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Author: Jansen, Maarten

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The Wisdom of Virgil

*The Aeneid, Its Commentators, and the Organization of Knowledge
in Early Modern Scholarship*

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Prof. dr. Ineke Sluiter (Universiteit Leiden)

Prof. dr. Craig Kallendorf (Texas A&M University)

Leden

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Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.

– Theodore Roosevelt

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1. INTRODUCTION

1. Commentaries

This dissertation is about Renaissance commentaries. For centuries commentaries have played a fundamental role in the formation, transmission and use of knowledge in many fields of scholarship and science, especially in fields in which the starting point for knowledge or information is the study of an (authoritative) text – e.g. theology, law, literature. In our time, commentaries on (classical) texts are a highly specialized genre of scholarly literature. At a fundamental level the modern scholarly commentary can be characterized as a product of scholarship that is the result of the meticulous study of another text and that aims to provide assistance in reading, understanding and interpreting that text in its particular linguistic, literary, historical, social or intellectual – to name but a few fields of interest – context. These commentaries are the result of the industrious labor of specialists, written for other specialists in the field or for those who are studying to become experts. Because of this the commentary is not an easy genre: it is a product of at times highly technical scholarship, and often closely connected to dense, complex networks of knowledge and learning. At the same time, because of its crucial position in knowledge transmission and formation, the study of commentaries can provide insights into issues such as the interplay between tradition and innovation, the authority of texts in society, the role of scholars as guardians and at the same time selectors of knowledge, the relation between scholarship and education, and the formation of a society's collective memory. For this reason in recent years the commentary has become to object of considerable attention in the field of Renaissance studies.

2. Latin Renaissance Commentaries on Virgil's *Aeneid*

In this dissertation, I will approach the commentary in the Renaissance as a phenomenon that occupies a central place in the intellectual history of the early modern world, and by extension in that of classical studies. Since at the time Latin was the language of learning and scholarship, I will focus on commentaries written in Latin; the tradition of commentaries written in the vernacular that emerged in early modern times is thus beyond the scope of this study. Furthermore, because of both the scale and complexity of many early modern commentaries, I have chosen to analyze comments on one work of one author only, but one that is a towering presence throughout the Renaissance: that author is Virgil and his work is the *Aeneid*. As is shown by Kallendorf (2015), there was a steady market for Virgilian commentaries in early modern Europe: he comes to 1,781,250 copies of Virgil editions (not necessarily with commentary) printed in Renaissance Europe. Clearly,

there was a continuous, substantial demand for commentaries on the works of Virgil throughout the early modern period.¹ As a model for poetic composition, as an exemplar for morality,² and as an imitator or *aemulator* of Homer, Virgil's works retained a central position in Renaissance teaching and scholarship.³ In education, he was the most studied ancient poet, and the *Aeneid* his most studied work.⁴

As will be discussed further below (sections 5 and 6.3), many early modern scholars considered Virgil to be one of the most eminent classical writers. Accordingly, his works enjoyed a prominent position in education and scholarship. Moreover (and of special importance to this study), the commentary tradition on the *Aeneid* goes back to classical antiquity itself and runs almost unbroken up to the early modern era. Because of these features, Virgil's *Aeneid* seemed to be an especially suitable entry point for an inquiry into early modern commentary practices.

In sum, this study concerns itself with early modern Latin commentaries on Virgil's *Aeneid* as works that are central for our understanding of the intellectual history of the early modern world and of the tradition of (classical) scholarship. Before I go into further detail about the Virgilian commentary tradition and the actual set-up of this study, two things need to be established. One is a brief discussion of the commentary in the early modern world: what are its most

¹ See Kallendorf (2015), 84-85.

² The importance attached to the study of the classical poets for morality (often also including a political dimension) is made explicit by Bruni in his *De studiis et litteris liber*, par. 21 (text and translation from Kallendorf 2002, 110-111): *Mea quidem sententia mancus quodammodo in litteris est, qui poetas non didicit. Nam de vita moribusque percommode multa sapienterque ab illis dicta et naturae generationisque principia et causae et quasi doctrinarum omnium semina in illis reperiuntur; et inest auctoritas magna propter opinionem sapientiae ac vetustatem et splendor eximius propter elegantiam et ingenuitas quaedam liberis hominibus digna, ut, cui haec non adsit, paene subrusticus videatur.* ['In my view, a man who has not read the poets is, as it were, maimed as regards literature. The poets have many wise and useful things to say about life and how it should be lived; in them are to be found the origins and causes of nature and birth – the seeds, as it were, of all teachings. By their antiquity and their reputation for wisdom they possess a high authority, by their elegance they have acquired a splendor and a distinction, by their nobility they have so far made themselves a worthy study for free men, that whoever does not know them seems to be something of a rustic.'].

³ Kallendorf (2013), 324. See for example Guarino, *De ordine docendi ac studendi*, par. 24 (Kallendorf 2002, 286-7): *A Vergilio autem inchoandum esse vel Augustini confirmat auctoritas...* ['Augustine's authority too confirms that one should begin with Vergil.'].

⁴ Grendler (1989), 240-241.

important features, and is there such a thing as a ‘Renaissance commentary’ (sections 2.1 and 2.2)? The second point is the conceptualization of the early modern commentary that lies at the heart of this study, namely the connection between this form of learning and the organization of knowledge (section 3).

2.1 The Commentary as a Genre: What Makes a Commentary?

The commentary is a form of discourse that was – and is – used in different fields of study. Additionally, as will be elaborated in section 6, the commentary has gone through a lot of changes since its first use in the classical world (this time in the widest sense of the word, including the commentaries written by the peoples of the ancient Near East). This leads to the question of whether one can speak of the commentary as a genre, and what the prime characteristics of such a genre might be. In this study, two criteria are used to delimit the genre:

1. A commentary always stands in relation to another text (which does not necessarily accompany the text of the commentary physically).
2. I will focus on commentaries that are lemmatically organized (and, for example, not on those consisting only of exegetical paraphrases). Since classical antiquity this has been considered to be one of the distinctive features of the genre.⁵

These two criteria do not constitute a definitive definition of the commentary, but provide a suitable and practical frame of reference for the commentary in the early modern period. An analysis of the Latin word *commentarius* (or its neuter form *commentarium*) does not really help in further demarcating the genre. As Ramming (2008) has shown,⁶ the word had a wide variety of uses in classical antiquity and in the middle ages, but was initially used in a much more limited way in the early modern era: only gradually did early modern scholars reconstruct the manifold ways in which classical authors had applied the word.⁷

The first feature which I have formulated above is often deemed characteristic for the commentary in the sense that a commentary should be secondary or subservient to the text it comments upon. Indeed, the commentary is always a metatext that stands in relation to another text, and thus there is a certain element

⁵ Ramming (2005), 68.

⁶ See also his earlier study, Ramming (2005), 77-85.

⁷ As Ramming (2008, 7-8) notes, Lorenzo Valla was the first early modern scholar to provide a more or less consistent discussion of *commentarius* and *commentarium* (in his *Elegantiae linguae latinae*).

of dependence that characterizes this relation, but how one should evaluate this dependence is not open-and-shut. In the tradition of Foucault and Genette, Stierle (1990) sees the commentary as the result of a conversion of a spoken text into a written text.⁸ In this view, the commentary never takes the upper hand and, in view of the lacunas that might emerge when one reads the primary text unmediated, the commentary only functions as a means for mediated actualization of knowledge. The commentary only functions as a bridge between the primary text and the reader, restoring the 'prétexte' (the texts in which the source text is embedded, which it cites and refers to) and, therefore, being largely concerned with pointing out intertextuality.⁹ In this view the commentary, as a text that itself stands in the tradition of the primary text, becomes an '*après-texte*', that is at the same time also '*contexte*' in the sense of its '*représentation institutionnelle*'.¹⁰ On the basis of these observations, Stierle comes to the following general view of the commentary:

'La symbiose entre le texte et le commentaire conditionne sa formation discursive. Le commentaire **n'est pas un discours continu**, mais une somme de micro-commentaires d'une multiplicité d'endroits textuels. Le discours du commentaire est donc **un discours essentiellement décentré**. Chacun de ses moments revient au texte pour en devenir un contexte partiel. Puisque **le commentaire cherche à s'effacer devant le texte lui-même dont il conditionne la lisibilité**, il n'a ni cohérence discursive ni écriture. **Il en est le vrai degré zéro.**'¹¹

This kind of conceptualization of the commentary – perhaps inspired by the (perceived) function of modern commentaries – as fundamentally secondary to the source text is not uncommon.¹² In my view, this theoretical conceptualization of the genre is highly problematic.¹³ One of its most important implicit lines of

⁸ Stierle (1990), 19. The influence of Foucault (with his focus on the relation between discourse and institutions) is clearly visible in Stierle's remark that the commentary is always related to a 'forme institutionnelle de la lecture comme représentation'.

⁹ Stierle (1990), 21.

¹⁰ Stierle points out that also in the most literal sense of the word an early modern commentary can be seen as context: it is often written around the text it discusses.

¹¹ Stierle (1990), 22. Emphases mine.

¹² Another example is found with Sandkühler (1967, 13), who sees the commentary as 'eine dienende Gattung': 'Der Kommentar ist eine dienende Gattung; wie ein Diener tritt er immer erst nach seinem Herrn auf...'

¹³ See also Buck (1975), 10.

argumentation seems to be that commentaries are a discontinuous type of discourse, because they relate to the source text through lemmatic organization (which I have mentioned as a second characteristic of the genre), and thus lack structural unity. Although at first sight it may indeed seem as if a commentary consists of a series of independent remarks dependent on the questions and problems posed by the source text, it appears that commentaries generally have a structural unity of their own. A commentary may be the result of a specific approach to the main text, resulting in a distinct overall-interpretation of it, even when that overall interpretation is not made explicit. For example, precisely because of their lemmatic organization, commentaries in classical antiquity stood apart from other forms of secondary literature.¹⁴ The typology of the genre of the commentary as not being a 'discours continu' and therefore being 'le vrai degré zéro' does not take this element into account. Indeed, it seems to confuse the commentary with the writing of glosses, which are often indeed a series of independent remarks next to a text. As I will show throughout this study, one should not accept too easily the supposed subservience of the commentator or the commentary to the text that is commented upon, especially in the case of early modern Latin commentaries.¹⁵ For example, the decision to use this genre could be motivated by the rhetorical function of the commentary: by attaching itself to an already established or even venerated text, the commentator could claim that his own views were of importance to or even supported by the entire tradition that came along with the work on which he offered comments.¹⁶

This conceptualization of the commentary (a commentary is not necessarily just a *metatext*) is at odds with that of Foucault and Genette, for whom the secondary nature of the commentary in relation to a primary source text is a core component of the genre.¹⁷ As Grafton explains in his lemma on the commentary, originally the ancient commentator "was a parasite. He nested in and tried to dictate the uses of an existing text that claimed authority in some field."¹⁸ Over time, Grafton explains, the commentary in the classical world became recognized as a literary genre that "sought to demonstrate the commentator's, as well as the author's, profundity, originality, and erudition", resulting in the commentary as a genre "whose authors produced new knowledge, and one of the most prominent

¹⁴ Sluiter (2000), 183.

¹⁵ See Sluiter (2013, 193-196) on this issue for the classical commentary.

¹⁶ See for example Sluiter (1998) and (2013).

¹⁷ See also Enenkel (2014), 3.

¹⁸ Grafton (2010), 226.

ones at that.”¹⁹ Especially with texts such as the *Aeneid*, with its central position in Roman culture,²⁰ the commentary came to function as a reproduction and summation of important intellectual and cultural material in society.²¹ In this way, the genre of the commentary could also serve as a vehicle for preserving cultural memory:²² for example, commentaries on a text could aid in its canonization. This conceptualization of the epistemological value of the commentary is a radically different one than the one I discussed before. It recognizes that the (classical) commentary, though often related to another text, was a form of discourse fundamentally connected to the formation, organization and transmission of knowledge. An approach to commentaries that takes this view as a starting point, will necessarily not only study the commentary in relation to the text it comments upon, but also situate it as a work of scholarship in its own right in the network of scholarship and learning to which it related.

This first feature which I have just discussed – the relation between the commentary and the text it comments upon – is closely connected to the issue of authority, since the authority of the commentary (or: the commentator) is closely connected to the authority attributed to the text that it offers comments on. Moreover, the (established) authority of this text forms an important guarantee for the survival of the commentary.²³ The commentator will, therefore, tend to stress the importance of the source text, thereby implicitly increasing the weight of his own work.²⁴ This need not necessarily mean that commentators would always defend the text: for in criticizing an authoritative text, the commentator could also show his own skill and originality. On the other hand, the desire to consolidate the authority of the text and to maximize its opportunity for interpretation could lead the commentator to defend it to such an extent that it required some very creative interpretation. A commentator would prefer a favorable reading over one that would attribute mistakes to the author of the source text, and would thus start from the assumption that the statements of the source text were accurate.²⁵ This aspect of the ‘principle of charity’ is characteristic for many classical commentaries

¹⁹ Grafton (2010), 226.

²⁰ See for example Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008), 1; 623.

²¹ Sluiter (2000), 188.

²² See Assmann & Gladigow (1995).

²³ Sluiter (1998), 12.

²⁴ As Sluiter (1998, 13) notes, this not only often results in the defense of the source text by the commentator, but can also result in (exaggerated) idealization of the text.

²⁵ Sluiter (1998), 15.

and is also found with early modern commentators, as will become apparent from the various case studies of this dissertation.²⁶

The aforementioned observations lead to the conclusion that the commentary is not just metatext, but in some cases even the primary text of interest for the reader. Because of this the relation between commentary and text should generally be perceived to be symbiotic, or in some cases even parasitical.

2.2 The 'Renaissance Commentary'?

This study presents a discussion of a selection of early modern commentaries on the *Aeneid*. These works represent a specific, but important, field of scholarship within the early modern commentary tradition. The commentary, however, was used in many areas of study as a format for the study of a text. The literary commentary is only one example of this. This broad use of the commentary as a tool for textual study raises the question whether one can speak of the 'literary commentary' as a sub-genre and if there is such a thing as a 'Renaissance commentary'.

In his lemma on the commentary, Grafton (2010) provides an overview of the genre of the commentary from classical antiquity until modern times (see my section 6 for a discussion of the chronological development of the Virgilian commentary). As he notes, the classical commentary tradition temporarily lost its prominent position as a tool for scholarship after the fall of the Roman empire.²⁷ Medieval scholars (initially) instead preferred the encyclopedic works of authors such as Macrobius. In biblical studies however the commentary was established as a standard tool for studying the Scriptures (the *Glossa Ordinaria*), which method of study was taken up by Italian scholars for the study of classical legal and medical texts. In his introduction to *Der Kommentar in der Renaissance* (1975), Buck discusses the (dis)continuities between the practice of commenting in the Medieval Era and the Renaissance.²⁸ As he notes, these differences and continuities vary according to the type of primary text being commented on, and according to the 'Bildungshorizont' (the intellectual horizon) of the author.²⁹ Since the commentary as a genre remained connected to education both in the medieval and in the early

²⁶ For the principle of charity and the commentary, see Sluiter (1998), 14-18.

²⁷ Grafton (2010), 227-228.

²⁸ As was already noted by Kristeller (1960, 215), the commentary became one of the most important genres for scholarly discourse in the Middle ages: 'Der Kommentar ist seinerseits wohl als die wichtigste Form der gelehrten Literatur des Mittelalters anzusehen.'

²⁹ Buck (1975), 8.

modern era, the form and function of the commentary changed in accordance with changes in education in general.³⁰ In his discussion, Buck makes a distinction between humanist commentaries and other types of commentaries.³¹ Grafton notes that with the arrival of humanist learning in the (late) 14th and 15th century, ancient models of commentary reemerged. This later view places the early modern commentary in the context of the renewed interest in history and philology of early modern humanism and connects it to the classical commentary tradition. This resulted in the production of commentaries that were modeled on classical examples, such as the commentary of Servius, but often also showed continuity with medieval scholarship.³² The commentary played an important role in the humanist 'Bildungsprogramm' according to which textual criticism should be applied to the primary text by the commentator to restore it as much as possible to its original state. This is connected to the humanist conceptualization of the value of classical texts as sources for moral lessons and guidelines, that could and should be extracted from them.³³

The early modern commentary thus appears to be a complex genre: on the one hand, it is part of the renewed interest in the classical world that is characteristic for the early modern era, while on the other hand it is rooted in classical and medieval scholarship. Moreover – as had also been the case in classical antiquity, as Grafton notes when he speaks of the endless possible variants of this “protean form”³⁴ – the commentary could take on many forms and be used in various fields of learning. I already mentioned the biblical and juridical commentary, to which one could add, to name but a few, the scientific (botanical, astronomical, physical, mathematical), philosophical (Aristotelian, Neoplatonic) and language-oriented (grammatical, rhetorical, poetical, antiquarian) types. The genre proved to be

³⁰ Buck (1975), 9: 'Es versteht sich, daß in den Lehrprogrammen der Humanisten, welche unter einer neuen Perspektive das antike Erbe ihrer Zeit erschließen und für sie nutzbar machen wollten, das Kommentieren klassischer Autoren dominierte. Dabei entwickelte sich eine neue Form des Kommentars, eben der humanistische Kommentar, der seinerseits die Kommentare in anderen Wissenschaften beeinflusste.' See also Grafton (2010), 228.

³¹ Buck does not elaborate the distinction between humanist and other commentaries, except that he characterizes the humanist commentary to a certain extent as a '... besondere Form der schriftstellerischen Selbstdarstellung seines Verfassers' (1975, 10). I would, however, object that this feature can also pertain to classical and medieval commentaries, and is therefore not typical for a humanistic one.

³² Grafton (2010), 228.

³³ Buck (1975), 11.

³⁴ Grafton (2010), 226.

highly popular in the early modern era,³⁵ possibly precisely because of its flexibility.

In view of the observations above, would it be possible to tentatively come up with general characteristics for early modern Latin commentaries on works of classical literature? First of all, early modern commentaries on poetic works such as the *Aeneid* generally exhibit a profound interest in matters of language, rhetoric, and style. This aspect, which will be further discussed in chapter 2 of this dissertation, is strongly dependent on the rhetorical and poetical tradition. A second feature of early modern commentaries appears to be the collection of parallel passages.³⁶ This is not only in accordance with a focus on *imitatio*,³⁷ but also stems from the desire of many commentators to embed the primary text in its historical context. In some respects, this can be deemed to be a specific early modern feature, for medieval commentaries generally tend to view classical texts much more *sub specie aeternitatis* and not as specimens of a historically contextualized cultural phenomenon.³⁸ Early modern commentators on the other hand pay much attention to explaining and analyzing the cultural and historical background of the events taking place in the *Aeneid*. This explanation of the *historia* was traditionally one of the tasks of the grammarian and nicely fitted early modern humanist interests. The topics that could be discussed in this kind of lemmata range from Roman history to Roman law, from archaeological remains to classical clothing, and from geography to astronomy. This information is again often embedded in a host of references to or citations from classical authors. I will discuss these practices more at length in chapter 3 of this dissertation.

3. The Virgilian Commentary and Early Modern Knowledge Management

The *Aeneid* was traditionally considered by commentators and other scholars to be a storehouse of knowledge, not only pertaining to the field of literary studies, but

³⁵ Grafton (2010), 230.

³⁶ Grafton (2010), 226; 228-230; see also the example discussed in Kallendorf (2013), 314.

³⁷ As for example Pade (2005, 57) remarks: 'In humanist secondary schools the pupils would be taught to read classical texts not only to acquire learning, but also to be able to imitate systematically the discourse of the best ancient writers. Hankins called the process imitative reading, and it is attested by numerous humanist treatises on education. As Leonardi Bruni put it in his *De studiis et litteris*, the reader should acquire not only *rerum scientia* but also *litterarum peritia*, or eloquence. The imitation was not only stylistic; it was taken for granted that the ethos of a text was transmitted to the reader, that the imitation of noble behavior was inseparable from imitation of noble speech: in short that good letters make good men.'

³⁸ Osmond (2005), 30.

also relevant to topics that traditionally (and certainly also from a modern point of view) were not central to the task of the grammarian. Already in classical antiquity there was a distinct tradition in which Virgil was seen as a scholar, a magician or even a prophet, and his works as important sources for general knowledge.³⁹ This is famously formulated by Servius in the preface of his commentary to the sixth book of the *Aeneid*:

‘Indeed all of Virgil is overflowing with knowledge, in which this book [*Aeneid* 6] claims preeminence, the greater part of which is Homeric. Some matters are told in a straightforward manner, many from history, many concern the deep knowledge of philosophers, of students of religion, of Egyptians, to the point that a number [of commentators] have written whole treatises from the individual topics of this book.’⁴⁰

This focus on Virgil as a scholar can in a somewhat different form also be seen in Macrobius’ *Saturnalia* (5th century): the poetry of Virgil is one of the central topics of this work and is regarded as a highly authoritative source of knowledge, especially on the composition of poetry.⁴¹ Within this frame, Servius is presented as the foremost grammarian, “standing head and shoulders above the *plebeia grammaticorum cohors*” (‘the Plebeian cohort of grammarians’).⁴²

In the early modern era, with its orientation towards classical literature and its fascination with the retrieval and organization of information on the classical world, Virgil’s position as a highly authoritative source for knowledge resulted in the production of commentaries, sometimes huge, on his works. In fact, the enormous effort that was made to consolidate and manage knowledge, fundamentally connected to the desire to prevent a recurrence of the (perceived loss) of classical knowledge and learning that occurred during the Middle Ages, is one of the prime characteristics of scholarship in the early modern period.⁴³ In the

³⁹ For a selection of relevant texts for this tradition, see Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008), section II.G ‘Virgil as Philosopher and Compendium of Knowledge’.

⁴⁰ Servius, *praef.* on the commentary on *Aen.* VI: *Totus quidem Vergilius scientia plenus est, in qua hic liber possidet principatum, cuius ex Homero pars maior est. Et dicuntur aliqua simpliciter, multa de historia, multa per altam scientiam philosophorum, theologorum, Aegyptiorum, adeo ut plerique de his singulis huius libri integras scripserint pragmaticas.* English translation from Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008), 464-465.

⁴¹ Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008), 636-637.

⁴² Kaster (1986), 171.

⁴³ This is formulated by Blair (2010, 12-13) in the following way: ‘The ambition to encompass all knowledge and the technique of juxtaposing excerpts from authoritative sources to achieve universal

last decades, much attention in Renaissance studies has been given to the ways in which the vast amount of knowledge that became available through the rediscovery of classical literature and the production of books on classical studies, was structured and organized by early modern scholars.⁴⁴ One of the most important recent works in this field is Blair (2010), who focuses on compilatory works such as dictionaries and encyclopedias.⁴⁵ Her study shows how a discussion of this kind of works from the viewpoint of the organization of information and the transmission of knowledge can be very productive for early modern intellectual history. The central approach to the early modern Latin *Aeneid*-commentaries studied in this dissertation is informed by this notion of management of knowledge. This means that I will approach early modern commentaries on the *Aeneid* primarily as exemplars standing in a long-standing tradition of information management, which accelerated because of developments in the early modern period (such as the invention of the printing press, the rediscovery of classical texts and developments in the sciences). Not surprisingly, the degree to which knowledge management is central to a commentary on the *Aeneid* and the way in which it is organized varies according to the approach the commentator takes to the text. This topic will be discussed in chapter 2 (with respect to the grammatical disciplines), 3 (with respect to cultural history) and 4 (with respect to the scientific disciplines) of this dissertation.

4. Research Topic and Research Questions

The early modern Virgilian commentary can be seen as a nucleus of scholarship and learning, encompassing information from a broad range of disciplines, and thus being connected to many of the prominent questions in current research on the early modern period. In addition, as I have noted before, the tradition of Virgilian scholarship that runs almost continuously from classical antiquity is a

scope were not new to the Renaissance. (...) Distinctively new to the Renaissance was the awareness of the great cultural trauma suffered through the loss of ancient learning during what Petrarch was first to call the Middle Ages. (...) A number of early modern authors articulated the hope that with proper storage and management the information accumulated henceforth would be safe from another catastrophic loss.'

⁴⁴ See for example Blair (2010, 4) (on early modern compilatory works): 'Recent scholarship has in many cases begun to examine these forms of accumulation [of knowledge in pre- and early modern cultures] as sites of information management, each of which posed distinctive practical, intellectual, and political challenges.' See also Grafton (1992, 24-26).

⁴⁵ Some earlier important studies in this respect are those by Jardine & Grafton (1986), and Moss (1996).

unique feature of the Virgil commentary.⁴⁶ This exceptional characteristic makes Renaissance Virgil commentaries the material *par excellence* for a study of questions concerning the continuity and discontinuity of intellectual traditions and the position of those traditions in the early modern period. This brings me to the central research question of this study: What is the role of the literary commentary in the organization of knowledge in the early modern period, and how does the role of intellectual traditions in this era change? I will use the Virgilian commentary as a lens to look at the complex developments taking place in the early modern period, both in the organization of information management and in intellectual traditions. Each of the case studies of this dissertation will thus provide insight into one important research question in modern Renaissance studies through the perspective of the Virgilian commentary.

4.1 Set-up of the Book

This book consists of four parts, each discussing a 'big question' in the field of Renaissance studies in relation to early modern Latin commentaries on the *Aeneid*.

Chapter 2 provides a discussion of the language disciplines in early modern *Aeneid* commentaries in view of the question of **the continuity and discontinuity of intellectual traditions**. Since the Virgilian commentary stood in an almost continuous tradition from the publication of the works of Virgil, and in view of the importance of these works in education and culture throughout the later centuries, the place and role of the language sciences – which formed the central tasks of the grammarian – in these commentaries can be highly informative about how these established disciplinary fields functioned in the Renaissance.

Chapter 3 focuses on the *Aeneid*-commentary by the Spanish scholar Juan Luis de la Cerda. In this chapter, I discuss **the conceptualization of the classical past** in this Renaissance commentary, in view of the discussion about the question of whether or not there was an emerging sense of history in the early modern period. Moreover, this chapter shows how scholars like La Cerda dealt with the classical past in their scholarship, and how certain types of commentary lemmata should not be viewed as mere explanation of the text, but as independent works of scholarship.

Chapter 4 concerns one of the major changes that took place in the course of the early modern period: the rise of the sciences. While early modern scholarship is

⁴⁶ A similar point could be made for the reception of the works of Horace, though one should note that his works enjoyed a less prominent position in education and scholarship. See Stadeler (2015) for early modern Latin commentaries on Horace.

often studied as part of the classical tradition – the philological tradition, that is – in this chapter I will study the role of the study of nature in early modern Latin commentaries on the *Aeneid*. This will bring to the fore the issue of **tradition and innovation** in these commentaries – did early modern scholars include newly available knowledge in their works, or did they conform to the established patterns? – and the role of scholarship and pre-modern science in early modern society. Moreover, on a very fundamental level, this chapter will show in what ways the established language disciplines positioned themselves vis-à-vis the newly emerging forms of learning, which could potentially threaten and undermine their position.

Chapter 5 will present an analysis of early modern commentaries and their readership. Building on the insights of the last decades in the history of reading and the history of the book, I will discuss the way in which early modern Latin *Aeneid* commentaries were read and what traces can still be found of that **reading**. This chapter will include several short case studies on early modern hand-written annotations in editions of Virgil commentaries. In this way, the analysis carried out in this chapter can function as a way of testing the assumptions and conclusions that have been presented in the previous chapters.

Finally, a **conclusion** will follow in which the findings of the four chapters are drawn together and related to the research questions of this dissertation, namely the role of the literary commentary in the organization of knowledge in the early modern period. Also, I will make some brief remarks on the legacy of Renaissance commentators on the *Aeneid*.

5. An Introductory Example: A. 1. 257-296 (Jupiter's Speech)

Before delving into the more specific aspects of the Virgilian tradition and questions of theory and methodology, it is time to have a first brief look at the material itself. The case study in this section will serve as a brief introductory example of the early modern *Aeneid*-commentary before the more detailed case studies in each of the chapters of this dissertation.

In the vast work that is the *Aeneid*, three passages of a prophetic nature stand out: the speech of Jupiter to Venus in book 1, the prophecy of Anchises in book 6 (A. 6.756 ff.), and the description of the Shield of Aeneas in Book 8 (A. 8.626 ff.).⁴⁷ These passages have attracted much attention from classical times onwards, both

⁴⁷ Austin (1971) commenting on A. 1.257 ff. emphasizes the relation between the speech of Jupiter and Anchises' speech in book 6; Austin (on A. 8.626 ff.) and Williams (1973, commenting on A. 8.608 ff.) also relate the description of the Shield of Aeneas in Book 8 to Anchises' prophecy.

because of the important function they have within the narrative of the *Aeneid* and their role in the ideological conceptualization of the work.⁴⁸ In this section I will analyze some of the comments made by classical and early modern commentators on one of these passages, the speech of Jupiter (A. 1.257-296). This will enable me to present a general overview of what type of comments are typically provided in early modern Latin commentaries on the *Aeneid* and how this is related to the Virgilian tradition (which will be discussed in more detail in section 6).

Jupiter's prophecy in fact consists of a consolation of Venus. In the lines preceding the speech, she has complained to him about the uncertain fate of Aeneas and the other Trojans. In a grave, majestic speech, Jupiter comforts her by revealing the success and future greatness of Aeneas' offspring.⁴⁹ In his narration, Jupiter describes the earliest history of Rome – the founding of the cities of Lavinium, Alba Longa and Rome – and the glory that will come in the days of "the Trojan Caesar ... a Julius,⁵⁰ name descended from great Iulus".⁵¹

The passage attracted special attention in antiquity, particularly because of the fact that through Jupiter's speech it is revealed to the reader at the very beginning of the *Aeneid* that things will ultimately end well for Aeneas and (some of) his comrades. I will discuss some examples of this a bit further on.⁵² Furthermore, the second part of the speech (A. 1.286-296) offers ample opportunity to be read in the context of Augustan imperial ideology. The scholar Tiberius Claudius Donatus (early 5th century; I will subsequently refer to him as Tib. Cl. Donatus) – who should not be confused with the fourth-century grammarian Aelius Donatus – in

⁴⁸ See for example the comment by Williams (1972-1973, 177) on Jupiter's speech, in which he emphasizes the importance of this passage for the overall tone of the *Aeneid*: "The world order, which seems here so desirable, cannot be achieved without suffering and sacrifice, and as the poem explores these sacrifices, the reader must remember why they have to be made." See also Austin (1971, on A. 1.257ff.) on the ideological overtones of these passages. See also Enenkel (2005a).

⁴⁹ Austin (1971) commenting on A. 1.254ff. notes how Venus and Jupiter are contrasted: Venus has spoken emotionally, Jupiter replies in a grave, calm, kind manner.

⁵⁰ It is a much debated issue whether this Julius Caesar should be identified with Gaius Julius Caesar or with the emperor Augustus. See Austin (1971) and Williams (1972-1973) on A. 1.286.

⁵¹ A. 1.286; 288: ... *Troianus origine Caesar ... Iulius, a magno demissum nomen Iulo*. All translations from the *Aeneid* in this section are based on those by Rushton Fairclough (1956). The translation of the *Aeneid* by Rushton Fairclough in general sometimes seems to be a bit overly formal, but in this particular case that seems to be quite appropriate.

⁵² See the references to the commentaries by Austin and Williams in my note 48. Interestingly, Macrobius in his *Saturnalia* in general pays much attention to the works of Virgil, but no relevant remarks are found on this particular passage.

fact opens his *Interpretationes Vergilianae* by stating that the *Aeneid* should clearly be read as a work of the *genus laudativum*, a rhetorical work of praise honoring Aeneas as the founding father of Rome and therewith also glorifying Augustus.⁵³ Tib. Cl. Donatus' rhetorical approach shows itself clearly when he describes how the skillful way in which Virgil was able to turn even Aeneas' vices into praise is characterized as being *summi oratoris*, 'characteristic of the best orator'.⁵⁴ In analyzing Jupiter's speech, Tib. Cl. Donatus clearly shows this type of approach. At the beginning of the speech (A. 1.257-8: 'Spare thy fear, Lady of Cythera; thy children's fates abide unmoved')⁵⁵ he immediately notes 'How swift does he [Jupiter] free the mind from sorrow! If he had only said this, it would have sufficed; because he has both assured her and expressed that nothing has changed about

⁵³ Tib. Cl. Don., *Interp. Verg.*, proemium, 2, 7-25: *Primum igitur et ante omnia sciendum est quod materiae genus Maro noster adgressus sit; hoc enim nisi inter initia fuerit cognitum, vehementer errabitur. Et certe laudativum est, quod idcirco incognitum est et latens, quia miro artis genere laudationis ipse, dum gesta Aeneae percurreret, incidentia quoque etiam aliarum materialium genera complexus ostenditur, nec ipsa tamen aliena a partibus laudis; nam idcirco adsumpta sunt, ut Aeneae laudationi proficerent. ... Talem enim monstrare Aenean debuit, ut dignus Caesari, in cuius honorem haec scribebantur, parens et auctor generis praeberetur; cumque ipsum secuturae memoriae fuisset traditurus extitisse Romani imperii conditorem, procul dubio, ut fecit, et vacuum omni culpa et magno praeconio praeferendum debuit demonstrare.* ['First and foremost notice what kind of subject matter our Maro has taken on. For if you do not realize this right from the start, bad mistakes will be the result. It certainly belongs to the genre of praise, but this is not recognized and remains hidden for the following reason. Through his wonderful technique of praise, while treating the deeds of Aeneas he also embraced (as can be demonstrated) genres that belong to a different subject matter without therefore, however, being alien to the roles of praise. For they have been adopted for this very reason that they should assist in the praise of Aeneas. (...) For he had to show that Aeneas was such as to provide a worthy parent and founder of the family for Caesar, in whose honor the work was written. And since he was going to put it to future generations that he had been the founder of the Roman empire, there was no doubt that he had to demonstrate, as in fact he did, that he was free of all guilt and his praise to be loudly proclaimed.']. And further on, where Tib. Cl. Donatus tells his son (4.24-28): *si Maronis carmina competenter attenderis et eorum mentem congrue comprehenderis, invenies in poeta rhetorem summum atque inde intelleges Vergilium non grammaticos, sed oratores praecipuos tradere debuisse.* ['If you pay careful attention to the epic of Maro and grasp its meaning correctly, you will discover in the poet a perfect rhetor, and hence you will understand that Virgil should not have been taught by grammarians, but by the best of orators']. English translations from Copeland & Sluiter (2009), 143-144; 145. See also Squillante Saccone (1985), 105-106 and Starr (1992).

⁵⁴ Tib. Cl. Don., *Interp. Verg.*, proemium, 3, 10-14.

⁵⁵ A. 1.257: *parce metu, Cytherea; manent immota tuorum / fata tibi; ...*

earlier promises.⁵⁶ Jupiter speaks as the king of the gods, rather than as Venus' father, since only in that capacity can he prophesy about future events.⁵⁷ The unveiling of future events here, Tib. Cl. Donatus notes, is very convenient to establish what the work of Virgil would have contained had its author not been outrun by Death.⁵⁸ All of this shows that Tib. Cl. Donatus approaches the speech in terms of rhetoric and of literary composition (the internal structuring of the *Aeneid*).⁵⁹ Furthermore, Tib. Cl. Donatus pays some brief attention to the myths referred to by Jupiter (Romulus & Remus) and signals again that the *Aeneid* is written in honor of Augustus and would have continued with some extra books on events leading up to Augustus' time, but for Virgil's untimely demise.⁶⁰ Thus Tib. Cl. Donatus is primarily interested in reading the passage in terms of classical rhetorical theory, so that the text could serve as an example to students of rhetoric. Furthermore, Tib. Cl. Donatus, analyzing the *Aeneid* as a work of *laudatory* rhetoric, identifies the ideological bearing of the passage and the praise that results from it for Augustus.

In his introduction to the first book of the *Aeneid*, Servius also immediately establishes a connection between the ideological purpose of the work and Jupiter's speech by stating that line A. 1.288 *a magno demissum nomen Iulo* ('name descended from the great Iulius') is a confirmation of Virgil's goal to glorify Augustus by describing the fates of his ancestors.⁶¹ At the passage itself, Servius offers

⁵⁶ Tib. Cl. Don., *Interpr. Verg.*, A. 1.259, 18-21: *quam cito maerentis animum solvit! Quodsi hoc solum dixisset, abunde suffecerat; nam et securam reddidit et nihil mutatum de superioribus promissis expressit.*

⁵⁷ Tib. Cl. Don., *Interpr. Verg.*, A. 1.259, 21-22: *sed huic dat poeta personam regis, non patris; de futuris enim loqui et significare ventura non nisi deorum rex poterat.* ('But here the poet gives him [Jupiter] the role of a king, not of a father. For to speak the future and to indicate the things to come is only possible for the king of the gods.').

⁵⁸ Tib. Cl. Don., *Interpr. Verg.*, A. 1.260, 9-15.

⁵⁹ For Tib. Cl. Donatus, see Copeland & Sluiter (2009, 141-142), Kaster (1988, 400) and Squillante Saccone (1985).

⁶⁰ Tib. Cl. Don., *Interpr. Verg.*, A. 1.263, 16-18.

⁶¹ Serv., *In Verg. Aen. I Praef.*, 1: *Intentio Vergilii haec est: Homerum imitari et Augustum laudare a parentibus; namque est filius Atiae, quae nata est de Iulia, sorore Caesaris, Iulius autem Caesar ab Iulo Aeneae originem ducit, ut confirmat ipse Vergilius (288) 'a magno demissum nomen Iulo'.* ['Virgil's intention is the following: to imitate Homer and to praise Augustus on account of his parents. For he is the son of Atia, the daughter of Julia, who was the sister of Caesar. Julius Caesar derives his origin from Iulus, the son of Aeneas, as Virgil himself confirms: "a name handed down from the great Iulus."'] transl. Copeland & Sluiter (2009, 128)] Servius also identifies the imitation of Homer as one of the reasons for Virgil to write his work, but

comments on matters of textual criticism, on the relation between Greek and Latin words, on the composition of Jupiter's speech and on matters of grammar and style, but actually not on issues of ideology.⁶² Servius' aforementioned remark A. 1.288 in his introduction to book 1 of his commentary already makes apparent that he is particularly interested in the connection Virgil establishes between Ascanius (Iulus) and the Julio-Claudian dynasty.⁶³ He also appears to be particularly keen to explain the references to the passing of time in the oration, for example by pointing out the difference between the year of the moon and that of the sun.⁶⁴ Servius also goes into quite some detail in explaining the myth of Romulus and Remus and to present several alternative versions of the foundational myth of Rome.⁶⁵ At the passage where Jupiter describes the foundation of Rome, Servius has inserted one of few moralizing remarks: he signals the fact that in A. 1.275 Romulus wears the hide of the she-wolf, his nurse, which was considered by many to be a repulsive act. Servius however solves the moral problem (in line with what was observed above in section 2.1 on the principle of charity) by pointing out that either the story is not true, or that Romulus was following the example of Jupiter himself here (who used the skin of his mother, the she-goat).⁶⁶ Servius pays much attention to the ending of the speech (A. 1.291-296), which is interpreted as referring to the time of the reign of Augustus (Servius explicitly wishes to identify Quirinus with Augustus and Remus with Agrippa).⁶⁷ The ending of Jupiter's prophecy consists of a grand eulogy of the power and glory of the Roman people under the rule of Augustus. The core elements of this eulogy are formed by Jupiter's bold promise in

the verse from the speech of Jupiter specifically refers to the perceived glorification of Augustus by Virgil.

⁶² See also Copeland & Sluiter (2009, 126-127).

⁶³ See for example also Servius' comment on A. 1.267: *cognomen Iulo* and on A. 1.286 *nascetur*.

⁶⁴ See my chapter 4 for more on the role of the scientific disciplines in the (early modern) commentary tradition of the *Aeneid*.

⁶⁵ See Servius' comment on A. 1.273.

⁶⁶ Servius on A. 1.275 *fulgo tegmine: id est, pelle lupae, qua utebatur more pastorum. Sed hoc multi reprehendunt, cur nutricis tegmine usus sit. Qui gemina ratione refutantur: vel falsitate fabulae, vel exemplo Iovis, qui caprae nutricis utitur pelle.* ['that is, the skin of the she-wolf, which he wore in accordance with the custom of herdsmen. But many censure this point, why he used the skin of his nurse. They are refuted in two ways: either by the falsehood of the story, or by the example of Jupiter, who wore the skin of his nurse the she-goat.']. See Austin (1971), on A. 1.275 for further discussion.

⁶⁷ Servius on A. 1.292. Rushton Fairclough (1956, *ad loc.*) inserts a footnote that interprets the line in a different way: 'i.e., Romulus (Quirinus) will be at peace with Remus. Civil wars will cease.'

A. 1.278-279 that he will give the Romans an empire without end and by the description of the concord and peace that are achieved within the empire under the rule of Augustus.

Let us now look at some early modern comments on Jupiter's first promise, that of an empire without end. The Florentine humanist Cristoforo Landino (*Aeneid*-commentary published in 1487), the Spanish Jesuit Antonio de Nebrija (1495) and the English school teacher Thomas Farnaby (1634), who all wrote commentaries on the *Aeneid*, do not offer any comment on the lines in question (more on these commentators and their works in section 9). In the commentary by the Parisian printer Iodocus Badius Ascensius (1501) – who often included a lot of information from the commentary by Landino, but here had to depend on himself – the issue of the promise of eternal rule for Rome is clearly marked by the printing of *Regna pereunt* ('Kingdoms perish') in the margin of the commentary. This lemma is interesting, for the politically important notion of *translatio imperii* – the transfer of the *imperium* of the Roman emperors to the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire – is explicitly mentioned:

Badius Ascensius on A. 1.279, *imperium sine fine*

(...) Nam mentitus est Juppiter dicens imperium sine fine dedi: de qua re divus Augustinus De verbis Domini sermo. xxxix. ita loquitur: "Habent mutationes [sc. terrena] regna [in the margin: Regna pereunt]: veniet ille de quo dictum est, 'et regni eius non erit finis'. Qui hoc [sc. aeternitatem] regnis terrenis promiserunt, non veritate ducti, sed adulatione mentiti sunt. Poeta illorum quidam induxit Iovem et ait de Romanis His ego non metas rerum nec tempora pono; // Imperium sine fine dedi. Non plane ita respondet veritas (...)."

(...) For Jupiter lied when he said 'I have given an empire without end': the divine [Saint] Augustine has spoken of this matter in his *De verbis Domini sermo* 34 as follows:⁶⁸ "[sc. Earthly] Kingdoms are transient [in the margin: Kingdoms perish]: he will come of whom it was said, 'and of his kingdom there shall be no end' [Luke 1.33]."⁶⁹ Those who have promised this [sc. eternity] to earthly empires, were not led by truth, but have lied because they wanted to be flattering. One of their poets has represented Jupiter, and he says about the Romans 'I set for these no boundaries in

⁶⁸ Aug., *De verbis Domini sermo*, 105.

⁶⁹ Luke 1, 33: *et regnabit in domo Iacob in aeternum et regni eius non erit finis* ['And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever and of his kingdom there shall be no end'].

fortune nor in time; // I have given empire without end.' [A. 1.278-279]. This is clearly not in accordance with the truth."

In this passage Badius – citing from St. Augustine – clearly opposes the notion of an empire without end. In the part of the lemma before this passage, he notes that the way in which the history of Rome is foretold by Jupiter implies eternal rule (... *tria milia annorum, quibus infinitum significatur imperium Romanos regnatueros*). The period that was set out for this rule, he remarks, had not come to an end, at the point where the rule – the *imperium* – was already transferred to the *Germani* (the Holy Roman Empire) (*qui numerus nondum completus est, cum iam imperium in Germanos translatus videamus*). Poets are better, he notes, in prophesying about the past than about the future (*Verum certiora de praeteritis quam de futuris inducunt poetae vaticinia*). Badius reinforces this point by invoking the authority of St. Augustine, to make it clear that no (earthly) empire can be without end. Badius worked in Paris as a printer under the protection of the French king. The notion of the *translatio imperii* was unwelcome to the kings of France, since it implied that they should obey to the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.⁷⁰ In rebuking the claim to eternal rule that is promised by Jupiter to Rome – by pointing out, with the help of St. Augustine, that Jupiter was lying – the claim of the Holy Roman Emperor to universal rule is attacked, for indeed an *imperium* was transferred, but this is not the *imperium Romanum*. Furthermore the passage is brought into line with Christian doctrine.⁷¹

This brief analysis shows how on the one hand the established tradition of a rhetorical reading of the *Aeneid* and on the other hand contemporary concerns determine the comments on the passage by the various early modern commentators. Furthermore a commentator such as Tib. Cl. Donatus also has ulterior motives, since his rhetorical explanation of the *Aeneid* challenges the authority of the grammarians who traditionally interpreted works of poetry. Of

⁷⁰ The *imperium* was considered to be one and indivisible by the Romans themselves: more persons could *participate* in the *imperium* (for example, two consuls), but it still remained one *imperium* (which, for example, becomes clear from the fact that the consuls could veto each other). In a concept in which the *imperium* of the Roman emperor had passed over to the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire, the king of France would have to be subservient to the emperor (an emperor being of a higher rank than a king). This was of course very unwelcome to the French kings; one solution to the problem – offered by lawyers at the French court – was to see the king of France as 'emperor in his own domain' (*rex imperator in regno suo*). See Pagden (2010), 310.

⁷¹ See also Kallendorf (in Pade (2005), 119) on the early modern tendency to read Virgil in terms of Christianity.

course, a rhetorical reading was very much to the liking of early modern scholars with their keen interest in rhetorical composition.⁷² On the other hand, the early commentators in this section do not truly exploit the possibilities for interpretation opened up by Jupiter's speech. Matters of politics and religion are, for example, scarcely mentioned. In fact, this fragmentation of the discussion of the *Aeneid*, and the great influence of the classical commentary tradition, are to a high degree characteristic of Virgilian commentary in the early modern period.

6. The Virgilian Tradition: A Diachronic Perspective on Virgilian Commentaries

In this section I will provide a discussion of the Virgilian tradition. From the moment of its publication, the works of Virgil were subjected to various forms of literary criticism, running from the fields of grammar and rhetoric to metaphysical interpretations. This is especially true for the *Aeneid*, because for the critic's approach to this epic a well-established literary model was already available in antiquity itself: the tradition of the writing of scholia on Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.⁷³

In this section, I will first briefly discuss the general traits of the Virgilian commentary tradition up to the early modern period (§ 6.1 and 6.2). Secondly, I will discuss the position of Virgil in the early modern period, with emphasis on his role in education (§ 6.3). I do not aim to provide a complete overview of the Virgilian (commentary) tradition, since I will only identify and discuss features of this tradition that are necessary as a background for this dissertation. For a more comprehensive discussion of the history of the literary (Virgilian) commentary, one could start with Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008) and Grafton (2010).

6.1 Classical Antiquity

The works of Virgil began to enjoy a canonical status already during the life of the poet.⁷⁴ As a result, the tradition of analyzing and commenting upon Virgil's works started early on in antiquity itself. Already in (late) antiquity two major branches of studying the works of Virgil can be discerned: that of rhetorical-allegorical interpretations as found in Tib. Cl. Donatus (early 5th century, rediscovered in the 15th century) and Fulgentius (6th century), and that of the grammatical tradition, of which the most well-known exponent is Servius (4th century). These two traditions

⁷² Kallendorf (1989), *passim*.

⁷³ See Knauer (1964).

