad soceros," cum "socer" et "socrus" dicantur? sed) meliori sexui respondit, id est masculino.

(Why *ad soceros* [to the parents-in-law], although it is said *socer* "father-in-law" and *socrus* "mother-in-law"? But) Virgil made the gender agree with the better sex, i.e., the masculine.

The modern way of expressing the matter is that the default gender in Latin is masculine; this is one of the passages in the commentary that explains the use of masculine in a way revealing the hierarchy of the sexes in society.<sup>69</sup> Here, Virgil has decided on the "better" sex. In my translation of the passage, Virgil appears as the subject of *respondit*, as in the passage discussed just above (Serv.

65. Verg. *Aen.* 12.896–98: ". . . he glances round and sees a huge stone, an ancient stone and huge which by chance lay upon the plain, set for a landmark" (trans. Fairclough).

66. The instance of the verse under discussion is not quite similar to the Sallustian passage, since, in the latter, we have a pronoun agreeing with the predicative noun, not the correlate, while in the Virgilian verse the pronoun is in the neuter and thus agrees with the correlate: it is the participle attached to the pronoun that agrees with the predicative noun.

67. Murgia and Kaster (2018, 514 ad loc.) read here *proprio*, on the basis of Serv. *Aen.* 1.159 (discussed above, p. 470); in any case, there is no proper name in Verg. *Aen.* 12.897.

68. Verg. *Aen.* 2.456–57: *saepius Andromache ferre incomitata solebat / ad soceros et avo puerum Astyanacta trahebat* ("Andromache, poor soul, would often unattended pass to her husband's parents, and lead the little Astyanax to his grandsire," trans. Fairclough). See p. 476 below on the same Virgilian passage (concerning *ad soceros*) in Pseudo-Probos.

69. E.g., Serv. *Aen.* 4.95: *DVORVM EST bene cessit masculino femininum* ("feminine gives way to masculine, as it should"). The two in question are Venus and her son, and the "wrong alternative" (despite the fact that Venus was the more important divinity) would have been *duarum*. See Vaahtera 2008, 257–59 on default gender and valued sex; see also Corbeill 2008; see Corbeill 2015, 7 on Servius and masculine as the default gender.

*Aen.* 12.897). The subject in both is undoubtedly Virgil, highlighting the choice made by the poet—Servius, in fact, often assigns Virgil or another author the active role.<sup>70</sup> Similarly with regard to *Aen.* 4.276, which in Virgil's expression (*cui regnum Italiae Romanaeque tellus / debentur*), has two subjects, *regnum* and *tellus*, both in the singular, Servius comments that "Virgil made the number agree [*respondit*] more properly with the plural."<sup>71</sup>

#### THE "HOW" OF SPEAKING ABOUT GENDER AGREEMENT

The passages employing *respondeo* with a human subject are the clearest instances of gender agreement in Servius' commentary on Virgil. They refer to a choice made by language users as to the controller gender (or number). It is in fact impossible to translate, for example, *respondeamus* by "agree (in gender)" as suggested by Souter's dictionary,<sup>72</sup> since the subject here is in the first-person plural. It is "we" (the users of language) that undertake the task of doing something. And it seems natural to translate the third-person singular *respondit* likewise with a human subject, "he," namely, Virgil.<sup>73</sup> This is the perfect tense and thus refers to a past action: it seems unlikely that Servius would have made a word form (*positus, ad soceros, debentur*) the subject of a past action. Although *respondeo* is perhaps not used in a manner allowing us to speak of grammatical terminology, Servius certainly seems to have found the verb useful in referring to gender agreement. The tone in all of these passages is instructive; it is clear that Servius' goal is to impart lessons concerning gender agreement and the choices related to it.

