The Tradition of Word Reordering: Donatus, Porphyrion, and Servius
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Ancient examples of describing, reordering, and explaining Latin word order are found in three Roman commentators/scholiasts: Porphyrion, in his comments on the poems of Horace; Donatus, in his comments on the plays of Terence; and the Servius commentators, in the comments on Vergil's *Aeneid*. By reordering the words of the phrases and clauses of the poets (frequently using the phrase *ordo est* to preface the reordered words), they demonstrate to their students and peers how to interpret grammatically the words of the poets. And by doing this, these ancient critics provide insights into Late Latin teaching of word order, constraints on word order, and meaning.

Each of these commentators provides more than one hundred examples of reordered phrases and clauses. The reordering techniques of Porphyrion and Servius have been tentatively examined in the recent past. For instance, It is found that Porphyrion appears to have a more rigid and formulaic approach than does Servius. As a specific example, he moves subordinate clauses to the end of the word string and tends to retain the author's order of subject, verb, and object. On the other hand, Servius, while he reorders many parts of the sentence, does not necessarily preserve the original subject, verb, object order. Rather, he tends to use the reordering technique as an opportunity to expand and even paraphrase Vergil, and he also uses it to explain disputed interpretations by reordering the original Latin words into different arrangements to illustrate possible meanings.

In this presentation, the earlier observations about Porphyrion and Servius' reordering techniques will be revised in light of the newly presented and extensive evidence on Donatus' reorderings of the language of Terence. For instance, while Donatus does the usual unravelling of word order for clarity and unlocks interlocked word order, he disturbs the author's word order much less than does Porphyrion, but he does more rearranging of longer strings and whole clauses, and, in addition, he makes far more comments on sense and interpretation than does Servius.

Finally, there will be a detailed comparison of the word reordering techniques of these three commentators and an examination of their commonalities and differences, all of which will demonstrate what can make the syntax of a Latin sentence clear to an ancient reader. And while it appears that at times this reordering is not natural language, it is always intended to communicate, and from it we can gain insights otherwise unavailable about Latin word order. Thus, these ancient writers can inform us of methods of clarifying Latin word order and provide potential models for modern teachers trying to guide students through the intricacies of Latin word order.