⁷⁴ See for example Tarrant (1997), 58-59.

demarcate two major approaches to commenting on the *Aeneid* that can be discerned from classical antiquity onwards up into the early modern period.⁷⁵ The medieval commentary of Bernardus Silvestris (12th century) and the early modern one by Landino (1487/8) can, for example, be seen as representing the rhetorical-allegorical focus of interpretation.⁷⁶ Throughout time the ‘Servian’ tradition – i.e., a method of commenting focused on matters of grammar (in the classical sense, thus encompassing the tasks of the grammarian, such as the explanation of *realia*) – has been far more substantial, but the influence of the rhetorical-allegorical type of commentaries has been great nonetheless. Sometimes both traditions intersect, leading to interesting combinations of allegorical readings combined with grammatical and historical-mythological explanation.

I will now briefly provide a more detailed overview of the commentary tradition on the *Aeneid* in classical antiquity. The list of the following works shows how the study of Virgil’s poetry started almost immediately with its publication: the earliest commentaries on his works were those by Quintus Caecilius Epirota (1st B.C.), a treatise by Julius Hyginus (64 BC-17 AD), the *Contra obtrectatores Vergilii* by Quintus Asconius Pedianus (3-88 AD), the *commentaria Aeneidos* by Lucius Annaeus Cornutus (20-68 AD), a work by Marcus Valerius Probus (35-100 AD), a commentary by Velius Longus (2nd century AD) and *Aspri in Vergilium commentarios* by Aemilius Asper (2nd – 3rd century AD). In the title of some of these early works the word *commentarium* (or *commentarius*, or *commentum*) is used in the sense of a text reflecting on another work (cf. the works by Cornutus and Asper).⁷⁷ This use of the word is also found in a remark by Gellius on grammarians who produced commentaries on the works of Virgil: ‘Some grammarians of an earlier time, men by no means without learning and repute, who wrote commentaries on Virgil, and among them Annaeus Cornutus (...).’⁷⁸ The treatise by Hyginus is mentioned by Suetonius, but the exact type of work remains unclear.⁷⁹

From the viewpoint of the tradition of Homeric scholarship, the almost immediate scholarly attention devoted to Virgil’s works, and especially his epic, can be easily explained, since the *Aeneid* could be – and often was – seen as the

⁷⁵ See for example Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008), 626.

⁷⁶ See Buck (1975), 17 and Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008), 625-626. For Landino, see my chapter 2.

⁷⁷ See also Céard in Lafond & Stegmann (1981), 102-104 and Ramming in Pade (2005), 77-85.

⁷⁸ *Nonnulli grammatici aetatis superioris, in quibus est Cornutus Annaeus, haut sane indocti neque ignobiles, qui commentaria in Vergilium composuerunt (...).* (Gell., 2.6.1). Translation by Rolfe (1927).

⁷⁹ Aulus Gellius tells us that Hyginus’ commentary was called *Commentaria in Vergilium* or *Libri de Vergilio*. See Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008), 626.

fulfillment of the Homeric poems.⁸⁰ The tradition of explaining and commenting upon Homer, already firmly established, could thus serve as a point of departure and as a model for the study of the works of Virgil. This also had its consequences in terms of authority: the weight and importance of the Homeric epics, reflected by the extensive Homeric scholarship, was now conferred upon Virgil's works by incorporating them in the same venerable scholarly tradition of commentary. This was further enhanced by the fact that already shortly after the death of Virgil (19 B.C.), the *Aeneid* was incorporated in the educational system of ancient Rome,⁸¹ and grammarians considered him an important authority on the Latin language and cited his poetry frequently.⁸² As will be discussed in the rest of this chapter, and in fact will become apparent from the more detailed case-studies in the other chapters of this study, these two developments – the incorporation in an authoritative tradition and the strong link with education – would remain characteristic of the further reception and study of the *Aeneid* up into early modern times.

In the late Roman period (4th/5th century) influential commentaries were written. First, there were the *commentarii in Virgilium* by Aelius Donatus (4th century), a work which is unfortunately almost completely lost, but partly preserved in the work of his pupil Servius (4th century, more on him below). In the early 5th century the *Interpretationes Vergilianae* (12 books) by Tiberius Claudius Donatus appeared, followed by the *Partitiones duodecim versuum Aeneidos principalium*⁸³ by the famous grammarian Priscianus Caesariensis (early 6th century). One of the most influential allegorical commentaries, that by Fabius Planciades Fulgentius, the *Expositio Virgilianae continentiae*, in which the first half of the *Aeneid* is interpreted as an allegory of the moral growth of the soul,⁸⁴ was published in the late 5th, early 6th century. The commentary by Aelius Donatus and the grammatical exercises by Priscian firmly stood in the grammatical commentary tradition.⁸⁵ Tib. Cl. Donatus' work, however, is more of a study of the rhetorical continuity of the *Aeneid*. This explains why his *Interpretationes Vergilianae* have had little influence on later grammatical commentaries.⁸⁶ This type of commentary, however, – offering a discussion of the rhetoric of the work in the form of a paraphrase – became very

⁸⁰ See Kennedy (1997, 151) on the relation of the *Aeneid* to the Homeric poems.

⁸¹ Williams (1969), 120.

⁸² Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008), xxxv.

⁸³ This work consists of grammatical exercises on the first line of each of the twelve books of the *Aeneid*.

⁸⁴ Burrow (1997), 79.

⁸⁵ Copeland & Sluiter (2009), 85, 170.

⁸⁶ Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008), 625.

common in 16th- and 17th-century school editions of the *Aeneid*, because of the renewed early modern emphasis on rhetoric, and the traditional connection between rhetoric and morality.⁸⁷

Servius' commentary on the *Aeneid* (4th century)⁸⁸ stood at the end of a long tradition of commentaries on Virgil and in fact relies to a large extent on the fruits of earlier Virgilian scholars (especially those of Aelius Donatus, who is only named by Servius when he disagrees with him).⁸⁹ The Greek origin of the tradition of writing commentaries on epic⁹⁰ is visible in Servius' methodology of commenting: the text is generally seen as raising a problem (*quaestio*) to which a solution is offered.⁹¹ Servius' commentary is generally focused on the explanation of the meaning of words and of difficult syntax. It also includes observations on rhetorical figures and narrative techniques. Fowler has pointed out that Servius' lemmata on the traditional *formulae* of Roman law and religion are of special interest in view of the rise of Christianity, because Servius seems to explain them in such a way that no *impietas* would arise from it.⁹² More in general, Virgilian scholarship has been relatively successful in bringing the interpretation of the works of Virgil in accordance with Christian doctrine.⁹³

6.2 The Middle Ages

During the medieval period, in spite of the allegorical commentaries that were written, the grammatical emphasis and interest in explaining matters of ancient culture from the Servian tradition retained its prominent position. This can for example be seen in the commentary attributed to Anselm of Laon (died 1117), in which the historical context for the events in the *Aeneid* is provided by referring to episodes from Biblical history.⁹⁴

The most important allegorical commentator of the medieval era is Bernardus Silvestris (12th century). A commentary on the first six books of the *Aeneid*, called

⁸⁷ This connection was not an early modern invention, but in fact consistent with classical approaches to poetry, especially in the case of Virgil. See for instance Kallendorf (1989), 9-13.

⁸⁸ The work is referred to by Priscian as *Servius in commento Virgilii* (Prisc. in G.L. 2, 233, 14) and 'Servius in commentario Aeneidos' (Prisc. in G.L. 2, 515, 23).

⁸⁹ Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008), 630; Kaster (1988), 170. See Kaster (1988), 169-197 for Servius as a grammarian.

⁹⁰ Fowler (1997), 73.

⁹¹ Fowler (1997), 74.

⁹² Fowler (1997), 74.

⁹³ Tarrant (1997), 70.

⁹⁴ Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008), 718.

the *Commentum*, is attributed to him. Bernardus, and other allegorical commentators of the time, regarded the text of the *Aeneid* as a veil behind which wisdom was hidden. This wisdom was opened up by the commentators when they provided large lemmata discussing, for example, cosmology or topics from the natural sciences pertaining to key elements from the main text.⁹⁵ The influence of Fulgentius' work is clearly visible in that in Bernardus' commentary the same structure is employed: the first six books of the *Aeneid* are seen as a representation of the stages in human life. An additional, innovative element in this frame of interpretation is that Bernardus read many elements from the *Aeneid* as referring to a conflict between body and soul.⁹⁶

In the Carolingian period many glosses, mostly lexical (providing synonyms in Latin or old high-German) were written on Virgil, who remained a central author in education.⁹⁷ The relationship between Virgil and Christianity remained multifaceted: he was often not seen as having truly been a Christian, but as a pagan poet who (unconsciously) prefigured the Christian era.⁹⁸ There are also some negative interpretations of the *Aeneid* – for example those in which the narrative of the work was seen as an eulogy of imperial power, unsuitable for Christians.⁹⁹ But generally it was not difficult to find points of convergence between the content of the *Aeneid* and Christian doctrine. This was often done in the footsteps of a tradition beginning in antiquity, in which Virgil was considered to be a source of knowledge and wisdom.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008), 721.

⁹⁶ Kallendorf (1989), 6.

⁹⁷ Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008), 704-705.

⁹⁸ Kallendorf (1989), 7: 'Given his central position in the grammatical instruction of the Middle Ages, and given the treasure house of philosophical truth that allegory could uncover in his poetry, Virgil came to mind immediately to the medieval Christian meditating on Augustan Rome. But if the Roman Empire was established as part of God's plan for human history, and if Virgil was the poet of that empire, then his poetry must be compatible with this same vision. Thus Virgil became a prophet who could at least see through the glass darkly into Christian history.'

⁹⁹ Burrow (1997), 80.

¹⁰⁰ Kallendorf (1989, 4) points out that the Neoplatonic practice of reading the works of Homer in an allegorical way opened up the possibility of doing the same for Virgil, albeit from a Christian perspective. For Virgil's position as a source of wisdom even for Christian scholars, see Comparetti (1993), 24.

6.3 Virgil in Early Modern Education

The early modern Virgilian commentary was fundamentally connected to an educational setting.¹⁰¹ Virgil was one of the pivotal figures in the revival of interest in the writers of the classical era that characterizes the beginning of the early modern period.¹⁰² The famous Italian scholar and teacher Battista Guarino (1434-1513), for example, writes in his *De ordine docendi et discendi* (1459) that the poetry of Virgil should be learned by heart. Virgil was studied in Renaissance schools by students in order to learn poetry and often also to serve as an example of morality.¹⁰³ There are however no indications that the composition of poetry had a regular place in the curriculum.¹⁰⁴ The connection between Latin literature and morality should not be seen as a feature that was specifically humanist: in the medieval school program, too, learning was concerned with civic and moral goals, and we can even trace this connection back to classical antiquity.¹⁰⁵ The same continuity applies to the corpus of authors read in schools and universities: Cicero, Virgil, Horace and other canonical authors retained their prominent position.¹⁰⁶ Occasionally the *Aeneid* had a privileged position in education because of its ideological overtones.¹⁰⁷

The lay-out of commentaries can be telling in establishing the general approach to reading: the fragmentation of text and commentary characteristic of commentaries is compatible with theories of education in the Renaissance according to which students had to excerpt relevant information from commentaries and write that information down into their notebooks (see my

¹⁰¹ See for example Kallendorf (2015), 59-69.

¹⁰² Grendler (1989), 240.

¹⁰³ Grendler (1989), 235; Kallendorf (1999b), 24.

¹⁰⁴ Grendler (1989), 243-244; this becomes also clear from the *regulae professoris rhetoricae* in the Jesuit *Ratio studiorum* from 1599: *Gradus huius scholae non facile certis quibusdam terminis definiri potest; ad perfectam enim eloquentiam informat, quae duas facultates maximas, oratoriam et poeticam comprehendit (ex his autem duabus primae semper partes oratoriae tribuantur), nec utilitati solum servit, sed etiam ornatui indulget* ['The level of this class cannot easily be established with some sort of level; in fact, it instructs to perfect eloquence, which comprises of two essential faculties, oratory and poetics (but among those two, one always gives the first place to oratory)']. See Demoustier & Julie (1997), 165.

¹⁰⁵ Black (1991), 138-139.

¹⁰⁶ Leonhardt (2008), 107.

¹⁰⁷ As, for example, in Venice, where the Venetians saw their city as the new Rome and themselves as the descendants of Aeneas, and where Virgil became part of the iconography of the state. See Kallendorf (1999b), 26-30.

chapter 5 for more on Renaissance reading).¹⁰⁸ The paraphrases of the text, which are often found in commentaries, played an important role in teaching: normally the teacher would read, paraphrase and explain a text in great detail, and students would write down his remarks.¹⁰⁹ This practice of paraphrasing found its origin in antiquity, as can be seen for example in the commentary by Servius. In offering a paraphrase of a part of a text to his students, a Renaissance teacher would include many synonyms to enhance the understanding of the text and increase the students' *copia verborum*. He would then move on to the explanation of matters of grammar, rhetoric and philology, and finally to the elements from cultural history present in the text.¹¹⁰ For the position of the language sciences in the Virgilian commentary, see chapter 2.

7. The Latin Renaissance Virgil Commentary: *Status Quaestionis*

As I have shown in the previous sections, Virgil had a prominent place in Renaissance scholarship and education. In turn early modern Virgilian commentaries played an important role in the reading and studying of Virgil's texts. In view of this, it is remarkable that the early modern commentary as a genre until recently was not studied extensively.¹¹¹ This is especially surprising in view of the attention in Renaissance studies to the management of knowledge in the early modern period (as I have discussed in section 3). As can be read from early modern treatises on education, the role of books as crucial keepers of (collective) memory was readily recognized. This appears for example for the following passage in "The character and studies befitting a free-born youth" by the Italian writer Pier Paolo Vergerio (1370-1444):

¹⁰⁸ Kallendorf (1999b), 71.

¹⁰⁹ Grendler (1989), 244.

¹¹⁰ Grendler (1989), 244-250.

¹¹¹ This has also been noted by other scholars, such as Stadeler (2015, 7-8) and Kallendorf (1999b, 37 & 37n.10), who notes the lack of enthusiasm in modern scholarship for Renaissance commentaries in general, and Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008, xxii): 'The vast body of commentaries and translations will become truly navigable only once the relevant entry in the *Catalogus translationum et commentariorum* has been published. For the time being, the understandable and at the same time paradoxical fact remains that the poet who was the most widely read in the millennium and a half under examination in this anthology has not received ... attention proportionate to his importance: if the manuscripts of Virgil's poems themselves are a daunting forest, then the glosses, commentaries, and other interpretation that his poetry has received deserve to be called a primordial jungle. The quantity of material is overwhelming, but it is considerably less daunting than the complexities entailed in sorting it, since despite the fundamental conservatism the commentary traditions proliferate and interact constantly.'

Vergerio, *The character and studies befitting a free-born youth*

‘So, since our memory cannot hold everything and indeed retains very little, scarcely enough for particular purposes, books, in my view, should be acquired and preserved as a kind of second memory. For letters and books constitute a fixed record of things and are the communal repository of all things knowable.’¹¹²

In recent years, important studies have appeared that have contributed a lot to our further understanding of the early modern Virgilian commentary. In the first place, much important work has been done on the early modern reception of Virgil and the Virgilian commentary by Craig Kallendorf.¹¹³ His *A bibliography of the early printed editions of Virgil* is the place to start for anyone studying the intellectual history of Virgil in the early modern era, since this work for the first time presents an overview of early modern editions of the works of Virgil.¹¹⁴ Furthermore he has published several monographs on topics such as the question of how the material form in which Virgil’s poetry was handed down contributed to the (early modern) reception of his poems;¹¹⁵ pessimistic readings of the *Aeneid* in early modern culture;¹¹⁶ readers of Virgil in the area around Venice during the late Renaissance;¹¹⁷ and Virgil and epideictic rhetoric in the Renaissance.¹¹⁸ In addition, he has published many articles on Virgil in the Renaissance, especially on Cristoforo Landino’s commentary on the *Aeneid*¹¹⁹ and on early modern marginalia on the works of Virgil.¹²⁰ A selection of his articles was published as Kallendorf (2007b).

One of the most recent, comprehensive works on Virgil in the Renaissance is Wilson-Okamura (2010), *Virgil in the Renaissance*. Though this book is not primarily

¹¹² Translation by Kallendorf (2002). The Latin text (also from Kallendorf (2002)) reads: *Eos igitur (quoniam nostra memoria non est omnium capax ac paucorum quidem tenax et vix ad singula sufficit) secundae memoriae loco habendos asservandosque censeo. Nam sunt litterae quidem ac libri certa rerum memoria et scibulum omnium communis apotheca.*

¹¹³ Apart from the works mentioned here, a selection of his articles on Virgil was published in Kallendorf (2007b).

¹¹⁴ Kallendorf (2012).

¹¹⁵ Kallendorf (2015), *The Protean Virgil*.

¹¹⁶ Kallendorf (2007a), *The Other Virgil*.

¹¹⁷ Kallendorf (1999b), *Virgil and the Myth of Venice*. See also Kallendorf (1993), *Virgil*.

¹¹⁸ Kallendorf (1989), *In Praise of Aeneas*.

¹¹⁹ E.g. Kallendorf (1983) and (1995).

¹²⁰ E.g. Kallendorf (2013), (2005) and Brown & Kallendorf (1987).

about early modern commentaries (but offers a discussion of reader's responses to aspects of Virgil's works in general and the image of Virgil as a poet), the importance of the early modern Virgilian commentary is not forgotten. This appears for example from the epilogue in which the early modern Virgilian commentary is briefly characterized: "I began reading the old commentaries on Virgil because I wanted to know what his text *meant* in the Renaissance, especially to poets. But the old commentators are not always interested in meaning. They will provide allegory, but more often they will offer information: information about science, about history, geography, and especially information about language. Much of this is extremely basic."¹²¹ As I have discussed in sections 3 and 4, precisely (the organization of) these bits of information in early modern Virgil commentaries will be the object of study of this dissertation.¹²²

In recent years, attention to the early modern commentary in general has increased, which shows itself especially in the appearance of several edited volumes. I will mention some of the more recent works. Enenkel (2014), *Transformations of the Classics via Early Modern Commentaries* presents a collection of essays on early modern commentaries in the fields of poetry (especially on Horace), history and moral philosophy, and natural history and geography. Enenkel & Nellen (2013), *Neo-Latin Commentaries and the Management of Knowledge in the Late Middle Ages and the Early modern Period (1400-1700)* is an edited volume that presents a collection of essays on commentaries in the fields of history, geography, poetry, drama, law and biblical studies. It contains an introduction by Enenkel on management of knowledge in Neo-Latin Commentaries. Häfner & Völkel (2006), *Der Kommentar in der Frühen Neuzeit* is one of the more recent edited volumes on early modern commentaries. The edited volume *On Renaissance Commentaries* (Pade (2005)) contains a selection of essays on early modern commentaries, including one by Kallendorf on reader-annotations in editions of Virgil. Gibson &

¹²¹ Wilson-Okamura (2010), 250.

¹²² Other studies on the Virgilian commentary in the early modern era include Berniz Alegre (2007) (on the commentary of Juan Luis de la Cerda), Haugen (1999) (on the lectures of a 16th-century French Jesuit on Virgil), Mack (1998) (on Ramus' commentary on the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*), Cauchi (1991) (on the 16th-century commentary by John Harrington), Lord (1996) (on the fourteenth-century commentaries of Petrarch, Trevetm, Zonus de Magnali and Benevenuto da Imola), Musico (1990) (on Poliziano's commentary on the *Georgics*), Lord (1987) (on Zonus de Magnali), Lunelli (1983) (on the commentary of Pomponio Leto), Leach (1982) (on illustration as interpretation), Margolin (1978) (on Erasmus as reader and interpreter of Virgil), Lentzen (1971) (on Cristoforo Landino), Padoan (1960) (on the reception of Bernardus Silvestris' commentary), Malaman (1940) (on the annotations of Piero Valeriano Bolzani), Wolf (1919) (on Cristoforo Landino), and Comparetti (1872) (on Virgil in the (late) medieval era).

Shuttleworth Kraus (2002), *The Classical Commentary* includes among others an introduction by Shuttleworth Kraus on the relation between commentary and reading, and an essay by Laird on the commentary of Juan Luis de la Cerda. Goulet-Cazé (2000), *Le commentaire entre tradition et innovation* presents an edited volume with essays on classical, Byzantine and medieval commentaries from various fields of study (biblical commentaries, scientific and philosophical commentaries). Most (1999), *Commentaries – Kommentare* is an edited volume that also presents several essays on religious, scientific and philosophical commentaries, not only from the classical world, but also from the Islamic and Eastern tradition, also including essays on post-classical commentary. Mathieu-Castellani & Plaisance (1990) presents a volume with several theoretical essays (especially the one by Stierle on the genre of the commentary) as well as case-studies on early modern (14th-16th century) commentaries from France and Italy. The edited volume by Buck & Herding (1975) appears to have been one of the first attempts to come to a more coherent picture of the early modern (literary) commentary. Knauer (1964) contains a list of Virgilian commentaries that includes several important early modern ones. The introductory first chapter of his study ('Einleitung') includes short discussion of and references to the early modern commentaries of Germanus and De la Cerda.

Apart from the volumes mentioned before, several monographs have been published that focus on the early modern commentary. Stadeler (2015) studies the reception of Horace in the Renaissance through the commentaries of Landino and Lambin. Berlincourt (2013) presents a discussion of the early modern (and modern) commentary tradition on Statius' *Thebaid*. Skoie (2002), *Reading Sulpicia. Commentaries 1475-1990*, is one of the few more recent works of scholarship in which the commentary tradition on one author is studied. It offers the study of seven commentaries on the *Corpus Tibullianum* from the view point of reader-response theory. Moss (1998b), *Latin commentaries on Ovid from the Renaissance*, consists of a selection of translated passages from early modern commentaries on Ovid, among them the commentary on the *Metamorphoses* by Jacobus Pontanus, who also published a commentary on the *Aeneid*.¹²³

¹²³ Apart from the studies mentioned here, one could also consult Osmond (2005) on Valla's commentary on Sallust's *Bellum Catalinae*, McKinley (2001) on medieval and early modern commentaries on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Moss (1998a) on 16th-century commentaries on Horace, Parker (1992) on commentaries on Dante, Lo Monaco (1991) on Poliziano's commentary on Ovid's *Fasti*, Grafton (1985a) on early modern commentaries, Martinelli & Ricciardi (1985) on Poliziano's commentary on Persius, Céard (1981)

8. Methodological Considerations

In this section I will briefly go into several points of methodology that lay at the basis of the analysis of early modern *Aeneid*-commentaries in this study. In section 2.1 of this chapter I have already discussed the issue of the commentary as a genre and the relation between commentary and source text. In this section I will first make some remarks on the way in which in this study commentaries are related to their intellectual and social context. Second, I will discuss some theoretical considerations on the relation between commentaries and their readers. Third, I will make some notes on the role of the commentary in (the formation of) tradition and cultural memory. Finally, I will make a remark on the way in which I have carried out textual analysis in this study.

In this study, early modern Virgilian commentaries are approached as phenomena that are part of intellectual history. This means that these are related to the social and intellectual context in which they were produced and in which they were read. In this study, this takes the form of an approach that consists of case-studies of aspects of the early modern *Aeneid*-commentary, guided by a question from the field of Renaissance studies (see section 4.1). In this way, various aspects of early modern learning and scholarship – e.g. the role of the classical tradition; the relation between scholarship and science; interaction between commentaries and their readers – will be discussed in relation to these commentaries. In combination, these case studies – each presenting an analysis of a facet of early modern Virgilian learning and scholarship – will contribute to formulating an answer to the broader question that lies at the heart of this current study: the early modern *Aeneid*-commentary as a form of knowledge organization, in the context of the many changes taking place in early modern scholarship. This kind of approach is in fact in part consistent with some of the traits of New Historicism (which is in itself more a collection of practices than a school or method).¹²⁴ In New Historicism too – which emerged in the field of Renaissance studies –, literature is studied within its historical and social context, focusing on the relationship between texts and the cultural system in which they were written. New Historicist scholarship often starts from the analysis of an anecdote (which, as Greenblatt called it,

on the (early modern) commentary as a genre, Casella (1975) on Beroaldo as a humanist commentator, and Krautter (1971) on Beroaldo's commentary on Apuleius.

¹²⁴ Payne (2005), 3.

provide “a touch of the real”¹²⁵, which is then used as a starting point for the analysis of more general (established) ideas or phenomena.

A particular form of context for the study of commentaries is the audience of readers. In chapter 5 of this study I will discuss the way in which early modern *Aeneid*-commentaries were read by early modern readers with the help of hand-written annotations in printed editions of early modern *Aeneid*-commentaries. The topic of commentaries and their readers is however also of relevance to the other chapters of this book; I will therefore make some general theoretical remarks on this relationship.

The relation between readers and commentaries is a complex one, since the commentator himself is in some ways also a reader, although we should not unproblematically read the comments that are provided by the commentator as his personal reading of the source text.¹²⁶ This kind of view would ignore the possible particular aims of the commentator in writing his work for a certain audience of readers. Moreover, certainly in the case of the Virgilian commentary, it would completely pass over the cultural tradition of which a text and its commentator were also part. Already several decades ago, Stanley Fish (1976) formulated his notion of ‘interpretative communities’. With the help of this notion, both stability and radical changes in the interpretation by readers of certain texts can be explained from their partaking in (different) communities that share certain norms and practices of interpretation. This model presents a good starting-point for thinking about the changes that occur in the genre of the commentary, especially for those changes that come about with the arrival of a different kind of reading of classical texts in the early modern era. The emergence of new interpretative communities – in this specific case the various circles of early modern scholars often involved in studying classical texts from a humanist perspective – brings about new practices of interpreting and commenting. In fact, one could say that this rise of new interpretative communities results in the formation of new discursive practices (to use the terminology of Foucault). These communities and

¹²⁵ See for example Greenblatt (1997), 22: “I wanted to recover in my literary criticism a confident conviction of reality, without giving up the power of literature to sidestep or evade the quotidian and without giving up a minimally sophisticated understanding that any text depends upon the absence of the bodies and voices that it represents. I wanted the touch of the real in the way that in an earlier period people wanted the touch of the transcendent.”

¹²⁶ For this reason I do not completely agree with the following view of Skoie (2002, 16), who writes: “Commentaries on classical texts, I will argue, can be seen as this kind of documentation of ‘modes of reading’, as a commentary in many ways is a written version of what goes on in a particular readers’ mind when reading.”

practices are also linked to issues of authority: as is stressed by Foucault, discursive practices exert control over the formulation of discourse, and the commentary is one of these practices *par excellence*.¹²⁷ While for the aims of this study Foucault's model in which discursive practices are connected to the exertion of power by institutions is somewhat less relevant,¹²⁸ this study starts from the presumption that commentary practices are fundamentally linked to the intellectual traditions and practices of the scholarly environment in which the commentary was conceived.

As I have discussed in section 3, one of the key characteristics of learning and scholarship in the early modern period is the vastly increasing amount of information that became available and the revolution in the possibilities for the dispersion of that information with the invention of the printing press. The type of reference works resulting from these two developments give useful indications for the (perceived) needs of early modern readership.¹²⁹ In the case of early modern Latin commentaries, it is remarkable, giving the huge number of lemmata written on a literary work such as the *Aeneid*, that more general considerations, let alone overall interpretations of the work, are seldom found. This points to a discontinuous mode of reading which was guided not so much by the course of events of the main narrative— although many commentaries provide short summaries of the course of events – but by the careful study of individual parts of the work.¹³⁰ The atomization of the study of a literary work and the meticulous mode of study that goes hand-in-hand with it, all too often resulted in lemmata that discuss at surprising length the most detailed subject matter. The result of this is that the commentary turns into a work of reference, like a dictionary or an encyclopedia, in which various fields of knowledge are in fact structured according to the organizational principle of the work of literature that the commentary accompanies. Further indications of this use of the work are found in the marginal pointers that are often printed next to the text of the commentary. The early

¹²⁷ See Foucault (1970), 23-32. Hook (2001, 526) nicely sums up Foucault's conceptualization of commentary as follows: 'In terms of the commentary, Foucault is speaking of the discourses based upon the major foundational narratives of a society, and the interchange between these primary (foundational religious, juridical, or scientific texts) and secondary cultural texts (commentaries). It is due to the 'top-heaviness' of primary texts that they will remain permanent, yet ever capable of being brought up to date, revisited for hidden or multiple meanings.'

¹²⁸ As is remarked by Hook (2001, 522-523), one of Foucault's main concerns is to link the analysis of discourse to political action.

¹²⁹ Blair (2003), 12.

¹³⁰ See for example Kallendorf (2013), 320-321.

modern reader envisaged by many a commentator seems thus to have been primarily interested in retrieving the manifold bits of information that were contained in and organized with the help of the literary text. One can easily imagine how this could have worked out in an educational setting, where grammar, rhetoric, poetical imitation and cultural and historical facts could all conveniently be taught with the help of central classical texts like the *Aeneid*. And also in a setting of scholarly study, this kind of knowledge organization seems to be appropriate to the learned practice of compiling and re-organizing information from a multitude of sources.¹³¹ In both settings, this kind of knowledge organization facilitated the kind of productive reading through writing that was distinctive for this period, both for students and scholars.¹³² The atomization and discontinuity that characterizes the presentation of knowledge in early modern commentaries on the *Aeneid* was not a typical early modern phenomenon, as appears from medieval and classical commentaries and from the way education was traditionally organized. In fact, the education offered by grammarians had been characterized by this 'narrow, fragmented schooling' from antiquity onwards.¹³³ Servius' commentary combines language instruction, of a *living* language, with the teaching of *realia* and literary exegesis.¹³⁴ For much of the early modern period, the teaching practices which had been established in the medieval era and which in turn were often based on classical models and methods like those offered by Servius, continued to form the basis for education.¹³⁵ And while many Virgilian commentaries were still modeled after Servius' example, the language situation had changed drastically: Latin became a language that was taught only by non-native speakers to non-native speakers.¹³⁶ This particular feature in combination with the humanists' focus on *classical* Latin is sometimes held to be the cause of development of a more distanced, more historicizing approach to

¹³¹ As Black (2001, 325-330) shows in a short case study of the glossing of Boethius' *De consolazione*, teachers could act as intermediaries between the commentary tradition and classroom teaching by selecting relevant material from the most important commentaries, just as many early modern commentators had selected, reorganized, and re-used material from older sources themselves.

¹³² Jackson (2001), 50. I will further discuss this in chapter 5 of this dissertation.

¹³³ The quotation is taken from Kaster (1988, 13), who in the introduction to his work (9-14) offers a harsh condemnation of this kind of education.

¹³⁴ See Kaster (1988, ch.5) for a discussion of how Servius' commentary was related to classroom instruction.

¹³⁵ Black (2001), 22, 366-367; Celenza (2004), 144-145.

¹³⁶ This is also stressed by Black (2001, 25).

classical texts in the early modern period.¹³⁷ On the other hand, moralizing readings of the works of Virgil remained influential, as commentators frequently discuss explicitly and at length the moral aspects of the work. Virgil's epic of course had a special position, being written by one of the most venerated classical authors in the highest literary genre, and thus being a paragon of morality and virtue by itself. As Kallendorf (2005 & 2013) has shown, this moralizing inclination in teaching is also visible in classroom notes of the early modern teaching of Virgil. The reading of Virgil will be further discussed in chapter 5 of this study.

As I already mentioned in section 7, in the early modern period printed books were to a certain extent perceived as a form of externalized memory, offering access to vast amounts of knowledge that no-one could memorize on their own. Among the first modern scholars who have called attention to the mnemonic function of texts for a society as a whole are Jan and Aleida Assmann. They have been prominent theorizers of cultural memory in recent years. In discussing commentaries, they focus on the epistemological role of these works. According to them, commentaries can only emerge when 'fundierende Texte' ('foundational texts': texts that have importance for a society as examples or sources of morality) have been transformed into 'festgelegte Texte' ('established texts': codification). According to this model, commentaries are always connected to foundational, established texts in a society, or, in other words, canonical texts.¹³⁸ Through this process the foundational text becomes part of a tradition of exegesis, in which an interpreter (e.g. a commentator) stands between the text and the reader.¹³⁹ The authority of a commentator is fundamentally linked to the main (foundational) text on which he offers comments.¹⁴⁰ Many a commentator therefore explicitly stresses the importance of the work he is writing on, for example in a preface to the reader, as will appear from the case studies of this study.

As will appear from the case studies in the subsequent chapters of this study, early modern commentaries can be notoriously complex, difficult works to work with. The knowledge presented in them is part of a tremendous web of information, consisting of references to classical texts (explicit or implicit), quotations taken from other commentators (again, explicit or implicit), the

¹³⁷ See my chapter 3 for an elaborate discussion of this (supposed) development. See also Celenza (2004), 145.

¹³⁸ Assmann & Gladigow (1995), 11: 'Der kanonische Text lässt sich definieren als die Komplexion dieser Merkmale des Fundierenden und des Festgelegten. Erst wenn der fundierende Text festgelegt wird, entsteht der kanonische Text und mit ihm der Kommentar.'

¹³⁹ Assmann & Gladigow (1995), 11.

¹⁴⁰ Sluiter (1998), 12.

discussion of concepts nowadays long forgotten, and references to works of scholarship that have sunk into oblivion. In this book, I have tried to untangle the web of knowledge that underlies all of this and in fact forms the core of these works. To this end I have traced the various sources of information used by the commentator and I have tried to establish in what way scholarship in early modern Virgilian commentaries was done. In starting from an analysis of the material itself – sometimes in the form of a study of a small piece of material, “an anecdote” – I have attempted to stay away from preconceived notions and categories.

9. Corpus

For the various chapters of this book I have studied a selection of early modern Latin commentaries on the *Aeneid*. Not all commentaries are discussed in every chapter, and some are only mentioned occasionally. The individual commentaries are introduced where they are first mentioned in a chapter. Nevertheless, a core corpus of texts lies at the foundation of the greater part of this study, which will be briefly introduced in this section. In the case of commentaries that are used in multiple chapters, references are included to the relevant part of this study where general information on the work and the commentator can be found.

In compiling the corpus of texts for this study, I have attempted to come to a selection of Latin commentaries on the *Aeneid* ranging from the late 15th to the late 17th century, thus encompassing (the greater part of) the early modern period. I have only concerned myself with printed editions, manuscript commentaries have therefore been left out. A second criterion for selection was that I wanted to attain a certain geographical distribution, with works coming from some of the most important centers of humanism. Third, I have included some of the commentaries that were most widely used – a criterion that in fact became only truly verifiable in a later stage of the research for this study with the publication of Kallendorf (2012). The six commentaries that form the center of the analysis in this dissertation – those of Landino, Badius, Pontanus, La Cerda, Farnaby and La Rue – were all widely read in early modern Europe. Some of these works stayed in print for a very long time (e.g. Farnaby, whose commentary stayed in print until the late 18th-century)¹⁴¹, others were incorporated readily into later Virgilian scholarship (e.g. La Cerda’s commentary, which is frequently mentioned by later commentators).

¹⁴¹ Kallendorf (2015), 16.

9.1 Core Commentaries

Each entry states the name of the author (marked in bold is the name that will be used in this study to refer to the author in question), followed by, in parentheses, his main place of activity and the year of publication of his Virgil commentary. Between brackets is indicated where in this study further general information about the commentator and his work can be found. Furthermore, the reference to the edition(s) that was used in this study is provided, with between parentheses the identification number of that edition in Kallendorf (2012).

- Cristoforo **Landino** (Florence, 1487/8) [ch. 2]
Virgilius cum commentariis quinque... Venice: Filippo Pinzi 1499 [LW1499/1500.1]
- Jodocus **Badius** Ascensius (Josse Bade; Paris, 1501) [ch. 2]
Aeneis Vergiliana cum Servii Honorati Grammatici huberrimis commentariis ... Cumque familiarissima Iodoci Badii Ascensii elucidatione atque ordinis contextu. ... Paris: Jean Petit, 1501 [LW1500-1501.1-3]
- Jacobus **Pontanus** (Jakob Spannmüller; Augsburg, 1599) [ch. 2]
Symbolarum libri XVII quibus P. Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, Aeneis, ex probatissimis auctoribus illustrantur. Per Iacobum Pontanum de Societate Iesu. Lyon: Jean Phillehotte 1604 [LW1604.4]
- Juan Luis de **la Cerda** (Frankfurt, 1617) [ch. 2, n.123; ch. 3 section 3]
 - *P. Virgilii Maronis Aeneidos libri sex priores argumentis, explicationibus et notis illustrata a Ioanne Ludovico de la Cerda ...* Cologne: Bernhard Wolter 1628 [LW1628.2]
 - *P. Virgilii Maronis Aeneidos sex libri posteriores: argumentis, explicationibus et notis illustrata a Ioanne Ludovico de la Cerda ...* Cologne: Bernhard Wolter 1628 [LW1628.2]
- Thomas **Farnaby** (London, 1634) [ch. 2]
P. Virgilii Maronis Opera: cum notis Thomae Farnabii. London: R. Scott, T. Basset, J. Wright, R. Chiswell 1677 [LW1677.4]
- Charles de **la Rue** (Paris, 1675; 2nd edition in 1682) [ch. 2]
P. Virgilii Maronis opera: Interpretatione et notis illustravit Carolus Ruaeus, Soc. Jesu, iussu Christianissimi regis, ad usum Delphini. London: A. Swalle & T. Childe 1696 [LW1696]

10. Terminology, Orthography, Sources

Although I am well-aware that the early modern era should not unproblematically be equated to the Renaissance, I have used 'early modern' and 'renaissance' indiscriminately in this study, since the topic of research is fundamentally connected to key features of humanistic Renaissance scholarship.

In writing the names of Greek and Roman authors, I have followed what is conventional in classical and renaissance studies, which usually conforms to general usage in the English language (thus 'Horace' and not 'Horatius'). In the case of the names of early modern authors, I have provided the Latin name, unless another form is habitually used in scholarship (so 'Landino' and not 'Landinus').

The orthography of Latin and Greek citations from early modern commentaries has been modernized, that is, adapted to the conventional Latin and Greek orthography in modern classical studies. The same goes for the punctuation of passages from early modern texts. Unless indicated otherwise, classical texts are cited from the Oxford Classical Text editions.

2. A CASE-BASED VIEW ON GRAMMAR, RHETORIC AND POETICAL THEORY IN RENAISSANCE LATIN COMMENTARIES ON VIRGIL'S *AENEID*

Grammaticorum est munus poetas exponere.

'It is the task of the grammarians to explain the poets.'

1. Introduction: Poetry and the Task of the Grammarian

From antiquity onwards, grammarians have played an important role in the explanation and interpretation of key works from classical literature. The citation above is taken from the commentary on the *Aeneid* by the 16th-century Jesuit scholar Jacobus Pontanus, who is paraphrasing Quintilian.¹⁴² The citation attests to the continuing importance of grammatical disciplines for the study of classical literature, and especially poetry in the early modern era.¹⁴³

In this chapter, I will discuss a selection of lemmata from a variety of early modern *Aeneid*-commentaries, discussing topics from the fields of grammar, rhetoric and poetical theory. While, as I have explained in the introduction to this thesis, early modern commentaries have received relatively little attention in modern scholarship, modern scholars have displayed a considerable degree of interest in this type of lemmata.¹⁴⁴ Since the grammatical tradition is an important, if not essential, part of Virgilian studies, writing on early modern *Aeneid*-

¹⁴² Q. 1.6.13-17. The citation is from Pontanus' lemma on V., A. 1.1 *Arma virumque*.

¹⁴³ Pontanus continues the lemma by citing a poem he attributes to Ausonius (modern editions of Ausonius' works no longer include the poem. See *Epigrammata Bobiensia* 47 (ed. Campana & Munari 1955)) in which the profession of the grammarian is mocked: *Ex his igitur verbis Virgilianis perlepidè occasionem sumit Ausonius irridendi cuiusdam Grammatici, cui erat rixosa et querela uxor. Inducit autem ipsum loquentem: 'Arma virumque docens, atque arma virumque peritus / non duxi uxorem, sed magis arma domum. / Namque dies totos, totasque ex ordine noctes / litibus oppugnat meque meumque larem.'* (...). [From these Virgilian verses then, Ausonius very wittily takes the opportunity to mock a certain grammarian, who had a quarrelsome and complaining wife. For he presents him speaking himself: 'Teaching about arms and the man, and skilled in arms and the man / I have not led a wife, but rather weapons to my home. / For all days, and all nights in a row / she beleaguers me and my house with disputes.' (...)]. This parodying of the famous opening words of the *Aeneid* ('Arma virumque') through the voice of a grammarian makes clear how much the meticulous study of poetry was the field of the grammarian. For the Greek epigram that lies at the basis of Ausonius' poem and for some more examples of grammarians as a target of ridicule in antiquity, see Sluiter (1988), 41-65.

¹⁴⁴ See the discussion of secondary literature on early modern (Virgilian) commentaries in chapter 1 of this thesis.

commentaries without providing a discussion of this field of scholarship would result in a distorted picture of these works. The grammatical tradition is a crucial part of early modern learning, but because of the longstanding tradition of the grammatical disciplines it can be difficult to unravel lemmata dealing with this subject matter. More specifically, the reasons for discussing the relation between the grammatical tradition and the early modern *Aeneid*-commentary in the first chapter of this dissertation are the following:

1. a study of the role of the grammatical tradition provides the necessary point of departure for the research questions that underlie the other chapters of this study, in which material is discussed that has received considerably less attention in modern scholarship;
2. in discussing the discontinuities within seeming continuities in the grammatical tradition, I will be able to show how out of the interaction between tradition and context arose different kinds of commentary, representing different approaches to Virgil's epic. This typology will then serve as a frame of reference for the analysis in the other chapters of this study;
3. in paying attention to three fields (grammar, rhetoric and poetical theory) that have always been considered to be part of the competence of the grammarian, I aim to contribute to the modern scholarship on this topic by providing not only a contextualized discussion of these fields, but also by making available a selection of these often highly complex lemmata to a broader group of scholars working in the field of early modern intellectual history, but not necessarily trained in classical philology.¹⁴⁵

In accordance with these aims, I will analyze in this chapter commentary lemmata pertaining to the fields of grammar, rhetoric and poetical theory. I will focus on four early modern Latin Virgil commentaries – those of Landino, Pontanus, Farnaby and La Rue – occasionally making references to other ones (especially in section 5 in which a lemma from the commentary by Pomponio Leto is discussed).¹⁴⁶ The four selected commentaries present different approaches to

¹⁴⁵ This third goal also explains why the footnotes in this chapter occasionally tend to become somewhat excessive in length.

¹⁴⁶ I will cite from the editions mentioned in section 9.1 of chapter 1.

Virgil's epic and will play an important role in the other three analytical chapters of this dissertation.

1.1 Set-up of this Chapter

The discussion in this chapter is organized in eight sections. Following this introductory section, in **section 2** I will discuss the educational context that is invariably linked to the (early modern) *Aeneid*-commentary. Also in that section each of the four aforementioned commentators will be briefly introduced. **Sections 3 to 7** each offer a case study in which one of the three fields of the grammatical tradition is discussed with reference to one or more of the commentaries. This discussion will focus on the large amount of rich lemmata on the very first lines of the *Aeneid* (A. 1.1-11). In the course of my analysis, I will however occasionally also refer to lemmata on other verses of the *Aeneid* to provide some additional contextualization.

In **section 3** I will study discussions of genre, as a case study in poetics. In **section 4**, I will discuss the field of grammar by analyzing lemmata on etymology. Then, I will focus on rhetoric, especially on the influence of the rediscovery of the works of Quintilian and Tib. Cl. Donatus (**sections 5-6**). Finally, I will return to the field of poetics to discuss poetics in the late-15th-century commentary by the Florentine scholar Landino (**section 7**). A brief conclusion will follow (**section 8**).

2. The Educational Context of the *Aeneid*-commentary

2.1 Cristoforo Landino: the Allegorical Commentary

The Florentine humanist Cristoforo Landino (1425-1498), poet, teacher at the Florentine studio, and author of the famous *Disputationes Camaldulenses* (c. 1472), published a commentary on the *Aeneid* in 1487/8. In view of his appointment at the studio, Landino had to lecture on many ancient authors, such as Cicero, Vergil, Horace, Juvenal and Persius, but also on later authors like Petrarch and Dante.¹⁴⁷ In his *prolusio* (prefatory oration) of 1462 – called *Praefatio in Virgilio* – Landino announced that he would lecture on Virgil the coming academic year (1462-63).¹⁴⁸ A manuscript of these lectures is still extant, enabling a closer look at the teaching of Landino.¹⁴⁹ The text of the manuscript consists of a word-by-word commentary

¹⁴⁷ Rombach (1991), 22.

¹⁴⁸ Field (1978), 17; Cardini (1973), 16; Kallendorf (1983), 520. An edition of the text can be found in Cardini (1974), I.20-28.

¹⁴⁹ See Kallendorf (1983), 520-521.

on the first seven books of the *Aeneid* that is almost three times as long (280 folios) as the amount of commentary on these books in the 1488 commentary.¹⁵⁰ Probably Landino continued his lecturing on the *Aeneid* (books VIII-XII) in the following academic year (1463-64). Landino's teaching at the studio appears to have been firmly rooted in the demands Florentine society had set for the education of its elite (e.g., the teaching of rhetoric for use in public life) and in the Neoplatonic tradition that is so characteristic of Florentine humanism of the second half of the 15th century. Both of these elements are visible in the lemmata from Landino's commentary.

Grammar, rhetoric and poetical theory are domains of knowledge that traditionally were part of an educational context. Many grammars, rhetorical manuals and commentaries were intended for school use, some directed at pupils, some at teachers.¹⁵¹ Landino's *Aeneid*-commentary originated in the context of Landino's teaching at the Florentine studio. The commentary is in many ways the fruit of his educational activities, and, as I will further discuss in section 7, the work is also greatly influenced by Landino's peculiar interpretative model which he had developed in his *Disputationes Camaldulenses*. The field of grammar in a narrow sense – the explanation of grammatical and syntactic rules – plays a minor role in the commentary: only rarely does one encounter lemmata that deal at length with such grammatical issues.¹⁵² This can probably be explained by the fact that the teaching of grammar belonged to an earlier phase in education, and was not part of the curriculum at the university level.¹⁵³ One of the few cases in which Landino discusses an issue of grammar, is at the opening of the work. There he presents a semantic explanation in his lemma on 1.4 *memorem Iunonis ob iram*:

Landino on V., A. 1.4 *memorem Iunonis ob iram*

Multa nomina active passiveque ponuntur. Active dicimus "sis felix, nostrorumque leves, quaecumque, laborem" [V. A. 1.330] id est 'sis propitia', ac 'da felicitatem'.

Passive autem 'Vivite felices', non quod inferant aliis, sed ipsi accipiant. Sic

¹⁵⁰ Field (1978) supposes that the manuscript is a draft of lectures transcribed by a student.

¹⁵¹ Where grammar is concerned, grammatical text books were generally written for use by teachers, not by pupils. Jensen (1990), 57.

¹⁵² When one considers grammar in a broader sense – pertaining to all the tasks of the grammarian, including for example the explanation of matters of culture and history – the field has a much more prominent role in Landino's commentary: he frequently presents a discussion of elements from the *Aeneid* that refers to historical practices from the classical world or to classical mythology.

¹⁵³ This becomes also apparent from Landino's introduction to his commentary on Horace, as discussed by Pieper (2013), 223.

formidolosus, et qui infert et cui infertur formido. Aliter ergo Terentius “Nimis formidulosa es”¹⁵⁴, aliter Sallustius “Semper illis aliena virtus formidulosa est”¹⁵⁵. Sic memor active ponitur ut “dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus” [A. 4.336], passive cum ait Horatius “... sive puer furens // impressit memorem dentibus notam”¹⁵⁶, id est de qua illa meminerit. Sic nunc memorem iram, id est, de qua meminisset Iuno.