I have not found a comparable use of *respondeo* in any author earlier than Servius. A survey of the verb *respondeo* by way of the *Index grammaticus* by Valeria Lomanto and Nino Marinone indicates that only one grammarian, Pompeius, a late fifth- or early sixth-century commentator on Donatus, used the verb in a manner similar to Servius.<sup>74</sup> The one relevant passage in his commentary concerns the already familiar Virgilian words, *hic illius arma, hic currus fuit* (Verg. *Aen.* 1.16–17), used by Donatus as an example of syllepsis in number.<sup>75</sup> In addition to number, Pompeius also mentions gender, although he does not offer any example of syllepsis in gender (Pomp. Keil *Gramm. Lat.* 5.301.28–36):<sup>76</sup>

syllepsis est dissimilium rerum una conclusio, puta si ponas duos numeros diversos et uni respondeas, alterum relinquo; si ponas duo genera diversa et uno<sup>77</sup> generi respondeas, alterum relinquo. puta "hic illius arma, hic currus fuit": "hic illius currus fuit" bene dicimus, "arma fuit" non bene dicimus. ergo syllepsis est, quotiens uno verbo respondemus duabus rebus

70. E.g., Serv. *Aen.* 1.159 above, where *Sallustius . . . iunxit*. But the active subject may even be the passage of Virgil discussed, as in Serv. *Aen.* 2.472 mentioned above (p. 465), where *locus indicat*.

71. Serv. *Aen.* 4.276: *DEBENTVR honestius plurali numero respondit*; Verg. *Aen.* 4.275–76: "to whom the kingdom of Italy and the Roman land are due" (trans. Fairclough).

72. See p. 469 above.

73. As already mentioned (p. 469 above), Baudou and Clément-Tarantino (2015, 53) choose the impersonal translation ad loc. 1.17, "l'accord se fait avec le plus proche," "il se fait," "on fait l'accord." See, however, their translation ad loc. 1.159, n. 60 above.

74. Lomanto and Marinone 1990, 1705–7.

75. For Pompeius' *syllepsis*, see Zago's commentary (2017, 315–21): Zago also notes Pompeius' and Servius' use of *respondeo* (pp. 316, 317).

76. The discussion of *syllepsis* continues even after this.

77. Zago 2017, 56: *uni generi*.

dissimilibus, ita ut una pars pertineat ad simplicem elocutionem, altera ad figuratam. nam quando dicimus “hic currus fuit,” simplex est elocutio; quando dicimus “arma fuit,” non est simplex elocutio, sed figurata.

Syllepsis means that one word form embraces different things, for instance if you use two different numbers and make the number agree [*respondeas*] with one of them only, ignoring the other; or if you use two different genders and make the gender agree [*respondeas*] with one only, ignoring the other. For instance, *hic illius arma, hic currus fuit*: we say correctly *hic illius currus fuit* but we cannot say correctly *arma fuit*. In conclusion, syllepsis takes place whenever we let one word agree [*respondemus*] with two different things, so that one part belongs to a simple expression, the other to a figurative expression. Since, when we say *hic currus fuit*, it is a simple expression; when we say *arma fuit*, it is not a simple expression but a figurative one.

Pompeius employs the second-person singular and first-person plural of *respondeo* in formulating the lesson; in the manner of Servius, he approaches the matter from the point of view of the language user.<sup>78</sup> He is commenting on Donatus and is thus moving in the world of figures. As to the origin of the approach to the Virgilian passage in Pompeius and Servius, the matter is complicated and involves two lost works: these are Servius’ commentary on Donatus in a more extensive form, and Donatus’ commentary on Virgil. The first of these was Pompeius’ source for his own commentary on Donatus.<sup>79</sup> Servius’ Donatus commentary, as we now have it, does not contain a proper commentary of Donatus’ Figurenlehre; it is, however, possible that the version available to Pompeius contained such a commentary.<sup>80</sup> As to Servius’ sources for his commentary on Virgil, he used both Donatus’ commentary on Virgil, the second lost work mentioned above, and Donatus’ commentary on Terence.<sup>81</sup> Thus, Servius is, for us, a possible source for the lost Virgil commentary by Donatus, and Pompeius for the lost extensive version of Servius’ commentary on Donatus. In any case, Servius, unlike Pompeius, does not use the term *syllepsis* in any of the contexts where he employs *respondemus* or *respondit* in reference to the choice of agreement. As we saw above, in commenting on Virgil’s *hic illius arma* etc. he also employs an invented example, the one with “great men and women”; this is not done by Pompeius.