Many nouns¹⁵⁷ are used in an active and in a passive sense. In an active sense we say ‘Be thou gracious [*felix*], whoever thou art, and lighten this our burden’,¹⁵⁸ this means ‘be favorable’ and ‘give good fortune’ [*felicitatem*]. In a passive sense however ‘Live happy’ [*felices*], not because they should bring this to others, but that they may get this themselves. Similarly, ‘*formidolosus*’ is both he who brings and he who receives fear. Thus in one way Terence, ‘You are too fearful [*formidulosa*]’, and in another way Sallust ‘The merit of others always causes them fear [*formidulosa*]’. In the same way ‘*memor*’ is used actively as in ‘While I have memory of myself, and while breath still sways these limbs’, and passive when Horace says ‘... or if a passionate young man leaves you a mark to be remembered with his teeth’, <i.e.> about which she will remember. So now ‘*memorem iram*’, that is, anger about which Iuno had remembered.

In this lemma, Landino mentions the possibility in Latin for the same adjectives to be used either in an active or passive sense. This is illustrated by a few examples and references to the classical authors Terence, Sallust and Horace (drama, prose and poetry), and to the *Aeneid* itself. Interestingly, Landino interprets *memorem* in Horace and in A. 1.4 as passive (*de qua meminisset Iuno*), while, for example, the Oxford Latin Dictionary gives it an active significance in Virgil (‘showing remembrance’) and a passive one in Horace. Notwithstanding, the explanation in this lemma facilitates the reading of this particular verse by discussing how *memorem* should be read according to Landino, and at the same time gives more insight into a rather advanced aspect of Latin grammar. Moreover, Landino’s

¹⁵⁴ Probably Ter., *Eun.* 756: *Num formidolosus obsecro es, mi homo?* [‘You’re not frightened, for goodness’ sake, my dear fellow?’] (translation by Barsby 2001).

¹⁵⁵ Sal., *Cat.* 7.2.2: *semperque iis aliena virtus formidulosa est.* [‘and always the virtue of someone else inspires fear in them’].

¹⁵⁶ Hor., *Od.* 1.13, 11-12: *... sive puer furens // impressit memorem dente labris notam.* [‘... or a raging boy // leaves on your lips a noticeable mark with his teeth.’].

¹⁵⁷ The *nomina* include both substantives and adjectives.

¹⁵⁸ Translation by Rushton Fairclough (1956).

references to instances of the same phenomenon in other classical texts both offer the interested reader a set of similar examples for further study, teaching, or excerption, while on the other hand they also aid in establishing an image of the commentator as an expert on the subject matter. I will return to the field of grammar in Landino's commentary in section 4 (on etymology) and discuss an example of the more allegorical aspects of his work in section 7.

2.2 Jacobus Pontanus: a Jesuit Commentary

The Virgil commentary by Jacobus Pontanus (Jakob Spanmüller; 1542-1626), was printed in 1599. Pontanus, who taught at Augsburg, was a member of the Jesuit order. Through their involvement in education, the Jesuits had a profound influence on education throughout (Catholic) Europe. Pontanus was a member of one of the commissions that were set up by the Jesuits to evaluate critically the proposals for a revision of the school curriculum in the new 1599 *Ratio studiorum*.¹⁵⁹ In this work the precepts for education by the Jesuit order were laid down.¹⁶⁰ Another instance of his intricate involvement in teaching is his work on poetical theory, the *Poeticae institutiones* (1594). This book presents one of the few Renaissance theoretical works on poetry for use in schools.¹⁶¹ Pontanus wrote several commentaries on the works of classical authors, which were printed in a series called *Symbolarum libri*. Through this series, Pontanus' commentaries on classical authors were used in the Jesuit teaching program in Latin. This program consisted of first three years of study of Latin grammar, then one year of study of the classical writers, and finally one year of the study of rhetoric.¹⁶² Especially Pontanus' editions of Ovid¹⁶³ and Virgil were used in Jesuit schools all over Europe.¹⁶⁴ The command of Latin and the imitation of classical authors took an important place in the program.¹⁶⁵ The teaching practice in the Jesuit classroom is described by Bauer (1998): first, in the *praelectio*, the teacher would give a paraphrase of the content of a passage, then he would offer a translation of it, and finally he would present comments on specific words and examples from other

¹⁵⁹ Blum (1998), 51.

¹⁶⁰ An edition of the *Ratio studiorum* from 1599 can be found in Adrien Demoustier et al., *Ratio studiorum: plan raisonné et institution des études dans la Compagnie de Jésus. Édition bilingue latin-français* (Paris: Belin, 1997).

¹⁶¹ Moss (1996), 220-221.

¹⁶² Demoustier e.a. (1997).

¹⁶³ See for example Moss (1996, 178n.66) on Pontanus' Ovid-commentary.

¹⁶⁴ Moss (1996), 221n.6. Jesuit education was very influential; see also Garin (1976, 205).

¹⁶⁵ Garin (1976), 203. See also Bauer (1998), 235.

authors.¹⁶⁶ On difficult words in the text, the teacher would offer synonyms and he would often present a prose paraphrase of the narrative in poetry to enhance insight in the construction of the sentence.¹⁶⁷ Pontanus' commentary on Virgil is very compatible with this type of teaching: its lemmata facilitate classroom explanation in various ways, e.g., by offering synonyms, by presenting references to other authors, or by offering a prose paraphrase. His monumental commentary on the *Aeneid* was a product of the Jesuit educational program, but also in many ways the outcome of the large number of commentaries that had been published over the course of the 16th century.¹⁶⁸ The work is striking in the extent to which it incorporates material from other commentators and classical authors. This leads to a work that is huge both in its magnitude and in the knowledge it contains. In this respect, Pontanus' commentary seems to be of the same type as that of his fellow-Jesuit Juan Luis de la Cerda, whose work I will discuss in chapter 3 of this thesis.

As I have argued above, Pontanus' commentary should be seen in the context of Jesuit education. Conveniently, Pontanus himself explicitly identifies the intended audience of his commentary and his goals in composing the work in a prefatory letter to the text. This letter is directed at the teachers and students of Virgil.¹⁶⁹ One of the issues discussed by Pontanus in the letter, is why he has undertaken the arduous task of writing yet another commentary on the *Aeneid*, when so many commentaries and other scholarly works were readily available. He explains first how, in writing his own work of scholarship, he has taken into account the works of his precursors,¹⁷⁰ who had written valuable comments based on their own ingenuity, or on the study of old (annotated) editions of the text. Pontanus emphasizes the amount and different kinds of works of scholarship he

¹⁶⁶ Bauer (1998), 236.

¹⁶⁷ Bauer (1998), 237-8. In fact the Jesuit method of teaching is much in line with early modern teaching in general. See Kallendorf (2013), esp. 318-324.

¹⁶⁸ Moss (1996, 178) points out that the method of teaching in Jesuit schools was in fact very much consistent with the set-up of late fifteenth-century Italian classical commentaries.

¹⁶⁹ *De causis et ratione suscepti operis, ad Virgilii studiosos et professores praefatio* ['On the reasons and the method for the undertaking of this work, preface to the students and teachers of Virgil'].

¹⁷⁰ *Observavi, eos qui operam et tempus impenderunt faciendis Variis lectionibus, Adversariis, Miscellaneis, et quibus aliis appellationibus huiusmodi notae commentarios suos inscripserunt ... ut Victorii, Turnebi, Politiani, Rhodigini, Mureti, Lipsii, et huius ordini trecenti, antiquiores, recentiores...* ['I have taken into account those who have expended labor and time in compiling *Variae lectiones*, *Adversaria*, *Miscellanea* and whatever other titles of this kind they have given their commentaries ... such as the innumerable works, ancient and modern, of Victorius [Germanus], Turnebus, Poliziano, Rhodiginus, Muretus, Lipsius, and any number [litt. 'three hundred'] of their colleagues, ancients and moderns'].

has studied in preparing his own commentary. He has consulted works written by authors from different professions, from very different places, with very different goals in studying the works of Virgil.¹⁷¹ In all their variety, he notes, all these works are useful for elucidating Virgil, especially the works of the Latin and Greek historians and poets.¹⁷² Pontanus' commentary shows that his remarks in the prefatory letter are not mere boasting. In fact, the method of excerpting and compilation which he describes are very visible in the commentary, which consists of lemmata often built from numerous paraphrases or citations from the works of other scholars. In this respect Pontanus seemed to have had a preference for the commentators Corrado and Nascimbeno and scholars such as Turnebus and Scaliger. Finally, in the last part of his prefatory letter, Pontanus identifies the intended readership for this kind of commentary:

Pontanus, praefatio

Quapropter, si e tam multis ac multifariis literatissimorum virorum vigiliis has explicationes, illustrationes, comparationes, emendationes arbitrato iudicioque meo decerperem, ac per libros Virgilianis libris dispositione ac numero respondentem, secundum seriem carminum, aptis sectionibus, pro recepto more distributam disponerem, ratus sum me a vobis, quique intra domesticos parietes Maronem lecitatis, quique eundem in illis eruditionis mercatibus pro cathedra discipulis interpretamini, gratiam non modicam initurum. Cum praesertim non raro incassum alibi sperata auxilia, hoc vobis non defutura habeam polliceri.

For that reason, if I gathered according to my own opinion and judgment these explanations, illustrations, comparisons, emendations from so many and so

¹⁷¹ *Notavi item, cum hos ipsos, tum alios, velut aliarum familiarum homines, diversarumque civitatum cives, dissimili scriptionis, sive tractationis genere occupatos, tam sacros, quam civiles, Theologos, Philosophos, Iureconsultos, Medicos, Rhetores, Grammaticos, et quidquid demum appellandi sunt, aliud agentes, Maronianos versus ad probandum, confirmandum, refutandum, ornandum, illustrandum aliquid in medium adducere.* ['I have moreover observed both these ones [aforementioned scholars], and others, like men from different families, and citizens from diverse cities, occupied with dissimilar kinds of writing or treatise, both religious and civil, theologians, philosophers, scholars of law, scholars of medicine, rhetoricians, grammarians, and however they are to be called precisely, who are having different goals, put forward Maro's verses in order to examine, assert, refute, embellish, or illustrate something'].

¹⁷² *Animadverti insuper, ex variis auctoribus, maxime autem ex historicis, et poetis utriusque linguae, ad lucem Virgilianae poësi maiorem adhibendam idonea permulta derivari posse.* ['Moreover, I have noticed that a great many useful things can be derived from the works of various authors, but especially from historians and poets in either languages [Greek and Latin] in order to shed more light on Virgil's poetry.'].

manifold nightly efforts of the most learned men, and arranged them in books corresponding in arrangement and number to the books of Virgil, following the chain of the verses, in fitting portions, distributed in the commonly accepted way, I think that I would win no small gratitude from all you who eagerly read Maro within domestic walls, and all you who teach the same to students professionally in those market halls of erudition. Especially since I promise you that you will not be left without the help that is often hoped for in vain elsewhere.

Pontanus thus intended his information-dense commentary for teachers and for students without a teacher, studying Virgil on their own. The same line of reasoning is found in Badius Ascensius' ¹⁷³ preface to his commentary on the *Aeneid*.¹⁷⁴ Therefore this kind of argumentation could very well be perceived as a traditional argument that could be used by the commentator to defend himself from criticism about the overload of information contained in his commentary. On the other hand, this kind of commentaries may very well have been intended to be bought not only by teachers, but also by students.¹⁷⁵ The most interesting point that emerges from Pontanus' prefatory letter however, is that it makes clear how the massive amount of Virgilian scholarship produced in the past centuries called for a clear restructuring and excerpting of the material. Only in this way could the vast knowledge contained by the Virgilian commentary tradition be made accessible again for those not intimately involved in Virgilian scholarship.

As was pointed out above, one of the traditional classroom activities was for the teacher to provide paraphrases of the poets and to let students practice writing

¹⁷³ Jodocus Badius Ascensius (Josse Bade van Asse; 1462-1535) was printer in Paris. His press was very productive: between 1503 and 1515 alone he published over 700 editions (Renouard 1909, 6). In the commentaries he published, he included lots of material from various older commentaries and classical texts which he combined into a new, more or less coherent commentary. His *Aeneid*-commentary was first printed in February 1501 and became one of the most printed Virgil commentaries in the early modern period (see for example Kallendorf 1999, 37).

¹⁷⁴ In his dedicatory letter to Petrus Apherdianus in the 1501 edition Badius explicitly states how he has conceived his commentary in such a way that it could also be used by students without a teacher: (...) *Hunc autem poetam familiariter exponere constitui ut quibus praeceptorum deest copia habeant ex nobis facilem ad eam viam.* (...) [I have however decided to explain this poet in an accessible way, so that those who lack the ready knowledge of teachers will have easy access to such knowledge from our work].

¹⁷⁵ Kallendorf (1999, 45-49) argues that printers of the sometimes voluminous commentary also had a younger public of readers in mind and that a *folio* format of an edition does not necessarily point to the contrary (against the often heard argument that large editions were not intended for use in schools, because of their size, weight and cost).

paraphrases themselves. At the end of Pontanus' commentary, a short treatise and paraphrases of the first and last three books of the *Aeneid* are attached. In the treatise, Pontanus discusses the usefulness of writing paraphrases on the work of classical poets. The paraphrase was not only prescribed by the Jesuit order, but had always been a traditional part of the grammatical and rhetorical tradition.¹⁷⁶ The form in which it is found in early modern commentaries varies. In Pontanus' commentary the paraphrase takes the form of long prose summaries of (large part of) entire books of the *Aeneid*. In the works of commentators such as Badius and La Rue they form a running prose summary printed next to the lines of the poem, while with Farnaby the paraphrase has taken the form of short (often one-sentence) prose summaries of sections of the *Aeneid*. In his treatise, Pontanus calls the paraphrase 'one of the rhetorical exercises or one of the minor tasks of the orator' (*oratoriarum exercitationum minorumve operum oratoris*), and refers to Lorenzo Valla's paraphrase of the *Iliad* as a good example of this type of work (*extat item tota Ilias a Laurentio Valla ad hunc modum tractata*).¹⁷⁷ With respect to the goal and use of the prose paraphrase, Pontanus writes that it serves on the one hand as a means to improve the students' understanding of literature, and that on the other hand a prose version enables a better understanding of difficult poetical texts (*Dubitare enim fas non est, quae prosa oratione, et verbis notioribus, et omnino elocutione oratoria efferuntur, expeditius solere intelligi, quam quae libertate illa, more, institutoque poetico*).¹⁷⁸ For this reason, he writes, the practice of writing paraphrases has always been frequent even among the ancient interpreters of the poets (*Quare et vetustiores poetarum explanatores paraphrasibus saepe usos constat*),¹⁷⁹ especially in the case of Virgil because of the difficulty in his work (*Quod si in ullo de Latinis utiliter istud, in Marone profecto utilissime fieri asseverari potest, in quo multa obscura, impedita, difficilia, et ingenia etiam eruditissimorum torquentia*).¹⁸⁰ At the end of his treatise, Pontanus briefly summarizes his argument in the following way:

¹⁷⁶ See for example Mack (2014, 58-59) and Grafton & Jardine (1986, 130-135) on the role of Aphthonius' *Progymnasmata* (ca. 4th century) in early modern education.

¹⁷⁷ 'In the same way the *Iliad*, which has been discussed in this manner by Lorenzo Valla, stands out'.

¹⁷⁸ 'For there is no reason to doubt that what is uttered in prose, through more common words, and altogether through oratorical diction, is usually more easily understood than what [is uttered] through that poetic license, practice and precepts.'

¹⁷⁹ 'It is well-known that for this reason even the older interpreters of the poets often made use of paraphrases.'

¹⁸⁰ 'But if it can be claimed that this practice can be usefully pursued in any of the Latin writers, it can without question be claimed that it can be most usefully pursued in Maro, in whom there are many obscure, obstructed, difficult things, and things tormenting the genius of even the wisest men.'

Pontanus

Meus ergo (ut revertar, unde paulisper abii) idem scopus, qui superiorum Paraphratarum: nempe, ut lectori levioris armaturae ad aliquot libros divinae Aeneidos commodius ac planius intelligendos tanquam ansam porrigerem; minime autem ut ad eius versus me exercendo, eloquentiam compararem: quod ipsum si quis facere instituerit, eum ego laudem mereri existimo. Igitur ad rem accedamus.

My goal is thus the same as that of the earlier paraphrasts (to return to the point from which I have briefly digressed): namely, that I offer as it were a handle to the less well equipped reader for easier and better understanding of some of the books of the divine *Aeneid*; not at all that by training myself through its verses I would match its eloquence; but if anyone should have set out to do this, I consider him worthy of praise. But let us now move on to the matter itself.

Pontanus affirmatively states that he has provided the prose paraphrase of the *Aeneid* to serve as a reading aid for the reader 'of lighter equipment' of the epic (and not as examples of his own eloquence). Since Pontanus intended his commentary, as I showed before, to be used by teachers and by readers of the epic studying the work on their own, the printed prose paraphrase in fact serves as a teacher who explains the narration and at the same time provides training in prose composition. As Pontanus notes a reader could through these paraphrases more easily and better understand some of the more difficult parts of the *Aeneid*.

Before I move on to the discussion of two other commentaries in the next section of this chapter, I briefly mention a specific use of the paraphrase, that is not identified by Pontanus, and which will be more fully discussed in chapter 5 of this thesis. In some cases the printed paraphrase in early modern commentaries appears to have been used by readers as an aid facilitating access to the text of the *Aeneid* in a very direct way. By underlining words from the prose paraphrase and the corresponding words from Virgil's verses, a reader could turn his paraphrase into a sort of index to the poetical text, since, as Pontanus remarks, a prose text is easier to read than poetry. This annotating practice shows once more how parts of the commentary could serve as access points to the work of literature, which is also in accordance with Pontanus' remarks on the use of paraphrases.

2.3 Two School Commentaries: Thomas Farnaby and Charles de la Rue

In this section I will discuss another two commentaries that are linked to an educational context. Following a brief introduction to both commentators, I will

discuss the similarities of and differences between these seventeenth-century works of scholarship.

2.3.1 *Thomas Farnaby*

Thomas Farnaby (1575-1647) was one of England's most influential schoolmasters and writers of schoolbooks of the seventeenth century. His commentary was first published in 1634. Farnaby is the author of many annotated editions of Latin authors, among them Seneca, Martial, Ovid, Terence and Virgil, which enjoyed huge popularity. Apart from his commentaries, he wrote an influential textbook on rhetoric, the *Index rhetoricus* (1625), and a Latin grammar, the *Systema grammaticum* (1641). Farnaby's commentary, as I will show below, was written for education at an intermediate level. This resulted in a rather selective and condensed type of commentary. As I will demonstrate, this is both determined by the developments in the commentary tradition over the preceding 150 years and by the specific educational setting of his work.

2.3.2 *Charles de la Rue*

Charles de la Rue (1643-1725) was a member of the Jesuit order and a very influential preacher at the French court. Many of his orations – of which his funeral oration for the Dauphin (Louis of France, the son of Louis XIV) is especially noteworthy – were printed during his lifetime. His commentary on the works of Virgil was first published in 1675; a revised edition appeared in 1682. Just as Farnaby's work, La Rue's commentary was aimed at education at an intermediate level.

In view of the gigantic commentaries by scholars like La Cerda (see chapter 3) and, to a somewhat lesser extent, Pontanus, the need for more compact and especially more accessible commentaries can be readily understood. Thomas Farnaby's commentary on the *Aeneid* is both much briefer in length and more restricted in content than its sixteenth-century predecessors. In some ways the commentary seems to share traits with the one by Charles de la Rue, which appeared in the Dauphin series. Both works were clearly intended for use in education at an intermediate level – Farnaby being one of England's most famous schoolmasters and the Dauphin series being intended for use by the young Dauphin of France. La Rue's commentary contains a preface, which will be discussed below. When looking at the commentary itself, it appears that Farnaby generally stays closer to the explanation of the narration of the *Aeneid* than some of his precursors had done. He seems to focus more on explaining the language and content of the poem itself, to make it better accessible to a readership of students at the intermediate level,

than on using the poem as a starting point for providing information that appears to be not directly relevant to the narrative of the epic. This kind of approach would suggest that the commentator has had to restrain himself more in what he offers to his readers than commentators such as Landino, Badius, Pontanus and La Cerda, who turned their works into hoarding-places of knowledge. It so happens that Farnaby comments on this problem in his lemma on V., A. 6.282. Here, Farnaby remarks that he cannot discuss certain topics in great detail, and therefore refers to other works for more information:

Farnaby on V., A. 6.282

Dabis mihi veniam, lector, per institutae brevitatis angustias excluso, si strictis tantum sterilis huius ulmi foliis, vanisque poëticorum monstrorum somniis excussis, te ad ipsos poëtas mythologos, eosque qui allegoriis philosophantur, relegem.

You will excuse me, reader, (my hands are bound because of the constraints of the prescribed brevity) if, having barely touched the leaves of this barren elm [A. 6.282-284] and having banished the false dreams of poetic monsters [A. 6.283-285], I refer you to the mythological poets themselves and to those who philosophize through allegory.

Farnaby refers to the elm and the monsters that are mentioned here by Virgil in his depiction of the Underworld. The discussion of Virgil's depiction of Hades in book 6 of the *Aeneid* had traditionally attracted a lot of attention from commentators, especially those seeking to read the epic in an allegorical way. Farnaby makes it clear that he will not offer a discussion of these topics, but instead refers to other authors and scholars. This remark by Farnaby not only shows that his commentary has another kind of set-up than the large sixteenth-century commentaries by scholars such as Pontanus (who, as I discussed above, really intended to compile and make accessible the most important observations of commentators and scholars before him), but possibly also hints at another conceptualization of the knowledge-value of the *Aeneid*. For the implication of Farnaby's remark is that he is leaving out information which a reader of an *Aeneid* commentary would expect to find in such a work of scholarship. It is conceivable that in selecting the material to include in his commentary, Farnaby chose to leave out those categories of information which he deemed less important. In this case, his remark that he refers his readers to "the mythological poets" and "those who philosophize through allegory" seems to suggest that he deems the information provided by those writers less important for a student of the *Aeneid*. Farnaby's selection is thus not

strictly quantitative – as he presents it in the passage cited above – but also qualitative. Since Farnaby's commentary comes without a preface, one encounters this kind of information in a commentary lemma. La Rue's commentary however has a preface, in which he explicitly discusses a very similar issue:

La Rue, *praefatio*

His ego auctoribus ac ducibus, in hac Virgilii explanatione, praeter brevitatis nitorisque studium, id imprimis mihi proposui: publicis commodis, non meae me laudi servire. Igitur versibus interpretationem, notas interpretationi subieci. (...) In notis neglexi nihil cuius in legendo Virgilio usus esse aliquis posset; nihil ad solam literaturae ostentationem usurpavi.

(...)

In quo quid praeter alios interpretes praestiterim, facile intelliget, quisquis eos aliquando attigerit; quorum quidem errores notare nolim asperius, qui excusari meos peto. Sane opera non inutilis a me posita est in explicandis ex fide historiae compluribus locis obscuris prius, aut parum feliciter enotatis; advocata etiam interdum subsidia aliarum artium ac disciplinarum, ne grammaticum egisse tantum diceret; quibus tamen in singulis si cui videbor nimis presse stricteque versatus, cuiusmodi querelae iam ad me delatae sunt: is me, non geographum, aut philosophum, aut rhetorem, sed Virgilii interpretem esse intelligat.

With these authors and guides I have set myself, except the desire for brevity and splendor, first and foremost the following goal in this explanation of Virgil: to serve public convenience, not my own glory. Therefore I have placed the interpretation under the verses and the notes under the interpretation (...) In my notes, I have omitted nothing that could be of any use in reading Virgil; and I have included nothing only for the sake of showing off erudition.

(...)

In this respect all who will ever have touched upon other interpreters, will easily understand what I have achieved over and beyond them; I, who ask that my own mistakes be excused, do not want to note <too> harshly their mistakes. Clearly, I have taken useful troubles in explaining on an historical basis many previously dark passages, or passages that had not been annotated felicitously enough; occasionally I also summoned the help of other arts and disciplines, lest people say that I operated only as a grammarian; if anyone however thinks that I am too succinct or too little informed in any of those fields, and such complaints have already reached me: let him know that I am no geographer, philosopher or rhetorician, but an interpreter of Virgil.

This preface tellingly shows that La Rue's readership – or at least part of it – expected from a Virgilian commentary not only an explanation of matters that were traditionally part of the domain of the grammarian, but also of issues pertaining to fields like geography and philosophy. La Rue even states that (hypothetical) complaints had reached him that in his explanations he had paid too little attention to those disciplines. Compared to previous commentaries like those of Landino, Pontanus and La Cerda, it is certainly true that La Rue has limited himself in what to include in his commentary. As he himself states in his preface, this is consistent with his aim to present a commentary that is, unlike some of its precursors, comprehensive, but workable. Admittedly, La Rue's statement is not lacking in rhetorical force and should also be read as the preemptive defense of a scholar anticipating criticism for leaving things out of his commentary. Even then however this passage from La Rue's preface, as Farnaby's remark in his lemma on V., A. 6.282, indicate that both these commentaries have a different scope from those by Landino, Pontanus and La Cerda. In part this can probably be explained by the specific educational setting for which each of these commentaries were intended, but I would suggest that it is also indicative of another tendency. As Knauer has remarked, Virgilian scholarship became very much congested by voluminous commentaries such as those of Pontanus and La Cerda.¹⁸¹ These scholars included centuries of Virgilian scholarship into their commentaries, making more works of the same nature no longer necessary. However, there was still need for editions for use in the classroom, that were less densely packed with information.

Concluding Remark

In this section I have discussed four early modern *Aeneid*-commentaries in relation to their educational context. I have identified some general features of each of these works and made some first assumptions as to the broader implications of these observations for the early modern Virgilian commentary. At this point, it is time to turn to the case studies, in which the fields of grammar, rhetoric and poetical theory in *Aeneid*-commentaries will be analyzed in more detail.

¹⁸¹ Knauer (1964, 86-87) remarks how these kind of commentaries in effect blocked further developments in the writing of Virgilian commentaries for the next 150 years. While this view may be somewhat dated – especially because Knauer dismisses all Virgilian scholarship between La Cerda and Heyne and seems to judge pre-modern commentaries by modern standards – his observation that there occurred some type of (perceived) congestion in the commentary tradition seems to have certain validity.

3. Poetics: A. 1.1a-d, *Ille ego...*: Jacobus Pontanus on A. 1.1a-1d *Ille ego* and the Conventions of Genre

The opening of the *Aeneid* had traditionally been a heavily debated topic in Virgilian scholarship.¹⁸² Starting with Servius, many commentators paid attention to the question of whether the work should open with the four lines starting with *Ille ego* (which I will number 1.1a-d) and in which the poetic career of Virgil was summarized, or with *Arma virumque*.¹⁸³

V., A. 1.1a-1d; 1.1

*Ille ego, qui quondam gracili modulatus avena
carmen, et egressus silvis vicina coegi
ut quamvis avido parerent arva colono,
gratum opus agricolis ; at nunc horrentia Martis
arma virumque cano (...)*

I am he who once tuned my song on a slender pipe,
and then, leaving the woods, made the nearby fields
obey the husbandmen however greedy, a work to
win favour with farmers; but now I sing of the
bristling arms of Mars and the man (...) ¹⁸⁴

Most early modern commentators take into account the problematic first four lines, if only as an opportunity to discuss the genre of epic poetry and the relation between the various poetical works of Virgil. Pontanus goes into the issue in detail in his lemma on V., A. 1.1a *Ille ego*. First, he pays attention to the fact that lines 1.1a-d would serve as a mechanism to counter plagiarism: by referring to his other works (the *Georgics* and the *Bucolics*) Virgil identifies himself as the author of the epic.¹⁸⁵ According to Pontanus, this mechanism goes back to the mythical poet Orpheus. Tucca, the poet and friend of Virgil, would have removed the lines because he deemed them unnecessary, for the work was immediately published

¹⁸² Ziolkowski & Putnam (2008), 22-25.

¹⁸³ See Servius, *In V. Aen. praef.*: *Augustus vero, ne tantum opus periret, Tuccam et Varium hac lege iussit emendare, ut superflua demerent, nihil adderent tamen (...) ... et aliquos detractos [versiculos], ut in principio – nam ab armis non coepit, sed sic: (...) [‘Augustus actually, to prevent the loss of such a work, ordered Tucca and Varius to emend it according to the following principle, that they would remove what was superfluous, but that they would add nothing’]. The same story is found in the life of Virgil attributed to Aelius Donatus (for an English translation of the relevant part of the life, see Copeland & Sluiter (2009), 102 par.39). I cite Servius from Thilo & Hagen (1881).*

¹⁸⁴ Translation by Williams (1972-1973).

¹⁸⁵ The same type of discussion of this passage is found in the commentary of Juan Luis de la Cerda (Toledo 1558 – Madrid 1643). For antiquarianism in La Cerda’s commentary, see chapter 3 of this dissertation.

under the name of the author.¹⁸⁶ Pontanus depends for this interpretation on a commentary by Germanus.¹⁸⁷ This is indicated at the end of the first section of the lemma. Pontanus frequently paraphrases from another commentary or scholarly work on Virgil and indicates this by briefly naming the author at the end of his paraphrase. What makes the lemma in question stand out is that Pontanus cites several authorities – he continues the lemma by referring to the *Poetics* of Scaliger, who agrees that Virgil wrote the four lines to prevent anyone from stealing his work. The quotation of Scaliger complements Pontanus' paraphrase of Germanus in that it provides the extra information that the use of devices against plagiarism was common among the ancients.¹⁸⁸ Pontanus continues to give information that

¹⁸⁶ (...) *Est autem Orpheum, qui Argonauticōn principio compendiosa enumeratione opera sua est complexus et professus, brevi enim anacephalaeosi sua quoque distinxit et comprehendit, ne aut plagiarii, a quibus olim vexatus fuerat, sacrilegio versus divinos sublegerent, sibi que adscriberent, aut eos falsarii adulterare auderent. Tuca tamen post Virgilii mortem, nullo discrimine principium hoc recidere est aggressus, quod ab utrisque nihil metuendum esse videret, iam temporibus Augusti integro poemate et opere Maronis, sub germano auctoris nomine evulgato, et recognito. German.* ['(...) This is however Orphic, who at the beginning of his *Argonautica* through a compendious enumeration has included and claimed his works, for he also distinguished and described them in a short recapitulation, so that neither plagiarizers, by whom he had been plagued in the past, would steal the divine verses through sacrilege, and ascribe them to themselves, nor forgers dare to counterfeit them. Tuca nevertheless, after the death of Virgil, has proceeded to cut away this beginning without risk, because he saw that there was nothing to be feared from either group [plagiarizers or forgers], because already in the times of Augustus the entire poem and the work of Maro had been published and recognized under the author's own name. Germanus.'].

¹⁸⁷ Germain Vaillant de Guéris (1516-1587), abbot of Pimpont and bishop of Orléans. His commentary on the *Aeneid* was published in 1575. See Knauer (1964), 78-82; see also Delacourcelle (1954), 336-361. La Cerda used the commentary in writing his own and shares with Germanus a fondness for Greek literature.

¹⁸⁸ *Veritus, inquit Scaliger Poet. lib. 5 cap. 17 plagiariorum temeritatem, tum in extremo 4. Georg. nomen posuit suum, tum hic prudenter innuit. Quae qui abstulere, suam faciunt Aeneidem, non Maronis. Et erat apud priscos in more positum, ut non titulis solum adscriberent nomen, sed operis statim principis apponerent. Sic omnes Arabes, et Chaldaei, ac prophetae veteres: Visio Azahelis, Iudicium Abidiai, Dixit Avenzabri, Sermo filii Zacuth, Propositiones Barthecuas, sic Herodotus, sic Thucydides. Idem Poet. lib. 1. cap.56. ["Out of fear of the temerity of plagiarizers", says Scaliger in book 5, chapter 17 of his *Poetics*, "he [Virgil] both placed his name at the end of *Georgics* 4, and he here indicated it wisely. Those who took them [verses 1.1a-d] away, made the *Aeneid* their own, not of Maro. And it was an established practice with the ancients, that they not only wrote their name at the title, but that they placed it immediately at the beginning of the work. Thus all the Arab peoples, and the Chaldaeans [Babylonians], and the ancient prophets: the *Visio* of Ezekiel, the *Iudicium* of Obadja, Avenzabri said, the *Sermo* of the son of Zacuth, the *Propositiones* of Barthekeuai, thus*

pertains to poetical theory, now going into the discussion of the proem for different genres of poetry, for which he again cites Scaliger¹⁸⁹ and also refers to a work by another scholar (Johannes Antonius Viperanus (1540-1610), *De poetica libri tres*).¹⁹⁰ He then turns to an intricate discussion of the connection between genre and style. For this topic, he again refers to the works of other scholars, in this case the Virgilian commentaries by Sebastiano Corrado and Nascimbene de' Nascimbeni.¹⁹¹

Herodotus, thus Thucydides." See also Scaliger, *Poetics*, book 1, chapter 56.']. As is remarked by Vogt-Spira (1998) in his edition of Scaliger's *Poetics*, the oriental names are difficult to identify.

¹⁸⁹ Pontanus cites the following passage from the *Poetica* (book 1, ch. 56): *Sunt et in generibus poematum proemia, ut in musicis προαύλια. In quibus plurimus fuit Claudianus, separato carmine a iusto poemate. Divinus autem poeta unum corpus fecit. Illa enim fuerant prooemium, 'Ille ego qui quondam' et cetera, ut pessima temeritate praetulerint arbitrium suum ii, qui exemerunt ea de iudicio tanti viri. (...) Tales sunt operum conclusiones, quos epilogos Graeci nominant, ut apud Horatium, 'Exegi monumentum aere perennius', et Ovidium, 'Iamque opus exegi', quae sunt a iusto opere separata. At non separavit idem Vergilius a Georgicis, 'Illo Virgilium me tempore dulcis alebat // Parthenope'.* Then he refers to Viperanus (*Lege etiam Viperanum, Poetics lib. 2 cap. 5*) for more information. ['And there are proems for categories of poems, just as 'proaulia' for musical works. Claudianus has the most of them, setting apart the [introductory] verse from the true poem. The divine poet [Virgil] however has created one corpus. These [verses] for instance were the proem, 'I am he who once' [V., A. 1.1a] etc., so that those people gave preference to their judgment through most nefarious temerity, who have removed them in defiance of the judgment of such a man. (...) Such are the conclusions of works, which the Greeks call epilogues, such as with Horace, 'I have constructed a monument more enduring than bronze', and Ovid, 'Now I have constructed a work', which [verses] are set apart from the work itself. But Virgil again did not separate [the closing verses] from the *Georgics*, 'At that time I Virgil was nursed by sweet Parthenope.' Read however Viperanus, *Poetics*, book 2, chapter 5.'].

¹⁹⁰ Joannes Antonius Viperanus (died 1610), author of *De poetica libri tres* (Antwerp 1579), was court historian of king Philip II of Spain and bishop of Giovinazzo in Apulia.

¹⁹¹ Sebastiano Corrado (professor at Bologna, died 1556), wrote an allegorical commentary on the first book of the *Aeneid*, published in Florence in 1555. See Knauer (1964), 103n.1. Nascimbene de' Nascimbeni (Nascimbaenus Nascimbaeni; died 1578) wrote a commentary on the first six books of the *Aeneid* (Basel 1577). He was a professor at Bologna, Ferrara and rector at Dubrovnik (1561-1569) and spent the last eight years of his life in prison after being convicted of heresy. See also Zabughin (2000 [1921-23]), II.79 on Nascimbeno's commentary.

Pontanus on A.1.1a *Ille ego*

Prudenter animadversum a Sebastiano Corrado, quemadmodum res ipsae ita sibi successerunt, ut se contingere videantur, pastoritia, rustica, civilis. Ita Virgilium opera sua, quibus hanc triplicem varietatem explicaret, quasi colligare voluisse.

This has been cleverly observed by Sebastiano Corrado, in what way the very subjects succeeded one another, so that they seem to be connected to each other: pastoral, rural and civic. And that in this way Virgil wanted to bind together, as it were, his works – through which he revealed this threefold variety – to one another.

Pontanus' discussion of the first four lines serves not so much to establish whether the lines should be included as the opening of the work or not (he does go into this question, but only briefly at the end of his lemma), but as an opportunity to discuss concepts from poetical theory, namely generic differences and the accompanying stylistic levels.

Pontanus on A.1.1a *Ille ego*

Certissimum est Virgilium singulis poematis suis singulos dicendi characteres seu figuras aptasse – humilem Bucolicis, mediam Georgicis, gravem Aeneidi – id quod rerum personarumque qualitas exigebat.

Definitely Virgil accommodated each individual stylistic level or form to each of his poems – the low level for the *Bucolics*, the middle for the *Georgics*, the grave one for the *Aeneid* – because the sort of subject matter and characters required this.

Pontanus then gives a detailed analysis of how each of the four prefatory lines corresponds to a different stylistic level of poetry (namely 1a-b1 to the *Bucolics*, 1b2-1d2 to the *Georgics*, and 1d2-1 to the *Aeneid*). First on the *Bucolics*:

Pontanus on A. 1.1.a *Ille ego*

Quod non solum ex ipsorum poematum lectione sed etiam ex hisce quatuor versibus primis satis superque perspicui posse. Quorum quidem versuum naturam, formam, styli, rationem, si quis aequa lance perpendat, poetam in illis prope clamare animadvertet, opus Georgicorum Bucolico et Aeneidis tantum praestare Georgico, quantum secundus versus distat a primo, et quartus differt a secundo. Nam quid hoc versu gracilius, humiliorque dici aut excogitari potest? 'Ille ego, qui quondam gracili modulatus avena Carmen.' Hoc nos admonet stylo tenui opus Bucolicorum esse compositum.

This cannot only be understood from the reading of the poems themselves, but also more than sufficiently from these first four verses. Indeed if someone weighed the character, the form, the style, the property of these verses impartially, he will notice the poet almost calling out in these, that the *Georgics* surpass the *Bucolics*, and the *Aeneid* the *Georgics* so much, as the second verse differs from the first, and as the fourth stands apart from the second. For what can be said or contrived that is more slender and more humble than this verse? 'I am he, who once tuned my song on a slender reed'. In this way he reminds us that the *Bucolics* were written in the subtle style.

Then on the *Georgics*:

Pontanus on A. 1.1.a *Ille ego*

Sed observa, uti sensim et gradatim verbis insurgat,
 '----- et egressus sylvis vicina coegi,
 ut quamvis avido parerent arva colono:
 gratum opus agricolis.'

Haec omnino altiora sunt primis, ut intelligas opus Georgicorum altiori quam carmen Bucolicum stylo fuisse perscriptum.

But notice, how gradually and little by little he raises [the level of style] with these words,

 '--- and then, leaving the woods, made the nearby fields obey
 the husbandmen, however greedy,
 a work to win favour with farmers.'¹⁹²

These verses are in every respect more elevated than the first, so that you may realize that the *Georgics* have been written in a more elevated style than the *Bucolics*.

And finally on the *Aeneid*:

Pontanus on A. 1.1a *Ille ego*

At hoc extremum Aeneidos opus, quantum rerum pondere et gravitate reliquis excellere debere cognovit, tantum hos novissimos versus prioribus sublimiores esse curavit. Subdit enim, 'at nunc horrentia Martis // Arma, virumque cano.' An haec cum superioribus, aut illa cum istis sunt conferenda? Quae cum verborum sonitu rei magnitudinem indicant, tum rerum quasi tumultu apta quadam cum orationis

¹⁹² Translation of 1b-d by Williams (1972-1973).

acrimonia usque adeo resonant, ut cuiusque avidas aures, atque immensum aliquid, infinitumque desiderantes implere possint. Ab his igitur versibus vario stylo compositis inchoatam fuisse a Virgilio Aeneidem nemo vel mediocriter eruditus ignorat. Nascimbaenus Commentar.

*Hausit hoc a Corrado Nascimbaenus qui asseverat, ita esse composita haec carmina quatuor prima, ut verbis ipsis ac dicendi figuris res tripartito opere explicatas referant, pastoritiam simplicitatem, rusticam sedulitatem, civilem dignitatem, et tres characteres, attenuatum, mediocrem, grandem, paucissimis verbis esse repetitos. Plura ibidem de horum versuum artificio.

But this last work, the *Aeneid*, to the degree in which he acknowledged that it ought to surpass the others through its weight of subject matter and dignity, to that degree did he take care that these last verses would be more exalted than the previous ones. For he wrote, 'But now of the fearful Martian arms and of the man I sing'. Can these verses be compared to the previous ones, or this subject matter with those topics? They both indicate the greatness of the subject matter by the sound of the words and resonate by the tumultuousness, so to speak, of the action, combined with a suitably vehement tone, to such an extent that they can fill anyone's ears, eager and desiring something immense and infinite. Thus no one, even of moderate learning, fails to see that the *Aeneid* was begun by Virgil with these verses, joined together in varying style. So Nascimbaenus in his commentary.

*Nascimbaenus has taken this from Corradus, who asserts strongly that these first four verses were composed in such a way that they reflect by their very words and figures of speech the contents that are set out in the three parts of his oeuvre, the pastoral simplicity, the rustic earnestness, the civic dignity, and that the three stylistic levels, slender, middle and grand, are called to mind with the smallest number of words. More on the skill of these verses in the place already mentioned.

This type of discussion is a traditional element in the commentary tradition that is already found in Servius and taken up by other early modern commentators like La Cerda and Farnaby.¹⁹³ In fact, Pontanus' lemma consists of a rhetorical analysis

¹⁹³ See for example *Rhet. Her.* 4.11f. La Cerda comments *ad loc.*: (...) *Deinde, hoc initio triplicem stilum, tenuem, medium, copiosum (Graeci appellant ισχνόν, μέσον, ἄδρον) magno quodam artificio expressit. (...)* ['(...) Finally, through this beginning he expressed a threefold style, the subtle one, the middle one, and the copious one (which <style> the Greeks call 'ischnos' [weak], 'mesos' [middle], 'hadros' [strong]), with great skill. (...)]. Farnaby: (...) *voluntque hanc ἀνακεφαλαίωσιν appositam quasi sigillum, uti et illam sub fine quarti Georgici, contra plagiariorum furta et falsariorum adulteria, constareque triplicis stili artificio, ut a tenui carminis Bucolici avena, a mediocri Georgici calamo ad sonorum Martiae tubae clangorem assurgeret.* ['(...) and they want this recapitulation to have been placed as a sort of mark, such as the one at the end of

of an element from the field of poetical theory (the discussion of genre). This is a clear example of how grammar, rhetoric and poetical theory were often intertwined. Making clear distinctions between these three fields of study is therefore not always possible and perhaps even unproductive. In a commentary such as that of Pontanus the analysis of the four verses not only reflects the commentator's involvement with the commentary tradition (which also is apparent from the references to other commentators, of which he has indirectly cited Corrado by reading Nascimbaenus), but also shows the interest in elements pertaining to rhetoric (the three levels of style)¹⁹⁴ and poetical theory (the opening of an epic poem). Pontanus is especially interested in the mechanism against plagiarism and does not primarily focus on the question of authorship with regard to the verses 1a-d.¹⁹⁵ I will return to poetics in section 7.

The discussion in the section demonstrates how early modern commentary lemmata in a Virgilian commentary can be situated in a broader web of knowledge, to which they themselves in turn also offer a contribution. On the one hand, the commentator could use the tradition of Virgilian scholarship as a point of reference for his discussion of the poem, if only for the identification of important topics. On the other hand, an early modern commentator such as Pontanus is also actively reworking the Virgilian tradition by compiling information from various sources and by new references for further information. Moreover, in referring to his peers – other commentators, such as Corrado and Nascimbaenus – and to classical authors and scholars Pontanus places himself and his work in this network of (contemporary) Virgilian scholarship, thus also claiming a place for himself. The picture that arises from all this, is that of the commentator as the nucleus in a vast network of knowledge, with his commentary serving as a focal point through which this knowledge is filtered, focused, sharpened and made (more) accessible for an audience of readers that is not as highly trained and as profoundly invested in these knowledge systems as the commentator. As I have mentioned already at the beginning of this chapter, this would certainly be the case for the grammatical disciplines which could pride themselves on a centuries-old tradition of

Georgics 4, against the thefts of plagiarizers and the counterfeits of forgers, and that it consisted of the skillful application of the threefold style, so that he rose from the tender reed-pipe of the *Bucolics*, from the medium reed of the *Georgics*, to the resounding noise of the trumpet of Mars.'].

¹⁹⁴ See *Rhet. Her.* 4.8.11 and *Cic., Or.* 20-2; 69; 128 for the theory of the three levels of style.

¹⁹⁵ At the end of the lemma he briefly states that clearly these four verses were composed by Virgil as the opening of the *Aeneid*.

scholarship, reaching back into classical antiquity itself. After this the learned discussion of poetical theory in Pontanus, the next section will concern itself with a fascinating field within the early modern study of grammar: etymology.

4. Grammar: A. 1.2 *Italiam* and Etymology¹⁹⁶

The first word of the second verse of the *Aeneid* causes Landino to write the following lemma:

Landino on A. 1.2 *Italiam*

Italiam] Sunt qui dicant a bobus denominatam, quod Graecorum prisca lingua boves 'italiae' dicebantur. Quod autem bobus abundaret, ex eo patet quod multa quae suprema dicebatur instituta erat duarum ovium, boum vero triginta pro copia boum et ovium penuria, ait Gellius.¹⁹⁷ Servius autem ab Italo rege Siciliae dictam putat. Qui in eam regionem veniens in qua postea regnavit Turnus, 'Italiam' de suo nomine illam appellavit. Festus autem scripsit Italiam dici quod magnos italos, id est boves, habeat; quia vituli ab Italis sunt dicti 'itali'.

Some say that Italy was called after oxen, because in the ancient language of the Greeks oxen were called *italiae*. That there were plenty of oxen is clear from the fact that the penalty which was said to be the highest was set at two sheep, but at thirty oxen, in accordance with the abundance of cattle and the lack of sheep, says Gellius. Servius however states that Italy was named after Italus, the king of Sicily. He came to the region where Turnus would later rule and called it 'Italia' after his own name. Festus, however, wrote that it is called *Italia* because it had big *itali*, that is to say oxen; because the calves [*vituli*] were called *itali* by the Itali [the inhabitants of *Italia*].

In this lemma, Landino explains why Italy was called *Italia*.¹⁹⁸ He provides three competing etymologies and a classical source for each of them (Gellius, Servius

¹⁹⁶ Since many of the early modern etymologies that are discussed in this section go back to classical examples, I will provide, when applicable, the reference to Maltby (1991), *A Lexicon of Ancient Latin Etymologies*.

¹⁹⁷ Gel 11.1.2: *Coniectare autem possumus ob eandem causam, quod Italia tunc esset armentiosissima, multam, quae appellatur 'suprema', institutam in dies singulos duarum ovium, boum triginta, pro copia scilicet boum proque ovium penuria.* ['Indeed we can infer for the same reason (viz. that Italy then was most abundant in cattle), that the financial penalty, which is called 'the highest', was set at two sheep and thirty oxen per day, clearly in relation to the abundance of cattle and the shortage of sheep.'].

¹⁹⁸ Maltby (1991), 314 s.v. *Italia*.

and Festus). To a modern reader, this kind of lemma might seem somewhat odd: the modern *Aeneid*-commentaries of Conway (1935), Austin (1971) and Williams (1972-1973; 1975) do not mention the etymology of *Italia* at all in their lemmata on this verse. Lemmata providing this kind of etymological explanations of Latin and Greek words are however frequently encountered in early modern *Aeneid*-commentaries. In this section I will discuss a selection of lemmata pertaining to this particular field within the discipline of grammar.

'*Etymologia*' in the early modern period had a different meaning than its modern counterpart 'etymology'.¹⁹⁹ It did not focus on establishing historical origin, but on establishing an interpretation of the name. In early modern etymology, just as with its classical precursor,²⁰⁰ this interpretation consists of presenting an explanation of the name that supports an already established (deeper) meaning of the word. Etymology was thus used as an epistemological tool for gaining access to hidden knowledge by constructing semantic relations.²⁰¹ Because of this connection between naming and meaning, etymologies were often used as an argument in favour of a specific interpretation of a word, which in turn could often support an overall reading of a passage. Moreover, etymology provided the commentator with an opportunity to affirm his authority as a scholar, in providing explanations for obscure or difficult words in Latin (or, occasionally, Greek).²⁰² Since the *Aeneid* and the Latin language still played an important role in early modern learning and scholarship, a commentator who was explaining etymologies was not only contributing to a better understanding of the past, but also to the understanding of the present.²⁰³ In early modern Virgilian commentaries the use of etymology is frequently found, for example in the commentaries by Landino, Farnaby, Badius and La Rue (while Pontanus seems to be less interested in this field of scholarship). A survey of these commentaries shows that the etymologies can be classified in more or less consistent categories on the basis of their argumentative function. I

¹⁹⁹ See also Sluiter (2015), 897.

²⁰⁰ See Sluiter (2015) and the 'Etymology Dossier' in Copeland & Sluiter (2010), 339-367.

²⁰¹ Borchardt, (1968), 429. Rothstein (1990, 333) goes as far as to make an analogy between the epistemic function of etymologies and the focus on origin and source in the Renaissance in general: 'Treating many things as we treat only words, in the Renaissance the identifiable (or identified) source of a thing is frequently taken as a principle defining the way it is to be understood and classified. ... The parameters of what a thing (actually or potentially) is can be defined by knowing its origin; in this sense origins can be taxonomic functions.' See also Copeland & Sluiter (2009), 339-367; Sluiter (2015), 900-901.

²⁰² Sluiter (f.c.), at n. 3.

²⁰³ This is pointed out by Sluiter (2015, 898) for ancient etymology, but is also characteristic for the early modern practice.

will briefly identify each of these categories and include examples of their use in the footnotes.

The first category consists of etymologies that are given when information is provided about a god, a hero from mythology or a city.²⁰⁴ This specific use of

²⁰⁴ E.g., Landino on V., A. 2.610, *Neptunus: A 'nando' dicitur Latine, quia vis aqua est et quondam ab aqua nobis potus pervenit. Apud Graecos ποσιδᾶων quia 'potum dei' appellatur. (...) ['Neptune: in Latin it is derived from 'nare ['to swim'], because water is power, and once our drink came from water. With the Greeks he is called 'Posidaôn', because he is 'potum dei' ['drink of the god'] (...)]* (see Maltby (1991), s.v. *Neptunus*; see also Sluiter (2015, 917), who points out that Cicero is mocking this etymology in *Cic., Nat. D. 3.24.62f*); Landino on V., A. 7.2, *Caieta: ... Alii dicunt propter combustas ibi naves Caietam fuisse appellatam, nam καίειν 'urere' est. [... Others say that Caieta was so called because of their burning the ships, because 'kaiein' [Greek] means 'to burn']* (see Maltby (1991), s.v. *Caieta*); Farnaby on V. A. 3.74, *Aegaeo: Aegea urbs erat Euboeae, ubi templum Neptuni Aegaei. Strabo lib. 9. [9.2.13] unde et nomen mari Aegaeo; quod tamen alii a scopulo, αἴγιε referentes, dictum autumant [i.e., Var., L., 7.22]: alii a fluctibus protervois et αἰγῶν more insultantibus. ['Aegea: Aegea was a city in Euboea, where there was the temple of Neptune Aegaeus. Strabo in book 9 [derives] from this also the name of the Aegean sea; of which others however say that it was called after a rock, that brought to mind two goats [Greek: 'goats' (dualis); two rocks resembling goat-heads, see Var., L. 7.22]: others [say that it was called] after rivers that were violent and that leapt like 'aiges' [Greek: 'goats'].']* (Maltby (1991), s.v. *Aegeum mare* (a)); Farnaby on V. A. 3.274, *Leucatae: Promontorii Epiri, a petris λευκαῖς dicti. ['Of Leucata: of the promontory of Epirus, called after the 'leukai' [Greek: 'white'] rocks']* (Maltby (1991), s.v. *Leucate*); Farnaby on V., A. 4.207, *Lenaem: Vinum, Lenaeus Bacchi nomen a ληνός 'torcular' et 'lacus'. ['Lenaem: a wine, Lenaeus [is a] name of Bacchus [derived from] 'lênos' [Greek: cask] meaning 'grapepress' and 'tank']* (Maltby (1991), s.v. *Lenaeus*); Farnaby on V. A. 6.13, *Delius: Apollo, a natali insula: vel a vaticinatione, a δῆλος ['Delian: this is Apollo, after his island of birth; or from his prophecy, from 'dêlos' [Greek: 'clear'].']* (Maltby (1991), s.v. *Delius*); La Rue on V., A. 1.1, *Troiae: Troia, regio Phrygiae minoris, in Asia minore, cuius urbs praecipua Ilium, ab Ilo rege dicta: non procul ab Ida monte. Haec et 'Troia', a Troë rege et 'Dardania', a Dardano Trois avo; et 'Teucria', a Teucro Dardani socero, vocata est. Eius arx 'Pergamus', plur. 'Pergama.' ['Troia : Troia, a region of Phrygia minor, in Asia minor, of which the most important city is Ilium [Troy], named after king Ilus: not far from mount Ida. It [the city] is also called 'Troy', after king Tros, and 'Dardania', after Dardanus the grandfather of Tros; and 'Teucria', after Teucer the father-in-law of Dardanus. Its citadel [is called] 'Pergamus', plural 'Pergama'.']* (Maltby (1991), s.v. *Troia, Ilium, Dardania and Teucrí*); La Rue on V., A. 2.31, *Imnuptae Minervae: Pallas' item dicta est. Vulcani nuptias respuit et virginitatem servavit. Nomen, vel a 'minari', quod armata pingatur; vel a 'memini', quod memoriae Dea dicatur; vel potius ab antiquo 'minervo', id est, 'moneo', quod homines bene moneat, utpote Dea sapientiae atque artium. ['Unmarried Minerva: 'she is also called 'Pallas'. She rejected a marriage with Vulcan and kept her virginity intact. Her name is either [derived] from 'minari' [Latin: 'to threaten'], because she is depicted armed, or from 'memini' [Latin: 'I remember'], because she is called the goddess of memory; or better even from the old word 'minervo', which means 'moneo' [Latin: 'I admonish'], because she admonishes men in a good way, being the Goddess of wisdom and the arts.]]* (Maltby (1991), s.v. *Minerva*).

etymology seems to be very consistent with the Virgilian commentary tradition. Servius, Donatus and in fact already the classical commentators on the works of Homer tend to provide this type of etymology in the same cases. Another aspect that comes to the fore in this first category is the role of Greek: only in rare cases does an etymology go back to a non-Greek word.²⁰⁵

This brings me to the second category of etymologies, namely those of non-proper names that explain the meaning of a Latin word by deriving it from the Greek. This can also pertain to defining the exact meaning of a Latin word, such as when La Rue at V., A. 3.257 explains that *ambesas* ('to eat around') in fact means the same as *circumesas*, because *ambi* is derived from the Greek ἀμφί ('around').²⁰⁶ Although this kind of etymology might resemble the interest in the historical origin of a word that is the object of study of modern etymology, La Rue's etymology is still different in that it is focused on establishing a semantic relation between the name and meaning of the word.

This relation between naming and meaning brings me to the third and largest category of etymologies, namely that in which an etymology serves as an entry point to the classical world. In these cases an etymology is provided either to facilitate the explanation of an aspect of classical culture or to validate such an explanation given earlier in the same lemma.²⁰⁷ It is thus employed as an argumentative tool. As an example, I turn to La Rue's comment on A. 1.490 *Amazonidum*:

²⁰⁵ The focus on Greek etymologies in a commentary on the *Aeneid* is not very surprising in view of the attention commentators generally pay to the links between the *Aeneid* and the works of Homer.

²⁰⁶ Maltby (1991), s.v. *ambo*.

²⁰⁷ See for example Landino on *templum* at V., A. 1.446 (*quasi tectum amplum...* ['as it were, 'larger roof' ('*TECTO amplum*')]) (Maltby (1991), s.v. *templum*); Landino on *remos* at V., A. 1.552 (*...a graeco verbo ῥέω quod facile per aquam fluat: inde 'remigare' est remis navigium agere. Inde 'remiges' qui remos agunt. [remus 'oar'] from the Greek verb 'rheō' ['to flow'] because it glides easily through the water: therefore remigare ['to row'] is moving a ship ['navigium agere'] with the 'remi' ['oars']. Therefore remiges ['rowers'] is the word for those who move [agunt] the remi ['oars']...*) (Maltby (1991), s.v. *remus* and *remex*); La Rue at V., A. 2.225 on *delubra* (*Templa sic dicta, a deluo, quia plerumque ante templa fontes erant, aut lacus, ubi templa ingressuri deluebantur.* ['Temples were called from *delubra* ['to wash off'], because there were usually springs in front of temples, or ponds, where those who were to enter the temples washed themselves.']) (Maltby (1991), s.v. *delubrum*); La Rue at V., A. 2.761 on *asylo* (*Asylum ἄσυλον ab α privativo et σύρειν 'trahere', σύλα 'spolium', quia qui ad illud confugisset, inde trahi aut spoliari non poterat. ...* ['In the asylum: 'Asylum, [Greek] 'asulon', from the privative alpha and 'surein' [Greek], 'to pull', 'sula' [Greek], 'spoils', because whoever had fled into it, could not be pulled from it nor be stripped.']) (Maltby (1991), s.v. *asylum*).

La Rue on V., A. 1.490 *Amazonidum*

‘Id est, ‘Amazonum’: quae sibi mammam alteram inurebant, ne iaciendis sagittis esset impedimento. Alteram baltheo substringebant. Nomen inde ab α privativo et μαζός ‘mamma’. De iis fuse Ae. 11.659 et c. Harum regina *Penthesilea*, Troianis post mortem Hectoris opem tulit. Et iuxta aliquos, ab Achille; iuxta alios, a Neoptolemo Achillis filio interfecta est.

This means ‘of the Amazons’; the Amazons burned off one of their breasts, so that it would not be a hindrance for the shooting of arrows. The other one they tied up in a girdle. The word is derived from the privative alpha and the Greek ‘mazos’, ‘breast’.²⁰⁸ More on them in A. 11.658 and further. Their queen Penthesilea offered help to the Trojans after the death of Hector. And according to some she was killed by Achilles, according to others by Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles.

The explanation of the etymology of *Amazonidum*²⁰⁹ is meant to support the *realia* behind the term (and vice versa the *realia* affirm the etymology). It shows who the Amazons were and why they were called by this name. In fact, the etymology builds on the mythological story of the amazons, describing their supposed distinctive feature – namely their lack of one breast. Modern scholars deem this etymology to be not very feasible from a modern linguistic point of view, as is often the case with classical and early modern etymologies.²¹⁰ The issue of whether the etymologies found in the early modern commentaries are sound from a linguistic perspective is however not so much of interest for this current study, since – as I have pointed out above – early modern etymology was aimed at establishing semantic relations, not historical-linguistic ones. The importance attached to the semantic function of etymology becomes apparent from the

²⁰⁸ Isidore of Seville (*Etym.* IX.ii.62) presents two other etymologies: ἄμα ζῶν (‘living together’, referring to the Amazons living together without men) and ἀνευ μαζῶν or ἀνευ μαζοῦ (‘without breast’; which is consistent with La Rue’s point); see also Servius on A. 1.490.

²⁰⁹ See Maltby (1991), s.v. *Amazon*.

²¹⁰ LSJ gives the same etymology as La Rue s.v. Ἀμαζών. Chantraine (1968, s.v.) however characterizes this etymology as “L’étymologie populaire admise dans l’antiquité (...)” and poses that the “étymologie véritable” has to be completely different. He refers to the hypothesis by Lagercrantz (1912) that it is derived from the Iranian tribe **ha-mazan*, probably meaning “warriors”. Frisk (1960, s.v.) notes that the etymology of the word remains unclear and also primarily refers to Lagercrantz. See Blok (1995) for more on the myth of the Amazons.

following lemma from Badius (on A. 1.196, *heros*²¹¹). At the end of this lemma the commentator refers explicitly to the traditional task of the grammarian in giving etymologies:

Badius Ascensius on A. 1.196 *heros*

... Item nimis concisus est Servius in explanatione heroum. Nec absolutam expressit rem in non parva significatione: audiatu itaque Augustinus copiosissime docens qui sunt heroes libro X *De civitate dei*²¹² his verbis: 'nomen heroum a Iunone dicitur tractum, quod Graece 'Iuno' Hera appellatur, et ideo nescio quis filius eius secundum graecorum fabulas heros fuit nuncupatus, hoc videlicet mysticum significante fabula, quod aer Iunoni deputetur, ubi volunt cum daemonibus heroas habitare, quo nomine appellant alicuius meriti animas defunctorum.' Idem in VII [cap. 6]: 'inter lunae gyrum et nimborum ac ventorum cacumina aerias esse animas, sed eas animo, non oculis videri et vocari heroas et lares et genoios.' Ex iis liquido patet qui sint heroes et unde nomen sortiantur. Trimegistus quoque auctor est heroas habitare inter aeris purissimam partem supra nos et terram ubi nullus est nebulis locus. Minime praetereundum est id quod Martianus Capella tradit in *De Nuptiis philologiae* [2.160] heroas videlicet ab Hera, quae terra dicitur, esse nuncupatos. Ista curioso interpretaeti fuerant vestiganda et enarranda. Nisi forte Servius existimavit satis superque esse id quod tractabat mutilatum tradere atque concisum. Cum boni tamen grammatici officium sit etymologias verborum significataque ubertum explicare.' Haec ille.

... Similarly, Servius is too succinct in his comment on the heroes. And he did not explain the whole matter in its not so small significance. Let us therefore listen to St. Augustine, who in book X of *De civitate Dei* [cap. 21] teaches most eloquently what heroes are with these words: 'It is said that the name 'heroes' was derived from Juno, because in Greek Juno is called 'Hera', and therefore some son of her, according to the Greek myths, was named 'Heros'; the tale clearly signified this secret information that the air was the domain of Juno, where they think the heroes live together with the demons, and by the name hero they call the souls of the deserving dead.' The same in his 7th book [cap. 6]: 'Between the orbit of the moon and the outer limit of the clouds and winds there are the aerial souls, but these are seen with the mind and not with the eyes, and they are called *Heroes*, *Lares*, and *Genii*.' From these things it is clearly evident who the heroes are and from what

²¹¹ Maltby (1991), s.v. *heros*.

²¹² Cap. 21; this is incorporated by Isidorus in *Etym.* VII.xi.96.

they got their name. [Hermes] Trismegistus also testifies that the heroes live between the purest part of the air above us and the earth, where there is no place for clouds. Least of all should we ignore that which Martianus Capella writes in his *De nuptiis philologiae* [2.160], ‘that ‘heroes’ is derived from Hera, who was said to be the earth.²¹³ These things had to be tracked down and explained by the thoughtful interpreter. Unless perhaps Servius thought that it was more than enough to hand down in mutilated and concise form what he was discussing. But it is the task of the good grammarian to explain in full the etymologies of words and to explain their meaning.’ This is what he said.

This lemma sums up the importance attached to etymology by an early modern commentator of Virgil such as Badius. The citation from Martianus Capella shows that explaining etymologies and the meaning of words in full was part of the tasks of the grammarian. For this reason Badius, following Martianus Capella, criticizes Servius, who only provided a short comment at the word *Heros*, without any information on the etymology of the word, which could account for its meaning.²¹⁴ Therefore Badius cites St. Augustine and Martianus Capella and refers to Hermes Trismegistus. The lemma exemplifies how etymology was seen as a tool that could be used as an entry point to knowledge about classical culture.

The fourth and last category of etymologies consists of etymologies adduced in support of a certain argument or interpretation. Clearly the boundaries between this category and the previous ones is not sharp: my categorization is for practical purposes only. For a discussion of an example of this type I refer to section 7 of this chapter, where I will discuss Landino’s lemma on the word *Musa*.

The aforementioned categories of etymologies demonstrate the early modern conceptualization of etymology as a tool for interpretation through an analysis of names. Especially in the case of the Virgilian commentary, where a commentator had to deal with an imposing amount of information handed down through the tradition of Virgilian scholarship, this kind of argumentative tool could aid in underpinning the commentator’s interpretation and his authority as a scholar explaining Virgil. In the next two sections I will discuss commentary lemmata pertaining to the field of rhetoric – a field in which longstanding scholarly tradition

²¹³ Cf. Var., *L.* 5,65: ‘Idem hi dei caelum et terra Iupiter et Iuno...’ [‘These gods ‘heaven’ and ‘earth’ are the same as ‘Jupiter’ and ‘Juno’.’].

²¹⁴ Servius wrote *ad loc.*: *Heros*] *vir fortis, semideus, plus ab homine habens, ut ait Hesiodus* [‘*Heros*: a brave man, half god, deriving more from man, as tells Hesiod’].

was invigorated by the rediscovery of important classical texts in the early modern period.

5. Rhetoric: A. 1.1 *Arma virumque* and the Influence of Quintilian

The increased interest in rhetoric – especially visible in the attention paid to style and figures of speech (clearly visible from the commentaries of Farnaby and La Rue in which many lemmata only consist of a brief identification of these phenomena)²¹⁵ – is often seen as one of the hallmarks of the Renaissance.²¹⁶ Many humanist scholars wrote rhetorical manuals or other works related to rhetoric.²¹⁷ This attention is reflected in the commentaries on the *Aeneid*, which frequently identify rhetorical concepts or the use of rhetoric in Virgil.²¹⁸ The combination of the increased attention to rhetoric by humanist scholars and the rediscovery of classical works determined to a great extent the use of this discipline in early modern commentaries on the *Aeneid*. More in general, the rediscoveries of classical texts in the second half of the fifteenth century had an important influence on the development of the Renaissance grammatical and rhetorical tradition:²¹⁹ the humanists came into contact with Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* (hitherto only known from fragments) and Varro's *De lingua Latina* (of which the first edition was

²¹⁵ The domains of grammar and rhetoric overlap where figures and tropes are concerned. This was already the case in antiquity (see for example Q. 1.8.16: *Enimvero iam maiore cura doceat [sc. grammaticus] tropos omnes, quibus praecipue non poema modo sed etiam oratio ornatur, schemata utraque, id est figuras, quaeque lexeos quaeque dianoeas vocantur: quorum ego sicut troporum tractatum in eum locum differo quo mihi de ornatu orationis dicendum erit.* [‘The grammatici, however, should take greater care in teaching all the Tropes, which are the main ornaments not only of poetry but also of oratory, and both kinds of Schemata – that is to say, Figures of speech (*lexis*) and of Thought (*dianoia*) as they are called; these, like the Tropes, I postpone till I come to deal with the ornaments of style.’ (transl. Russell 2001)]).

²¹⁶ Grendler (1989), 205.

²¹⁷ This is also visible in the other types of scholarship of Virgilian commentators, like Badius (editor and printer of manuals on rhetoric), Pontanus (*Poetica*), Melanchthon (*De rhetorica libri tres*) and Thomas Farnaby, who wrote the *Index Rhetoricus* (1625).

²¹⁸ The specific interest in figures and tropes is clearly reflected in the commentaries. In commenting on A. 3.56-57, (...) *quid non mortalia pectora cogis / auri sacra fames!* (...) Nascimbaenus discusses an example of the distinction between both categories (referring to Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.1.3 and 9.3.24-25): *Exclamatione avaritiam detestatur. Quintilianus id vocat ὑπέρβατον, non illud quidem, quod inter τρόπους annumeratur, sed aliud quod est eius figurae sententiarum, quae ἀποστροφή dicitur, simile (...)* [‘Through the exclamation he renounces greed. Quintilian calls this ‘hyperbaton’, not the one however, which is counted among the ‘tropes’, but the other one which is similar to that figure of the sentence, which is called ‘apostrophe’.’ (i.e. turning away from the normal audience, addressing another, which is an expression of pathos)].

²¹⁹ Tavoni (2000), 659.

published in 1471 by Pomponio Leto).²²⁰ These works showed how the Romans themselves had disagreed on important issues of grammar and rhetoric, stimulating a re-evaluation of the established practices in these fields. With the rise of the vernacular, Renaissance scholars also started to write the first vernacular grammars, borrowing the descriptive framework from the traditional Latin ones.²²¹

The importance of the rediscovery of classical works pertaining to the language sciences is clearly visible in the instant influence of the rediscovery of a complete edition of Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* (in 1416 by Poggio Bracciolini at St. Gall).²²² It quickly became the humanist's standard reference for classical rhetoric.²²³ The humanist scholar Giulio Pomponio Leto (1428-1498) – involved in the first printed edition of the *Aeneid* (1469), the writer of a commentary on Quintilian and Virgil, and the first editor of Varro's *De lingua Latina* – refers to it frequently in his commentary on the *Aeneid*.²²⁴ In the first lemma of his commentary, Leto cites from the *Institutio*:

Leto, on A. 1.1. *Arma virumque*

Arma virumque] Quintilianus ait: “breviter et dilucide summam rei, de qua cognoscere volumus, indicare in principiis debent poetae, ut fecerunt Vergilius et Homerus, in operum suorum principiis.”²²⁵ Et idem libro primo, tres in elocutione virtutes inesse debere monstrat, dicens: “Sit autem imprimis lectio virilis et cum

²²⁰ Another important stimulus was the rediscovery of works of Cicero. See Sabbadini (1905, 100); only three of Leto's commentaries were published, namely those on Columella, Quintilian and Virgil – of which the last one was published without his consent in 1490 in Brescia. See Kallendorf (1999, 44n.47) who concludes that Leto's work on Virgil should be re-examined.

²²¹ Percival (1995), 148-150.

²²² Plett (2004), 14-16.

²²³ Lorenzo Valla took Quintilian as a starting point in writing his very influential *Elegantiae Linguae Latinae*. Classen (2003), 175.

²²⁴ The situation regarding the text of Leto's commentary is very complex. For this chapter, I have used the edition *In omnia quae quidem extant, P. Vergilij Maronis opera, commentarij, varia multarum rerum cognitione referti, nuncque primum in lucem editi / Iulius Pomponius Sabini ; cum rerum et verborum in hisce memorabilium locupletissimo indice* (Basel: Joannes Oporinus 1544). For a discussion and a recent bibliography of Leto's commentary, see Abbamonte (2011, 115n.1). Contrary to what Zabughin (2000 [1921-23]), I.191) states ('... Pomponio era dispregiatore della retorica...'), Leto's use of the *Institutio oratoria* in his commentary indicates a certain fondness of rhetoric.

²²⁵ Q. 4.1,34: *si breviter et dilucide summam rei, de qua cognoscere debeat, indicamus (quod Homerus atque Vergilius operum suorum principiis faciunt)*. ['If we shall have briefly and clearly indicated the core of the matter, of which one must learn (which Homer and Virgil do in the beginnings of their works)'].

suavitate quadam gravis, et non †pressae†²²⁶ similis: quia carmen est et se poetae canere testantur. Non tamen in canticum dissoluta, nec plasmate, ut nunc a plerisque fit, effoeminata, de quo genere C. Caesarem adhuc praetextatum accipimus dixisse: ‘Si cantas, male cantas; si legis, cantas’.”²²⁷

Quintilian says: ‘The poets should briefly and clearly state the principal matter, about which we want to know in the opening of their works, as Virgil and Homer did.’ And the same author shows in the first book that there should be three virtues in the style [of an oration], for he says: ‘But foremost the reading should be manly and dignified with a certain smoothness, and not like prose, because it is a song and the poets claim that they sing. But the reading should not dissolve into actual singing, nor in effeminate modulations, as is done nowadays by most, on which practice we hear that Gaius Caesar, still a boy, has said: ‘If you sing, you sing badly; if you read, you sing.’

Leto cites from the *Institutio* to show how Quintilian refers to the opening words of the *Aeneid* as a good example of how a poet should give a brief and clear indication of the topic of his work at the beginning of it.²²⁸ By citing this particular phrase, Leto’s lemma fits into the traditional discussion in Virgilian commentaries on the appropriateness of *Arma virumque*: already Servius noted how some scholars questioned the order of these words, as *arma* refers to the second part of the *Aeneid*, and *virum(que)* to the first part.²²⁹ Citing the text of Quintilian, who, being a scholar

²²⁶ The edition prints *pressae*, which though grammatically correct does not make sense and should probably be emended to *prosa* in view of the reference to Quintilian.

²²⁷ Q. 1.8,2: *sit autem in primis lectio virilis et cum suavitate quadam gravis, et non quidem prosae similis, quia et carmen est et se poetae canere testantur, non tamen in canticum dissoluta nec plasmate, ut nunc a plerisque fit, effeminata, de quo genere optime C. Caesarem praetextatum adhuc accepimus dixisse: ‘si cantas, male cantas, si legis, cantas.* [However this reading must foremost be manly and with a certain dignity with sweetness, and certainly not like that of prose, because it is a song and the poets claim to sing, but not [should this result in] licentious singing nor in the effeminate modulations, as is now done by many, on which practice we have heard that Gaius [Julius] Caesar, still wearing the toga *praetexta* [i.e., the toga of boys] has said most excellently: “If you sing, you sing badly, if you read, you sing.”’].

²²⁸ This judgment is also found in Tib. Cl. Donatus, *ad loc.*: *in hac brevitate et angusta propositione multa complexus est; nam et proposuit et divisit et in eo ipso sese commendat (...).* [‘in this short and limited proposition he has comprised much; for he has set out [the topic], and has divided [it], and in doing so he commends himself.’].

²²⁹ The discussion of this topic – which was in itself already traditional, as seen from the fact that the opening words of the *Iliad* had also been issue of debate in the Homeric scholia – became a traditional

living in the 1st century AD and thus very close to the time of Virgil, was of great authority, he settles the argument in favor of Virgil (see also the next section). Quintilian adduces Virgil as an authoritative example for how a poet should state the subject matter of his poem at the beginning of his work. Citing this passage

element in the Virgilian commentary tradition. Servius on A. 1.1 *Arma* (referring to the Life of Virgil in his preface): *Multi varie disserunt cur ab armis Vergilius coeperit, omnes tamen inania sentire manifestum est, cum eum constet aliunde sumpsisse principium, sicut in praemissa eius vita monstratum est. (...)* ['Many have discussed in divergent opinions why Virgil began with 'arma', it is however evident that all debate in vain, because it is undisputed that he had selected another opening, as has been demonstrated in his foregoing Life'], and on A. 1.1. *Arma virumque: figura usitata est ut non eo ordine respondeamus quo proposuimus; nam prius de erroribus Aeneae dicit, post de bello. Hac autem figura etiam in prosa utimur.* ['It is a common figure of speech not to give the corresponding items in the same order in which we announced topics; for he speaks first about the wanderings of Aeneas, and later about the war. This figure of speech we also use in prose.' (transl. Copeland & Sluiter 2009)]. Fulgentius notes the controversy, but gives a rather idiosyncratic analogical reading which forms the key to his allegorical interpretation of the *Aeneid*: [Virgil speaking to F.] *Nam ut ab armis inciperem, - scivi enim quod viri vocabulum significatio sexus sit, non honoris; si viri primum nomen ponerem: multi viri sunt, non tamen omnes laudandi; ergo virtutem primum posui (...) ... trifarius in vita humana gradus est, primum habere, deinde regere quod habeas, tertium vero ornare quod regis. Ergo tres gradus istos in uno versu nostro considera positos, id est: 'arma', 'virum' et 'primus': 'arma', id est virtus, pertinet ad substantiam corporalem, 'virum', id est sapientia, pertinet ad substantiam sensualem, 'primus' vero, id est princeps, pertinet ad substantiam censualem, quo sit ordo huiusmodi: habere, regere, ornare.* ['For that I started with 'Arms', - in fact I knew that the word 'man' has a signification of gender, not of honor; if I used 'man' as first word: there are many men, not all however are to be praised; therefore I placed excellence in the first place (...) ... there are three degrees in human life, first 'having', then 'to rule what you have', but the third 'to adorn what you rule'. Take it therefore that these three steps are placed in one verse of mine, that is: 'weapons', 'man', and 'first': 'weapons', that is: 'excellence', pertains to the corporal component, 'man', that is: 'wisdom', pertains to the component of the senses, but 'first': 'leader', pertains to the component of appraisal, so that the order is as follows: having, ruling, adorning.'] (Fulg., *Expositio*, 146-147). A nice early modern discussion of the topic (and solution of the problem) is found in La Cerda who comments *ad loc.*: [in the margin: *Virgilius defenditur*] *Sunt qui poetam reprehendant, quod virum postposuerit, ad quem pertinent sex priores libri; arma praeposuerit, ad quae sex posteriores. Sed sciant hi, non constringi oratores aut historicos hac lege, adeo nec poetas. (...) Sed quid si adhuc alia defensio poetae? Sunt enim non pauci, qui dicunt, nihil curandam distinctionem de aequa illa portione librorum, cum respectu ad duas voces arma, virum.* ['Some people reprimand the poet, because he has postponed 'man', to whom pertain the first six books; and because he placed 'arms' up front, to which pertain the six last books. But let them understand that orators and historians are not constrained by this rule, and neither are the poets. (...) But what if there is yet another defense of the poet? For there are not a few, who say, that one should not care about this equal division of the books, with respect to those two words 'arms', 'man'.].

from Quintilian in a lemma on the opening words of the *Aeneid*, serves as a defense of Virgil. In the next section I will discuss another work of which the rediscovery provided to be influential for the commentary tradition on the *Aeneid*.

6. Rhetoric: A. 1.4 *vi* and Tiberius Claudius Donatus

The *Interpretationes Vergilianae* of Tiberius Claudius Donatus resurfaced again in Italy in the mid-15th century. Two Carolingian manuscripts were brought to Italy, the first in 1438, the second in the 1460s. Copies of the work circulated widely.²³⁰ Like Quintilian, the rediscovery of Tib. Cl. Donatus' work influenced the commentary tradition, but to a lesser extent.²³¹ A manuscript of the text was owned by Landino, who as I will show made use of it in his commentary.²³²

In the *Interpretationes*, Tib. Cl. Donatus gives an overall interpretation of the *Aeneid* by reading it as a work of panegyric rhetoric.²³³ This reading starts from the central hypothesis that Virgil has written the epic as a poem of praise for Augustus, shaping Aeneas as his mythical counterpart.²³⁴ This type of reading makes it necessary to uphold the moral integrity of Aeneas' behavior and often results in the need to explain inconsistencies or less fortuitous actions on Aeneas's part. This defense of Aeneas (or Virgil) had been a traditional part of the commentary tradition²³⁵, but received an important stimulus from the reappearance of Tib. Cl.

²³⁰ Reynolds & Marshall (1983), 158.

²³¹ The dating of the work by Tib. Cl. Donatus is uncertain and not much about his life is known. Starr (1992), 159-174.

²³² The first edition of the full text of the *Interpretationes* appeared only in 1535. Before that, scholars used an epitome that was published by Landino. See Georges (1969), xix; Kallendorf (1989), 14 & 14n.37; and Wilson-Okamura (2010), 16-17.

²³³ Copeland & Sluiter (2010) point out that Tib. Cl. Donatus' rhetorical interpretation of the *Aeneid* is part of the traditional competition between the language disciplines, in this case whether the explanation of poets belonged to the domain of the grammarian or the rhetorician. Copeland & Sluiter (2010), 141.

²³⁴ Tib. Cl. Donatus in his preface: *Primum igitur et ante omnia sciendum est quod materiae genus Maro noster adgressus sit; hoc enim nisi inter initia fuerit cognitum, vehementer errabitur. Et certe laudativum est (...) Talem enim monstrare Aenean debuit, ut dignus Caesari, in cuius honorem haec scribebantur, parens et auctor generis praeberetur (...).* ['First then and before all else it is to be known what sort of subject matter our Maro has taken up; for if this is not known at the start, bad mistakes will be the result. And it is certainly of the laudatory [type] (...) For he had to show Aeneas to be such, that he could be presented as an ancestor and progenitor of the *gens* worthy of Caesar, in whose honor these things were written (...).'].

²³⁵ Especially Macrobius made it his aim to solve the inconsistencies and other problematic passages in the *Aeneid*. Comparetti (1908), 65.

Donatus' work.²³⁶ For a commentator such as Landino, whose theoretical frame for reading the *Aeneid* depended on the exemplarity of Aeneas' behavior, this results in lemmata such as the following on V., A. 1.4 *vi*:

Landino on A. 1.4 *vi*

Vi] *Vis*, vim et *vi* 'i' in singulari habent. Est autem a Graeco βία, nam apud illos dicitur, et significat 'robur', ut "fit via *vi*" [A. 2.494], item virtutem, ut "multa *vi* muniet Albam" [A. 1.271]. Item 'violentiam', unde dicimus 'illatam vim virgini', significat copiam, "vis magna auri homini illi fuit." *Vi* ergo superum id est non iustitia et aequitate, sed violentia a qua non abest crudelitas. Conciliat ergo benevolentiam Aeneae a persona adversariorum qui tam inique Aeneam insectarentur, et a persona Aeneae commiserationem excitat, quod non sua culpa, sed aliorum crudelitate in tantas tamque graves aerumnas inciderit. Et tamen omnia animi magnitudine et sapientia toleraverit et superaverit, et cum non verisimile videretur quod superi dii ita inique fuerint hominem pium insectari, ostendit illos studia Iunonis esse secutos, quam Homerus etiam scribit deos in Troianos concitasse.

The nominative, accusative and ablative of *vis* have an 'i' in the singular. The word is derived from the Greek, for they say '*bia*', and it means '*robur*' ['force'], as in "he makes a road through force ['*vi*']"; likewise it means *virtus* ['virtue, courage'], as in 'and he will build the walls of Alba with great virtue ['*vi*']'. Likewise it means *violentia* ('violence'), so that we can say 'violence ['*vim*'] done to a virgin'; and it means 'abundance' ['*copia*'], "that man had a great abundance of gold." '*Vi* superum' thus means not through justice and fairness, but through violence, not lacking in cruelty. He [Virgil] thus procures favor for Aeneas from the character of his adversaries since they pursued Aeneas so unjustly, and he procures compassion from the character of Aeneas, because he fell into such great and such serious hardships not through a fault of his own, but because of the cruelty of others. And yet he endured and conquered all these things with greatness of spirit and with wisdom; and because it would not seem likely that the gods would be so unjust as to hunt down a pious man, he shows that they acted in accordance with the zeal of Juno, of whom Homer already writes that she stirred up the gods against the Trojans.

²³⁶ For reading the *Aeneid* in terms of epideictic rhetoric in the Renaissance, see Kallendorf (1989).

The lemma starts with an etymology, followed by a semantic analysis, but then turns towards a rhetorical analysis of the way in which Aeneas is portrayed in the passage: Aeneas' virtue is stressed by Virgil by contrasting it with the unjust anger of Juno. For the reader this brings about *benevolentia* and *commiseratio* towards Aeneas, because the protagonist did not suffer all his misfortunes by his own fault, but because of the anger of one of the gods.²³⁷ And not only was he an innocent victim of this divine wrath, he also endured it in a magnificent and wise manner. A look at Tib. Cl. Donatus' comment on this passage shows that Landino's interpretation is in fact much in accordance with that of his early 5th-century precursor:

Tib. Cl. Donatus on A. 1.4

Vis enim non est nisi cum fit aliquid extra leges, hoc est contra fatum. Ut autem ex hoc quoque excusaret Aenean, qui nihil tale de superis meruerat, addidit *saevae memorem Iunonis ob iram*, hoc est non propter Aeneae aliquam culpam haec superos fecisse, sed ut obsequerentur studio et voluntati Iunonis, cui utpote reginae universi in quam vellet partem consentire debuerant et idem velle quod illa praesumpserat. Purgatur ergo etiam ex ista parte Aeneas. Restat ut ipsam quoque Iunonem frustra adversus ipsum odium suscepisse monstremus, in quo ipso non tantum purgatio est susceptae personae, verum etiam deformatio Iunonis, quam e diverso poeta constituit; ait enim *saevae memorem Iunonis ob iram*.²³⁸

For it is only *vis* if something is done in violation of the laws, that is to say against fate. And to excuse Aeneas on this ground too, who had deserved nothing of the

²³⁷ Servius on A. 1.4 *vi superum* also notes the defence of Aeneas by Virgil; Fulgentius also comments on the function of *vi superum* (through the *persona* of Virgil), but gives it a Platonic twist by connecting the virtue of Aeneas to the wisdom of his soul (Fulg., *Expositio*, 144-145).

²³⁸ The endurance of Aeneas throughout all his hardships is one of the key themes for Tib. Cl. Donatus, as appears from his comment on A. 1.8-11 *Musa mihi causas memora ... labores inpulerit?*: (...) *Quod autem in themate posuit 'saevae memorem Iunonis ob iram', hic quoque confirmat. Interea hoc dicendo instruit homines ad bonam vivendi rationem. Bonum enim virum iustus dolor debet commovere et sic nec in ultione sit immoderatus nec ipsas quamvis iustas inimicitias diutius in animo retinet. (...) Quantum ergo reprehendenda est Iuno, quae nec accepit Aeneae iniuriam et sic persecuta est innocentem!* [(...) Here, too, he confirms that he has indeed made 'through cruel Juno's unforgiving wrath' a topic. Meanwhile by saying this he instructs people in the method of living well. For legitimate grief should move the good man and thus he should neither be unrestrained in revenge nor should he keep in his mind too long his enmities, however justified. (...) How much then is Juno to be blamed, who did not receive an injustice from Aeneas and thus persecuted an innocent man!'].

sort from the gods, he added ‘through cruel Juno’s unforgiving wrath’, that is to say that not because of any fault of Aeneas did the gods do those things, but in order to submit to the zeal and will of Juno, with whom, as is natural, since she is the queen, all had to agree in in what she wanted and go along with what she had initiated. Aeneas is thus cleansed in this respect as well. It remains that we show that even Juno herself had taken up her hate against him in vain. This is not so much a cleansing of the character of Aeneas, but even the depreciation of Juno, whom the poet has depicted in opposition to him; for he says ‘through cruel Juno’s unforgiving wrath’.

Landino’s interpretation of the passage is in many ways the same as that of Tib. Cl. Donatus: Aeneas is excused for having been struck by misfortune, because this was the result of unjust anger from *one* of the gods. While Landino’s explanation closely follows that of Tib. Cl. Donatus he also adds some rhetorical terminology of his own: *conciliat benevolentiam; commiserationem excitat; non verisimile videretur*.²³⁹ All of these elements pertain to key notions from rhetorical theory: the tasks of the orator in giving a good opening to a speech (*captatio benevolentiae*), the use of affects to influence the audience (*pathos*), the importance of the credibility of elements from an oration (probability, *verisimilitudo*). Each of these elements also pertains to one of the three means of persuasion (ethos, pathos and logos).²⁴⁰ The use of this terminology creates a reciprocal relation: on the one hand, Landino analyses the opening of the *Aeneid* as if it were an oratorical work (a frame presented by Tib. Cl. Donatus, which fits Landino’s very specific interpretative frame with which he approaches the work, more on this in **section 7**); on the other hand, he explains or illustrates these very rhetorical concepts with the help of the *Aeneid*. Both aspects demonstrate the importance of rhetoric in the humanist mindset. One of the main reasons why Landino’s teaching, part of the Florentine *studio*, focused on rhetorical theory was that many of his pupils would eventually pursue a worldly career – at the court, in diplomacy or in politics. The rhetorical analysis of a poetical work such as the *Aeneid* is therefore not only of use to the formation of scholars, but also to the education of men of the world. Thus the role of the field of rhetoric in his commentary is in accordance with this educational context and the role of rhetoric

²³⁹ Tib. Cl. Donatus’ use of *purgare*, *monstrare* and *e diverso constituere* could also be reminiscent of a (forensic) rhetorical setting.

²⁴⁰ See Cic., *Or.*, 2.115 and 310; the three means of persuasion were often confused with the three tasks of the orator; see Copeland & Sluiter (2010), 163n.85.

in Florentine society.²⁴¹ All early modern commentaries on the *Aeneid* that are discussed in this study were conceived against the background of a centuries-old tradition of Virgilian scholarship, while at the same time being conceived in an era in which much was changing, both in scholarship and in society at large. In the last section of this chapter, I will discuss a lemma from Landino's commentary on the *Aeneid*, which presents one of the more striking early modern frameworks of Virgilian interpretation.

7. Poetics: A. 1.8 *Musa* and the *furor poeticus*

The rhetorical reading of the *Aeneid* which we have encountered above in Tib. Cl. Donatus and Landino sometimes led to the reading of the *entire* work from a rhetorical point-of-view. As we have just seen, this often meant a reading in terms of morality. This type of reading originates from the connection between rhetoric and poetics on the one hand, and rhetoric and ethics on the other, which dates from antiquity itself and for which Virgil was an essential author. In an extreme form, this type of reading developed into the allegorizing of the entire work, for example in terms of a moral allegory of the virtuous life (starting with Fulgentius). This line of interpretation became one of the two important branches in the commentary tradition on the *Aeneid* – the other one being the grammatical and rhetorical one starting with Tib. Cl. Donatus and Servius.²⁴²

Landino presented this kind of allegorical reading, from a Neoplatonic point of view, in the third and fourth book of his *Disputationes Camaldulenses*. And though he states differently in the dedicatory letter to his commentary,²⁴³ this

²⁴¹ In an analysis of Landino's commentary on Horace's *Ars Poetica*, Christoph Pieper also points to the embeddedness of the commentary in the social and political context of Florentine public life. Pieper (2013).

²⁴² In his preface, Tib. Claudius Donatus explains his desire to write a (rhetorical) commentary on the *Aeneid* by referring to the existing grammatical tradition: *Si Maronis carmina competenter attenderis et eorum mentem commodè comprehenderis, inuenies in poeta rhetorem summum; atque inde intelliges Vergilium non grammaticos sed oratores praecipuos tradere debuisse*. ['If you will pay attention to Maro's poems properly and you will get hold of their design neatly, you will find in this poet the highest rhetor; and from this you will understand that Virgil should be entrusted not to the grammarians, but especially to the orators.']. See also Comparetti (1908, 61).

²⁴³ *Nam quemadmodum in Camaldulensibus philosophi interpretis munus obivimus, sic in his commentariis grammatici rhetorisque vices praestabimus*. ['For just as we have attended to the duty of the philosophical interpreter in our *Camaldulenses*, so will we fulfill in these commentaries the office of the grammarian and the rhetor.']. See Kallendorf (1989), 132-136 for a discussion of these two approaches to literature in Landino.

specific approach is clearly visible in this work too.²⁴⁴ Central to Landino's theory of poetics, which determines his reading of the *Aeneid*, is the notion of the *furor poeticus* – the poetic fury which brings the poet in contact with the divine and allows poetical works to comprise divine knowledge. Central to this concept is the idea that the human soul is imprisoned in the human body and only able to return to the world of Ideas by contemplating the ideas.²⁴⁵ From this conceptualization, Landino develops a distinct conception of poetry: it is not merely important for moral and political education, but in fact encompasses all domains of learning. This idea is clearly visible in Landino's *Praefatio in Virgilio* (1462).²⁴⁶ In fact, the *furor poeticus* functions as a direct connection between the human and the divine, by which the *poeta theologus* is able to serve as an intermediary between both worlds. Thus poetry functions as an instrument for bringing the individual soul closer to the divine by revealing divine knowledge. Virgil is considered by Landino to be one of the most eminent poets in the respect.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ See Kallendorf (1989, 132-142; 136): '... for Landino, both the allegorical-philosophical and the grammatical-rhetorical approaches to poetry lead naturally to the praise of virtue and condemnation of vice. For this reason, it was difficult for Landino to maintain in practice the methodological distinction he professed between the two approaches, for no matter where he began, he tended to shift toward a common critical ground.'

²⁴⁵ See for this concept Galand-Hallyn & Hallyn (2001), ch. 2.2; Oehlig (1992); Nebes (2001); Zinten (1990), 189-203; Pieper (2008).

²⁴⁶ 'Est igitur poetica disciplina non dicam una ex iis artibus quas nostri maiores liberales appellarunt, sed quae illas universas complectens (...). Quam quidem rem, ut et divinus ille Plato in *Phaedro* et Platonius Cicero in *Tusculanis disputationibus* ostendit, nemo umquam mortalium sine divino quodam furore attingere potuit.' ['The poetic discipline is however not, I would say, one of these arts which our ancestors have called 'liberal', but one which embraces them all, (...). Indeed, as both the divine Plato also shows in his *Phaedrus* and the Platonist Cicero in his *Tusculan Disputations*, never was any mortal able to achieve this without a certain divine fury.']. *Praefatio in Virgilio* (ed. Cardini, 1974, 313).

²⁴⁷ 'Quam ob rem si divina potius quam humana haec, de qua diu loquor, disciplina habenda est, si antiquissimi sunt omnium poetae, si utilitas simul atque iocunditas ab illis expectatur, si et bene dicendi et bene vivendi infinita praecepta atque exempla in illis deprehendimus, si soli ex omni scriptorum genere sunt apud quos omnes disciplinae reperiantur, si et hominibus admirandissimi et diis immortalibus acceptissimi semper fuerunt, nihil iam vobis ob stare, optimi adolescentes, video, quominus divinissimam hanc disciplinam omnibus ingenii viribus et tota, ut aiunt, mente amplectamini; praesertim cum ex eo vate illa nobis haurienda proponantur, qui rerum copia et verborum elegantia ita reliquos antecellit, ut nemo, nisi longo intervallo, sibi secundus esse apud Latinos possit.' ['For this reason, if this discipline concerning which I have been speaking for a long time is to be considered divine rather than human, if poets are the most ancient of all, if benefit as well as pleasure is to be expected from them, if we learn through them the innumerable rules and examples of speaking well

The effect of this frame on the reading of the *Aeneid* is clearly visible in Landino's lemma on the word *Musa* in A. 1.8. The lemma starts with an element of grammar: Landino gives two possible etymologies of the word *Musa* (of which the second goes back to Plato's *Cratylus*):

Landino on A. 1.8 *Musa*

Musa ab eo quo est μυεῖν, id est 'docere', dicitur, vel παρὰ τὸ μῶ,²⁴⁸ id est 'inquirō', nam omnium bonarum artium illas inventrices esse volunt.

The word Muse comes from the word *muein* [Greek], which means 'to teach', or from *mō* [Greek], which means 'to search', for they consider them [the Muses] the inventors of all the liberal arts.

The lemma shows how the etymologies given by Landino support his subsequent interpretation of the Muses as sources for divine inspiration for the poet. The names of the nine Muses are given with reference to Hesiod,²⁴⁹ and then a transition is made towards an allegorical reading (with reference to Fulgentius) of the nine Muses in which they refer to the human speech organs:

Landino on A. 1.8 *Musa*

Anaximander Lampsacenus et Xenophanes Heracleopolites dicunt poetas esse in tutela Apollinis qui lyra canit et novem Musarum in quarum medio ipse residet. Et per Apollinem humanam vocem intelligunt quae novem instrumentis proficitur. Haec autem Fulgentio teste²⁵⁰ intelligunt quattuor anteriores dentes - quorum

and living well, if they are the only ones of all types of authors in whom all the disciplines are to be found, if they always were the most admirable for men and the most welcome to the immortal gods, then nothing, I think, stands in the way, excellent young men, of your embracing this most divine discipline with all the powers of your talent as they say, with your whole mind; especially since these things are laid out for us to be harvested from this poet, who surpasses all the others in richness of subject matter and elegance of words to such an extent, that no-one, unless at a long distance, can call himself second to him among the Latin [writers].'. Landino, *Praefatio in Virgilio* (ed. Cardini (1974), 324-5).