The invented example actually recurs in a late grammar. The Carolingian *Commentum Einsidlense in Donati barbarismum* (by Remigius Autissiodorensis, ca. 841–ca. 908)<sup>82</sup> may indeed have adopted its approach to Donatus’ syllepsis partly from Servius’ commentary on Virgil.<sup>83</sup> Donatus’ syllepsis in number, as exemplified by *hic illius arma, hic currus fuit*<sup>84</sup> is first explained in detail; then, after noting that the figure occurs in different properties of the parts of speech, the author cites an example almost identical to the one used by Servius in connection

78. Magallón-García (2013, 89) has studied Pompeius’ debt to Servius in matters related to syntax, and comes to the conclusion that Pompeius not only inherits Servius’ doctrine and his “tímidas nociones sintácticas” but also amplifies them.

79. See, e.g., Kaster 1988, 140–50; Holtz 1981, 237; Schindel 1975, 21–23.

80. See, e.g., Schindel 1975, 19–33 on Pompeius’ Figurenlehre.

81. See Bureau 2011.

82. On Remigius, see Zetzel 2018, 350–52.

83. According to Schindel (1975, 18), Remigius made use in particular of Servius’ commentary on Virgil. Grazzini (2011, 370–71) concludes that Servius was for Remigius (and others) “la vraie encyclopédie du monde ancien” and the exegetical paradigm for writing new commentaries.

84. See p. 469 above.

with the same Virgilian verse.<sup>85</sup> The grammarian does not use any form of the verb *respondeo* here, but his use of *resolvo* (*resolvuntur*) is a nice precedent to modern gender resolution. In Servius, we have *vir et mulier magni ad me venerunt*, here, *vir et mulier; qui noviter ad nos venerunt, magni sunt*. The late text is a commentary on Donatus, not on Virgil, and the theme is syllepsis. It thus, like Pompeius earlier, unites elements of Donatus' grammar and Servius' commentary on Virgil.

It may be noted here, that Servius' comments involving *syllapsis per genus* are both contextual (Serv. *Aen.* 10.31, 10.672):<sup>86</sup> they are quite different from his comments discussed above, where the language user was assigned a central role in making the right choice, and the relevance to Latin composition was obvious. The examples of *syllapsis per genus* are formulated as information, without any recommendations.

Let us now return to *hic illius arma, hic currus fuit*: Virgil's expression has two subjects, the first in the plural, the other in the singular, and the predicate is in the singular. Servius (Serv. *Aen.* 1.17) finds an analogy for this in gender (for the passage, see p. 468 above) and he teaches how to cope with this potentially problematic situation. Considering that the ancient grammarians did not really have the proper tools to discuss agreement, this is an achievement. I do not, however, suggest that the achievement belongs to Servius, or that Servius, and after him Pompeius and Remigius, were alone in offering such lessons.<sup>87</sup> We do not know how Donatus, in his lost commentary on Virgil, may have discussed the Virgilian passage or other, similar ones—although there is nothing quite similar in Donatus' preserved texts. We have one Latin source that is earlier than Servius, and that, like Servius, offers instruction on the default gender. This is Pseudo-Probos,<sup>88</sup> author of the *Instituta artium* (beginning of the fourth century; Keil *Gramm. Lat.* 4.47–192).<sup>89</sup> At the end of the section on *nomen* we find a group of questions concerning the usage of various authors. These are, perhaps, questions that a *grammaticus* might actually have presented to the *pueri* in his class. The questions start with *quaeritur*, as in the following (Keil *Gramm. Lat.* 4.127.31–37):