²⁴⁸ Pl., *Crat.*, 406a1-5.

²⁴⁹ Hes. *WD*, 1; *Th.*, 77-79.

²⁵⁰ Although Landino only mentions him in this section, the second part of the first section of the lemma is also much dependent on Fulgentius, who writes in the fifteenth tale from his *Mitologiarum libri* (called *Fabula de novem Musis*): *Huic etiam Apollini novem deputant Musas ipsumque decimum Musis adiciunt illa*

siquis desit sibilus et non vox ex ore provenit - item duo labia; septima est lingua; octavum palatum quod Graeci 'uranion' dicunt, quoniam sit ad formam caeli quid 'uranos' appellatur. Qua ex re octava Musa dicitur Urania. Nona est gutturis profunditas, per quam spiritus egreditur.

Anaximander of Lampsacus and Xenophanes of Heracleapolis say that the poets are under the protection of Apollo, who plays on his lyre, and of the nine Muses in whose midst he himself resides. And by 'Apollo' they mean the human voice which originates from nine instruments.

These [nine instruments], on account of Fulgentius, they understand as the four frontal teeth – if any of these is missing, a hissing comes from the mouth, not an articulated sound – further two lips; the seventh [instrument] is the tongue; the eighth, the palate which the Greeks call 'ouranion', because it has the form of the sky, which is called 'ouranos'. For this reason they call the eighth Muse Urania. The ninth is the depth of the throat, through which the breath comes out.

Landino, however, discards the interpretation by Fulgentius and prefers the one offered by Plato in his *Republic*. At this point the concept of *furor poeticus* is

videlicet causa, quod humanae vocis decem sint modulamina; unde et cum decacorda Apollo pingitur cithara. Sed et lex divina decacordum dicit psalterium. Fit ergo vox quattuor dentibus, id est e contra positis, ad quos lingua percutit et quibus si unus minus fuerit sibilum potius quam vocem reddat necesse est. Duo labia velut cimbala verborum commoda modulantia, lingua ut plectrum quae curvamine quodam vocalem format spiritum, palatum cuius concavitas profert sonum, gutturis fistula quae tereti meatum spiritalem praebebat excursu et pulmo qui velut aerius follis concepta reddit ac revocat. Habes ergo novem Musarum vel Apollinis ipsius redditam rationem, sicut in libris suis Anaximander Lampsacenus et Zenophanes Eracleopolites exponunt (...) Nos vero novem Musas doctrinae atque scientiae dicimus modos, hoc est (...). [‘They also assign to Apollo the nine Muses and add him to the Muses as a tenth one, for the reason that there are ten organs of articulation for the human voice, whence Apollo is also depicted with a lyre of ten strings. Also Holy Scripture speaks of a psaltery of ten strings. Speech is produced with the four teeth, that is, the ones placed in the front, against which the tongue strikes; and if one of them were missing it would necessarily give forth a whistle rather than speech; two lips like cymbals, suitably modulating the words; the tongue, like a plectrum as with some pliancy it shapes the breathing of the voice; the palate, the dome of which projects the sound; the throat tube, which provides a track for the breath as it is expelled; and the lungs, like a sack of air, exhaling and inhaling what is articulated. There you have the explanation of the nine Muses and Apollo himself as given by Anaximander of Lampsacenum and Zenophanes of Heraclea. (...) But I also say that the nine Muses are the stages of learning and knowledge, as follows. (...).’ (translation by Whitbread (1971)].

introduced and the Muses are connected to the heavenly spheres. Hesiod is brought forward as an additional authority for this interpretation:

Landino on A. 1.8 *Musa*

Ego autem Platoni libenter adhaereo. Ponit enim tantus philosophus divini furoris genera quattuor, de quibus alio fortasse in loco dicemus. Inter eos ponit poeticum eumque a Musis provenire demonstrat. Musas autem appellat caelestium sphaerarum cantus, nam in libro De republica, singulis sphaeris singulas Sirenas appositas dicit motum ipsum sphaerarum ac sonum qui inde fit significans. Quapropter per octo sphaeras octo Musas, ac per illarum concentum nonam ponit, quam, quoniam harmonia una est ex omnibus suavissime composita, excellentissimam reliquarum dixit Hesiodus. Ergo poesis a divino furore, furor a Musis, Musae a Iove, eodem Platonis teste, proveniunt. Sed de his alio in loco latius.

But I gladly adhere to Plato. For he, the great philosopher, states that there are four sorts of divine fury, of which we will perhaps speak at another place. Among those he places the poetic fury and he shows that it originates from the Muses. For he calls the Muses the song of the heavenly spheres, for in his *Republic*, he says that every sphere has its own Siren, referring to the very movement of the spheres and the sound that originates from it. Therefore there are eight Muses for eight spheres, and for their harmony he posits a ninth, which Hesiod has called the most excellent of all, for harmony is one, composed in the most pleasant way from all of the others. Thus poetry comes from divine fury, the fury from the Muses, the Muses from Jupiter, as Plato testifies. But on this topic more at another place.

Landino then turns back to a more down-to-earth discussion of his topic (having stated that he will come back to the Muses and divine inspiration more extensively in one of his other lemmata), namely to the names of the nine Muses, in which etymology again plays a prominent role:

Landino on A. 1.8 *Musa*

Alcmeon ac nonnulli alii eas caeli et terrae filias dicunt. Sed et de numero non omnes idem sentiunt, cum sint qui tres tamen ponant Musas, sed nobiliores novem dicunt. Ait nam Homerus Μοῦσαι δ' ἐννέα πᾶσαι ἀμειβόμεναι ὅτι καλῇ [Hom., Od. 24,60]. Addit etiam Diodorus, quod Clio dicitur quia κλέος 'gloria' est et poetae ex laudibus quos aliis tribunt et sibi et illis maximam gloriam vendicant.

Euterpe quoniam ex bonis quae ex illa doctrina perveniunt non mediocrem voluptatem capiant. (...) ²⁵¹

Alcmeon and a number of others call them the daughters of heaven and earth. But they do not all agree on the number of Muses, for some say that there are three Muses, but the more renowned authors say there are nine. For Homer says 'The nine Muses all replying with sweet voice'. And Diodorus adds that Clio is called that way because 'kleos' is 'glory' and that the poets from the praise which they offer to others gain the highest glory both for themselves and for those others. Euterpe is called that way because from the good things that come forth from her teachings, they gain much pleasure. (...)

What happens in this lemma, especially in the passage about the Muses in Plato and Hesiod, is that the Muses are discussed within the frame of Landino's concept of the *furor poeticus*. The commentator thus presents a discussion of old material in a new context. Apart from the mix between etymology, *realia* and poetical theory, the lemma is characterized by the mix of sources that are referred to: Hesiod's *Theogony*, Anaximander, Xenophanes, Fulgentius, Plato, Alcmaeon of Croton, Homer, Diodorus Siculus. It is clear that Landino has not consulted all these sources himself, especially in view of his probably limited knowledge of classical Greek. ²⁵²

A look at the remarks of other Virgilian commentators on this passage shows that Badius gives the same kind of interpretation – which is not surprising in view of Badius' frequent use of Landino's commentary – but most others focus on other points of interest from poetical theory: Pontanus focuses on the *invocatio* and refers to Corrado for more information on the (invocation of) the Muses; Juan Luis de la Cerda discusses both the invocation and the Muses himself; Farnaby in a much shorter lemma only identifies the Muse; and La Rue leaves the issue of divine inspiration aside altogether. This quick comparison shows all the more how

²⁵¹ The etymologies of Clio and Euterpe are found in Fulgentius, *Myth.* 1,15 (see Maltby (1991), s.v. *Clio* and *Euterpe*).

²⁵² In the 1507 edition of Landino's commentary, only the first part of the lemma is printed, while everything starting from *Haec autem Fulgentio teste* is removed. The explanation of elements from classical cultural history in the course of grammatical explanation was a traditional part of education. That is probably why the first part of the lemma is printed in the 1507 edition and why the more idiosyncratic discussion by Landino in the remainder of the lemma was omitted. More scholarly work on the reception of Landino's commentary and on the use of his work by other commentators needs to be done to come to a satisfying answer to these kind of questions.

characteristic the frame of interpretation in Landino's lemma is for his commentary and for the Florentine context in which he operated, with its interest in Neoplatonism and the teaching at the Florentine *studio*.

8. Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed a selection of lemmata from four commentaries that will also figure prominently in the other chapters of this dissertation. I have focused my discussion on lemmata discussing topics from three areas of the language disciplines: grammar, rhetoric and poetical theory. I have limited my analysis to lemmata on the first few lines of the epic (*A.* 1.1a-10) and started my discussion by discussing the educational context in which early modern *Aeneid*-commentaries often functioned. In my discussion of the subsequent case studies I discussed some particulars of each of the three aforementioned fields and at the same time showed that often the fields of grammar, rhetoric and poetics are intertwined. I have shown how the explanation of matters pertaining to those fields had been part of the competence of the grammarian since antiquity itself, and a longstanding tradition of grammarians writing commentaries on works of poetry such as the *Aeneid* was available to early modern commentators. However, it has also become clear that, while the influence of tradition is clearly discernible in early modern *Aeneid*-commentaries, there was also room for innovation, for the commentators' own preferences and interpretations. This becomes manifest in the different character of the commentaries discussed in this chapter. Landino, using his very specific interpretative framework (in part based on Tib. Cl. Donatus), combined his poetical theory with rhetorical analysis in the context of the Florentine studio. Pontanus made extensive use of available commentaries and other works of scholarship – especially the commentaries by Corrado and Nascimbeno – to produce a work full of references to and citations from classical and later sources. His preface and treatise on the use of the paraphrase make clear that his work is firmly rooted in the Jesuit tradition of education. The commentaries by Thomas Farnaby and Charles de la Rue, also rooted in an educational context, represent very different types of commentary. Although these works differ among each other, they have in common that they take a step back in terms of the collection of information. In selecting the material they present to their readers, these commentaries make the *Aeneid* better accessible again after the deluge of information from the commentaries that had gone before.

Though, as I have discussed, characteristic features of a commentary are to a certain extent determined by the social and intellectual context in which the author operated, we can conclude that the commentaries by the aforementioned four authors seem to represent three different types within the genre: the (early)

Humanistic commentary (Landino; Leto and Badius are also of this type), the Jesuit tradition of writing huge commentaries for use in education (Pontanus and La Cerda), and the 17th century commentary intended for use in school education (Farnaby, La Rue). Other categories are possible, and I have certainly not discussed all types of early modern Virgilian commentary. Still what we have seen is how the four commentaries that have been discussed in this chapter attest to the flexibility of the genre and the variety which results from it. In the next chapter I will focus on one commentary to study the relation between early modern antiquarianism and the early modern *Aeneid*-commentary.

3. JUAN LUIS DE LA CERDA ON THE ROMAN TOGA: CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY IN A RENAISSANCE COMMENTARY

1. Introduction

Early modern commentaries on the works of Virgil often comprise a host of information on a broad range of topics. Some of them almost turn into a sort of encyclopedia of the classical world. In this chapter, I will study one particular type of lemma, the one that offers information on classical culture. I will be interested in establishing what approaches to and what views of the classical era underlie such lemmata. I will analyze this topic with the help of the *Aeneid* commentary by the 16th-century Jesuit scholar Juan Luis de La Cerda, who wrote a monumental commentary on the works of Virgil. I will study La Cerda's learning on classical antiquity as a form of encyclopedic knowledge and determine what conceptualization of the past underlies these lemmata. To this end, I will first discuss the question of how early modern scholars viewed the classical world: there is an ongoing debate in modern renaissance scholarship about the way in which humanist scholars approached the past, which forms an important point of departure for my study. After having discussed this debate and having established the theoretical framework for my enquiry (**section 2**), I will briefly introduce La Cerda and his commentary (**section 3**); then I will approach the topic at hand by means of a case study of one specific lemma from his work (**sections 4 and 5**). After that, I will situate my observations from the case study in the context of La Cerda's commentary in general (**sections 6 and 7**) and against the background of the antiquarian movement (**section 8**). A brief conclusion will follow in which the conclusions from the different levels of my analysis will be brought together. There, I will address the central issue of what we can infer from La Cerda's commentary about humanist views of the classical past (**section 9**).

2. The Early Modern View of the (Classical) Past

Most modern scholars claim that the humanist' view of history was based on a new attitude towards the past, unlike that of preceding times: humanists now regarded "history" as being fundamentally different from their own period.²⁵³ This

²⁵³ Grafton (1985), 620: 'A rich body of research has taught us much about the historical reading of the ancients. Sabbadini and Nollac almost a century ago, Ulman, Weiss, Billanovich, Timpanaro and Rizzo more recently have shown that humanists did indeed create a new mode of experiencing old texts. They saw the ancients as inhabiting a world different from theirs and devised what we would now call the methods of historical philology in order to bring themselves closer to it.'; Kallendorf (1989), 14: 'As

position was first described at length by Peter Burke (1969), according to whom Renaissance humanism brought about a fundamental change in the way in which scholars studied the past:²⁵⁴ he describes a development from a direct approach to (classical) texts that was characterized by confrontation and appropriation to a more detached method which offered room for a sense of historical developments (causation), critical evaluation of sources, and anachronism.²⁵⁵ Burke's whole concept of the 'Renaissance sense of the past' is in fact grounded in the idea that the medieval world lacked any idea of historical distance.²⁵⁶ Clearly, this view is not consistent with current conceptualizations of the medieval era and its relation to the early modern period.²⁵⁷ The consequences of Burke's analysis however – especially the notion that Renaissance scholars had a fundamentally different view of the past than their medieval counterparts – are still influential, as will become apparent below.

Clearly, one of the important features of scholarship in the early modern period, is that many scholars involved themselves in a very direct way with the classical past, as has also become apparent from the discussion of commentary lemmata in the previous chapter. The question of the humanist's sense of the past on the one hand, and the important role of classical antiquity for the humanist movement on the other, form a complicated picture that concerns key elements of intellectual history. For the aim of this chapter, it is important to establish what views of the past and what conceptualizations of historiography underlie the various products (such as commentaries) of the intellectual labor of early modern scholars and how this relates to general features of humanist intellectual programs.

Ann Blair (2010) has argued that one of the characterizing new features of the Renaissance, was the 'awareness of the great cultural trauma' caused by the loss of

Eugenio Garin has shown, the humanists made enormous progress in recovering a sense of historical perspective, a sense that ideas and actions are bound to values and that these values change over the course of time'. see also Fryde (1983), 56; Lowenthal (1985), 75. For a discussion of the question of early modern historiography, see Momigliano (1950), (1990) and Grafton (2007).

²⁵⁴ Burke (1969), 1: '... surprising as this may now seem and despite (or because of) the great medieval achievements in other fields, during the whole millennium 400-1400, there was no 'sense of history' even among the educated (...)'.

²⁵⁵ Burke (1969), 1 distinguishes these three factors that are included in 'the sense of history: 'the sense of anachronism', 'the awareness of evidence' and 'the interest in causation'.

²⁵⁶ Burke (1969), 1: 'Medieval men lacked a sense of the past being different in quality from the present.'

²⁵⁷ See for example the introduction by Aurell (2005) in a volume on the study of the Middle Ages in the 20th century.

access to ancient learning during the Middle Ages.²⁵⁸ She shows convincingly how this sentiment was one of the important agents in the enormous effort of early modern scholars to compile and organize manifold forms of knowledge.²⁵⁹ One may wonder what the sense of loss which underlay this productivity meant for the humanists' conception of the past, for the very intellectual activities of early modern scholars seem to indicate the realization of a fundamental, if not unbridgeable, rift between the classical era and their own time.²⁶⁰ It is precisely their effort to compile, organize and consolidate classical knowledge that makes it painfully clear how these scholars feared to lose access again to a world that was in many aspects so different from their own.

When we turn to Renaissance historiography, we find a complicated picture of the early modern understanding of the past. One of the key figures in Renaissance thinking about historiography was the Florentine humanist Leonardo Bruni (1370-1444), writer of the *History of the Florentine People* (1442; *Historiarum florentini populi libri xii*) and especially fond of the Roman historiographer Livy.²⁶¹ While he clearly introduced important new elements into the writing of history, Bruni's work cannot unproblematically be seen as the product of a distanced scholar seeking to come to an objective description of past events: he did not critically evaluate the use of sources in the classical historians on whom he based his own work,²⁶² and motivations that are from a modern point of view less scholarly, like the desire to glorify the city of Florence and its republic, often played an important role.²⁶³ But where Bruni's work differs significantly from the preceding historiographical tradition and sets a model for later Renaissance historiographers is in his view of history in terms of political developments, with special attention to the feats of great men and the impact of wars and battles. Moreover, as Grafton (2007) observes, the *ars historica* was seen by many early

²⁵⁸ Blair (2010), 12-13.

²⁵⁹ See section 3 of chapter 1 of this study for a more elaborate discussion of this phenomenon.

²⁶⁰ The same paradox is observed by Gouwens (1998, 77), though not in the context of knowledge management but on the occasion of his discussion of the very direct identification of humanists with the classical past.

²⁶¹ Ianziti (1998), 367.

²⁶² Grafton (2007), 98; Ianziti (2000), 43.

²⁶³ Ianziti (1998), 368-369; Ianziti also points out how Bruni's view of historiography was at odds with that of Biondi (for a discussion of Biondi and antiquarianism, see section 8 below). See also Bagge (1997), 1351-1356 in which Bruni's account of events from Florentine history is compared to that of other (medieval) Florentine historiographers. For more on the political aspects of Bruni's writing see Quillen (2010), 381-382, Hankins (2005), 88 and Hankins (2006), 130.

modern scholars as 'a form of rhetoric and a source of exempla.'²⁶⁴ For this reason, no principles were established by Bruni and his contemporaries for the assessment of sources. Only in the sixteenth century was this type of rules proposed by a scholar like François Baudouin (1520-1573).²⁶⁵ Generally, the political uses of the past remained an important factor in humanist historiography.²⁶⁶

The implications of all this for humanist views of the past is that the past was mainly seen as a model for contemporary life: it was not a closed book of which the high points could never be attained again, but on the contrary provided an outline for the great undertakings of the humanists' own time, as for example in the case of Bruni's political *exempla*. Within this approach of seeing the past as a model, Lowenthal (1985) distinguishes three perspectives on the past that were generally used by early modern scholars: they may be labeled 'a sense of distance', 'imitation', and 'revival and rebirth'.²⁶⁷ These three perspectives formulated by Lowenthal form a good starting-point for thinking about humanist conceptualizations of the (classical) past. In my view, it seems that only a theoretical frame that takes a combination of all of these three perspectives into account can explain the creative and intricate manner in which humanists dealt with the legacy of the classical era. In such a frame, I would theorize that the humanists' sense of distance supported the need for imitation (and adaptation of classical models to the contemporary world), which in turn resulted in the revival and rebirth of classical arts and ideas. This is not the view of Lowenthal, who argues that the sense of distance (which he calls historical awareness) created problems for Renaissance scholars since their desire to 'improve on antiquity' implied that history brought about change and that 'the present could not really be like the past'. Thus, he writes, precisely the sense of historical distance 'freed

²⁶⁴ Grafton (2007), 31; see in particular Grafton's discussion (34-49) of the use of (fictitious) speeches in historiographical works by humanist historians: this was an issue of much debate among early modern scholars, precisely because of the problematic relation between this rhetorical aspect and the question of historical veracity.

²⁶⁵ Grafton (2007), 99; 166-167. However, as Grafton (103-104) shows, the idea of the critical evaluation of sources as a key feature of historiography had its roots in 15th-century Italy, where it was advocated by scholars like Pomponio Leto.

²⁶⁶ See for example Maas (2012), 11 on early modern Dutch historiography: 'In sum, the political subject matter of humanist historiography, its aims of teaching and praising princes, the dedication of individual works to the powerful, and the active participation of historians in public life seem to justify the conclusion that just like historical examples could be used to support political rhetoric, the production of humanist historiographical writing was to an important extent driven by political factors.'

²⁶⁷ Lowenthal (1985), 77ff..

humanists from viewing classical antiquity as an unalterable, irreproachable forerunner'.²⁶⁸ Early modern scholars (or at least early modern commentators, as will become apparent in a moment) seem to have taken a much more pragmatic approach to this problem: they used those elements from classical history for identification which fitted their purposes and stressed the sense of historical distance where that suited them best or where that was necessary to uphold the exemplary function of the classical world (especially in the domain of religion). But generally, the high degree to which identification with and great interest in the classical past are present, demonstrate the importance of that period to early modern scholars like La Cerda.

3. Juan Luis de La Cerda (1558-1643)²⁶⁹

Juan Luis de La Cerda – born in Toledo (1558), died in Madrid (1643) – was the son of Francisco de la Cerda and Jéronima de Zárate. He entered the Jesuit order on October 4, 1574 and served as a professor of poetry, rhetoric and Greek at the *Colegio Imperial* in Madrid (1597-1642).²⁷⁰ His monumental commentary on Virgil in three volumes was published between 1608 and 1617.²⁷¹ La Cerda further wrote a commentary on Tertullian (1624;1630), published *Adversaria sacra* (Lyon 1626),²⁷² a treatise *De excellentia sacrorum spirituum* (Paris, 1631) and a work in Spanish *Libro intitulado Vida politica de todos los estados de mugeres* (Madrid, 1599).²⁷³ La Cerda furthermore compiled an epitome of the *Grammatica Latina* of Nebrija (1598) that was declared the official and only text for Latin teaching in Spain by Philip II.

Although La Cerda's commentary is one of the most monumental and influential commentaries on Virgil,²⁷⁴ it has been relatively little studied.²⁷⁵ The commentary on the *Aeneid* alone is huge – two volumes in folio (about 1600 folia) –

²⁶⁸ Lowenthal (1985), 80.

²⁶⁹ Good starting points for (references to) information on La Cerda's life and works are Kallendorf (2009), 584 n.20, Laird (2002), 174-175; Stevens (1945) and Lawrance (1994); see also Knauer (1964), 82-87.

²⁷⁰ Martínez (1995), 113.

²⁷¹ The commentary on the *Bucolics* and the *Georgics* appeared in 1608, that on the first six books of the *Aeneid* in 1612 and on the last six books in 1617. Reprints were published up till 1647. See Kallendorf (2009), 579 n.2.

²⁷² *Adversaria sacra P. Io. Ludovici de la Cerda*.

²⁷³ A work in Spanish consisting of five treatises full of references to the Classics and the Bible.

²⁷⁴ Knauer (1964), 86.

²⁷⁵ As is also noted by Jiménez Calvente (2001), 35 and Kallendorf (2009), 579.

and is as much a commentary as it is an encyclopedic work.²⁷⁶ It is accompanied by the *index Erythraeus* (1538) – a word index on the works of Virgil²⁷⁷ – and by two other indices: one of Greek words, the other a general index (*rerum et verborum*). Although an index of Greek words is not unique for early modern commentaries, its presence in the commentary is in accordance with the great interest La Cerda displays in relating Virgil's works to Greek literature. In addition to a host of references to classical Latin literature, his commentary is full of references to Greek authors, often accompanied by lengthy citations and translations from the Greek text. In the 'letter to the reader' which is printed in the first volume of the Virgil commentary (thus preceding the commentary on the Georgics), La Cerda explains that he has done this to facilitate the teaching of *imitatio*, precisely by showing how the works of Virgil not only related to but sometimes also imitated preceding Greek texts.²⁷⁸ This also accounts for the attention La Cerda pays to points of similarity between Homer and Virgil – a traditional topic, but worked out elaborately by La Cerda.

4. A First Look at La Cerda and the Roman Toga

One of the most resounding and ideological passages from the *Aeneid* is Jupiter's speech in the first book of the work. As was concluded in chapter 1 after an examination of early modern commentary lemmata on the passage, early modern commentators mostly ignored the political or ideological matters of interest that the passage seems to offer. This is also the case with La Cerda, who in discussing the passage mainly focuses on offering references to Homer and other Greek authors and on providing information on *realia*.²⁷⁹ At the end of his lemma on *imperium sine fine* ('an empire without end'), for example, he refers briefly to the possible ideological and political implications of the verses A. 1.278-279 *His ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono / imperium sine fine dedi ...* ('For these I set no limits in space and time / I have given them an empire without end') but then immediately

²⁷⁶ As Mazocchi (1993), 664 notes: '... los comentarios del Padre La Cerda ofrecen un elemento más de reflexión sobre el carácter enciclopédico de la civilización barroca.'

²⁷⁷ *Index Erythraei Virgiliano operi cuiuslibet impressionis ab Antonio Maria Basso Cremonensi accomodatus*.

²⁷⁸ In fact, facilitating *imitatio* seems to form one of the most important aspects of the commentary. See also Laird (2002), 180-181, who remarks: 'His commentary is an abundant thesaurus of models – and for him successful *imitatio* is itself the essence of Virgil's own achievement. The deliberate manner in which the emulation of Virgil in turn is advocated is all the more striking.'

²⁷⁹ The same kind of restraint is found in La Cerda's commentary on the sixth book – often having triggered very creative interpretations of previous commentators (e.g. Landino, Badius Ascensius). See Laird (2002), 184-187.

states that he does not currently wish to go into this matter: *Huc pertinet attributum aeternitatis dari solitum Romanis Imperatoribus. Cuius rei mentio multa in Smetio,²⁸⁰ ubi seges exemplorum. Omitto, ne impleam paginam* ('This pertains to the customary attribute of eternity given to Roman emperors. On this matter a lot is said in Smetius, where there is a rich crop of examples. I leave this out, so that I will not fill a page').

One of the most striking instances of leaving out ideological considerations and focusing on matters that seem to be less relevant for modern reader of the work, occurs at verse A. 1.282 *Romanos, rerum dominos gentemque togatam* ('Romans, the lords of the world and the people wearing the toga') where again, instead of focusing on the promise of Roman world domination, La Cerda chose to write a lengthy and intricate discussion of the shape of the Roman toga. This lemma – of which a full transcription and a translation can be found in the appendix – will serve as a case study, precisely because of its remarkable occurrence at this point in the commentary, where one might have expected a discussion of more fundamental issues of ideology and politics. The lemma clearly shows the interest of the commentator in providing encyclopedic and antiquarian knowledge on classical cultural history. In analyzing the lemma I will trace the web of references and scholarship that underlies it, to enhance our understanding of its function in the commentary and in the broader context of the humanist sense of the past.

La Cerda's commentary is structured in *argumenta*, *explicationes*, and *notae*. The *argumenta* provide short prose paraphrases of sections of the poem, while the *explicationes* concern comments on smaller and larger portions of text taken together and on the *Aeneid* as a work of literature. The lemma on the toga belongs to the *notae*. In his *Ad lectorem* ('To the reader') La Cerda explains the structuring of the work and sets out some of the principles which governed the writing of his commentary.²⁸¹ On the *notae* he remarks the following:

²⁸⁰ Martinus Smetius, *Inscriptionum antiquarum quae passim per Europam liber. Accessit auctarium a Iusto Lipsio*. Lugduni Batavorum: Ex Officina Plantiniana, 1588. Smetius' (ca. 1525-1578) work – a huge collection of classical inscriptions – was published posthumously by Justus Lipsius, after Janus Dousa had bought the manuscript for Leiden University. Langereis (2001), 115.

²⁸¹ La Cerda, *Ad lectorem*: *In argumentis breviter comprehendo partem illam carminum, quam declarandam suspicio (...) In explicationibus non solum sententias singulas explano, sed universas annecto, expendens interdum mentem Poetae (...) In notis multa est rerum varietas pro ipsa rerum varietate quibus poeta est plenus.* ['In the *argumenta* I briefly summarize that part of the poem, which I take up to explain (...). In the *explicationes* I not only explain the individual sentences, but also all of them together, sometimes evaluating the judgment of the poet (...) In the *notae*, there is a great variety of subjects, in accordance with the variety of subjects of which this poet is full.'].

La Cerda, *Ad lectorem*

In notis multa est rerum varietas pro ipsa rerum varietate quibus poeta est plenus. In his enim iam explicationem meam firmo, adductis aut auctoribus, aut testimoniis, quibus innitor (...) Ex interpretibus Virgilii qui ante me commentarios ediderunt, uni, ut plurimum, adhaereo Germano Valenti Guellio P.P. cuius iudicium mihi visum est gravissimum.

In the notes, there is a great variety of subjects, in accordance with the variety of subjects of which this poet is full. In these, I affirm my *explicatio*, by citing either authoritative sources or proof, on which I base myself (...) Of the interpreters of Virgil who have published commentaries before me, I adhere mostly to one, Germanus Valens Guellius P.P.,²⁸² whose judgment weighs very heavy for me.²⁸³

In this passage, La Cerda explains the relation of the *notae* to the *explicationes*: the *notae* consist of lemmata that contain all kinds of subject matter and support the interpretation of the *Aeneid* which La Cerda gives in his *explicationes*. The *notae* are also the place where La Cerda gives his many and often lengthy citations from other authors. This kind of structuring facilitates the efficient use of the commentary enormously: a reader interested in getting a better grip on the narrative of the *Aeneid* would turn to the *argumentum*.²⁸⁴ A student of Virgil interested in the epic as a work of literature, aiming to understand the meaning of the single sentences, the larger whole and the intention of the poet, would consult the *explicationes*.²⁸⁵ And finally, someone looking for information on a topic that is not necessarily related to the work of Virgil, but of which La Cerda undertakes an exposition in one of his *notae*, would turn to the *notae*. This structuring of the commentary is also supported by the lay-out of the commentary, as is shown in ill.1.

²⁸² According to Knauer (1964, 79n.1) PP probably stands for *pater prior*. Since Germanus was the abbot of Pimpont, I would prefer a reading in which it stands for 'Pimpontius' (which is often found with his name).

²⁸³ For Germanus, see chapter 1, n.187.

²⁸⁴ See note 281.

²⁸⁵ See note 281.

16. TV MIHI QVODCVNQVE HOC RE-
GNI EST, &c.] Sunt qui sententiam Poëtæ referat B
ad Physicam rationem, quòd tempestates conflentur
e nubibus, quibus præest Iuno: hæque ventis agi-

17. SCEPTRA In lunonis potestate credebant veteres esse regna, imperia, sceptras, coronas. Paulus in Corinth. illius simulacrum exhibit cum corona in capite, cum sceptro in manibus. Hinc illi dedicat Nero auream coronam, pallam purpuream, quæ duo Regum insignia, scribit idem Paul. eodem loco.

^c Habes tempeſtatis cauſas, & quæ antecedunt iam effecta, & quæ ſequuntur, videlicet *hominum clamor, rudentium ſtridor*. Tempeſtatis horror apparet in

A litta *lyllabis* *lis* *frustra*. Demulcelitur *q*uātinus
repetatur, quae formata ad horrorem. Sequitur *id est*
in omni tempestate terribilis. *Id est* in omni
tempore tenebra, caligo, tenebrae, obscuritas coeli, ac
demum nox. Fiant haec omnia momento temporis,
ideo *subito*. In verbo repetitum nomen quiddam vltra
vulgarem alacrit. Potiusquam. Quātilind *caliginem*
diemque, vulgus quāvis dicere solet. iam cum
emphasi *tristitiam* ex *oculis*. Nam quamvis Lycii
eam sequebantur; sed Troianorum fuisse causa
tempestas excusatur. Quod *indignus et incusatur* fuit
enim hic necessaria non mentio ad fulgura, quae
deinde sequuntur, nam hic nocte horribilis et
claritas iniquat. Quia iam ille horrore *interempti*, et
crebris *malis* *ignem* *ether*. At *crebris*, quia in tempesta-
te, crebris malis fulgura, quam totius audirentur.
In tanta rerum formidine, quod expectandum,
nil mors hanc *et praesentem interitum* *omnis*.
Quia sunt hic *interitus*, *eductus*, *caelum*, *tenebrae*, *totius*
tristis, *fulgura*. Vide quot hostes?

HÆC VBICTA, &c. Iudicium summo-
 rum virorum, est, neminem Poëtarum con-
 ferri posse cum Virgilio in hæc tempestatis descriptio-
 ne. Nam Homæus Odysſ. 5. illani tantum in-
 choauit, non perfect, vbi multa sunt indigna Hom-
 æri Ingenio. Lucanus lib. 5. furit, & multa inter dum
 ridicula. Ouidius. 1. Trif. & 11. Met. nugatur in
 re satis luctuosa. Papius. 5. Theb. & Flaccus. 1.
 Arg. sui semper tantum similis. Seneca in Agamen.
 multis redandat. Apollonius plebeius est multorum
 iudicium. Sed præsertim Maro in notissimo hære-
 tici Homæro loco ut lib. 5. Odysſ. placuit ante o-
 mnia illius verbus ad uerere ab e loco, quo Neptu-

Virgilianis se-
perat omnes
Poëtas.

are the indices at the end of the commentary. But however extensive these may be, they do not offer access to all of the *notae* – the word ‘toga’, for example, is not included. As a further aid to the reader, however, keywords are printed in the margins of the commentary, pointing to topics which La Cerda addresses in his *notae* (no marginal keywords are printed for the *argumenta* or the *explicationes*). Of course printing such marginalia was quite customary, but they can inform us about the perceived use and value of the lemmata of the commentary. In the case of La Cerda’s lemma on the toga one encounters marginal pointers like *togae Romanae forma* (‘the shape of the Roman toga’), *togae Romanae origo* (‘the origin of the Roman toga’), *quadratae vestes* (‘rectangular clothing’) and *impluviata vestis* (litt. ‘clothing shaped like an *impluvium*’). Clearly, these topics are not so much of interest to a reader studying the *Aeneid*. But they are all the more relevant to someone looking to get some information on these topics with respect to the Roman toga in its various aspects – for which a modern reader would simply turn to an encyclopedia or look for an article in a journal. As I will show in the following analysis of this *nota*, La Cerda is not in the least concerned with the *Aeneid*; rather he presents his well-founded, scholarly opinion on a matter of antiquarian interest.

5. A. 1.282: the Roman Toga

The lemma on *togatam* is almost three times longer than the average *nota* in the commentary on the first book of the *Aeneid*. Such extensive lemmata are not in themselves exceptional for La Cerda – he more than once allows himself room for digression – but what is in fact striking, as I mentioned before, is that at this important point in Jupiter’s speech La Cerda chose to insert a lengthy discussion of Roman clothing. And while such a topic fits the characterization La Cerda has given before of the subject matter that is discussed in the *notae* (‘a great variety in subject matter’), the extensive attention paid to a topic not central to Jupiter’s speech remains striking. Moreover, in his *argumentum* and in the *explicatio* on this passage too La Cerda remains silent about possible political or ideological connotations of the passage.

As I noted before, a full transcription and translation of the lemma can be found in the appendix to this chapter. In the following I will only quote the parts of the lemma that are directly relevant to the discussion at hand.

La Cerda opens his discussion of *togatam* by pointing to parallel passages for *gentemque togatam* (‘and the people wearing the toga’) in Laberius (cited by

Macrobius)²⁸⁶ and Propertius.²⁸⁷ As I have just noted in section 3, this practice is not only traditional, but in La Cerda's view an important element in teaching poetic imitation and composition. He then refers to relevant (post-classical) secondary literature, such as Lipsius,²⁸⁸ Sigonius²⁸⁹ and Baysius²⁹⁰ and to Tertullian's *De Pallio*. The works by Sigonius, Baysius and the chapter from Lipsius are early modern antiquarian treatises on the classical world, while Tertullian's treatise on the *pallium* ('cloak') – on which La Cerda wrote a commentary – dates back to antiquity itself. With these references, La Cerda sets the intellectual background for his discussion and at the same time offers his readers some useful references for further reading. This fits with the generally compilatory character of La Cerda's commentary and reveals the working method of the commentator. In fact, the commentary is preceded by a long list of hundreds of classical authors and 150 post-classical scholars whose works La Cerda has used in writing his commentary.²⁹¹ At the same time, it affirms the authority of the commentator by showing that he is well-informed about the matter at hand.

After this brief introduction, La Cerda announces his own contribution to this field of knowledge, namely a short treatise on the *form* of the toga: the color of the vestment had already been established by Lipsius, other relevant pieces of

²⁸⁶ Macr., *Sat.* 6.5.15, who points to parallel lines in Laberius: *Laberius in Ephebo ... "togatae stirpis". Idem infra ... "dominium // togatae gentis"*. [*Laberius in his Ephebus ... 'Toga-wearing race'*. The same further on ... 'rule of the toga-wearing people'].

²⁸⁷ Prop., *Carm.* IV.2,56: *turba togata* ['toga-wearing crowd'].

²⁸⁸ Lipsius, *Electorum libri I* (Antwerp: Plantijn, 1580). Chapter 13 is titled *De vestitu Romano conlectanea* ['Collections about Roman clothing'], in which Lipsius focuses on the color of Roman clothing (*De colore vestium apud Romanos, itemque de Candidatis, Sordidatis, Pullatis, non satis plana hodie res est. Ego paullo uberius dicam, quam qui ante me ...* ['On the color of clothing with the Romans, and also on white togas, togas of mourning, the black toga, this matter is not satisfactorily clear today. I will speak a bit more copious, than those before me....']).

²⁸⁹ Carolus Sigonius (Carlo Sigonio; 1524-1584), *Fasti consulares* (1550). This was an important work on the history of Rome; he also wrote on Roman law and several important works on the constitution of Athens and Sparta (*De republica Atheniensium* (1564) and *De Atheniensium et Lacedaemoniorum temporibus* (1565). Here reference is made to *De antiquo iure civium Romanorum, Italiae, Provinciarum, ac Romanae iurisprudentiae iudiciis, libri xi*, book 3 (*De iudiciis*), c.18 *De Toga*.

²⁹⁰ Lazarus Baysius (Lazare de Baïf; 1496-1547), *De re vestiaria* (1526). He was a French diplomat who wrote a treatise on Roman seafaring, *De re navali* (1536) and one on the arteries (*Vascularia*). His discussion of the toga is found in *De re vestiaria* under the heading *De vestimentis externis* ['On outer clothing', i.e. as opposed to underclothing].

²⁹¹ See Laird (2002), 176-177.

information are available in the sources he just mentioned, but this is a gap in the knowledge about the Roman toga that still had to be filled:

La Cerda on A. 1.282 *togatam*

Ego hinc tractatiunculam assumam de forma, quae non satis comperta. Est difficultas maxima, an toga Romana fuerit quadrata? An potius circularis, seu semicircularis?

I will add here a little treatise on its form, which has not been established satisfactorily.²⁹² This is the greatest difficulty, whether the Roman toga was rectangular, or rather round or half-round.

What follows is in fact a brief scholarly essay – in many aspects reminiscent of a modern scholarly article as I will demonstrate –, in which La Cerda discusses the form of the Roman toga by analyzing the opinions of Renaissance scholars on the topic and by discussing the most important testimonies from (late) antiquity.

La Cerda begins his analysis by evaluating the opinion of Petrus Victorius (who in his (*Liber*) *Variarum lectionum* had written comments on various classical authors), who had claimed – referring to the authority of Athenaeus²⁹³ – that the toga was rectangular.²⁹⁴ The *Deipnosophistae* by the Greek rhetorician and grammarian Athenaeus of Naucratis (Egypt; late 2nd century AD) contains a host of information on dining and feasting in the classical world, and is a treasure-trove for quotes from over 1000 classical authors, over 10,000 lines of verse.²⁹⁵ An edition of the work was first printed by the Aldine press in 1514.²⁹⁶ This is precisely the sort of work an early modern antiquarian would be interested in.

La Cerda not just refers to Victorius' work, but uses it as an instance in which the authority of Athenaeus is used to come to the conclusion that the Roman toga was rectangular.

²⁹² In the margin: *Togae Romanae forma* ['The form of the Roman toga'].

²⁹³ Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, 5.213b.

²⁹⁴ *Petri Victorii Variarum lectionum libri xxxviii*. (1553; 1569), chapter 8 of the 19th book (edition Florence, 1584), which is titled *De togis Romanorum, quae, ut conicere licet ex Athenaei loco, quadratae fuerunt* ['On Roman togas, which, as can be inferred from the place in Athenaeus, were rectangular']. Victorius (Pierro Vettori, 1499-1585) was professor of Greek and Latin at the *studio Fiorentino*.

²⁹⁵ Olson (2006), ix.

²⁹⁶ Olson (2006), xvii.

La Cerda on A. 1.282 togatam

Primum coniicit doctissimus Petrus Victorius lib. 19. *Variarum lectionum* cap. 7. ductus Athenaei loco hoc ex lib. 5: τῶν δ' ἄλλων Ῥωμαίων οἱ μὲν θεῶν ἀγάλμασι προσπεπτώκασιν, οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ μεταμφιεσάμενοι τετραγῶνα ἱμάτια τὰς ἐξ ἀρχῆς πατρίδας πάλιν ὀνομάζουσι: *Ex aliis Romanis, quidam ad Deorum simulacra confugientes procumbunt, alii mutata veste quadrata, patriam, quam principio gestabant, nunc rursum induunt.*

The first solution was surmised by the most learned Petrus Victorius in chapter 7 of the nineteenth book of his *Variae lectiones*, on the strength of this passage from book 5 of Athenaeus: 'And of the other Romans, some cling to the statues of the gods, while the rest, having removed their rectangular robes, call themselves once more by their native countries' [Greek] 'And of the other Romans, some flee to the statues of the gods and kneel in supplication, others, having removed their four-sided gowns, now put on again the fatherly toga, which they had worn in the beginning [Latin]'

In discussing the viewpoint of Victorius, La Cerda shows that he is aware of the argumentation in favor of this opinion. Moreover, as a sort of bonus, La Cerda offers an explanation of what exactly is happening in the passage from Athenaeus: some Romans, fearing the revenge of king Mithridates VI of Pontus who had conquered many of the Roman settlements in *Asia minor* and had ordered the killing of all Roman citizens, sought refuge at the altars of the gods (hoping that Mithridates would not dare to slay them there), while the others removed their rectangular cloaks – to avoid easy identification as Romans because of their rectangular togas – and called themselves once more by their native countries (thus pretending not to be of Roman descent). In fact, it should be pointed out that the passage in Athenaeus is ambiguous. The Greek word 'metamphiesamenoí' could both mean 'having changed into' or 'having removed'.

As an extra service, La Cerda points to a parallel passage in Cicero, where the aforementioned explanation of the events described by Athenaeus is given:²⁹⁷

La Cerda on A. 1.282 togatam

Et quidem sic Romanos vitavisse iras Mithridatis Cicero quoque *Pro Rabirio Posthumo* scripsit, cuius verba adducam, ut adductus Athenaei locus intelligatur:

²⁹⁷ Cic., *Rab.* 27.

Facilius certe P. Rutilium Rufum necessitatis excusatio defendet, qui cum a Mithradate Mytilenis oppressus esset, crudelitatem regis in togatos vestitus mutatione vitavit.

And in fact Cicero has also written in his *Pro Rabirio Posthumo* that the Romans avoided the anger of Mithridates in this way, I will cite his words so that the aforementioned passage from Athenaeus may be understood: ‘Certainly, even easier will the excuse of necessity protect Publius Rutilius Rufus who, when he was oppressed by Mithridates in Mitylene, avoided the cruelty of the king against those wearing togas, through a change of clothing.’

After this short digression, La Cerda turns back to the matter at hand – the form of the Roman toga (as La Cerda himself states: ‘But I turn back to the topic at hand’), starting with a refutation of Victorius and others who supported the view that the toga was rectangular and advocating his own position that the toga was round (‘In spite of what Victorius thinks, the Roman toga was round, not rectangular’). La Cerda starts his argumentation by citing and/or referring to three authoritative texts: Isidore’s *Etymologiae*, Tertullian’s *De Pallio*, and, most importantly, Dionysius of Halicarnassus’ *Antiquitates Romanae* (as the most ancient source). Isidore and Tertullian are briefly adduced for their remarks on the roundness of the toga:²⁹⁸

La Cerda on A. 1.282 *togatam*

Isidorus clare libr. 19. cap. 24 *toga forma rotunda, et fusiore*. Tertull. illi dat *umbonem*, et *ambitum*, quae duo cum rotunditate consentiunt.

Isidore clearly writes in chapter 24 of his 19th book ‘the toga is of a round and rather wide form.’ Tertullian describes it as *umbo* [a protuberance]²⁹⁹ and *ambitus* [a revolution], both of which are consistent with roundness.

Dionysius is, however, La Cerda’s most important source – as La Cerda himself says: ‘But the full force of my argumentation rests on book 3 of Dionysius’

²⁹⁸ Isid., *Etym.* 19, 24, 3 (*De palliis virorum*): *Est autem pallium purum forma rotunda et fusiore, et quasi inundante sinu, et sub dextro veniens supra humerum sinistrum ponitur, cuius similitudinem in operimentis simulacrorum vel picturarum aspicimus; easque statuas togatas vocamus.* [‘It is a plain cloak of a round and rather wide form, and with rippling folds, as it were: it is drawn under the right arm and arranged over the left shoulder. We see its likeness in the clothing used for statues and pictures, and we call these statues ‘wearing a toga’. (transl. Barney, Lewis, Beach e.a. 2006)]. Tert., *De Pallio* 5.8-9.

²⁹⁹ The Oxford Latin Dictionary (2004) gives: ‘The bunch formed by the folds of a toga drawn together across the chest.’

Antiquitates.³⁰⁰ In this passage – which, just as the other Greek citations in the lemma is cited in Greek and translated into Latin – Dionysius describes the royal insignia offered to the Roman king Tarquinius by the Tyrrhenians, who had just been defeated in battle. One of these pieces, a royal gown, is described as being half-round, just like a Roman toga:

La Cerda on A. 1.282 *togatam*

Sed vis tota posita mihi in verbis Dionys. libr. 3. *Antiq.* qui ita de toga Romanorum: περιβόλαιον πορφυροῦν ποικίλον, οἷα Λυδῶν τε καὶ Περσῶν ἐφόρουν οἱ βασιλεῖς, πλὴν οὐ τετραγώνον γε τῷ σχήματι, καθάπερ ἐκεῖνα ἦν, ἀλλ’ ἡμικύκλιον: *togam purpuream et pictam, quales solent et Lydorum et Persarum reges gestare, praeterquam, quod non figura quadrata, ut illae, sed semicirculari*. Et loqui illum de toga Romana, certum, nam statim [no Greek cited]: *talia vestimenta togas Romani, Graeci, Tibenon vocant*.

But the full force of my argumentation rests on book 3 of Dionysius’ *Antiquitates*, who writes the following on the Roman toga: ‘the purple and colorful gown, such as the kings of Lydia and Persia used to wear, except that the form of it is not rectangular, like theirs, but semicircular.’ [Greek] ‘the purple and decorated gown, such as the kings of Lydia and Persia used to wear, except that the form of it is not rectangular, like theirs, but semicircular.’ [Latin] And it is clear that he speaks of the Roman toga, for [he continues] straightaway: ‘These types of clothing, the Romans call ‘togas’, the Greeks ‘tibenon’.’³⁰¹

By adducing these authoritative sources, La Cerda shows that Victorius was in fact wrong in his conclusion based on the passage in Athenaeus that the Roman toga was rectangular. He then proposes a reading of the Athenaeus’ passage that confirms his own point of view and reconciles this authority with the others he has just mentioned (especially Dionysius):

La Cerda

Hinc facilis solutio ad Athenaeum (quo Victorius nititur) si dicas, togam apud Lydos primos inventores quadratam fuisse, ut ait Dionysius. Atque adeo Romani,

³⁰⁰ Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.*, 3. 61.1.

³⁰¹ Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.*, 3.61.1: ‘Ρωμαῖοι μὲν τόγας, Ἕλληνες δὲ τηβέννας καλοῦσιν...’ [‘The Romans call these ‘togas’, the Greek ‘têbennas’.’].

qui in Lydia apud Mithridatem versabantur, formam illam retinebant, sed non inde sequitur Romae, et in Italia eam esse formam.