Quaeritur, qua de causa Varro masculinum et feminam avos pronuntiarit. hac de causa, quoniam quaecumque generis feminini nomina generibus masculinis reperiuntur esse coniuncta, haec sub sono generis masculini necesse est ut procedant. qua disciplina et Vergilius Priamum et

85. Keil *Gramm. Lat.* 8.270.4–8: . . . “*vir et mulier, qui noviter ad nos venerunt, magni sunt.*” Hic “*vir*” et “*mulier*” cum sint masculini et feminini generis, per unum genus *i*(*dest*) masculinum clauduntur, quia, ubi duo genera iunguntur masculinum et femininum, per illud, quod praecipuum est, resolvuntur (“ . . . ‘*vir et mulier, qui noviter ad nos venerunt, magni sunt.*’ Although *vir* and *mulier* are of the masculine and feminine gender respectively, they are enclosed within one gender, i.e., the masculine, since when the two genders, masculine and feminine, are joined together, they are resolved into the superior gender”). The grammarian’s (*genus*) *praecipuum*, superior gender in the translation, refers, in our terms, to default gender. For the passage, see Vaahera 2008, 259.

86. For Serv. *Aen.* 10.672, see Corbeill 2015, 73.

87. Similar rules can be found in the Greek treatise *De figuris* by Pseudo-Herodian (the date of the *De figuris* is probably around the second century CE; for a brief characterization of the work, see Schironi 2018, 173–74); figure in gender is exemplified by a case of a conjoined NP with masculine and feminine and a masculine participle united with them. The rhetorician explains that the masculine is stronger than the feminine (ισχυρότερον γὰρ ὄν τὸ ἀρσενικὸν γένος τοῦ θηλυκοῦ) and therefore wins in the attached word. He adds that the feminine is likewise stronger than the neuter, and gives examples involving feminine and neuter with a feminine participle (Ps.-Herodian § 3).

88. Also identified as Palladius; see, however, Zetzel 2018, 306–7 for criticism of this identification.

89. See Kaster 1988, 348–49.

Hecubam masculino genere appellat, dicens de Andromacha “ferre incommitata solebat / ad soceros.”

It is asked why Varro called a male and a woman *avos* [acc. pl. of *avus* “grandfather”]. The reason is that all feminine words that are found connected with masculine ones have to be included in the word of masculine gender. In accordance with this rule, Virgil calls Priamus and Hecuba with a word of masculine gender when he says, speaking of Andromache, *ferre incommitata solebat / ad soceros*.<sup>90</sup>

There follow two more examples from Virgil showing the masculine pronominal form *hos* and the masculine participial form *tractos*, as used in reference to both sexes.<sup>91</sup> Pseudo-Probus then repeats the rule (Keil *Gramm. Lat.* 4.128.8–10). Two of the three Virgilian examples offered have already been discussed above, Serv. *Aen.* 2.457 (*ad soceros*) and 8.209 (*atque hos*),<sup>92</sup> since Servius comments on the gender to be chosen in connection with them.<sup>93</sup> This part of Pseudo-Probus’ work very probably derives from a treatise on *Latinitas*;<sup>94</sup> perhaps Servius’ lessons on gender agreement derive from some such treatise as well.

#### CONCLUSION

The examination of gender agreement in Servius’ commentary on Virgil adds to our knowledge of the ancient classroom, especially concerning the adaptation of the technical language of the grammatical treatises for the didactic purposes. There are several passages in Servius’ commentary on Virgil that are, quite probably, related to school lessons in gender agreement; they employ, for instance, such non-technical expressions as *cum genere*,<sup>95</sup> *supprimit genus*<sup>96</sup> or *contra genus*.<sup>97</sup> With the help of these expressions, it was possible to refer to the fact that the gender of a noun is revealed by its determiner (and otherwise hidden) and that gender agreement is sometimes notional, with a controller not found in the text. References to the head of NP as determinative of the gender of the agreeing element might be made through simple expressions such as *unde* and *secundum*<sup>98</sup> and using the verb

90. Verg. *Aen.* 2.456–57: for the translation, see n. 68 above. See Vaahtera 2008, 258. The plural *soceri* (*socer* “father-in-law”) was understood to mean “father-and-mother-in-law,” but in the singular the word for “mother-in-law” is *socrus*. The word for “grandmother” is *avia*.