Here is an easy solution for what is said by Athenaeus (on whom Victorius bases himself), if you say that the toga was rectangular with the first inventors, the Lydians, as Dionysius says; and that indeed the Romans, who lived in Lydia under Mithridates, preserved this shape [i.e. rectangular], but that it does not follow from this that this was its shape in Rome, and in Italy.

La Cerda thus concludes that the solution to the problem of disagreeing authorities is that the Romans had circular togas in Rome, while they wore four-sided ones in Lydia. As a further support for this interpretation, he adduces two passages from the Roman historian Appian of Alexandria (95-165 AD), where it is said of Marc Antony that while he was in Egypt, he wore a rectangular robe, following the Greek instead of the Roman custom;³⁰² and that while he was in Athens he wore rectangular clothing and an Attic type of shoe:³⁰³

La Cerda on A. 1.282 *togatam*

Itaque fecerunt togati in Lydia, quod Antonius in Aegypto, de quo Appianus lib. 5: καὶ στολὴν εἶχε τετράγωνον Ἑλληνικὴν ἀντὶ τῆς πατρίου: *stolam quadratam Graecorum more pro patria et domestica induit*. Et de eodem iterum, cum Octavia Athenis degente, σχῆμα τετράγωνον ἔχων καὶ ὑπόδημα Ἀττικόν: *habuit vestem quadrangulam et Atticum calceamentum*.

So the toga-wearers in Lydia behaved, just as Antonius did in Egypt, on whom Appianus in his fifth book writes: 'And he wore the rectangular Greek gown instead of that of his fatherland.' [Greek]; 'And he wore the rectangular Greek gown instead of the one customary in his fatherland.' [Latin]. And again on the same, when he lived in Athens with Octavia: 'he wore a four-sided cloth and an Attic type of shoe.' [Greek]; 'he wore a four-sided cloth and an Attic shoe.' [Latin].

La Cerda connects his interpretation to a developmental narrative in which the toga came to the Romans from other people and changed its form in the process. This is supported by referring to Tertullian, who in *De Pallio* remarks how the

³⁰² App., *B. Civ.*, 1.11.6-7.

³⁰³ App., *B. Civ.*, 5.8.5-6.

Romans have forgotten that the toga had come from abroad,³⁰⁴ and to Artemidorus, who derived the toga from the Arcadian Timenus:³⁰⁵

La Cerda on A. 1.282 *togatam*

Itaque solutio est Romanos usos Romae toga circulari, in Lydia tamen quadrata, ut referrent primam togae originem. Fuit enim toga Romana primum aliarum gentium. Tertull. *De Pallio*: *Toga vobis oblata est. proh quantum circummeavit a Pelasgis ad Lydos, a Lydis ad Romanos*. Artemidorus illam ducit a Timeno quodam Arcade. Lege illum libr. 2. cap. 3. de *Somn.*

Therefore the solution is that the Romans used a circular toga in Rome, in Lydia however a rectangular one, so that they returned to the first origin of the toga.³⁰⁶ For the Roman toga originally came from other people. Tertullian writes in *De Pallio*: ‘Your toga was presented to you. Io, how much has it travelled around from the Pelasgians to the Lydians, from the Lydians to the Romans.’ Artemidorus derives it from a certain Arcadian named Timenus; read him in the third chapter from the second book of his *De Somniis*.³⁰⁷

Towards the end of the lemma, La Cerda briefly shows that he is well-aware that some Roman clothing was indeed four-sided: he provides references to Afranius³⁰⁸ and Sextus Pompeius Festus³⁰⁹ and cites a passage from Plautus in which fun is made of a certain type of rectangular clothing – playing on the ambiguity of ‘impluviata’:³¹⁰

³⁰⁴ Tert., *De Pallio* 1.2.

³⁰⁵ Artemid., *Onir.* 2.3.59. Artemidorus (2nd century AD) describes how Temenus the Arcadian was the first to wear his Greek chlamyda in a Roman way (i.e. draped around him) when he was navigating the Ionian sea and visited the local population, who took over the custom and in time came to call this type of clothing a ‘Tēmeneion’. Over time, through corruption of the name, this became ‘tēbennos’. See White (1975), 85.

³⁰⁶ In the margin: *Togae Romanae origo* [‘Origin of the Roman toga’].

³⁰⁷ In the margin: *Quadratae vestes* [‘Rectangular clothing’].

³⁰⁸ Afran., *com.* 44.

³⁰⁹ Fest., 277M.

³¹⁰ Pl., *Epid.* 224. Duckworth (1940) *ad loc.*: ‘*Impluviatam* (sc. *induculam*) is often defined “shaped like an *impluvium*, i.e. four-sided, having a rectangular border” ... Plautus for the sake of jest makes Periphanes misunderstand Epidicus’ remark and reply: “What? she wore an *impluvium*?”.’

La Cerda on A. 1.282 *togatam*

Scio apud Romanos vestes quasdam fuisse quadratas, ut sagus apud Afranium in *Deditio* ‘*Quadrati sunt sagi*’, et ricinum apud Sextum Pompeium et id quoque ex Plauto liquidum Epidic.

[Ep.] *Impluviatam, ut isthaec faciunt vestimentis nomina.*

[Pe.] *Ut in pluvium induta erat?*³¹¹

I know that with the Romans certain types of clothing were four-sided,³¹² such as a ‘*sagus*’ [a rough mantle] mentioned by Afranius in his *Deditio*: ‘*Sagi* are rectangular.’ and ‘*ricinus*’ [a veil] with Sextus Pompeius [Festus], and this is also clear from Plautus’ *Epidicus*:³¹³

[EP.] ‘*Impluviata* [‘Dressed in a skylight <robe>’], as they [women] give names to clothes.

[PE.] Do you say she was dressed in an *impluvium*? [‘Skylight’]?’

Turnebus’ comment on this passage is cited, to explain Plautus’ joke and to show that Plautus referred to rectangular clothing:

La Cerda on A. 1.282 *togatam*

Quae verba Turneb. lib. 14. cap. 19. explicat (reiecta prius explicatione Nonii) de veste quae *quaternata, id est, quatuor quadrata lateribus, undique corpus ambiat, quae forma est impluviorum in cavaediis.*

Turnebus explains these words in chapter 19 of his 14th book (after having rejected the explication given by Nonius) on a piece of clothing which is “four-sided, that is, with four rectangular sides, it goes round the whole body, which is the shape of *impluvia* in antechambers.”

Then, La Cerda offers the conclusion to all this, summing up his whole argumentation in just one sentence: even when some Roman clothing was rectangular, who could maintain that this was also the case for the toga – in view of

³¹¹ The 1968 edition by Lindsay gives:

EP. *Impluviatam, ut istaec faciunt vestimentis nomina.*

PE. *Utin impluvium induta fuerit?*

³¹² In the margin: *Sagus quadratus fuit* [‘The *sagus* was rectangular’].

³¹³ In the margin: *Impluviata vestis* [‘Clothing shaped like an *impluvium*’].

the heavy testimony of Dionysius and the solution offered for the passage in Athenaeus?³¹⁴

La Cerda on A. 1.282 *togatam*

Sed hoc de toga quis affirmet, pugnante valide testimonio Dionysii? Et Athenaeo facilem habente exitum?

But who would maintain this with regard to the toga, when the strong testimony of Dionysius is at odds with it? And while Athenaeus can easily be resolved?

This last phrase of the lemma – persuasively formulated as a rhetorical question – shows how La Cerda really wants to make a point: he has established that the toga was indeed round and has refuted the argumentation of other scholars, reconciling the information from important authorities in the process.

What appears from the analysis of this lemma is that, apart from the word *toga*, it bears no relationship to the text of the *Aeneid*. Its function can therefore not be simple explanation or clarification of the text of Virgil. This is consistent with its character as a *nota*, as was discussed at the beginning of this section. The lemma on the toga shows how far this dissociation from the primary texts goes: it almost seems as if La Cerda's decision to comment on this issue is grounded in a special interest in Roman clothing. In fact, there is some good ground not to discard this supposition altogether: La Cerda had written a commentary on Tertullian, *De Pallio*, a speech in which Tertullian explains why he has stopped wearing the toga and had instead started wearing a *pallium*. Moreover, a chapter on priestly vestments (*De veste sacerdotali*) is included in La Cerda's *Adversaria sacra*.³¹⁵ La Cerda's interest in classical clothing can thus be very well understood in a religious context, in which the robes of priests were derived from Roman (priestly) gowns. But more importantly La Cerda's scholarly activities show that he was a specialist in the matter, which can account for his decision to include this detailed lemma on a particular interest of his in his commentary on Virgil. Additionally, in view of the variety of topics discussed in the *notae*, a discussion of the shape of Roman toga would not be too much out of place in the commentary, though the relative length of the lemma remains an indication of La Cerda's special interest in the matter.

³¹⁴ In the margin: *Quaternata vestis* ['four-sided clothing'].

³¹⁵ Chapter 164; the *Adversaria sacra* consist of 187 chapters discussing specific words in the Vulgate and the Latin church fathers.

Detached as La Cerda's lemma may be from the narrative of the *Aeneid*, it is certainly firmly grounded in an established tradition of scholarship – namely antiquarianism. La Cerda's lemma is thoroughly antiquarian, which already becomes apparent from the sources he mentions at the beginning of his treatise: Lipsius, and Sigonius and Baysius – who were both antiquarians. La Cerda's lemma clearly stands in this tradition, in fact he works out one of the aspects of the toga (the form) which he deems is not yet satisfactorily established. This makes his lemma a scholarly contribution to antiquarian research,³¹⁶ demonstrating how La Cerda's commentary is intertwined with other discourses. Just as the antiquarian works of Biondo or Rosinus offer a collection of knowledge on elements from classical culture, so these types of lemmata in La Cerda's commentary function as nuclei of antiquarian information. Lemmata like the one on the Roman toga can in fact be compared to the many digressions present in Biondo's works. With this in mind, I will now first further contextualize the lemma within the commentary as a whole, before moving on to discussing it against the background of the antiquarian tradition.

6. Classical Antiquity in La Cerda's commentary

How does the lemma on the toga relate to other lemmata on classical antiquity in La Cerda's commentary? When placing the lemma in the context of the other *notae* on the *Aeneid* that concern themselves with the classical world, it becomes apparent that the kind of information discussed in the lemma – parallel places, authorities, interpretations – occurs frequently in other *notae*, though often in less extensive form.³¹⁷ Moreover, when discussing topics that have already been established

³¹⁶ On a general level, La Cerda's commentary is not as dependent on or subservient to the text of the *Aeneid* as is often the case with modern commentaries. This is a feature that can be found in many early modern Virgilian commentaries – e.g. Landino (1487), Nascimbenus (1577) or Pontanus (1599) –, as Laird (2002), 195 puts it in the case of La Cerda: '... his commentary does not play the simple role of *ancilla* in relation to the text of Virgil, but becomes an object of interest or – in a more audacious modern terms – a creative work of art in itself.'

³¹⁷ Apart from the examples that are discussed in this chapter, one can think of the following, selected examples in the case of the first half of book 1 alone: La Cerda's lemmata on A. 1.1 *primus* (in which he discusses the classical borders of Italy, criticising Servius and referring to Pliny, Lucan and Sidonius Apollinaris); on A. 1.12 *Urbs antiqua* (discussing the foundation of Carthage, referring to Appian and Corradus); on A. 1.16 *hic illius arma* (on the weapons of Juno, citing Festus and Plutarch, and referring to Corradus, Pausanias, Valerius Flaccus, Arnobius and Ovid); on A. 1.50 *Corde* (on the heart as the seat of rage, referring to Homer, Seneca, Meleager, Catullus, Laevinius' notes on Horatius etc.); on A. 1.123 *imbrem* (proving that *imber* can be said of any water); on A. 1.138 *tridentem* (on Neptune's trident,

satisfactorily by other commentators, La Cerda often refers to his precursors. This is not the case with the lemma on the toga, which he does not take to have been discussed satisfactorily yet. In the other *notae* the element of the organization and opening up of knowledge is also clearly visible – among other things with the pointers in the margin (see ill. 2).

referring to Ovid, Pindar, Aristides, Plato, Arnobius and the scholiast on Aristophanes' Wasps); on A. 1.149 *saevitque animis ignobile vulgus* (on the bad habits of the common people, referring to Tacitus, Curtius, Herodotus, Gregory of Nazianzus, Dio Chrysostomus, Cyprian, Thucydides and Dionysius of Halicarnassus); on A. 1.164 *scaena* (on the rustic origins of theater); on A. 1.179 *frangere saxo* (on how grain was crushed with stones, referring to Turnebus, Lucretius, Hippocrates and Pollux); on A. 1.203 *meminisse iuvabit* (analysing a passage from Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, referring to many other classical texts, to explain how the memory of a distressful event can be sweet); on A. 1.213 *litore aëna locant* (discussing the use of the cauldrons, weighing the opinions of Servius and Robortello); on A. 1.235 *Teucra* (on Teucer as the primogenitor of the Trojans and Dardanus as the founder of Troy; referring to Corradus and criticizing Servius who identified Teucer as Dardanus); on A. 1.244 *Timavi* (where La Cerda writes 'Here I delay a bit', inserting a long discussion on five topics: the location of the river, on its source, on its name, on whether it was dry, and on its vernacular name. Each question is discussed with a host of references to classical and post-classical sources).

^a Troiugena interpres Diuul, qui Numina Phœbi,
360 Qui tripodas, Clari lauros, qui sidera sentis,
Et volucrum linguas, & præpetis omina penna,
^b Fare age (namque omnem cursum mihi prospera dixit
Religio, & cunctis iussuerunt Numine diui
Italiam petere, & terras tentare repostas:
61 Sola nouum, dictūq; nefas, Elarpyia Celeno
Prodigium canit, & tristes denuntiat iras,
Obscænamque famem) Quæ vix prima pericula vitio:
Quid vè sequens tantos possum superare labores.

A'G R V M E N T V M.

Sciscitatur Aeneas Helenum de cursu in Italiam, Harpyia prodigio territus.

EXPLICA TI Ò.

* Apat illorum permagnificè, attribuit illi o-
mitem pene augurum disciplinam. Variè in-
terpretes. *Que de Gcomantia, Pyromantia, Aero-*
mantia Seruius hic diuidit, parè probè, neque imit
alias aliorum diuisiones. Illa tantum placet, ut tripli-
cem vaticinandi scientiam attribuat Heleno, ex af-
fatu numinum, ex afflris, ex ausibus. Primam in illis,
sente Phœbi numina, tripodæ, clari volucrum, alarum om-
nia fides. Tertiam, *sente linguæ volucrum, alarum om-*
nia. Necias igitur, cur Cicero r. de Diuinat. dixerit,
Helenum auguriis diuinasse, ut Calfdram mentis
incitatione, & furore: ut videatur [ola auguria Hele-
no tribuere, cui Maro hic omne prope diuinationis
genus Redeo. Tot attributa præcedit illud *interpre-*
Diadum, quasi hoc sequentia explicant, ut species llo
genus. *Vo Trogenia* cum respectu ad se: quasi dicat,
Troianus à Troiano quærit.

^b Quid verò ad illum? *Fare age*, vox signata, vates enim fatur, inde fata. Quid verò vult? Icare, quæ primùm vitanda, quæ deinde sequenda. Itaque hæc summa, & duplex petitio. Adungit causam indulgentiam parenthesi, cum demum post toraculac illum consulat. Videlicet tristes Harpyiarum denuntiationes, & quæ de famiæ iam præcesserunt. Illud, *religio prospera dixit mihi omnem cursum*, est hypallage, pro omnis religio dixit mihi cursum prosperum.

N O T E.

I. **T**ROIIVGENA] Ad huius vocis explanationem idonea est nota hæc Serui non vulgaris, sed illius, quem fepela laudo. Sciendum, fecit veteres auctores affirmant, peritissimos augurum et Arcaneum, et plurimos fuisse Troianos. Nonnulli dicunt, à Mæso Rege missos à Phrygia, regnante Fauno, qui disciplinam augurum Italiam offenderent. Ergo Troiæ sine dubio augurum et divinationis peritus est.

Vates Di-
vino interpre-
tes.

cesserant ad Deos, & horum ad mos reuertant. Oculi
la, & ideo interpretes dicuntur apparere ex Plutarcho
loco in Iliad. ἐπὶ Πλάτῳ ἡμετέροισιν οὐ γινώσκουσιν ἡμᾶς
οὐδὲ ἄλλους, ὡς μέγας θεῶν, καὶ ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλὰ οὐκ ὄντι
δυνάμει ἀνθρώπων ἀντιπροσβύοντες, οὐ γινώσκουσιν ἡμᾶς, καὶ ἡ
σας ἀνθρώπων φύσιν. sententiam horum iam præmissi
Huc pertinent verba Liiij lib. 1. Te mihi mater veridice
interpretes. Deum autem celestium numerum necinit.

3. QVI NUMINA PHOEBI, &c.] In enarra-
do hoc vario divinationum complexu, tam hî-
quàm 10. Æn. in illis,

*Cui pecudum fibra, cœli cui sidera parent,
Et lingua volucrum, & præsagi fulminis ignes,*
in hoc (inquam) divinationum complexu omni-
no institit versibus Orphicis, qui alieno ore ita so-
nant:

*Perdidi leges multas, ac munia vatun:
Quæ volucrisq; ferâq; decet: quæ conuenis extra
Esse modo: quæ diuinent infortunata mentes,
Mortales vñ habet sopor, & leuiss irrigat artus:
Prodigijs quæ conueniant monstrisq; medela:
Quidquæ parens Diuim scellarum fidere monstrat.*

4. **TRIPODAS**] De Phœbi tripode variè au-*Trips quid.*

flores teneant, deque eius forma quidam mensam,
 vas alii, plerique perforatum fedile tradiderunt. Alii
 hos tres pedes referunt, vel ad tria falacia, quibus tan-
 quam pedibus innixus erat. Hoc indicant Græco-
 rum Scholiani in quibus *ἄνθρωπος νεύει πρὸς τοὺς πόδας αὐ-
 τοῦ τοῦ ἵππου*. vel ad gradus tres, quibus in eum locum
 ascenderet Pythia, vt tutius acciperet *ἀδελφὸν ἑῶν*.
 ne videlicet suffocaretur ab adstantibus. Huc viden-
 tur pertinere verba Eusebii in lib. 3. illud. *ἀπὸ τοῦ ἵπ-
 ποῦ τοῦ ἁγίου αὐτῆς*. Antonius Aug. Dial. 5. de Icon-
 putat, quantum elici ex verbis Diodori & Strabo-
 nis potest, tripodem fuisse puteal quoddam (Hilpa-
 nis *brezel de puteo*) pedum trium, in quod Pythia ascen-
 deret, æque halitu inde emergente amens omnino
 reddita funderet verba propheta plena. Tripus etiam
 musicum fuit instrumentum, de cuius admirabilis
 compositione fuit Athenæus libro 14. Est vero qui
 coniectet, Tripodem vaticinarium fuisse instru-
 mentum illud musicum, quod cum pulsaret vaci-
 dator, in eius pedes statim le Dæmon infuaretur,
 vi contigisse ex variis historicis cognoscimus: Dæ-
 mon enim plerumque sese inferbat in pectus ad
 musicam harmoniam. Sed longe hoc a bona coniec-
 tura. Nam verbum *ἱπποπόδες* quo Græci & ascendere, quo
 Latini vtuntur, quid faciunt ad hoc instrumentum?
 Sed in summa scias, tripodem fuisse mensam fulciti tri-
 plicis. Hoc enim altitatum vnico, quo ego iam supra
 dedi de *ortina*. Qui attentè ad auctores legerit, hoc esse
 verum inueniet. Huic opinioni hæreo, reliquis fal-
 sas puto.

§. CLARII LAVROS] Duplex sententia, vel
enim intelligit laurum, quæ erat in ipso templo, &
per quam etiam dabantur oracula, de qua lauro Poë-
ta ipse suprà,

— tremere omnia visis repente,
Liminaque lauribus Dei.
vel coronam ex lauro factam, quam Phœbus ipse,
quique oracula edebat sacerdos, gestabant in capite.
Inde crebrum apud Græcos, ex corona vaticinari, &
seruus Chremylum rogat apud Aristophanem in
Plut.

Τὴ δὲ ἰσοφύνητος ἔλαβεν ὅτι τῶν ἐκκοινοῦντων;
Quid igitur Phœbus locutus est ex coenosis?

Igitur

Still, La Cerda's lemma on the toga stands out because of the persuasive argument that is developed in it and its length. This prompts the question whether the lemma then can be perceived as a work of scholarship that is *sui generis*, for this type of explicit contributions to scholarship is relatively rare in the commentary. With this question in mind, I will now discuss another instance of a lemma that concerns the classical world and that catches the eye. In this case the lemma literally draws attention, since the *nota* on A. 1.159 *est in secessu longo locus* ('There is a spot in a deep inlet') is accompanied by an image. Just as with the Roman toga, this lemma is rather long, as La Cerda himself remarks at its start.³¹⁸ In this lemma, La Cerda discusses where the exact location is of the port of Carthage as described by Virgil in A. 1.159-168:³¹⁹

V., A. 1.159-168

Est in secessu longo locus: insula portum
efficit obiectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto
frangitur inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos.
Hinc atque hinc vastae rupes geminique minantur
in caelum scopuli, quorum sub vertice late
aequora tuta silent; tum silvis scaena coruscis
desuper, horrentique atrum nemus imminet umbra;
fronte sub adversa scopulis pendentibus antrum,
intus aquae dulces vivoque sedilia saxo,
Nympharum domus. (...)

There in a deep inlet lies a spot, where an island
forms a harbor with the barrier of its sides on which
every wave from the main is broken, then parts into
receding ripples. On either side loom heavenward
huge cliffs and twin peaks, beneath whose crest far
and wide is the stillness of sheltered water; above,
too, is a background of shimmering woods with an
overhanging grove, black with gloomy shade. Under
the brow of the fronting cliff is a cave of hanging
rocks; within are fresh waters and seats in the living
stones, a haunt of Nymphs. (...)

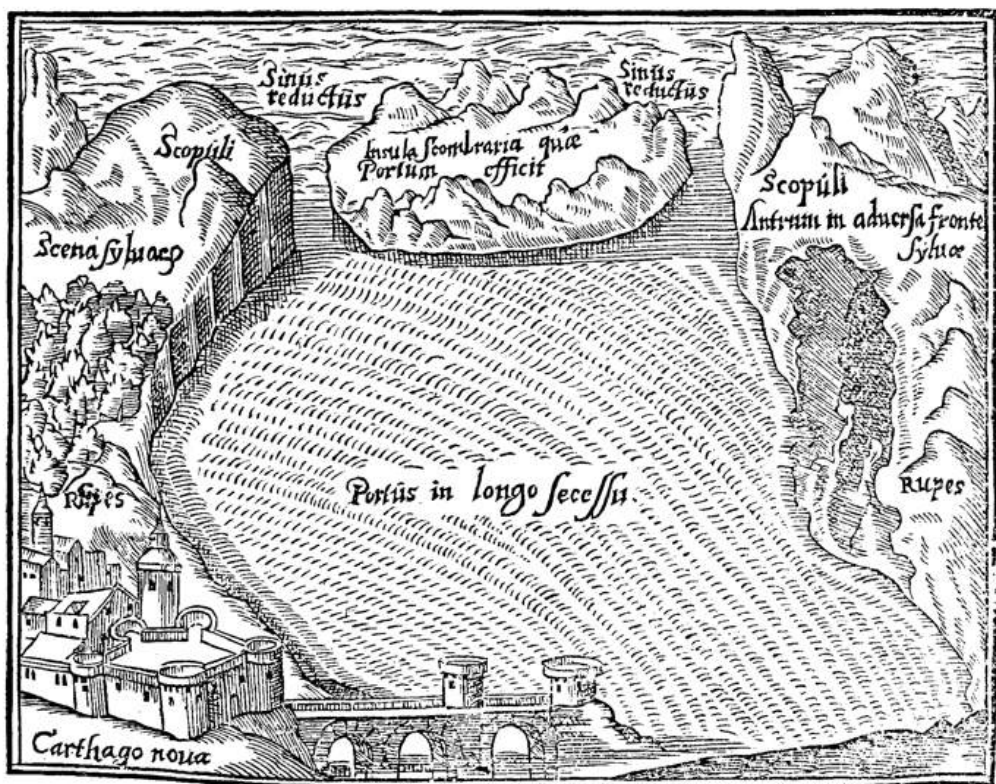
Again, La Cerda starts by referring to the classical sources, in this case a passage in Livy from which many had concluded that this port had to be that of *Carthago Nova* in Spain. After comparing the passage from Livy with Virgil's description and briefly referring to Juan de Mariana, *Historiae de rebus Hispaniae*,³²⁰ La Cerda introduces the image (see ill. 3) as follows: 'But I pass over the writers, and prove the matter through its very description, which is conscientiously portrayed as follows.'³²¹

³¹⁸ La Cerda: *Haec nota modum excedet*. ['This *nota* will exceed the limit'].

³¹⁹ Translation by Rushton Fairclough (1956).

³²⁰ Juan de Mariana (1536-1624), a Spanish Jesuit. His *Historiae de rebus Hispaniae* appeared at Toledo in 1592 in twenty volumes (with then books added in 1605).

³²¹ La Cerda: *Sed omitto scriptores, et rem probo ipsissima descriptione quae fideliter expressa sic habet*.



III. 3 Illustration accompanying La Cerda's lemma on A. 1.159 *est in secessu longo locus*.

The elements of the description of the port of Carthage by Virgil in verses A. 1.159-168 are all put onto the map of the landscape surrounding the city of Carthago Nova in Spain (modern Cartagena).³²² In spite of offering this prominent piece of evidence for the identification of Virgil's port with the Spanish city, La Cerda continues the lemma by remarking that Virgil's description of the port of Carthage was in fact driven by a desire to imitate Homer – implying that the search for geographical identification of the port is not very relevant.³²³ With reference to

³²² *Portus in longo secessu* and *Insula Scombraria quae portum efficit* pertain to A. 1.159; *sinus reductus* to A. 1.161; *rupes* to A. 1.162; *scopuli* to A. 1.162-3; *scena sylvae* to A. 1.165; and *antrum in adversa fronte sylvae* to A. 1.166. The way in which Virgil's description is projected onto the map of the port of Carthago Nova would in fact fit any harbor that is located in a bay.

³²³ According to La Cerda the image has great, but non-cogent probability: *Quae dixi magnam habent probabilitatem, sed ita tamen ut sua probabilitate inclinent, non cogant*. ['The things I have said have great

Scaliger and Turnebus,³²⁴ he notes how in this case it is not so much topography that is at work, but topothesy – the description of an imagined place.³²⁵ This presents La Cerda with the opportunity to go into the issue of Virgilian imitation of Homer, and in fact of comparing Virgil's description of the port of Carthage to that of Homer: *Ab hac diligentia pergo ad Virgilii et Homeri comparationem* ('From this carefulness [i.e. that the description is not topographical], I proceed with the comparison of Virgil and Homer'). La Cerda is thus well aware of the literary dimensions of the text and in fact refutes the validity of the – traditional – search for the topographical location mentioned in the *Aeneid*. More fundamentally, his *modus operandi* in dealing with the description of the port mentioned by Virgil, lets the text of Virgil speak for itself: La Cerda mentions all the authorities that affirm that the port in question is indeed that of Carthago Nova in Spain, but the ultimate 'proof' that is adduced by him is an image that fits Virgil's description. In the end, however, fiction and imitation take precedence over factuality: La Cerda interprets Virgil's description not so much as a depiction of an actual topographical phenomenon, but as an imitation of Homer.

With the image, La Cerda ends the discussion and turns to *imitatio*. But what to think of his reference to the remark by Scaliger on topothesy (see note 325)? This implies that the quest for the identification of geographical locations on the basis of a literary text can in some cases be problematic, because the poet was not always

probability, but nevertheless in such a way that because of their probability they incline, but do not compel.'].

³²⁴ La Cerda: *Itaque bene Turnebus scripsit lib. 18 Advers. C. 32 descriptionem hanc accomodari portui Hispaniae casu potius aliquo, quam Poetae voluntate*. ['And Turnebus writes rightly in chapter 32 of book 18 of his *Adversaria* that this depiction conforms to the port in Spain more by chance than because of the intention of the poet.'].

³²⁵ La Cerda : ... *et Julius Scaliger ait, hanc esse topothesiam, non topographiam, id est, fictam, non veram loci descriptionem*. ['... and Julius Scaliger says, that this is topothesy, not topography, which means, the description of an imagined place, not a real one.']. This goes back to Servius, who writes: *topothesia est, id est, fictus secundum poetam licentiam locus. Ne autem videatur penitus a veritate discedere, Hispaniensis Carthaginis portum putatur descripsisse*. ['Topothesy, which means, a place imagined at liberty by the poet. But, so that he is not perceived to deviate completely from the truth, he is believed to have described a port in Carthaginian Spain.']. Cf. Williams (1972), *ad loc.*: 'This imaginary description of a harbour is based on Homer's description of the harbour of Ithaca. ...' and Austin (1971), *ad loc.*: '(...) Yet, 'literary' though Virgil's harbour is, it has enough of an authentic ring to make critics try to identify it: Servius' *putatur* shows that he refers to a traditional theory, according to which Virgil describes the harbour of New Carthage in Spain ...'.

concerned with representing the real world. This stance seems quite odd when compared with the intricate discussion La Cerda offers on the shape of the Roman toga: how can he write so extensively on a, to a modern reader, relatively obscure topic (especially in relation to the story of the *Aeneid*) and discard the discussion about the exact location of the port where the great Roman hero Aeneas and his comrades landed with their ships, an issue which could bring together in a very direct way the narrative of the epic and the contemporary world? Unlike with the lemma on the Roma toga, where the *Aeneid* is used as the starting point for an antiquarian discussion, the approach visible in the lemma on the port of Carthage seems to be consistent with a view of the *Aeneid* in which the work is primarily seen as a work of literature, rather than as a source of knowledge. On the other hand, a common factor between the two lemmata is that the commentator rather than Virgil is the one offering – through the compilation and organization of the texts of other classical writers and other scholars. The commentator attaches information to the text of the *Aeneid*, using it as a sort of steppingstone and information management tool for lemmata like the one on the toga, and in fact also like the beginning of his lemma on the port of Carthage, which also fits La Cerda's interest in accommodating the contemporary world.³²⁶ Unlike the lemma on the toga, however, La Cerda is not interested in dwelling too long on the question where the Virgilian port – which he deems purely fictional – might be located. The question arises what conception of the classical world underlies this kind of selection?

The same question comes to mind when reading the dedicatory letter which precedes La Cerda's commentary on the *Aeneid*. In this letter La Cerda stresses the importance of the study of literature for the nobility and others who play a role in the leadership of the country. He contrasts current practices (the negative attitude of nobility towards literary study) to those in the classical world:

La Cerda, Dedicatory letter

Longe aliud antiquorum aevum. Euntes ad bellum duces libri comitabantur et qui in dextris gladios gerebant, libros in pretiosis scriniis repositos portabant, ut post ardorem diurnae pugnae, nocturnum tempus illorum lectioni dicarent, et ita a militari strepitu conquiescerent.

This was very different in antiquity. Books accompanied generals going to war and those who wielded swords in their right hands, carried books stashed in valuable

³²⁶ Laird (2002), 190-191.

receptacles, so that after the excitement of battle by day they dedicated their nighttime to reading, and thus could find rest from the military uproar.

Thus, part of the answer to the question of selection lies in the conceptualization of the role and position of classical literature. In this passage La Cerda not only emphasizes the use of the study of classical literature, but of that of reading in general. In the dedicatory letter, the value of the Classics for contemporary life is found in the moral importance of classical works – not only for scholars, but also for generals, diplomats and other members of the elite. Thus, according to La Cerda, the study of literature is not only relevant to scholars and others pursuing the *vita contemplativa*, but also to generals, the very exponents of the *vita activa*, who in classical times took their books with them to the battlefield. This is further emphasized by La Cerda's remark that these books were carried in 'valuable receptacles' (chests) and were read to find rest from the tiresome military life. Though this type of argumentation is conventional, La Cerda contrasts this use of the Classics with the lack of attention members of the higher classes pay to this important field of knowledge. In the dedicatory letter that precedes the second volume of his *Aeneid* commentary, which is dedicated to four brothers from the Genoan Squarciafico family,³²⁷ the value of the lessons one can learn from studying the classical world is stressed again and presented as the prime reason for La Cerda to write his commentary. His dedicatees, who according to La Cerda descended from the Romans themselves,³²⁸ stemmed from a family of which the members had always fulfilled important public tasks.³²⁹ He goes on to enhance

³²⁷ *Ioanni Baptistae, Vincentio, Iosepho, Fabio Squarciaficis nobilissimis doctissimis humanissimis concordissimis fratribus Joannes Ludovicus de la Cerda S.D.* '[Juan Luis de la Cerda hails the most noble, most learned, most kind and most concord brothers Giovanni Battista, Vincentio, Giuseppe and Fabio Squarciafico.]

³²⁸ La Cerda remarks that unfortunately the archives of Genoa had burned down, but that otherwise the Roman descent of the Squarciafico family would be even easier to prove: *Fuisset res ista clarior nisi Genuensia archiva anno centesimo supra millesimum misero incendio corrupta periissent: quam calamitatem non florentissima modo Squarciaficorum familia, sed reliquae Genuenses lugent, ut in qua maxima antiquitatis decora, et maiorum monumenta perierint.* ['This matter would have been even more clear if the archives of Genoa, ruined through a wretched fire, had not been lost in the year 1100: which calamity not only the most prosperous Squarciafico family but also the other Genoans deplore, because in that <calamity> the highest honors of antiquity and the monuments of the ancients were lost.']

³²⁹ And through their mother's family, La Cerda remarks, they descended from the family of the Justiniani: *Quid si memorem ornamenta militiae Ioannem et Iacobum Iustinianos? Quorum prior dux maximus Imperatoris Constantini ultimi Principis Byzantinorum Constantinopolim menses octo supra decem ab impetu Barbarorum defendit, ac tunc illa concidit cum ille concidit. Posterior in bello Genuensium contra Alphonsum*

their glory on the basis of connections to the classical world by comparing the *concordia* ('concord') between the four brothers³³⁰ with the often violent relations between members of the imperial family in Rome. Without going into the value and merits of his own commentary, La Cerda presents the classical world not as just a set of moral examples, but as highly relevant to statesmen and members of the nobility. From the argumentation in both prefatory letters, one would thus surmise that La Cerda in fact sees the classical world as highly relevant for issues in his own day. Such an hypothesis however only makes one wonder even more how such an approach that is grounded in the continuing social and political relevance of the Classics relates to La Cerda's apparent avoidance of topics of ideology (as with his discussion of the speech of Jupiter) and to lemmata like the one on the toga, in which the classical world is approached as an object of scholarly study that is only accessible through thorough examination and evaluation of classical texts. This question can only be answered when La Cerda's approach to the classical world is discussed on a more conceptual level (**section 7**) and contextualized within early modern antiquarianism (**section 8**). As will become clear, and was already indicated by La Cerda's fundamental interest in the Roman toga, but his lack of interest in the location of the port described by Virgil in *Aeneid* 1, the solution for the apparent contradiction between both conceptualizations of the classical world seems precisely to be found in the connection La Cerda establishes between the intricate study of classical knowledge and phenomena still relevant to his own day. The next section will show another example of this

Regem Aragonium et Neapolitanum non solum egregiam operam navavit... (...). ['What if I call to mind those jewels of the army Johannes and Jacobus Justinianus? The former as the highest commander of the emperor Constantine, the last emperor of the Byzantines, defended Constantinople for 18 months from the barbarian attack, and she [Constantinople] only fell, when he fell. The latter had not only accomplished outstanding work in the Genoan war against king Alfonso of Aragon and Naples ... (...)].

³³⁰ La Cerda: *restat virtus illa omni aevo ut magna, ita etiam rara, quam in vobis stupeo, fraterna scilicet concordia ... (...)* *Quale, Deus Maxime, spectaculum aevo isto mortales cernimus, fratres scilicet concordissimos, aequaliter non dico sentientes, sed etiam exspirantes: domum officinam amoris, penum benevolentiae, emporium charitatis! Penates in quibus habitant tres Gratiae uno nexu, uno nodo, uno vinculo!* ['This virtue remains forever as great, as it is rare, by which I am stunned in you, namely the fraternal concord ... (...) What kind of a spectacle, Greatest God, do we mortals see in this period, that is these most harmonious brothers, alike – I won't say in their thinking, but even in their breathing. Their home a workshop of affection, a store of benevolence, a market of lore! The *Penates* in whom live the three Graces in one joining, one knot, one fastening!'].

process of making classical knowledge productive in, and for the benefit of a new contemporary context.

7. A 'modern commentary'?

Andrew Laird (2002) – in an article which explores La Cerda's commentary and identifies aspects of it that might be of use for modern commentators – has pointed out that in some respects La Cerda's commentary appears to be very modern, in the sense that he takes a *distanced position* towards antiquity to accommodate contemporary events and that the commentary takes priority over the text of the *Aeneid*. On the other hand, La Cerda's work is very different from 19th- and 20th-century commentaries in that he tries to *connect* the classical world to his own time in a very direct way (of the later an example will be discussed a bit further on).³³¹ This combination of distancing and connecting is what makes La Cerda such an interesting commentator, but also accounts for some at first sight puzzling features of his commentary. On the one hand, as has been observed above, it is clear that La Cerda's interest in the classical world is in a sense encyclopedic, namely in that he wishes to bring together all sorts of knowledge on a huge variety of topics related to the classical world. This can explain lemmata such as that on the toga – in which indeed the lemma takes prominence over the text of Virgil. On the other hand, however, when one takes into account the prefatory material to the commentary in which the continuing moral value of the classics is emphasized, one finds that La Cerda's interest in compiling knowledge of classical culture and organizing that with the help of the *Aeneid* does not necessarily point to a view of the classical world that is purely that of a distanced scholar.³³² La Cerda's approach to the

³³¹ For Laird (2002) this is precisely the point in which La Cerda could serve as an example for modern commentators, 171: 'Commentators could seek to involve their work more directly with the contemporary cultural moment – from which the study of antiquity and its texts at present seem so far removed.' And 198: 'The literary nature of La Cerda's work in conjunction with his remarkable erudition is salutary for those writing classical commentaries today. There are good reasons for encouraging more flexible, fluid, and adventurous methods of exegesis and to plead for a discourse of commentary which is not merely academic.'

³³² Laird (2002) seems to agree with this point, 184: 'It [La Cerda's commentary] is in fact just as much concerned with sources which help a reader to understand Virgil's text in its cultural and historical background as it is with purely poetic sources. This concern reflects an interest, going beyond Virgil's poetry, in the nature of the society which produced it.' At first sight, this observation seems to be contradictory to what I have found in discussing La Cerda's comments on the speech of Jupiter (namely an absence of interest in the ideology at work in the speech). I will come back to this in my conclusion to this article.

world of the Greeks and the Romans is characterized by a point of view that appears more distanced and less engaging than that which is characteristic of a commentator like Landino – who in fact used the *Aeneid* as a receptacle for his Neoplatonic theory of poetical inspiration and morality –, but still La Cerda is involved in connecting knowledge about the classical world to his own time, of which I will show a clear example below.³³³ Thus he is reworking the knowledge that is the result of intricate study of the classics and actualizing and revaluating these bits of information with the help of the *Aeneid*.

A nice example in which knowledge about a classical phenomenon is actualized by explicitly connecting it to contemporary practice, is La Cerda's lemma on A. 7.115 *quadris*. At this point in the *Aeneid*, Aeneas and the other Trojans, having arrived in Italy, set out to explore the inland of the Italian coast. Just before they will first meet king Latinus of the Latins, Virgil describes how a prophecy made by a harpy in book 3 (A. 3.257) comes true: the Trojans are forced to gnaw on their 'tables', that is the bread they use as platters. In his lemma La Cerda discusses the form of the bread and connects this to the role of bread in the Christian Eucharist. It should be noted beforehand, that in many ways this lemma is very similar to that on the toga which I have discussed above: again the lemma starts from a specific hypothesis ('The Roman toga was round, not rectangular'; 'Virgil speaks of cakes, not of pans') leading to an extensive discussion of literary material. I cite the first half of the lemma in full:

La Cerda on A. 7.115 *quadris*

A. 7.115 *quadris*] Quadrae erant iam patinae, iam placentae. De patinis nihil, cum nihil hic de illis Virgilius, nam accipiendum illum de placentis, clare liquet, et ex contextu, et ex lib. 3. Aeneid., nam quod hic ait, patulis nec parcere quadris: in 3. dixerat,

Ambesas coget³³⁴ malis absumere mensas.

Ergo placentae istae in orbem formabantur; sed ita, ut decussatae essent per medium incisione quadam hac figura , et quaeque pars quadra dicebatur, quia pars quarta placentae integrae. Liquidum hoc ex Poeta coniungente orbem cum quadris.³³⁵ Sed clarius idem in Moreto:

Format opus, palmaque suum dilitat in orbem,

³³³ For further examples, I refer to Laird (2002), 190-192, who adduces some nice instances of La Cerda accommodating the recent Spanish conquests in the Americas.

³³⁴ A. 3.257. Modern editions read *subigat* ('compels').

³³⁵ A. 7. 114-115 : ... orbem // fatalis crusti.

Et notat expressis aequo discrimine quadris.

A qua forma veteres de hoc pane dicebant σταυροειδῶς, quia haec figura crucem refert. Inde lucem capiunt loca quaedam Poetarum. Horat. Epist. 17. Lib. 1. dixit:

Et mihi dividuo findetur munere quadra.

Martial. Epig. 76 lib. 3.

*Nec te liba iuvat, nec secta quadra placenta*³³⁶

Et Epig. 95. Lib. 9.

Libetur tibi candidas ad aras

Secta plurima quadra de placenta.

In quibus *fissio* et *sectio* aperte notant, quadratam placentam ex decussatione. Huius moris rationem tibi aperiam. Homerus saepe convivium vocat aequale δαίτα εἶσιν [iotacized accusative of δαῖς ἐίστη], quia aequa omnibus pars data, nisi qui ἑξοχοί essent, ut Duces, aut Principes. Quin inde volunt panes quadrati, ut divisi iam essent iusta portione. Mansit postea in Christianis mos idem a Gentilibus acceptus, sed mutua ratione, ut in multis aliis: nam factum in honorem Crucis, quod ab Gentilibus ad aequam distributionem. (...)

A. 7.115 *squares*] ‘squares’ sometimes refers to pans, sometimes to cakes. <I say> nothing about pans, because Virgil <wrote> nothing about them, for the fact that it has to be accepted that he speaks about cakes is evident, both from the context, and from book 3 of the *Aeneid*, for what he says here [A. 7.115] as ‘Not sparing the wafer-like squares’, and in book 3 [A. 3.257] he has said,

‘Will force you to consume with your jaws your tables,³³⁷ gnawed at the edges.’

Accordingly these cakes were shaped round; but in such a way, that they were divided crosswise through the middle by an incision of this shape , and each part was called a *quadra* [litt. ‘square’], because it is a fourth part of the whole cake. This is evident from the Poet connecting the orb with *quadrae*. But the same wrote clearer in his *Moretum*:³³⁸

*‘He shapes the work and spreads it out with his hands in a circle,
And he marks it by quarters expressed at an equal distance.’*

³³⁶ Mart. 3.77,3: *Nec te liba iuvant, nec sectae quadra placentae.*

³³⁷ ‘Tables’ here refers to pieces of bread, used as plates for food.

³³⁸ The *Moretum* is a work in the *Appendix Vergiliana* (a collection of works that were traditionally ascribed to Virgil but of which the authorship is in fact uncertain).

From this shape, the ancients called this bread 'stauroeidôs' [Greek, litt. 'Cross-resembling'], because this shape reminds us of the cross. From this certain instances of the Poets become clear. Horace said in *Ep.* 1.17[49]:

"And me! The quartered bread will be split, dividing the gift.

[And] Martial in *Epig.* 3.76 [3.77,3]:

'Neither the pancakes please you, nor the quarter-cut cake'

And in *Epig.* 9.95 [9.90,17-18]:

*'And may an offer be made to you on your white altars
of many quarter-cut slices of cake.'*

In some they write openly 'a cleaving' [Hor.] and 'a cutting' [Mart.], a quartered cake by dividing cross-wise. I will show you the reason for this custom. Homer often calls a festive meal 'equal', 'daita eisin' [δαίτα εἴσην: 'equally divided'], because all are given an equal part, except those who were 'exochoi' [Gr. 'eminent'], such as the commanders or the leaders. Because of this quartered breads signify that they were already divided in just portions. This same custom stayed with the Christians who had taken it over from the pagans, but with a changed meaning, as with many other customs: for what was done by the pagans for equal distribution is practiced in honor of the cross.
(...)

As I noted before, in this lemma La Cerda again, just as in the lemma on the Roman toga, wishes to establish a point, namely that *quadris* in A. 3.115 refers to cakes and not to pans. Again, he first introduces the question at hand, followed by references to classical and postclassical literature (in this case Virgil, Horace, Martial and Homer). I have only quoted the first half of the lemma, for it continues with many references to classical authors and Christian writers about the shape of bread (and tables). Interestingly, this lemma makes explicit how La Cerda discusses an element from classical literature in a frame that is relevant for his contemporary readers, in this case Christianity. As I have noted above, La Cerda's intricate discussion of the shape of the Roman toga may equally have sprung forth from its relevance to Christians, because of the relation to the clothing of Christian priests. Here, in the lemma on *quadris*, the connection is made explicit. Additionally, the small drawing of a quartered bread printed in the text of the lemma to enhance understanding of the explanation given by La Cerda points to the contemporary importance of the phenomenon to his readers. It is well conceivable that the depiction of the possible location of the port of Carthage that was discussed above also points to a special interest of readers of the commentary in the possible connections of classical and contemporary practices or places.

What the discussion of the lemma on *quadris* makes clear in addition to my analysis of the lemma on the toga above is how La Cerda makes knowledge about the classical world productive for contemporary scholarship and readership by connecting it to contemporary practices or phenomena.³³⁹ In the case of the lemma on *quadris*, one might perhaps even say that La Cerda is in fact providing a cultural etymology of the quartered bread in Christian religion. Thus, although there is a certain modernity in the commentary of La Cerda in the sense that he approaches the classical past as a distanced scholar, one should remain conscious of the fact that a scholar like him regarded the text, the Classics, and the classical world as something that mattered not only to intellectuals, but to all people who wanted to fulfill any position of importance within society (which is a distinctive difference with modern scholars and commentators). One could even say that La Cerda's effort in compiling knowledge, forms a tribute to the importance of the classics. On the other hand, this effort is grounded in what Ann Blair has called the desire to 'safeguard the material they collected against a repetition of the traumatic loss of ancient learning' which had occurred in the past.³⁴⁰ La Cerda's stance on the classics is thus based on a combined effort of (re)valuation and organization of the available material. His interpretation and method in approaching the classical world tell us much about how he viewed the past and especially about the relevance of the past. In the next section I will focus on an important aspect of this conceptualization of the past, namely the early modern antiquarian movement.