91. Verg. *Aen.* 3.492 (*hos*) and 8.207–10 (*hos, tauros*).

92. See p. 472 above. Pseudo-Probus, like Pompeius, is content with citing examples drawn from the literary authorities in connection with gender agreement.

93. What Servius and Pseudo-Probus have in common is that both have their peculiar uses for the verb *respondeo*. Servius, as we have seen, uses the verb *respondeo* in connection with gender and number agreement, while in Pseudo-Probus the meaning is sometimes the one included in Souter’s lemma *respondeo*, “be construed with” (e.g., Keil *Gramm. Lat.* 4.73.22–23: “the *nomina* in the comparative are construed with the ablative, as in *doctior illo* or *illis* [‘more learned than he or they’]”; *comparativi gradus nomina ablativo casui respondeant, ut puta doctior illo vel illis*).

94. Zetzel 2018, 314. See Zetzel 2018, 83–88 on *Latinitas* and treatises written on it. See Garcea 2018, 451–55 for the complex typology of late Latin grammar; since the *De latinitate* by Pansa and by Flavius Caper are lost we cannot truly know whether, for instance, Pseudo-Probus’ *Instituta artium* is modeled on treatises like these (Garcea 2018, 453).

95. See p. 467 above for Serv. *Ecl.* 7.58 and for the reason why I have included it among the passages discussed, even though it is not certain that the *cum genere* is Servian.

96. See p. 468 above for Serv. *Aen.* 5.380.

97. See p. 467 above for Serv. *Aen.* 4.462.

98. See p. 465 above for Serv. *Aen.* 10.377.

for governing, *rego*.<sup>99</sup> Substantivation of adjectives appears as one theme, employing the expression *genus ex adiectione formetur*.<sup>100</sup> Besides adaptation of the technical language, the teachers undoubtedly employed a varied set of examples as well: thus, *arma* and *currus* were accompanied by *vir* and *mulier magna*.

Servius' instruction does not differ essentially from what was transmitted, for instance, through the teaching of figures such as syllepsis, but in some of the comments his approach is different. He tackles the question of gender agreement and focuses on the actual process of Latin composition. This is apparent in the introduction of the active first-person verb form *respondeamus*.<sup>101</sup> The verb seems to have offered him a practical way to approach gender agreement.

It seems natural to assume that this use of *respondeo* with a human subject might have arisen in a school context: perhaps the *pueri* were asked, for instance, to attach the right form of a modifier to a conjoined NP with different genders. It is not only "we" (who may include the *pueri*, and certainly include the language users of Servius' time generally) that appear as the subject of the verb, but Virgil as well. It is at least a semi-technical term and certainly a didactic term that refers to the act of choosing the word controlling the form of another word. The cases I have found in Servius' commentary on Virgil are limited to agreement in gender and number. Although Servius was not likely to have been a Roman pioneer in his approach to gender agreement, he is our best source concerning how it was presented in the classroom.

In conclusion, one can say that while gender agreement is implicitly present in the ancient Roman approach to grammatical gender, with its chief focus on the gender of the individual word, Servius' commentary on Virgil also contains a more explicit discussion of gender agreement as it functions in Latin syntax. This opens a window into the ancient classroom and shows that, despite the relatively awkward approach to grammatical gender and gender agreement in ancient grammar, there were practical tools for conceptualizing gender and for teaching its use.

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99. See p. 462 above and Serv. *Aen.* 7.231.

100. See p. 466 above and Serv. *Aen.* 1.417.

101. See p. 468 above and Serv. *Aen.* 1.17.

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