³³⁹ That this approach is not evident can for example be seen in a 19th-century *Aeneid*-commentary which in commenting on this passage makes use of La Cerda (Staughton, W. (ed.), *The Works of Virgil: with the Latin interpretation of Ruæus, and the English notes of Davidson. With a clavis. To which is added a large variety of botanical, mythological, and historical notes, selected and original, with a view to facilitate the acquaintance and the meaning, and to promote a taste for the beauties of the illustrious author, by William Staughton D.D.* Philadelphia: 1825). In a lemma on A. 7.115 *patulis quadris* the American commentator William Staughton (1770-1829) writes: 'How comes it that the poet here calls them squares, when at the same time he mentions their circular form, *orbem fatalis crusti*? The antiquaries reconcile this, by telling us they were a kind of circles divided into quadrants by two lines drawn through the centre at right angles; in conformation of which Cerda quotes Moretus: *Format opus, palmaque suum dilitat in orbem // et notat expressis aequo discrimine quadris*. Of these quadrants of the circle each was called *quadra*, as being the fourth part of the whole cake. This explains Horace, 1 Ep. XVII. 49. *Et mihi dividuo fundetur munere quadra*, and other passages in the Roman authors. See Mart. *Epig.* LXXVI. Lib. III. and *Epig.* XLV. Lib. IX.' Interestingly, Staughton has clearly read La Cerda's lemma and incorporated parts of it in his own, but he seems to have deliberately left out the connection to the breaking of bread in Christian liturgy (which can perhaps be explained from the fact that La Cerda was a Jesuit and Staughton a Baptist clergyman).

³⁴⁰ Blair (2010), 6.

8. Viewing the Classical World: the Antiquarian Movement.

The cultural history of classical antiquity can be considered to be a particular early modern interest.³⁴¹ It originated in mid-15th-century Italy, with the *Roma Triumphans* (1459)³⁴² by Flavio Biondo³⁴³ and the *De varietate fortunae* by Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1459) which had appeared ten years earlier. In this work, the author connected in a revolutionary way the visible remains of the ruins of Rome with classical literature (both Latin and Greek texts, some of which he had rediscovered himself).³⁴⁴ This type of approach was new in that it tried not just to observe the material remains of antiquity, but to understand them – quite comparable to what humanists sought to do in their dealings with classical literature.³⁴⁵ The first methodological account of the classical remains of Rome, however, is found with Flavio Biondo in his *Roma instaurata*.³⁴⁶ In his effort to come up with a topographical reconstruction of classical Rome, Biondo combined detailed study of the material remains with that of classical (and even medieval) literature – in many ways just as Poggio had done before him. But Biondo went further than Poggio in consulting various sources, because, for example, he also had an eye for information that could be gained from the study of ancient coins.³⁴⁷

³⁴¹ The medieval study of classical antiquity did not perceive it as a different period and the interest in the remains of antiquity was in many ways of a more utilitarian type (for example using remains of classical buildings as decoration for new buildings) than of a true interest in the remains as antiquities. Weiss (1988), 1-6; 59; 203. For antiquity, early modern scholars saw Varro's *Antiquitates Rerum Humanarum et Divinarum* (of which only fragments have been preserved, which were lost during the Medieval period but partly transmitted in the works of St. Jerome and St. Augustine) as an important precursor for their own interest in Roman antiquity. Mazzocco (1985), 126-127; 134n.28.

³⁴² Interestingly, ideological motivations may also have been involved for Biondo when writing the *Roma triumphans*, as is stated by Mazzocco (1979, 4): 'One of the objectives of the *Roma triumphans* was to inspire and prod the potentates of contemporary Europe into overcoming the Turkish peril.'

³⁴³ Mazzocco (1979), 1.

³⁴⁴ Weiss (1988), 64.

³⁴⁵ 'The critical approach introduced into philological studies by Lorenzo Valla had a counterpart in the methods used by Poggio and Biondo when considering what remained of Roman antiquity.' Weiss (1988), 205. See also Levine (1987), 73.

³⁴⁶ Weiss (1988), 66; Mazzocco (1985), 127-131.

³⁴⁷ 'Poggio may have begun humanist archaeology, but with Biondo archaeology took a great step forward, and it was only with the second edition of Marliani's handbook on Roman topography in 1544, that Biondo's work was finally superseded.' Weiss (1988), 68. As becomes apparent from this citation, Weiss uses the term 'antiquarianism' mostly in its restricted sense that refers to the interest in and study of the material, that is archaeological, remains of antiquity. As is pointed out by Mazzocco (1985, 124) this definition is much too limited: 'However, a close reading of Renaissance antiquarian literature

Because of its wide scope and thoroughness in describing the ancient monuments, the *Roma instaurata* stood at the basis of a new type of interest in classical antiquity, an interest that was moreover no longer only focused on seeing classical antiquity as a source for moral examples, but that was interested in classical culture as a whole.³⁴⁸ From this point on, the cultural history of classical antiquity – not only the visible archaeological remains, but all aspects of life in the ancient world – was a highly popular interest that became overtime more and more institutionalized and, for example, also led to establishing private collections of antiquities.³⁴⁹ Especially in the sixteenth century it began to take shape as a distinct discipline, with important works like the *Romanarum Antiquitatum Libri Decem* (1583) by Joannes Rosinus in which an attempt was made to reconstruct life in ancient Rome.³⁵⁰ The systematic study of the material remains of antiquity, often in combination with the reading of classical texts, not only emerged from the humanists' interest in understanding antiquity, but also from the fear of losing access to antiquity: already in the *Roma instaurata* we find Biondo deploring the ongoing deterioration and destruction of the monuments visible in the city, a sentiment shared by many humanists and antiquarians.³⁵¹

In his works, Biondo showed a wide interest in various topics from classical culture. More importantly, he discusses these topics with the awareness that antiquity was a fundamentally different period from his own time. This is an important conceptualization of history, since it made it possible to discuss also those elements from classical culture that were problematic for a contemporary

indicates that for the scholars of the Renaissance antiquarianism implied much more than the reconstruction of archeological remains.'

³⁴⁸ Enenkel (2001), 76; Mazzocco (1985), 124, 130; Mazzocco (1979), 1. This is not to say that the idea of the practical value of the study of the classics – especially as a foundation for a career in administration, politics or diplomacy – was abandoned (see Levine (1987), 75; Pade (2005), 63). The new antiquarian interest was, however, chiefly limited to *Roman* antiquity. The material remains of Greek culture were much less studied. On the one hand this can be explained by reasons of practicality – the remains of ancient Greece being part of the Ottoman empire; the limited knowledge of Greek and, therewith, the inability to bring about the same kind of combination of material and literary sources as in the study of Roman remains. See Weiss (1988), 144.

³⁴⁹ Weiss (1988), 180-202.

³⁵⁰ Mazzocco (1985), 124-125. In fact, Rosinus' work can be considered to be the first comprehensive and systematic attempt at reconstructing the life of ancient Rome since the *Roma triumphans* of Biondo. Mazzocco (1979), 9, 14.

³⁵¹ Weiss (1988), 67-68; 98-104; 205. See also my discussion of Blair (2010) in section 2 of this chapter.

reader (for example pagan religion).³⁵² What mattered was not the search for moral lessons from classical sources, but the reconstruction of antiquity in all of its sometimes bewildering aspects.³⁵³ The findings that emerged from this reconstruction were deemed of importance to many other kinds of disciplines, as is remarked by Rosinus, and especially to the better understanding of classical literature.³⁵⁴ In this reconstruction classical literature played an important role as a source of information. This is precisely what one encounters in La Cerda's commentary: a conceptualization of the study of history in which classical texts offer a window to the cultural history of the classical world, and in which the classical world is seen as a distant but still relevant point of reference for contemporary issues. Moreover, antiquarian works are often characterized as compilatory works, as a sort of encyclopedias, especially where the incorporation of citations from classical literature is concerned.³⁵⁵ These features – the interest in classical *realia*, the prominence of references to classical works and the compilatory nature of the information provided – are all also characteristic of the work of La Cerda. In fact, a lemma like that on the Roman toga can be compared to the many digressions that are present in Biondo's works.³⁵⁶ But La Cerda, as we have seen, still stresses the moral and exemplary value of the *Aeneid*, which is not surprising in the context of Jesuit education.

³⁵² 'It can be observed that in the course of the sixteenth century the interest in antiquarian treatises in strange and remote aspects of Antiquity was ever growing.' Enenkel (2001), 91. See also Mazzocco (1985), 131: 'Moreover, by viewing mythological figures as socio-historical phenomena rather than as *fictiones poeticae*, it [Renaissance antiquarianism] added a new dimension to classical mythology. In fact, classical myths became to be regarded not as repositories of hidden moral truths, but as manifestations of a heathen and misguided society.'

³⁵³ Enenkel (2001), 76-77.

³⁵⁴ See Mazzocco (1985), 125 and (1979), 9.

³⁵⁵ Enenkel (2001), 76 ('a source book'); Mazzocco (1985), 129, 130 ('encyclopaedic intent'); Mazzocco (1979), 9 ('because of its [the *Roma triumphans*] encyclopedic quality...').

³⁵⁶ For example when Biondo writes on the *Velabrum*: 'Digressions are by no means rare in Biondo's treatise and some of them are really short dissertations on some antiquarian point. His section on the 'Velabrum' [*Romae instauratae libri* II, 52-55], for instance, strives to explain this rather obscure name. This he starts to do by rejecting the medieval corruption 'velum aureum', whence he passes on to examine and discuss the evidence offered by Varro, Ovid, Livy, Tacitus, and the inscriptions still left in the locality. The whereabouts of the 'Aerarium' gave him an excuse for a historical dissertation on Roman coinage, mainly drawn from the Elder Pliny.' Weiss (1988), 69-70.

9. Conclusion

Clearly, the foregoing observations on early modern antiquarianism and on La Cerda's approach to the classical world can be connected to the discussion at the beginning of this chapter on the humanist conceptualization of the past. Momigliano was one of the first to emphasize the connection between antiquarianism and the gradual development of a new historical method.³⁵⁷ Lemmata like the one on the Roman toga in La Cerda's commentary clearly are part of a larger field of lemmata concerning antiquarian interests. In turn, the antiquarian lemmata in La Cerda's commentary are grounded in the broader antiquarian interest which is characteristic for classical scholarship in the early modern period. This explains why a commentator like La Cerda writes an extensive lemma on the shape of the Roman toga in a commentary on the *Aeneid*: explanation of the text of the poem is no longer the prime objective of the commentator, the lemma stands for a goal in itself, namely giving information about an item of antiquarian interest. La Cerda's lemma is more of a scholarly essay in which he offers a well-informed contribution to the state of scholarship in this particular field. This type of knowledge organization also points to a specific function of the main text that is commented upon, namely to serve as an index to the commentary: the well-known verse *A. 1.282* serves as a mnemonic aid for the reader to find information on the Roman toga. The commentary thus dominates the text, not vice versa, while the text becomes a tool for organizing and retrieving information. This is clearly visible in La Cerda's lemma on the toga: the line *Romanos rerum dominos gentemque togatam* serves as an index to the encyclopedic knowledge in the lemma. Retrieval of the knowledge in the lemma is further enhanced by the marginal pointers that are printed in the margin (*Togae Romanae forma*). In an age in which scholarly information is organized in treatises, compilations of *adversaria* or common-place books, the commentary is in fact one of the most practical interfaces for knowledge organization – especially in the case of an author like Virgil, whose works were still thoroughly studied in schools. The specific type of lemmata which I have discussed in this article are thus in more than one way encyclopedic: in terms of content and in terms of knowledge organization. In the case of La Cerda's commentary this also becomes clear from the extensive indices that accompany his work and that are essential tools for accessing the overload of information contained in the commentary.

The lemmata on classical antiquity in La Cerda's commentary are clearly embedded within the wider antiquarian tradition. But what view of the classical

³⁵⁷ Momigliano (1950), 286.

world underpins La Cerda's remarks? It should be observed that his way of approaching the classics in lemmata such as the one on the toga or the one on the *quadris* is in fact quite innovative. Instead of providing a sort of encyclopedic lemma based on classical scholarship, La Cerda offers his reader an intricate discussion of the topic including references to classical and post-classical sources of information. Moreover, he engages with the material he discusses, rhetorically stressing the, sometimes innovative, line-of-thought he himself prefers. This is even the case in lemmata such as the one on the port of Carthage in which La Cerda restrains himself somewhat more, but still presents a clear decision to the reader as to the way in which the passage should be read, again referring to contemporary sources. The picture that arises from all this is that of a commentator whose point of view is on the one hand that of a scholarly observer who views the classical era from a distance, as a period which is very different from his own and of which many aspect still deserve further clarification. On the other hand, the effort La Cerda makes in discussing his material, the host of references he provides, and the interest he seems to take in establishing definitive interpretations of classical source material that goes beyond the text of the *Aeneid* as a work of literature, gives the impression of a commentator who, although not assimilating the ancient world to his own time or appropriating its concepts for contemporary use, still very much thought that the classics mattered to his own world and who frequently tries to establish connections between the classical and the early modern world. In that approach it is the text of the *Aeneid* which offers a window onto the cultural history of the classical world, which a commentator such as La Cerda can exploit to get into discussions that go far beyond the philological discussion of the literary text. In this way, while, like most other early modern commentators, staying away from political, ideological or religious interpretations of the *Aeneid* (which were not uncommon in the Virgilian tradition), La Cerda fills in the argument made in his prefatory material in which he stresses the use and need of the study of the classics for the contemporary world and castigates members of the ruling class who are not interested in classical literature; and he also claims – referring to classical practices – that thorough study of the classics is still indispensable for the well-educated man who wants to pursue a public career. La Cerda's approach to the classics in his commentary in fact makes this claim explicit. Moreover, what La Cerda's emphasis on the use of classical studies shows, is how in a world that was rapidly changing – in the Spanish context one need only think of the effects of the discovery and conquest of the New World – the position of his contemporaries towards the study of classical texts began to change. And although commentaries on the *Aeneid* still appeared throughout the 17th century (in a much

smaller and much less dense format), La Cerda's monumental work in fact would be one of the last of its kind.

10. Appendix: La Cerda on the Roman toga

La Cerda on V., A. 1,282: *Gentemque togatam*

Laberius³⁵⁸ etiam *gentem togatam* et *stirpem togatam* vocat Romanos, citante Macrobio.³⁵⁹ Et Propertius lib. 4 *Eleg.* dixit *turba togata* de Romana. Scripserunt multi notas varias de Romana toga. De colore eius docte Lipsius, lib. 1 *Electorum*. cap. 13. In Sigonio et Baysio non pauca sunt, multa in Tertulliano lib. *De Pallio*. Ego hinc tractatiunculam assumam de forma, quae non satis comperta. Est difficultas maxima, an toga Romana fuerit quadrata? An potius circularis, seu semicircularis? Primum coniicit doctissimus Petrus Victorius lib. 19. *Variarum lectionum* cap. 7. ductus Athenaei loco hoc ex lib. 5: τῶν δ' ἄλλων Ῥωμαίων οἱ μὲν θεῶν ἀγάλμασι προσπεπτώκασιν, οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ μεταμφιεσάμενοι τετράγωνα ἱμάτια τὰς ἐξ ἀρχῆς πατρίδας πάλιν ὀνομάζουσι: *Ex aliis Romanis, quidam ad Deorum simulacra confugientes procumbunt, alii mutata veste quadrata, patriam, quam principio gestabant, nunc rursum induunt.* Et quidem sic Romanos vitavisse iras Mithridatis Cicero quoque *Pro Rabirio Posthumo* scripsit, cuius verba adducam, ut adductus Athenaei locus intelligatur: *Facilius certe P. Rutilium Rufum necessitatis excusatio defendet, qui cum a Mithradate Mytilenis oppressus esset, crudelitatem regis in togatos vestitus mutatione vitavit.* Sed redeo. Pace Victorii, Romana toga rotunda fuit, non quadrata. Isidorus clare libr. 19. cap. 24 *toga forma rotunda, et fusiore*. Tertull. illi dat *umbonem*, et *ambitum*, quae duo cum rotunditate consentiunt. Sed vis tota posita mihi in verbis Dionys. libr. 3. *Antiq.* qui ita de toga Romanorum: περιβόλαιον πορφυροῦν ποικίλον, οἷα Λυδῶν τε καὶ Περσῶν ἐφόρουν οἱ βασιλεῖς, πλὴν οὐ τετράγωνόν γε τῷ σχήματι, καθάπερ ἐκεῖνα ἦν, ἀλλ' ἡμικύκλιον: *togam purpuream et pictam, quales solent et Lydorum et Persarum reges gestare, praeterquam, quod non figura quadrata, ut illae, sed semicirculari.* Et loqui illum de toga Romana, certum, nam statim [no Greek cited]: *talia vestimenta togas Romani, Graeci, Tibenon vocant.* Hinc facilis solutio ad Athenaeum (quo Victorius nititur) si dicas, togam apud Lydos primos inventores quadratam fuisse, ut ait Dionysius. Atque adeo Romani, qui in Lydia apud Mithridatem versabantur, formam illam retinebant, sed non inde sequitur Romae, et in Italia eam esse formam. Itaque fecerunt togati in Lydia, quod

³⁵⁸ Decimus Laberius (105-43 BC).

³⁵⁹ Macrobi., *Sat.* 6.5.15.

Antonius in Aegypto, de quo Appianus lib. 5: καὶ στολὴν εἶχε τετράγωνον Ἑλληνικὴν ἀντὶ τῆς πατρίου: *stolam quadratam Graecorum more pro patria et domestica induit*. Et de eodem iterum, cum Octavia Athenis degente, σχῆμα τετράγωνον ἔχων καὶ ὑπόδημα Ἀττικόν: *habuit vestem quadrangulam et Atticum calceamentum*. Itaque solutio est Romanos usos Romae toga circulari, in Lydia tamen quadrata, ut referrent primam togae originem. Fuit enim toga Romana primum aliarum gentium. Tertull. *De Pallio: Toga vobis oblata est. proh quantum circummeavit a Pelasgis ad Lydos, a Lydis ad Romanos*. Artemidorus illam ducit a Timeno quodam Arcade. Lege illum libr. 2. cap. 3. de *Somn.* Scio apud Romanos vestes quasdam fuisse quadratas, ut sagus apud Afranium in *Deditio* ‘*Quadrati sunt sagi*’, et ricinum apud Sextum Pompeium et id quoque ex Plauto liquidum Epidic.

[Ep.] *Impluviatam, ut isthaec faciunt vestimentis nomina.*

[Pe.] *Ut in pluvium induta erat?*³⁶⁰

Quae verba Turneb. lib. 14. cap. 19. explicat (reiecta prius explicatione Nonii) de veste quae *quaternata, id est, quatuor quadrata lateribus, undique corpus ambiat, quae forma est impluviorum in cavaediis*. Sed hoc de toga quis affirmet, pugnante valide testimonio Dionysii? Et Athenaeo facilem habente exitum?

La Cerda on Vergil, *Aeneid* 1.282: ‘people wearing the toga’

Laberius, too, calls the Romans ‘people wearing the toga’ and ‘toga-wearing offspring’, according to the quote in Macrobius. And Propertius in the fourth book of his *Elegies* said ‘toga-wearing crowd’ of the Roman people. Many have written various notes on the Roman toga. Lipsius has written learnedly on the color of the toga in book 1, chapter 13 of his *Libri electorum*. Not a few notes are found in Sigonius and Baysius, many in Tertullian, *De Pallio*. I will add here a little treatise on its form, which has not been established satisfactorily.³⁶¹ This is the greatest difficulty, whether the Roman toga was rectangular, or rather round or half-round. The first solution was surmised by the most learned Petrus Victorius in chapter 7 of the nineteenth book of his *Variae lectiones*, on the strength of this passage from book 5 of Athenaeus: ‘And of the other Romans, some cling to the statues of the gods, while the rest, having removed their rectangular robes,³⁶² call themselves once more by their native countries’ [Greek] ‘And of the other Romans, some flee

³⁶⁰ The 1968 edition by Lindsay gives:

EP. *Impluviatam, ut istaec faciunt vestimentis nomina.*

PE. *Utin impluvium induta fuerit?*

³⁶¹ In the margin: *Togae Romanae forma.*

³⁶² The Greek is ambivalent, one can also read ‘having dressed themselves in rectangular robes’.

to the statues of the gods and kneel in supplication, others, having removed their four-sided gowns, now put on again the fatherly toga, which they had worn in the beginning [Latin]’ And in fact Cicero has also written in his *Pro Rabirio Posthumo* that the Romans avoided the anger of Mithridates in this way, I will cite his words so that the aforementioned passage from Athenaeus may be understood: ‘Certainly, even easier will the excuse of necessity protect Publius Rutilius Rufus who, when he was oppressed by Mithridates in Mitylene, avoided the cruelty of the king against those wearing togas, through a change of clothing.’ But I turn back to the topic at hand. In spite of what Victorius thinks, the Roman toga was round, not rectangular. Isidore clearly writes in chapter 24 of his 19th book ‘the toga is of a round and rather wide form.’ Tertullian describes it as *umbo* [a protuberance]³⁶³ and *ambitus* [a revolution], both of which are consistent with roundness. But the full force of my argumentation rests on book 3 of Dionysius’ *Antiquitates*, who writes the following on the Roman toga: ‘the purple and colorful gown, such as the kings of Lydia and Persia used to wear, except that the form of it is not rectangular, like theirs, but semicircular.’ [Greek] ‘the purple and decorated gown, such as the kings of Lydia and Persia used to wear, except that the form of it is not rectangular, like theirs, but semicircular.’ [Latin] And it is clear that he speaks of the Roman toga, for [he continues] straightaway: ‘These types of clothing, the Romans call ‘togas’, the Greeks ‘tibenon’.’³⁶⁴ Here is an easy solution for what is said by Athenaeus (on whom Victorius bases himself), if you say that the toga was rectangular with the first inventors, the Lydians, as Dionysius says; and that indeed the Romans, who lived in Lydia under Mithridates, preserved this shape [i.e. rectangular], but that it does not follow from this that this was its shape in Rome, and in Italy. So the toga-wearers in Lydia behaved, just as Antonius did in Egypt, on whom Appianus in his fifth book writes: ‘And he wore the rectangular Greek gown instead of that of his fatherland.’ [Greek]; ‘And he wore the rectangular Greek gown instead of the one customary in his fatherland.’ [Latin]. And again on the same, when he lived in Athens with Octavia: ‘he wore a four-sided cloth and an Attic type of shoe.’ [Greek]; ‘he wore a four-sided cloth and an Attic shoe.’ [Latin]. Therefore the solution is that the Romans used a circular toga in Rome, in Lydia however a rectangular one, in remembrance of the first origin of the toga.³⁶⁵ For the Roman toga originally came from other people. Tertullian

³⁶³ The Oxford Latin Dictionary (2004) gives: ‘The bunch formed by the folds of a toga drawn together across the chest.’

³⁶⁴ Dion., 3.61.1: ‘Ρωμαῖοι μὲν τόγας, Ἕλληνες δὲ τηβέννας καλοῦσιν...’.

³⁶⁵ In the margin: *Togae Romanae origo*.

writes in *De Pallio*: ‘Your toga was presented to you. Io, how much has it travelled around from the Pelasgians to the Lydians, from the Lydians to the Romans.’ Artemidorus derives it from a certain Arcadian named Timenus; read the third chapter from the second book of his *De Somniis*.³⁶⁶ I know that with the Romans certain types of clothing were four-sided,³⁶⁷ such as a ‘*sagus*’ [a rough mantle] mentioned by Afranius in his *Deditio*: ‘*Sagi* are rectangular.’ and ‘*ricinus*’ [a veil] with Sextus Pompeius [Festus], and this is also clear from Plautus’ *Epidicus*:³⁶⁸

[EP.] ‘*Impluviata* [‘Dressed in a skylight’], as they [women] give names to clothes.

[PE.] Do you say she was dressed in an *impluvium*? [‘Skylight’]?’

Turnebus explains these words in chapter 19 of his 14th book (after having rejected the explication given by Nonius) on a piece of clothing which is “four-sided, that is, with four rectangular sides, it goes round the whole body, which is the shape of *impluvia* in antechambers.” But who would maintain this with regard to the toga, when the strong testimony of Dionysius is at odds with it? And while Athenaeus can easily be resolved?

³⁶⁶ In the margin: *Quadratae vestes*.

³⁶⁷ In the margin: *Sagus quadratus fuit*.

³⁶⁸ In the margin: *Impluviata vestis*.

4. THE VIRGILIAN COMMENTARY AND THE RISE OF THE SCIENCES

‘The true philosopher must learn not to let the books he read ‘break and corrupt’ the nature he could know purely. The rich leather folios and quartos (...) revealed not progress but stagnation, not enquiry directed to a clearly defined goal but arguments without end. (...) Not only Ptolemy or Galen, then, but a whole canon’s worth of ancients lay prostrate, and their legions of interpreters with them.’

Grafton (1992), 202 (paraphrasing Bacon).

1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the relation and interaction between traditional scholarship and the new sciences in the early modern period as seen in commentaries on Virgil’s *Aeneid*. The hypothesis of this dissertation is that Virgil’s epic sparked the writing of commentaries that came to be veritable treasure-troves of knowledge. In the previous two chapters this was discussed in relation to the language sciences and cultural history. But what of the role of the sciences in these works? What about the comments pertaining to, for example, astronomy, biology or physics? To what extent – if any – can these remarks be related to the developments taking place in the emerging scientific disciplines? The commentary itself, as a convenient way to structure and present knowledge, was initially used by practitioners of the new disciplines,³⁶⁹ which may form only one of the connections between philology and the sciences.³⁷⁰ While philology and science may appear to be distinctly different discourses, with very different methodologies and objects of study, one has to keep in mind that both operated in the same cultural and intellectual context: more often than not the men involved in the new sciences were also students of classical philology. Still, it remains to be seen whether the early modern Virgilian commentator was willing or able to cross the boundaries of his own discipline and training and traverse into the baffling world of early modern scientific thought.³⁷¹

Even though the interest in early modern science and its connection with Renaissance scholarship has increased considerably over the last decades,

³⁶⁹ See for example Grafton (2010, 231), who mentions Johannes Kepler (astronomy), William Harvey (medicine) and Giovanni Battista Riccioli (astronomy).

³⁷⁰ Bück (1975), 13-15.

³⁷¹ A question that is beyond this study, is whether the philological and the scientific traditions were indeed two separate discourses in the early modern period. See, for example Spiller (2004, 3), who claims that these ‘two cultures of belief’ in fact shared an ‘aesthetics of knowledge’.

interestingly enough no attempt has yet been made to connect one of the most important exponents of early modern scholarship, the literary commentary, to the early modern scientific tradition. In my view, this is a true lacuna in this field, as the rise of modern science is often considered to be one of the most important developments for Western civilization, of which the roots are to be found precisely in early modern Europe.³⁷²

The relation between early modern literary scholarship and the sciences is a complex one. It is even hard to define pre-modern science itself, both in the early modern era and in the classical and medieval period. Originally, most of what we would call scientific disciplines were perceived as separate parts of the *artes liberales*, namely the mathematical subjects of the *quadrivium*: arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and musical theory.³⁷³ Additionally, the study of nature was practiced in the tradition of natural philosophy and natural history (which in some ways can be seen as part of the field of cultural history, see section 4.1). And while over time, especially in the course of the early modern period, the aforementioned fields of study increasingly came to be independent, separate disciplines outside the traditional framework of the *artes*, it still remains difficult to look at the history of the disciplines which we now call the sciences without falling into the trap of projecting back our own modern ideas and conceptions about these fields of study.

1.1 Organization of this Chapter

In view of the above, I will in this chapter first address the question of the position and identity of the classical, medieval and early modern sciences and how these disciplines relate to modern scientific practices. This is necessary to avoid any misconceptions resulting from modern ideas about science and scholarship. Subsequently, I will focus on the complex relation between the humanities and the sciences in the early modern world: in this chapter, the Virgilian commentary will function as a lens through which this relation can be studied. Having established the intellectual context, I will discuss the presence of the scientific disciplines in a selection of early modern commentaries on the *Aeneid*. This selection includes commentaries from different eras (ranging from the late 15th until the 17th century,

³⁷² See for example Jardine (1999, 6-7): 'The changes in intellectual outlook of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries formed the basis for what many consider to be the most important 'event' in Western history – the so-called 'scientific revolution'. (...) In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, international trade and an increasing demand for consumer 'worldly goods' on the part of the wealthy triggered the European Renaissance in art and learning. (...) Emerging seventeenth-century science matched and furthered the globalizing interests that the Renaissance had stimulated.'

³⁷³ Dear (2009), 29.

with an occasional example from the early 18th century) and various contexts (ranging from Neo-Platonic Florence to Jesuit education).³⁷⁴ I will be particularly interested to see whether the discourses of the commentary tradition and the new disciplines interact, or whether they were (already) separate worlds. In other words: was there any spill-over effect of major scientific breakthroughs into the literary commentary tradition, or will the conclusion of the study of these commentaries be that traditional philology fell behind in accommodating recent developments and thus missed an important leap into (early) modernity? As I will show, the latter seems to be the case. Nonetheless, a thorough study of the role of the scientific disciplines in the early modern Virgilian commentary – which has not yet been attempted by modern scholars – will contribute to our understanding of these two traditions of scholarship in the early modern period.

Part 1 of this chapter (**sections 2-3**) concerns itself with aspects of (the history of) the scientific disciplines, while **part 2 (section 4)** provides the discussion of selected lemmata from early modern *Aeneid*-commentaries. In my study of the early modern commentaries I will focus on lemmata about natural philosophy, astronomical phenomena and natural history, since these fields of study had been part of the commentary tradition of the *Aeneid* since classical antiquity. For this reason, my discussion of the history of the scientific disciplines (**section 2-3**) will focus on these areas of interest.

1.2 Terminology

It is not always easy to select the right words for discussing the sciences and scholarship. One should recognize that the word ‘science’ is a problematic term to describe the practices of the study of natural phenomena in the classical, medieval or even in the early modern world. In addition, the Latin word *scientia* does not necessarily equate ‘science’. Clearly, the use of a modern notion like ‘science’ in studying Renaissance learning can hinder our understanding of these texts since this word does not fit early modern terminology, in spite of the apparent similarities in the use of the word (see section 2.1 for a discussion of the modern notion of science).³⁷⁵ The use of the modern term hinders our understanding of the

³⁷⁴ In this chapter, I will discuss selected lemmata from the commentaries of Landino (1487/8), Corradus (1555), Nascimbenus (1577), Germanus (1575), Lambertus Hortensius (1577), Pontanus (1599), La Rue (1675) and Minell (1719).

³⁷⁵ Thus Wilson-Okamura’s remark ‘... “natural philosophy”, which we would call science’ and his translation of the *ratio physica* of the fourth century allegorists as ‘scientific interpretation’ is, though not altogether incorrect, perhaps somewhat less fortunate. Wilson-Okamura (2010), 81.

manifold disciplines that once concerned themselves with phenomena, that are nowadays studied in the scientific domain: e.g. philosophy (especially metaphysics, particle theory), geography (Ptolemy, Pomponius Mela), natural history (Pliny), mathematics (Plato, Euclid, Archimedes) and medicine (Hippocrates, Galen). On a general level, it is possible for us to group these practices into two clusters: one consisting of several branches of philosophy, the other of fields of study that are more practically orientated.

Still, also this demarcation cannot represent the degree to which the scientific disciplines were interwoven with other fields of study: in the case of classical antiquity, one need only think of the fact that many Greek and Roman practitioners of 'science' were also philosophers. To some extent this is also true for their early modern counterparts.³⁷⁶ For this reason, to denote a field of study that concerns itself with phenomena that are nowadays part of the natural sciences, I will use the term 'scientific discipline' (without implicating that the field of study is scientific or a discipline in the modern sense of the word) and its practitioners 'scientists'. So, for example, I will call classical cosmology a scientific discipline because it is about the study or theorizing of the heavens (a natural phenomenon). I will reserve the term 'science' for modern science, hoping thus to avoid the pitfall of missing or misinterpreting the particulars of earlier disciplines by the use of a modern frame.

PART 1: THE SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINES

2. The Scientific Disciplines in the Classical, Medieval and Early Modern World.

In studying the history of the scientific disciplines one must clearly distinguish between a historical perspective looking back from science as it is today (the history of science) and a historical approach starting from the study of scientific disciplines in the classical world. Rorty (1984, 50) briefly summarizes the use both perspectives for the study of the history of philosophy, which can easily be transposed to the history of science:

'There is nothing wrong with self-consciously letting our own philosophical views dictate terms in which to describe the dead. But there are reasons for *also*

³⁷⁶ See for example Kahn (1991), 7: 'The close connection between philosophy, science, and mathematics is just as characteristic of Greek philosophy in its first century and a half as it is of the initial period of modern philosophy in the 17th century.'

describing them in other terms, their own terms. It is useful to recreate the intellectual scene in which the dead lived their lives (...). There is knowledge – historical knowledge – to be gained which one can only get by bracketing one's own better knowledge about, e.g., the movement of the heavens or the existence of God.'

In his discussion, Rorty in turn refers to the study of the history of science as an example.³⁷⁷ In the first perspective, one should recognize how earlier practices in many ways cannot measure up to modern scientific standards, but one must be careful not to study these disciplines from a teleological point of view and to project back modern notions, leading to anachronism. The second perspective, on the other hand, focuses on the history of the sciences in their own context.

In this chapter, I will be using both perspectives. I will employ the first perspective, looking back from a modern point of view and describing the past in our own terms, by identifying some key features that characterize modern science – such as the experimental method and analogy – with which earlier practices can be compared (**section 2.1**). In this way, it will be possible to position the historical scientific disciplines in relation to the modern sciences and to see whether any common methodological ground or other characteristics can be identified. I will employ the second perspective, discussing the scientific disciplines in relation to their own time and in their own terms, to focus on the influence of the classical scientific disciplines of the study of nature in medieval and early modern times (**section 2.2**). I will discuss this topic with the help of some key texts from classical antiquity on the subjects of the *quadrivium*, such as Martianus Capella, and those pertaining to specific fields of study, such as Pliny for natural history. One final caveat should be made in relation to the second approach: the overview presented in section 2.2 is aimed at facilitating the study of the *Aeneid*-commentaries and thus does not entail a comprehensive overview of the history of science (which is a vast field of study), or of the reception of the classical scientific disciplines in later eras. References will be given in the footnotes to facilitate the further study of these subjects.

The two perspectives will enable me to establish a framework of reference and a notion of science that can be used in the analysis of the early modern Virgil commentaries and that can especially be helpful in determining the relation of these works to developments in the early modern scientific disciplines. The first perspective – describing the past in our own terms – helps to establish what the

³⁷⁷ Rorty (1984), 49-50.

modern notion of science entails and forms a frame of reference with which earlier practices can be compared. The second perspective – recreating the context of the scientific disciplines – will contextualize scientific practices before the modern era and helps to establish a horizon of expectations for early modern commentary lemmata on scientific topics. This combined approach of two perspectives is necessary for my current investigation because it is pivotal to understand the broader context and traditions of scientific thinking in the early modern era before one can think about discussing the relationship between the emerging (modern) sciences and the *Aeneid*-commentary.

2.1 Key Features of Modern Science

One of the key features of modern science is the experimental method,³⁷⁸ consisting of systematic investigation and experimentation on the basis of hypotheses, and resulting in the formation of theories (for example by induction)³⁷⁹ that are open to further testing by independent observers.³⁸⁰ Moreover, the theories that are formed do not require faith, but can be judged on the basis of evidence: hypotheses are continuously tested to see whether they can be falsified or results can be repeated. Accountability is thus one of the prime directives of modern science (and, I would add, also of modern scholarship).³⁸¹ Because of this, scientific investigation is a continuous process. Kosso (2011) furthermore stresses that modern science is fundamentally a ‘coherent web of information’ in which observations and theories

³⁷⁸ That this is an ongoing discussion becomes clear from the debates and publications of the last decade on the method and value of science (see for example Kosso, 2011 and Shrake, Elfner, Hummon e.a., 2006).

³⁷⁹ Kosso argues, convincingly, that modern science should not be equated with induction. For what matters most in the scientific method is not the way by which one comes up with a theory, but the testing of these theories. Kosso (2011), 9-11; 13-20.

³⁸⁰ Shrake, Elfner, Hummon e.a. (2006), 130-131 (quoting The Ohio Academy of Science, 2000). Interestingly, in their discussion of the question ‘What is science?’, the authors also refer to a decision of the US Supreme Court from 1993 (*Daubert v. Merrell Dow Pharmaceuticals, Inc.*) in which the Court gives a definition of science (‘it represents a *process* for proposing and refining theoretical explanations about the world that are subject to further testing and refinement’) and of the scientific method (‘... in order to qualify as ‘scientific knowledge’, an inference or assertion must be derived by the scientific method. Proposed testimony must be supported by appropriate validation ... based on what is known. In short, the requirement that an expert’s testimony pertain to ‘scientific knowledge’ establishes a standard of evidentiary reliability.’). See also Kosso (2011), *passim*.

³⁸¹ Kosso (2011), 10-11.

are linked in various ways.³⁸² This conceptualization of modern science as an organized web of information (and thus also as a social phenomenon) is highly relevant to my discussion of early modern commentaries as tools for the management of knowledge.³⁸³ Important features of the modern scientific method are thus:

1. systematic investigation and experimentation on the basis of hypotheses,
2. resulting in the formation of theories,
3. that are open for further testing (accountability),
4. resulting in a coherent web of information.

Can elements of the modern scientific method be traced in the works of classical scientists? While they may not be directly apparent, they can sometimes be derived indirectly from the reading of their works. One can assume that many of these writings in one way or another had some basis in the observation of natural phenomena. The question is, however, to what extent these observations were systematic and to what degree they were deemed important for the formation of scientific theories.³⁸⁴ Sometimes (e.g., in the case of the classical astronomers and scholars like Aristotle, Hippocrates and Galen) it is clear that empirical observation played an important role. But even in these cases, the key element of modern science – the testing of hypotheses – is certainly not prominent.³⁸⁵ One could say that there was a limited role for observation and – to a lesser extent – experimentation in the classical scientific disciplines, but they did not constitute a fundamental, essential precondition, a *conditio sine qua non*, for the study of natural phenomena.³⁸⁶ In absence of thorough empirical study, conceptual operations such

³⁸² Kosso (2011), 21-24; 39.

³⁸³ For a discussion of knowledge organization, I refer to the introduction of this dissertation.

³⁸⁴ According to Tuplin and Rihll (2002, xii) the ‘failure to develop the experimental method’ is a ‘curious feature’ of Greek science – the other being the limited use of experiments of any sort.

³⁸⁵ Lloyd (1966, 76-78) discusses some examples of empirical investigation, among others from Aristotle’s *Meteorologica*. His conclusion that there is indeed some indication that the value of careful observation was recognized by the ancient Greeks, but that the evidence gathered from these observations was inconclusive or irrelevant to the theory that was tested, affirms that the empirical method cannot be seen as a characteristic of Greek scientific practices. For a more recent discussion on the experimental method in the classical world see, for example, Lindberg (2007, 362-364).

³⁸⁶ It is important to stress that this conclusion does not imply a negative judgment about the classical scholars working in the scientific disciplines. Rather it makes apparent how, for various reasons (one need only think of the limited practical and social possibilities for experimentation in the classical world)

as analogy (and polarity) played an important role as a tool of investigation (also in the grammatical tradition³⁸⁷).³⁸⁸ Atomism, for example, on a conceptual level one of the most successful theories from classical antiquity,³⁸⁹ was not at all based on empirical observation (which was impossible) but on philosophical reasoning. Of course, the primacy of theoretical reasoning is also characteristic for some of the most advanced parts of modern science (e.g., theoretical physics), but an important difference is that the process of reasoning in these disciplines starts from knowledge that has been tested in empirical observation. Without this starting-point, the scientific inquiry into phenomena of the natural world can easily extend into the realm of philosophy or – as has occurred frequently throughout history – into that of magic and superstition.

For a classical, medieval or early modern practice to be labeled ‘scientific’ from a modern perspective, it is thus indispensable that some form of empirical observation or systematic theoretical reasoning is employed with the goal of understanding more about the natural world. This kind of criterion was chosen by Keyser & Irby-Massie in compiling their *Encyclopedia of Ancient Natural Scientists*. As they write in their introduction (2008, 1), their principle of inclusion was (my underlining):

‘to ask whether the endeavor was to understand or model some aspect of the natural world on the basis of investigation and reason, without recourse to hypotheses about purposive agents, and without reliance on tradition *per se*.’

I find this approach of pre-modern scientific practices very sensible, as it presents a clear-cut criterion against which practices can be tested, but also leaves room for models of scientific investigation that do not necessarily conform to modern practices. Especially the last part of this quotation is of key importance, since while a distinction between science, philosophy and theology in terms of method and the authority of tradition can be sensible nowadays, in the classical, medieval or early

the classical study of natural phenomena cannot unproblematically be seen as an equivalent of modern science.

³⁸⁷ See Sluiter (1990), 46, 45-59.

³⁸⁸ Lloyd (1966), *passim*.

³⁸⁹ Successful in the sense that some of the central concepts of the classical theory of atomism (i.e. that everything is built of particles invisible to the eye) still survive in modern physics, albeit on very different theoretical grounds. Ironically, the very word ‘atomos’ (‘indivisible’) points to one of the major points of divergence between classical philosophical atomism and modern physics.

modern period the boundaries between these fields of studies can often not be easily defined in these terms. While acknowledging that the authority of tradition played an important part in pre-modern scientific practices, the criterion for a practice to be labeled as 'scientific' demands that it not rely on tradition only, but also on reasoning and investigation. In my view, this kind of approach is both practical and fair in approaching the pre-modern sciences, as it encompasses two of the features of modern science formulated above (systematic investigation and experimentation; the formation of hypotheses), implies a third (accountability, in objecting to theories about purposive agents and tradition *per se*), but also leaves room for scientific practices that, while conforming to these criteria, are still to a certain degree alien to a modern observer.

In my analysis of the lemmata from early modern commentaries and especially in my conclusion to this chapter, I will approach pre-modern scientific practices starting from the approach which I have just formulated: the combination of the criterion of Keyser & Irby-Massie and the key characteristics of modern science which I have discussed above. Moreover, such an approach enables a testing of the early modern scientific theories (and possibly also practices) as observed in the commentaries to identify the most important characteristics and developments visible in early modern commentaries, while not resulting in a teleological perspective in which early modern scientific practices are seen as an equivalent of modern science.

2.2 The Classical Study of Nature and its Reception in the Medieval and Early Modern Era.

2.2.1 Antiquity

2.2.1.1 The Science of Nature: Natural Philosophy

The study of natural phenomena and ontology before the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century is often called by the name of 'natural philosophy', expressing the prominence of philosophical reasoning in this field as a tool of the examination of nature. The use of this term is complicated, as it is also used to refer exclusively to scientific thinking about motion and change until the 17th century.³⁹⁰ In this chapter, however, I use the term according to the definition of Anstey & Schuster (2005):

³⁹⁰ Laird & Roux (2008), 2-3.

‘Any system of natural philosophy, whether a version of the hegemonic and institutionalized Scholastic Aristotelianism, or one of its challengers, concerned itself with a general theory of nature – that is, the nature of matter and cause, the cosmological structuring and functioning of matter and the proper method for acquiring or justifying knowledge of nature.’³⁹¹

In this perspective, natural philosophy is concerned with trying to establish a general theory of nature, focusing on aspects such as the nature of matter, the causes of natural phenomena, and cosmology, and with constructing a methodology for acquiring knowledge about natural phenomena. In this sense it can be seen as a precursor of modern physics, though, in this definition, pertaining to a wider field of study, of which especially the edges that border on philosophy will turn out to be of significance for the Virgilian commentary. This latter aspect can be explained from the origin of the natural philosophical tradition in the ancient Greek world, where it formed the counterpart of thinking about nature in the mathematical tradition.³⁹² It thus encompassed almost all thinking about nature outside the mathematical tradition, including theories of motion, change, cosmologies and general theories of the universe. For example Aristotle’s model for the structure of the cosmos has been of enormous influence on cosmologies developed in natural philosophy (see section 2.2.1.2). Generally, there was not much mutual exchange of ideas and concepts between natural philosophy and the mathematical tradition.³⁹³ Characteristic for the study and explanation of nature in the natural philosophical tradition is that it starts from first principles that were posited, with empirical observations used as examples to support them.³⁹⁴ Note that this is different from modern science in the sense that these observations were not used to *test* principles, but were only adduced as supportive evidence.

The natural philosophical way of approaching nature was very important to the Virgilian tradition, in which especially the *Aeneid* has at times been used as a starting point and treasure trove for the construction of ontologies, cosmologies and observations on natural phenomena. The connection between Virgil’s poetry and natural philosophy for example also shows from Virgil’s call upon the Muses in *Georgics* 2.475-482 in which he asks them to show him, among other things, ‘the paths of the sky and the stars’ and the causes of earthquakes and the power of the

³⁹¹ Anstey & Schuster (2005), 1.

³⁹² Cohen (2005), 11.

³⁹³ Cohen (2005), 13.

³⁹⁴ Cohen (2005), 11-12.

seas. On the other hand, as Nappa (2002) points out, Virgil seems not to have claimed the knowledge of a natural philosopher.³⁹⁵ In fact, this intermingling of discourses, of the literary, the philosophical, and the 'scientific', was one of the key features of natural philosophy in classical poetry. In the case of the *Aeneid*, especially allegorical interpretations of the work were often grounded in naturalistic philosophical thinking, not seldom resulting in ontologies that combined philosophy with concepts from natural history. Examples of this are already found at the very beginning of the commentary tradition, in the case of the *Aeneid* in the commentaries by Servius and Tib. Cl. Donatus. In particular the sixth book of the epic presents ample opportunity for ontologies in the philosophical tradition of thinking about natural phenomena. One can easily imagine especially how interpretations of Virgil that have their roots in the natural philosophical tradition could become vulnerable to criticism with the rise of a new, often competing model for the explanation of the natural world, namely that of the new sciences. Perhaps this is also one of the reasons that the extensive allegorical readings that are found in the commentaries of scholars like Landino and, to a lesser extent, Badius Ascensius that were often grounded in the natural philosophical tradition declined in prominence over the course of the 16th and 17th centuries with the rise of successful scientific models that competed with traditional ontologies and cosmologies.³⁹⁶

2.2.1.2 Astronomy³⁹⁷

After a general introduction to astronomy in classical antiquity, I will focus on a discussion of Aristotle's model of the universe, and on prime features of classical astronomy and its relation to poetry.

Introduction

Astronomy is often considered to be one of the scientific disciplines in which the ancients made most progress. For instance, already in the third century BC Eratosthenes of Cyrene (276-195 BC) determined, in fact quite accurately, the

³⁹⁵ See also chapter 1, sections 3 and 6 of this dissertation.

³⁹⁶ See my chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion of the allegorical interpretations found in Landino.

³⁹⁷ The goal of this section is not to offer a comprehensive overview of Greek and Roman astronomy, but to provide a necessary, general background for the discussion of commentary lemmata dealing with astronomical phenomena. When needed, further details about classical astronomers or Greek and Roman astronomy will be provided in the discussion of the lemmata. There are many studies available for further reading in classical astronomy; I especially point to Graham (2013), Evans (1998), Hodson (1974) and Lloyd (1970).

circumference of the earth.³⁹⁸ Astronomy was especially noteworthy in that it used geometrical and mathematical models for the study of the heavens through which celestial phenomena could be predicted.³⁹⁹ This is one of the reasons that of the classical scientific disciplines, astronomy has received a considerable amount of attention from modern scholars working in the field of the history of the sciences.⁴⁰⁰ Some of the most telling steps forward in classical astronomy (by which I refer, in view of the object of study of this chapter, to the practices of the Greeks and the Romans, thus leaving out the Babylonians and other peoples from the Near East) were made as early as the 5th century BC, with important works by Anaxagoras (510-428 BC), Empedocles (490-430 BC) and Parmenides (5th century). Especially the latter author, whom many nowadays would probably consider to be primarily a philosopher, is a telling example of how astronomy was in no way limited to technical genres of literary discourse.⁴⁰¹ In the fourth century the famous astronomer Eudoxus of Cnidus (408-355 BC) introduced his astronomical model of concentric spheres and the hippopede,⁴⁰² and Heraclides of Pontus (390-310 BC) hypothesized on the rotation of the earth (in a geocentric model). Further advances were made in the third century BC, when Aristarchus of Samos (310-230 BC) appears to have introduced heliocentrism (for which he is credited by Archimedes), and Apollonius of Perga (262-190 BC) theorized about epicycles and eccentric circles. A very important figure was the 2nd-century-BC scholar Hipparchus of Nicea (190-120 BC) who, instead of just trying to explain astronomical phenomena, attempted to predict the movement of heavenly bodies on the basis of observational astronomy and mathematical calculation. His only preserved work is a commentary on the *Phaenomena* of the poet Aratus (315-240 BC), of which the first half consists of a poetic reworking of a lost work by Eudoxus.⁴⁰³ This shows again the important role of poetry in the teaching of scientific phenomena and the central position of the commentary for both scholarship and scientific study.⁴⁰⁴

³⁹⁸ Wright (1995), 41.

³⁹⁹ Through these models, Greek and Roman scholars were able to predict the movement of heavenly bodies.

⁴⁰⁰ Rihll in Tuplin & Rihll (2002), 3.

⁴⁰¹ See Doody, Föllinger & Taub (2012), 234

⁴⁰² The 'hippopede' ('horse-path') is the movement of a planet following the pattern of an eight (8), which accounts for the sometimes seemingly irregular (at times circular, and at times cylindrical) retrograde movement of planets across the night-sky (which originates from the combined movements of the planets and the earth).

⁴⁰³ Kidd (1997), 14-18.

⁴⁰⁴ See for more on the *Phaenomena* Kidd (1997).

More than three centuries later, classical astronomy appears to have reached its peak in the works of Ptolemy (ca. 90-168 AD), whose *Almagest* is the only astronomical work from classical antiquity that was handed down to us completely.⁴⁰⁵ This work, combining astronomical observations with mathematical calculation, contains among other things a catalogue of more than 1000 stars⁴⁰⁶ and was ‘rediscovered’ in the West in the 12th century through Latin translations of earlier Arabic translations from the Greek,⁴⁰⁷ although it took until the 15th century for scholars to pay serious attention to it again.⁴⁰⁸

Aristotle

Classical philosophical works also contain many astronomical ideas. The various ways in which astronomy – just as mathematics – was employed in philosophical discourse is clearly visible in the works of Plato (esp. the *Phaedo*, the *Republic*, the *Phaedrus* and the *Timaeus*) and Aristotle (esp. the *Physics* and *De Caelo*). In fact, Aristotle’s *De caelo* is the earliest written Greek source available to us in which the earth is presented as a sphere.⁴⁰⁹ To account for the transient nature of everything on earth and the unchanging regularity of astronomical phenomena, Aristotle introduced the fifth element of *aether*, which accounted for the unchanging nature of the celestial bodies.⁴¹⁰ In this way, the celestial bodies were placed in an eternal

⁴⁰⁵ Ptolemy’s most extensive work, apart from the *Almagest*, is the *Tetrabiblos*, which concerns itself with astrology, as Lloyd (1973, 130) remarks: ‘Many distinguished scholars have, in the past, flatly refused to believe that this could have been written by the same man who composed the *Almagest*. Yet we have no reason to doubt its authenticity...’ In fact, the *Almagest* and the *Tetrabiblos* together are a case in point for the unproblematic co-existence of astronomy and astrology in antiquity, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

⁴⁰⁶ Evans (1998), 42; 264-65 points out that most of these stars can still be identified today, which attests to the significance of Ptolemy’s work; moreover, only in the fifteenth century would the first star catalogue independent from that of Ptolemy appear.

⁴⁰⁷ The first Latin translation from the Greek original was prepared by George of Trebizond and appeared in 1451 (see Pedersen 2011, 19-21).

⁴⁰⁸ Pedersen (2011), 19; Taub (1993), 1. Pedersen (2011, 11) compares the importance of the *Almagest* for classical science with that of Newton’s *Principia* for the 17th century.

⁴⁰⁹ Evans (1998), 47. One of the arguments advanced by Aristotle for proving the spherical shape of the earth (*De Caelo* 2.14/297a8: Σχῆμα δ’ ἔχειν σφαιροειδὲς ἀναγκαῖον αὐτὴν [‘Necessarily she must have a spherical shape’]) is the shadow cast by the earth on the moon during lunar eclipses, which is curved (*De caelo* 2.14/297b23-31).

⁴¹⁰ Wright (1995), 129, 152.

world separated from earth (the latter is also called the sublunary region).⁴¹¹ Aristotle's influence on the cosmologies developed in the philosophy of nature (see above, section 2.2.1.1) was immense, and alternative models for the structure of the cosmos (like that of the atomists) at best retained a marginal position.⁴¹² But Aristotle's cosmology also proved to be influential outside the field of the philosophy of nature,⁴¹³ especially because it was partly blended into the system of Ptolemy. The Ptolemaic system in fact combined several ancient cosmological theories such as that of Eudoxus (according to whom the cosmos consisted of several concentric spheres that accounted for the motion of the planets) and that of Aristotle (who in turn had already built on the work of Eudoxus⁴¹⁴).⁴¹⁵ The power of Ptolemy's mathematical model over that of Aristotle's is that it provides the opportunity to predict celestial phenomena (which was also true for the model of Eudoxus).⁴¹⁶ Because of this, Ptolemy's model (especially his *Planetary Hypotheses*) became the basis for the technical features of medieval cosmology (e.g. the mechanical motion of the spheres in which the planets were located), while Aristotle's *De caelo* provided the philosophical basis.⁴¹⁷

Because Aristotle's model of the universe is characterized by continuing motion, an explanation was needed for the cause of this motion (in contrast to the model of the Atomists, in which only change in movement needed explanation). The followers of Aristotle's model could therefore not dispense altogether with an external agent: a first unmoved mover, the *πρῶτον κινεῖν ἀκίνητον*, or a (Christian) god.⁴¹⁸ The Aristotelian model thus has two prime features: (1) the need

⁴¹¹ Even in the context of contemporary astronomical observations, Aristotle's model of the cosmos was problematic. For example, he has to treat comets as phenomena of the sublunary world to account for their change and movement. See Lloyd (1996), 164-175.

⁴¹² Furley (1987), 3.

⁴¹³ Both in the Western European and in the Islamic world (Evans 1998, 426).

⁴¹⁴ See for example Aristot., *Met.* 12.1073b-1074a in which Aristotle discusses Eudoxus' model of the concentric spheres and tries to establish mechanical relations between the motion of the spheres.

⁴¹⁵ Taub (1993, 45-103) discusses the primary hypotheses proposed by Ptolemy in his *Amalgest*, e.g., that the heaven revolves spherically; that the earth is spherical; and that, according to the senses, the earth is in the middle of the universe.

⁴¹⁶ Evans (1998), 391-392.

⁴¹⁷ Evans (1998), 392. As Evans (1998, 425) points out, Ptolemy was in many respects the last original Greek astronomer; a combination of circumstances (such as the rise of Christianity and increasing political instability) increasingly hindered the further development of the classical scientific disciplines.

⁴¹⁸ The concept of a prime mover was readily taken up by Christian scholars as a support for Christian creation. See Jorink (2010), 38.

for a cause for movement in the cosmos and (2) the need for radical separation between the eternal heavens (made of ether) and the earthly world (made of the four traditional elements).⁴¹⁹

Prime Features of Classical Astronomy and its Relation to Poetry

In spite of the large time-span of the period in which classical astronomy was developed, there appear to have been some fundamental theoretical propositions that were characteristic for the theories developed by classical astronomers. Evans (1998) sums up five 'fundamental propositions' on which Greek astronomy was based: (1) the earth is a sphere; (2) which lies at the center of the heaven; (3) which is of negligible size in relation to the heaven; (4) the heaven is also spherical; (5) the heaven rotates daily about an axis that passes through the earth.⁴²⁰ And indeed, such theoretical assumptions are visible in some of the most important works of classical astronomy, like those of Eudoxus, Aristotle and Ptolemy.

Another important feature of classical astronomy is that it more often than not comprised cosmology and that it was closely related to the type of philosophical cosmogonies that are well-known from the Milesian philosophers Thales, Anaximander and Anaximenes. This is again an indication that astronomy in the classical world, contrary to modern science, should not be viewed as a technical discipline that was only discussed in technical discourse, in isolation from the surrounding culture, but that was fundamentally embedded in broader theorizing about the heavens. Another important indication for this is that texts dealing with astronomy are found in a variety of genres, not least in the poetic ones (as was already noted above with reference to the *Phaenomena* by Aratus), as is attested by Hesiod's *Theogony*, Parmenides' *The Way of Truth*, the philosophical works of Cicero, Lucretius (esp. his 5th book of *De rerum natura*), and Seneca the Younger (esp. book 7 of his *Naturales quaestiones*, 'On Comets').⁴²¹ This conflation of technical subject matter and a high stylistic genre, at first sight somewhat surprising from a modern perspective, is accounted for by the didactic role of poetry in the classical world:⁴²² most of the time, authors writing on astronomy not only strove to compose a comprehensive treatment on the subject of astronomy, but also a

⁴¹⁹ Furley (1987), 6-7.

⁴²⁰ Evans (1998), 76-78.

⁴²¹ Wright (1995), 11.

⁴²² See Doody, Föllinger & Taub (2012), 234: 'The idea that specialist literature cultivates a sober, fact-oriented style of representation also does not apply for all works of ancient specialist literature.'

didactic work.⁴²³ Of course, this does not preclude the observation that, from a modern point of view, classical poetic works containing astronomy (such as those by Parmenides and Lucretius)⁴²⁴ provide information of a completely different nature and on a completely different level than the more technical, often mathematical treatises on the same subject (e.g., Ptolemy). But, unlike in modern times, works of literature, and especially the poets, possessed a prominent place in scientific discourse. As will be shown further on in the case studies on lemmata dealing with astronomy, this was especially the case for Virgil, for in his works matters of astronomy and cosmology play a prominent role, and this was actively taken up in the Virgilian tradition. Virgil provides a cosmology in *Eclogue* 6 (verses 31-40), with complex literary allusions to Hesiod, Callimachus and Lucretius.⁴²⁵ Other cosmologies are found in *Eclogue* 4 and, famously, *Aeneid* 6. Clearly, these cosmologies are the product of the combination of various literary and philosophical traditions, with the inclusion of elements from the scientific disciplines.⁴²⁶ It is this intermingling of discourses, of the literary, the philosophical, and the 'scientific', that was one of the key features of natural philosophy in classical poetry. This once again attests to the difficulties one often encounters in attempting to order classical works of literature and scholarship with respect to their role in the history of the scientific disciplines. What is clear, however, is that precisely because of the combination of the literary and the 'scientific', the cosmological passages from Virgil's poems have from classical antiquity onward always been highly appealing to commentators and other interpreters.⁴²⁷

2.2.1.3 Natural history

The study of the history of nature was a well-established field in classical learning, encompassing many topics that later became the subjects of study for entire independent disciplines (such as botany, meteorology, pharmacy, biology). The most influential work with natural historians was Pliny the Elder's (23 AD-25

⁴²³ Taub (1993), 32.

⁴²⁴ See Graham (2013, ch. 3) and Coxon (2009, 373ff.) on the astronomical observations in Parmenides, *Doxa* (int. al. the insight that the moon gets its light from the sun). For Lucretius, see especially *De rerum natura* 5.509-770.

⁴²⁵ Morton Braund (2006), 208.

⁴²⁶ For a discussion of the probable philosophical sources of influence on Virgil's cosmologies, see Morton Braund (2006). See Hardie (1986) for a broader discussion of the cosmologies in the works of Virgil (especially of their political aspects).

⁴²⁷ See for example the collection of interpretations of the boy in *Eclogue* 4 in Putnam & Ziolkowski (2008), 487-503

August 79 AD) *Naturalis historia*,⁴²⁸ which remained highly significant up into the sixteenth century,⁴²⁹ offering an alternative model to that other paragon of the study of natural science, Aristotle (384-322 BC).⁴³⁰ The latter had written a host of works in the field (that are customarily referred to by their Latin titles), including the *Historia animalium* ('The History of Animals'), *De generatione animalium* ('On the generation of animals'), *De motu animalium* ('On the motions of animals'), the *Parva naturalia* (a collection of writings discussing natural phenomena) and the *Meteorologica* ('Meteorology'). The pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata* were also of importance, just as the works of other classical authors like Theophrastus (371-287 BC), *Περὶ φυτῶν ἱστορίας* ('Enquiry into plants'), the medical works of Galen (129-200 AD), and Dioscorides, *De Materia medica* ('On the Materials of Medicine'). But Pliny's encyclopedic *Naturalis historia* was the dominant source of information, precisely because of the encyclopedic nature of the work which made it highly suitable for use by later scholars. As was already discussed above, classical works treating topics from the scientific disciplines are not necessarily, and often not, rooted in empirical study. This is certainly true for the *Naturalis historia*. Natural history thus was, from a modern perspective, a field on the cusp between the natural sciences and the literary disciplines,⁴³¹ a combination that we have also encountered in the previous sections on astronomical writings. Despite the lack of empirical foundation, it was only in the later sixteenth century that criticism of Pliny's work on the basis of new developments in the scientific disciplines emerged.⁴³² Before that time, famous scholars in the field of natural history like Conrad Gesner (1522-1605) had still been much dependent on Pliny.⁴³³

2.2.2 Middle Ages

The early Middle Ages are characterized by a focus on the *trivium* (grammar, logic and rhetoric), which can, for example, be determined from the scarcity of chairs for *quadrivium* subjects (arithmetic, geometry, music theory, astronomy). An increase in these chairs occurred from the second half of the fifteenth century onwards.⁴³⁴ This was due not only to an increasing interest in these subjects (partly as a result of the influence of classical Greek texts that were translated into Latin from the

⁴²⁸ Gaius Plinius Secundus (23-79 AD), *Naturalis historia*.

⁴²⁹ Doody (2010), 31.

⁴³⁰ Blair & Grafton (2012), 538; Doody (2010), 2; 174.

⁴³¹ Murphy (2004), 4-5.

⁴³² Doody (2010), 31-38; Beagon (1992), 23; see section 3 below.

⁴³³ Doody (2010), 37.

⁴³⁴ Reiss (1997), 138.

Arabic from the twelfth century onwards),⁴³⁵ but also because of increased trade and commerce.⁴³⁶ Before this shift in interest, Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* ('The marriage of Philology and Mercury', 5th century AD) was the prime source of knowledge for almost all forms of learning, namely the seven liberal arts (the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*, in *De nuptiis* symbolized by seven maidens attending the wedding of Mercury (divine intelligence) and Philology (human intellect)).⁴³⁷ One of the most important features of the work was that it divided knowledge into various categories or, in other words, it offered a classification of the various forms of knowledge.⁴³⁸ Together with Boethius' *De consolazione philosophiae*, Martianus Capella's work was the most important source for the school curriculum in the early Middle Ages.⁴³⁹

There is some debate about the position of astronomy in the early Middle Ages,⁴⁴⁰ but one can safely say that the great works of classical Greek astronomy only returned to the scholars of Western Europe in the course of the twelfth century through Latin translations of Arabic translations of the Greek astronomical and mathematical treatises.⁴⁴¹ Martianus Capella's seventh book, for example, concerns astronomy, but the discussion he offers is rather limited in comparison to the achievements of the classical astronomers.⁴⁴² Still, the work had an important role in the medieval study of the harmony of the heavenly spheres, for it provided both a cosmography (the *ars astronomica*, book 7) and a theory of music (the *ars*

⁴³⁵ Copeland & Sluiter (2009), 149.

⁴³⁶ Reiss (1997), 139. This argument is in fact also used as one of the elements to explain the rise of Humanism in early Renaissance Italy.

⁴³⁷ For a brief introduction to this work, see Copeland & Sluiter (2009), 148-151.

⁴³⁸ Copeland & Sluiter (2009), 9-10; 13. There was a rich medieval commentary tradition on the work; see Teeuwen (2010), 12-14.

⁴³⁹ Bower (2010), 61-62; Stahl (1971), 21-22. Stahl (1965, 102) even calls Martianus Capella 'the founder of the *trivium* and *quadrivium* in medieval education'.

⁴⁴⁰ McCluskey (2010, 221-225) argues that early medieval astronomical texts have until recently been neglected in modern scholarship, and that therefore the common view of astronomy in the early Middle Ages (namely as being virtually non-existent) is no longer viable. Still the important classical astronomical works only became available from the 12th century onwards, which made earlier developments in the more practical, technical branch of astronomy very difficult (which is also recognized by McCluskey, 224).

⁴⁴¹ One of the results of this is that many Latin and modern names for stars are corrupt forms of an Arabic equivalent, which itself often goes back to the Greek. Evans (1998), 43; 397-401.

⁴⁴² Evans (1998), 397-398. For a discussion of the view that Martianus Capella's astronomy goes back to Varro, *De astrologia* (lost) see Stahl (1971), 50.

musica, which is discussed in book 9; musical theory was one of the disciplines in the *quadrivium*).⁴⁴³ In this way, early medieval astronomy was firmly framed in the pedagogical tradition of the seven liberal arts, with – apart from Martianus Capella – central texts of authors like Macrobius, Pliny, Boethius and Isidore.⁴⁴⁴ The most important difference with classical astronomy, especially that of Ptolemy, was that early medieval commentators and glossators on these texts did not concern themselves with geometrical models and quantitative computation to predict the movement of celestial bodies.⁴⁴⁵

2.2.3 *Renaissance*

In the course of the late 16th and 17th centuries, the dominance of Aristotelian philosophy came under increasing pressure. Increasingly scholars of disciplines like astronomy and biology chose not to rely solely on authoritative classical texts like those of Aristotle, but to take into account the empirical observations by themselves or others. The effect of this in astronomy was that Aristotelian cosmology, which had been dominant up to the 16th century, had to be abandoned, just like Ptolemaic geocentrism. In botany, the descriptions of plants and animals in works by classical authors like Pliny were found not to be in accordance with the results of empirical study. The questioning of the authority of classical texts which resulted from this, has often been identified as one of the prime characteristics of the early modern era. One needs to be careful, however, not to identify this approach with the humanist movement. Although humanist scholars questioned the way in which earlier scholars had dealt with authoritative texts, the authority of the classical authors was central to their scholarly undertakings. Moreover, precisely this central position of classical texts came under increasing pressure as a result of the aforementioned confrontation between ‘knowledge from books’ and empirical research. This phenomenon, which is highly relevant to the topic of this chapter, will be discussed in more detail in **section 3**.

⁴⁴³ Teeuwen (2010), 22-24. As Teeuwen remarks, Martianus Capella’s cosmography is confusing and at times self-contradictory, e.g., the combination of a geocentric and a heliocentric worldview (namely in the case of the planets Mercury and Venus). On the other hand, precisely this aspect of his work must have been what made him so appealing to medieval commentators because it offered ample opportunity for interpretation.

⁴⁴⁴ McCluskey (2010), 224.

⁴⁴⁵ Computational astronomy was, however, practiced for the benefit of one particular domain, namely that of religion, e.g., determining the exact date of Easter, which required the prediction of the spring equinox (the sun passing the equator in March, marking the first day of Spring) and of the first full moon after the equinox. See McCluskey (2010), 231ff.

In astronomy, one of the best-known works of the early modern era is Copernicus' *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium libri sex* (1543). In fact, even in this revolutionary work the influence of concepts from classical astronomy is apparent, as Copernicus' theory is very similar to that of Aristarchus of Samos (3rd century BC).⁴⁴⁶ In 1616 *De revolutionibus* was placed on the Index by the Catholic Church, which, however, failed to have a real influence on the spreading of the heliocentric model.⁴⁴⁷ The next important step was taken by Johannes Kepler, who in his *Astronomia nova* (1609) was the first to truly break with the Ptolemaic model by removing the concentric circles (and establishing that the orbit of the planets was actually elliptical rather than circular). All this culminated in 1632 in the publication of Galileo Galilei's *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo*, which in turn resulted in Galileo's trial by the Inquisition in 1633.

Traditionally, astronomy had always been intimately connected to astrology.⁴⁴⁸ The mathematical tools developed in classical astronomy, for example to predict the position of the planets, were readily used in astrological calculations.⁴⁴⁹ While in this chapter I will in particular be interested in astronomy (since the science of modern astronomy emerged in the early modern era), the astrological tradition cannot be ignored: up to the early modern era (and rather unfortunately still in our own day) astrology has been a popular practice that was performed in all social strata of society.⁴⁵⁰ Thus, for example, the Zodiac – which will be discussed in more detail below, in my analysis of the Virgil commentaries – was originally a concept used both in astrology and astronomy. The role of astronomy in religion is comparable to the use of astronomical tools in astrology, e.g. to determine the time of eclipses of the sun, the appearance of comets and the position of other celestial bodies (which was for example of importance to determine where certain planets were at the time of someone's birth).⁴⁵¹

⁴⁴⁶ Copernicus refers to Aristarchus in his notes. Wright (1995), 153-155. He also names Martianus Capella as one of his predecessors (see Stahl, Johnson & Burge (1971), 175).

⁴⁴⁷ Evans (1998), 424-425.

⁴⁴⁸ See, for example, Taub (1993, 129-133) on Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*. In this work Ptolemy discussed the influence of celestial bodies on things on earth and the possibility of prognostication (which he had already discussed from a mathematical perspective in his *Amalgest* for the movement and the position of heavenly bodies).

⁴⁴⁹ Grafton (1999, 22-37) provides a telling account of the complex calculations early modern astrologers had to make.

⁴⁵⁰ For a concise introduction to the position of astrology in the Renaissance, see Grafton (1999), 1-21.

⁴⁵¹ Wright (1995), 42-43; 163-184. The connection between celestial phenomena and religion was also of relevance in the early modern period; see, for example, the debate in the Dutch Republic over the

Turning to natural history, it can be observed that in 16th-century-early-modern Europe, this area of learning gained much prominence as a field of study. This phenomenon manifested itself, for example, in the establishment of chairs for the study of natural history at universities.⁴⁵² This was especially the case for the study of botany, which became increasingly connected to medicine.⁴⁵³ In the course of the century, new areas of study, such as geology and paleontology, were established. As is stressed by Findlen (1999), the formation of these disciplines was mediated through the study of, and debate about, books,⁴⁵⁴ including both classical texts and contemporary publications.⁴⁵⁵ This role of humanist learning in the rise of the scientific disciplines attests once more to the fundamental connection in the early modern era between humanist scholarship and the study of natural phenomena.⁴⁵⁶ Pliny was still the most important classical author in the field, his *Naturalis historia* serving as a welcome alternative to Aristotle.

To finish this section, I will note briefly that the rise of the sciences in the early modern period cannot be equated to the rise of rationalist thought, the start of the Enlightenment, or even the establishment of modern science. Such an equation would not only lump together centuries of developments in intellectual history too easily, but would also unnecessarily cloud our understanding of the early modern scientific disciplines. Nowadays science is strongly associated with rationalist thought, while even the most prominent early-modern protagonists of the new sciences, such as Robert Boyle (1627-1691) and Isaac Newton (1642-1727), were deeply involved in disciplines which probably few people today would call

appearance of a comet in the winter of 1664-1665 in Van Miert (2009), 259-267. See also Jorink (2010), ch.3 'Comets'.

⁴⁵² Findlen (1999), 370-372.

⁴⁵³ '... Renaissance naturalists wished to give an ancient discipline ... a permanent place in the university curriculum by presenting it as the connective tissue that linked medicine to natural philosophy ...'. Findlen (1999), 370-371. In the field of botany, Theophrastus (whose works only became available for scholars in the West in the 15th century and were translated into Latin by Theodorus Gaza), Dioscorides, Pliny and Galen were the four classical authorities. See Reeds (1976), 522-527 for an overview of the classical sources for botany in the Renaissance.

⁴⁵⁴ Findlen (1999), 372.

⁴⁵⁵ See also Reeds (1976), 520.

⁴⁵⁶ As Reeds (1976), 542 concluded in the case of botany: 'When Renaissance botanists finally surpassed the ancients in their knowledge of *res herbaria*, much of the credit belonged, as they well knew, to their humanist-inspired faith in their classical exemplars.'

scientific (e.g., alchemy and astrology), or even rational.⁴⁵⁷ This brief observation shows again why it is important to judge the scientific efforts of early modern scholars on their own merit and in their own context, and not according to our modern standards.

3. Early Modern Science and the Humanities

The rise of the modern sciences had a profound impact on early modern learning.⁴⁵⁸ Canonical works which had formed the basis for centuries of teaching and learning, such as the natural works of Aristotle, Ptolemy and Galen, lost their central position or became obsolete altogether. They were replaced by the works of men like Copernicus and Vesalius. As Blair & Grafton (1992) have stated in their introduction to a thematic volume of the *Journal of the History of Ideas* on the relation between humanism and science, the new sciences should be studied in their *interaction* with aspects of humanism: just as the humanists owed much to their scholastic predecessors, so too the new scientists were more indebted to humanism than some of them liked to acknowledge.⁴⁵⁹ One need only think of the rediscovery and meticulous study of classical Greek texts on astronomy, mathematics and medicine in the sixteenth century to understand the importance of the methods of Renaissance humanism for the rise of the sciences. Nonetheless, there was tension between both intellectual traditions, leading to the sometimes fierce attacks on Renaissance humanism by authors like Francis Bacon – who in his *Instauratio magna* (1620) called for leaving behind the textual authorities and embracing the new sciences instead⁴⁶⁰ – and René Descartes.⁴⁶¹ Moreover, the central position of Latin as *the* language for learning, literature and scholarship eroded more and more over the course of the seventeenth century, and especially the practitioners of the newly emerging scientific disciplines (e.g., Galileo, Newton) chose to publish their findings in the vernacular. On the other hand, the position of

⁴⁵⁷ See, for example, Rogers (1996, 8f.) for the interest in alchemy in England in the 1650s. The distinction between alchemy and chemistry began to be made only by the end of the 17th century.

⁴⁵⁸ As Anthony Grafton puts it: 'All intellectuals ... knew a vital fact that their fifteenth-century predecessors could not have suspected. What men had traditionally revered as Antiquity ... was really the youth of mankind ... The age of a system of thought became a sign not of authority but of obsolescence, and many of those who insisted on the aesthetic superiority of classical literature admitted the substantive supremacy of modern science.' Grafton (1992), 4-5.

⁴⁵⁹ Blair & Grafton (1992), 536-539; see also Grafton & Siraisi (1999), 4-5 and Dear (2009), 39.

⁴⁶⁰ See Grafton (1992), 197-204.

⁴⁶¹ Grafton (1996), 205.

Latin and humanist learning remained firm in education and civic life.⁴⁶² In fact, both fields had traditionally been firmly connected in the educational tradition (as was already mentioned before in section 2 with regard to the seven liberal arts), and this connection was maintained in the early modern era, as is clearly visible, for example, in the Jesuit program of education, in which the study and teaching of classical literature, style and rhetoric was combined with much attention to mathematics.⁴⁶³

A good example of the perceived relevance in the early modern era of the study of scientific disciplines for the *studia humanitatis*, and vice versa, is the field of astronomy. It is clear from early modern educational treatises that training in this field was deemed of special importance for the study of the classical poets. Two examples from these early modern treatises will show how early modern scholars themselves explicitly connected the scientific disciplines and philological studies. Eneo Silvio Piccolomini (1405-1464; known as pope Pius II from 1458-1464), for example, recommends in his treatise *De liberorum educatione* (1450):

‘Nor should a moderate study of astronomy, a study which explains the heavens and discloses the secrets of the heavenly bodies to mortals, be denied to a young prince. A knowledge of this subject has often been a helpful and seemly thing for great leaders. (...) Therefore a boy should also be immersed in this branch of knowledge, without which the poets cannot be completely understood.’⁴⁶⁴

It is to be noted that in this perspective the sciences are not to be studied for themselves, but to facilitate the understanding of the classical poets.⁴⁶⁵ Piccolomini makes this even more explicit when he writes in the following sentence of his treatise:

⁴⁶² Grafton (1996), 207-208.

⁴⁶³ Reiss (1997), 11.

⁴⁶⁴ ‘Nec astronomiae moderata lectio regi puero negari debet, quae caelos ostendit et arcana superum mortalibus pandit. Huius notitia magnis saepe ducibus adiumento decorique fuit. (...) Imbuendus est igitur et hac doctrina puer, sine qua nec poetae plenius intelligi possunt.’ Text and translation by Kallendorf (2002), 252-253.

⁴⁶⁵ As advised by Quintilian in *Inst.* 1.4.4.

'But we must always take care, when taking on one art, not to neglect the others, nor should our attachment to natural science and contemplative studies lead us to put aside the study of morality and distract us from the conduct of our affairs.'⁴⁶⁶

The same opinion is voiced by Battista Guarino (1434-1513) in his *De ordine docendi ac studendi* (1459):

'However, since much in the poets has been taken from astrology and geography, it will be desirable for students to know thoroughly the treatise *On the Sphere*,⁴⁶⁷ and to look at Pomponius Mela, Hyginus, Solinus, Martianus Capella, and Strabo (whom my father⁴⁶⁸ recently translated into Latin).'⁴⁶⁹

In spite of these examples of the appreciation of the scientific disciplines for the study of *classical* texts – and it should be noted that what is commended in the above is the study of the classical knowledge of astronomy, and not of contemporary scientific ideas – the confrontation between the authority of (classical) texts and the results of empirical study can be seen as one of the important features of the later early modern period.⁴⁷⁰ All of this culminated in the late 17th century in the well-known *Querelle des anciens et des modernes*, which started off with Charles Perrault's *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand*. In this work, modern man outshines his antique counterpart because of his technological progress, and the authority of canonical authors like Homer and Virgil is questioned.⁴⁷¹ An analogous debate started in England with the publication of the *Essay upon Ancient and Modern Learning* by Sir William Temple (who defended the ancients). Clearly, both these affairs were the culmination of a conflict that had been gradually

⁴⁶⁶ 'Semper autem cavendum est, nec, si uni iungamur arti, ut reliquas negligamus, neve naturalibus inhaerentes studiis ac contemplationibus, quae moralia sunt postponamus et rebus abducamur agendis.' Text and translation by Kallendorf (2002), 253.

⁴⁶⁷ *Tractatus de Sphaera* by Johannes de Sacrobosco (13th century). This treatise, drawing on Ptolemy's *Almagest*, was one of the most popular textbooks on astronomy before the Copernican revolution.

⁴⁶⁸ Guarino Guarini of Verona (ca. 1374-1460) translated Strabo's *Geography* from Greek into Latin.

⁴⁶⁹ Section 26: 'Ceterum quia in poetis multa et de astrologia et de situ orbis sumpta reperiuntur, haud erit incommodum tractatum *Sphaerae* pernoscere, Pomponium Melam, Hyginum, Solinum, Martianum Capellam et quem nuper in latinum parens noster convertit Strabonem videre.' Text and translation by Kallendorf (2002), 290-291.

⁴⁷⁰ Jorink (2010), 74-85.

⁴⁷¹ DeJean (1997), 42-44; Levine (1991), 121-126.

building up over the course of the seventeenth century.⁴⁷² On a fundamental level, the debate touched on the question of the possibility of progress: where the new sciences boasted of the new discoveries that were made through empirical study and that showed the inadequacy of some of the foundational texts of classical learning, Renaissance humanism had always tried to retrieve and restore the ancient knowledge that was embedded in the texts of classical authors. Tentatively one could say, then, that with the advent of new scientific practices, and with the increasing success of those practices, the very tradition of humanist scholarship was at stake. For essentially, who would bother to consult the knowledge available in the many voluminous commentaries on classical authors, when the very knowledge that was in those works had been shown to be outdated? In other words, the knowledge function that had been so central for the commentary tradition in the early modern era appears to have been gradually undermined by the new scientific advances.

PART 2: EARLY MODERN *AENEID*-COMMENTARIES

4. The Sciences in Early Modern Commentaries on the *Aeneid*: Introduction

‘Is there any one of the ancients who has surpassed him [Virgil] in the knowledge of the stars? Anyone weighing pharmacy and the fourth book of the *Aeneid* in a balance, who then is there, who does not admire in this poet that natural science of the Magi, which some call the most beautiful part by far of occult philosophy? What of matters ancient, what of history escapes him? For [he has] skill in cosmography and knowledge of *mathesis* [astronomical mathematics] and geometry: even when we remain silent, Aeneas’ sea journey in the third book speaks for itself. (...) Let us now pass over the knowledge of agriculture, and his expertise on herbs, stones, of animate beings, of stories, and indeed the knowledge of nature itself, which the Greeks call *phusikê*.’⁴⁷³

(Lambertus Hortensius, *De operis Aeneidos dignitate, philosophia, et laude Poetae*).

⁴⁷² Levine (1991), 1-17.

⁴⁷³ ‘Ecquis veterum in astrorum scientia hunc superavit? Qui pharmaceutriam, et quartum Aeneidos aequilibrio trutinat, quis porro est, qui Magiam illam naturalem, quam occultae philosophiae longe pulcherrimam partem quidam vocant, in poeta non admiretur? Quid antiquarum rerum, quid historiarum hunc fugit? Nam cosmographiae peritiam, matheseos et geometriae scientiam: vel nobis tacentibus, satis loquitur Aeneae navigatio in tertio. (...) Ut nunc rei rusticae scientiam, ut herbarum, lapidum, animantium, fabularum, ipsiusque adeo rerum naturae, quam Graeci *φυσικὴν* nominant, peritiam mittamus (...).’

This elaborate praise of the great value of the *Aeneid* as a source of knowledge on the natural sciences represents only one third of the words which Lambertus Hortensius in the preface to his 1559-commentary (*Lamberti Hortensii Montfortii Enarrationes in sex priores libros Aeneidos Vergilianae*) uses to describe the unique qualities of the epic for all kinds of disciplines, ranging from theology and history to rhetoric and style.⁴⁷⁴ Passages like this one clearly illustrate how the tradition of Virgil's works as sources of knowledge was still firmly anchored in early modern commentary discourse. The leading question of this chapter is how early modern commentators of the *Aeneid* – especially those working in the later 16th and 17th centuries – dealt with this tradition in view of the many advances that were made in the scientific disciplines, and whether this brought about any changes in the appreciation or conceptualization of the *Aeneid* as a source for knowledge about the natural sciences.

Although often overlooked, lemmata on scientific subject matter have always been part of the commentary tradition on the *Aeneid*, up to our own day.⁴⁷⁵ From the commentary of Servius onwards, remarks on astronomy, biology and especially natural philosophy are found. These comments, however, have never attained the kind of dominant position enjoyed by the lemmata on subject matter that is part of the traditional core competence of the grammarian, such as etymology, rhetoric, style and the explanation of elements of cultural history and mythology. Therefore it is sensible to treat the lemmata that deal with scientific topics as part of the wider group of lemmata on phenomena from classical cultural history that, according to the grammarian, need to be explained to understand Virgil's poetry. On the other hand, as my analysis in the previous two chapters of this dissertation has shown, the *Aeneid* was clearly viewed and treated as a storehouse, a treasure-trove for knowledge, not only about the classical world, but about the world as it is. This would imply that knowledge about phenomena from nature should also be viewed as a category of knowledge that does not only pertain to the specific context of the classical world, but that also provides knowledge that is universal and therefore valid for a reader centuries after the work first appeared. As was discussed above, this can give rise to tensions between

⁴⁷⁴ Lambertus Hortensius (c.1500-1574) was a Dutch priest and scholar who studied at Utrecht and Leuven and was rector of the Latin school at Naarden (Dutch Republic). See Molhuysen & Blok (1911), vol. 1, s.v. Hortensius.

⁴⁷⁵ See for example the modern commentary by Austin (e.g. on V., A. 1.535 *subito ... Orion*; on V., A. 1.744 *Arcturum* and *Triones*).

the traditional way of discussing and explaining natural phenomena and the progress made in the scientific disciplines. In the analysis of three specific categories of lemmata dealing with subject matter from the domain of the natural sciences – natural philosophy (4.1), astronomy (4.2), and natural history (4.3) – it will become apparent how and to what extent the traditional discourse of the Virgilian commentary tradition and that of the new scientific disciplines intersected and related to each other.

4.1 The Philosophy of Nature

As was discussed in **section 2.2.1.1**, natural philosophy was one of the most important strands in the broader tradition of combining thinking about literature and nature. Over time this tradition became especially complicated because of its relation to Christianity and the scientific disciplines. Elements from the tradition of natural philosophy, especially the ontological models provided there, had been taken up by Christian interpreters of the *Aeneid* to appropriate the authority of this work. With the rise of the scientific disciplines however, natural philosophy—despite being still very much en vogue with (early) humanists – became obsolete, or at least marginalized, though one should note that many early modern scientists still participated at least in part in natural philosophical thinking.⁴⁷⁶ Interestingly, in early modern *Aeneid*-commentaries, one does not only encounter this mode of interpretation where one would expect it (e.g., in the late fifteenth-century allegorizing commentary of Landino, see my chapter 2), but also in much later works like the commentary by Nascimbaenus, as is shown from the following lemma, where one would perhaps expect the influence of early modern scholars of nature or of recent developments in thinking about natural phenomena such as time and motion. Instead, Nascimbaenus turns to classical scholarship:

Nascimbaenus

A. 1.269 *volvendis mensibus*] Philosophorum opinionem sequitur de tempore. Nam duo tantum admittunt philosophi tempora, praeteritum et futurum. Praesens vero esse negant ullum, nam in eo quod praesens dicimus, si quid iam aliqua ex parte confectum est, praeteritum est; si quid mox perficiendum, futurum est. Quamobrem poeta annis volventibus dixit. Quod enim volvitur, non stat. Quod non stat praesens dici non potest. Oratores vero non modo praesens tempus admittunt, sed et magis praesens adinvenerunt, de quo pluribus, cum opportunior inciderit scribendi locus.

⁴⁷⁶ Dear (2001), 65–79.

A. 1.269 *with the rolling months*] He follows the opinion of the philosophers about time. For the philosophers allow only two times, the past and the future. They deny that there is any present time, for in that which we call 'present', if something is already for some part completed, it is past; if something will be finished soon, it is the future. For this reason the poet said 'rolling years'. For what is rolling, is not stable. What is not static, cannot be called the present. The orators, however, not only allow the present, but have even invented in addition a 'more present'. More on this subject when a more suitable place for writing will present itself.

The entire lemma in fact appears to have been taken from a work by Marius Victorinus (3rd/4th century AD). In his *Explanaciones in Ciceronis rhetoricam*, a commentary on Cicero's *De inventione*, Victorinus writes a lemma on *De Inv.* 1.26,39 in which he discusses the topic of 'time'. I quote the relevant passage:

Victorinus

'(...) But the philosophers divided this time of ours in two times: past and future. However they denied that there is a present, on the grounds that in the one that we call the present, if something has already been completed for some part, it is the past, [and] if something will soon be completed, it is the future. Thus also Virgil: 'As the years roll' [V., A. 1.234]; for what is rolling, is not stable, what is not stable, cannot be considered the present. The orators however divide our time in three tenses, the past, the present, and the future. And they divide the past in three tenses (...). But they divide the present time into two, 'the present' and the 'more present'. The present time is: 'Now, now rise on your oars' [V., A. 5.189], that is, what he [Cicero] says 'And moreover those things that are imminent in the present and that must occur most certainly' [Cic., *Inv.* 1.26.39]; for the time that is *instans* ['impending'] is the present time, such as when Juno says to Juturna, when the fates had hold of Turnus already: 'and save him from the impending fates' [V., A. 10.624]. Indeed, so that we understand that she has spoken of the present fates, he has added afterwards the time which is more present: 'if you dare anything more present' [V., A. 12.152]. Therefore they have said that the present time has two times, the present and the more present.'⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁷ '(...)Verum hoc tempus nostrum philosophi in duo tempora diviserunt, in praeteritum et futurum. Praesens autem esse negaverunt, quod in eo quod praesens dicimus si quod iam aliqua ex parte confectum est praeteritum sit, si quid mox perfici habeat futurum sit. Ita Virgilius: "tot iam volventibus annis" [sic; V., A. 1.234]; quod enim volvitur non stat, quod non stat praesens non habetur. Oratores autem tempus nostrum in tria tempora

Victorinus provides a discussion of how philosophers and orators conceptualize time, with reference to passages from Virgil. He explains that the word *praesens* can be used in the comparativus (*praesentius* instead of *magis praesens*). In fact, Nascimbaenus' lemma contains nothing more than a selection of quotations from Victorinus' comment on Cicero. His lemma, however, is interesting for two reasons. First, Nascimbaenus has taken over much of Victorinus' discussion, but he has inserted this information at another verse of the *Aeneid*: Victorinus refers to A. 1.234 (*volventibus annis*), but Nascimbaenus writes his lemma on A. 1.269 (*volvendis mensibus*). The way in which Victorinus has presented his discussion makes it clear that his lemma on Cicero is almost waiting to be incorporated in a Virgil commentary: all a commentator has to do is to rewrite Victorinus' text a bit. This appears to be precisely what Nascimbaenus has done. The lemma thus clearly illustrates how interconnected an early modern commentary like that of Nascimbaenus was with other works of scholarship. The second reason why this lemma is particularly interesting is that, surprisingly, Nascimbaenus has left out exactly those parts from Victorinus' text that explain what is meant by the opinion of some philosophers that there is no present, and moreover what it means that some orators allow for a *magis praesens* ('stronger present'). Without this information from Victorinus, Nascimbaenus' lemma is in fact difficult to understand. In his work on late antique grammarians Kaster refers to a similar discussion of the term *magis praesens* in the *Commentum artis Donati* ('Commentary on the *Ars* of Donatus) of the late 5th-century grammarian Pompeius.⁴⁷⁸ In that particular instance, it appears that 'magis praesens' is in fact not in Donatus' text, but the result of an ill-considered reading of Donatus, probably on the basis of an intermediary text (like that of Servius).

In addition, it is somewhat unclear why Nascimbaenus has selected specifically this explanation of time for his lemma on Virgil: the lemma suggests an

dividunt, praeteritum, praesens, futurum. Ac praeteritum tempus in tria tempora dividunt (...) Praesens vero tempus in duo dividunt, in praesens et magis praesens. Praesens tempus est: "nunc, nunc insurgite remis" [V., A. 5.189], hoc est, quod ait ET ITEM QUAE INSTENT IN PRAESENTIA ET CUM MAXIME FIAN'T [Cic., Inv. 1.26.39] ; instans enim tempus praesens est, ut ait Iuno ad Iuturnam, cum iam fata Turnum tenerent: "atque instantibus eripe fati" [V., A. 10.624]. Denique ut sciamus illam praesentia fata dixisse, addidit postea tempus quod magis praesens esset: "si quid praesentius audes" [V., A. 12.152]. Praesens ergo tempus duo tempora habere dixerunt, praesens et magis praesens.' The Latin text was taken from the following edition: A. Ippolito (2006), *Marii Victorini explanationes in Ciceronis Rhetoricam*. Turnhout: Brepols Publishers.

⁴⁷⁸ Kaster (1988), 147.

interpretation of *volvendis mensibus* as representing a natural phenomenon (the flow of time) from a philosophical viewpoint. This is consistent with the established idea that Virgil was not only a master poet, but also a great philosopher of nature. Because Virgil adhered to the philosophers' view about time, he used the phrase implying continuity. For the quotation from Victorinus should in fact be read against the background of the complex philosophical discussion on discrete and continuous time,⁴⁷⁹ a point that Nascimbaenus does not make. Interestingly, he does not present in any way his own opinion on these classical ideas either, nor does he in any way relate the issue of the flow of time to classical or contemporary theories, for which he could have looked, for example, at the work of various classical and post-classical astronomers.⁴⁸⁰ This all points to a lack of invention on Nascimbaenus' part: he appears to have been unable, or unwilling, to travel from the realm of grammatical explanation into that of natural philosophical scientific discourse. On the other hand, the comment offered by him is in agreement with the type of (grammatical) explanations traditionally offered by commentators of Virgil, and therefore probably also in accordance with what his readers expected of him.

In looking for lemmata on natural philosophy, the sixth book of the *Aeneid* would seem a logical place to start. Traditionally this book had always presented itself as a welcome opportunity for commentators to read the epic in terms of natural philosophy, that is, as an allegory for the composition of the universe, and for being and change.⁴⁸¹ In this book, Aeneas enters the Underworld where he meets, among others, his deceased father Anchises (A. 6.679ff.). Anchises explains to Aeneas the transmigration of souls that takes place in the underworld and prophesies about the future of Rome. Metaphysical philosophy and scientific thought were closely related in classical antiquity,⁴⁸² which often resulted in allegorical readings of the *Aeneid* – especially of book 6, but sometimes also of the entire epic – encompassing ideas from fields like astronomy or natural physics. While this tradition was firmly established and remained influential into the early modern period,⁴⁸³ the readings that resulted from it sometimes also make clear the broad gap between classical and early modern learning and beliefs. Because of this, La Rue, in his lemma on A. 6.713-14 *Quibus altera fato corpora debentur*, purposely creates a stark contrast between the views of his own day and those expressed in

⁴⁷⁹ See for example Warren (2003) about Sextus Empiricus on time in his *Contra Physicos*.

⁴⁸⁰ Servius offers no comment on the issue of time at V., A. 1.234 or 1.269.

⁴⁸¹ See my remarks on Landino's commentary in chapter 2.

⁴⁸² See my discussion above in section 2.2.1.1.

⁴⁸³ See also my discussion of Landino in chapter 2.

(or lying at the basis of) the text of Virgil. Clearly, the court chaplain La Rue here makes sure that no one could misunderstand the attention that he as a commentator paid to this passage:

La Rue on A. 6.713 *Quibus altera fato corpora debentur*

A. 6.713 *Quibus altera fato corpora debentur*] Non enim omnes animae alia in corpora redibant, ut mox dicemus v.748. Sed iam opus est, ut promissam saepe de animarum natura dissertationem exequamur, et evolvamus mysteria famosae illius translationis animarum diversa in corpora, quae Graecis μετεμψύχωσις dicitur. Hanc primo invexit Pythagoras, tenueruntque deinceps Socrates et Plato. His adhaeret hoc loco Virgilius ut et G. 4.220, qui prius Epicurum sequebatur Ecl. 6.31. Id omne undecim capitibus complectemur; quae quantum a Christiana veritate absint, facile erit intelligere.

A. 6.713 *To whom other bodies are owned by fate*] For not all souls returned to other bodies, as we will explain in a moment at verse 748. But now it is necessary that we provide the discussion about the nature of souls which was promised many times, and that we unravel the mysteries of that well-known transmigration of the souls into different bodies, which the Greeks call *metempsychôsis*. Pythagoras was the first to introduce this idea, and Socrates and Plato subsequently adhered to it. Virgil adheres to them at this verse like in G. 4.220, who earlier had followed Epicurus in Ecl. 6.31. We will discuss all this at length in the next eleven chapters; how remote these things are from the Christian truth will be easy to understand.

Apparently, an extensive discussion of this part of the sixth book was traditionally expected from the commentator. La Rue offers such a discussion, but makes explicitly clear that the views expressed in this passage are in no way compatible with the only viable opinion of his own day on this matter, that of the church. On the other hand, La Rue's decision to include extensive commentary on this part of the text (and he is a commentator who usually does not hesitate to be selective) attests to the importance that he and his intended readership attached to the natural philosophical ideas from classical antiquity that were traditionally used in the interpretation of this passage. Thus La Rue faithfully discusses the ideas mentioned by Anchises and relates them to the works of Plato (especially the *Timaeus*) and to the philosophical doctrines of Pythagoras. One may therefore conclude that despite the plain irrelevance for his own day of the ontology presented by Anchises, this particular element of classical scientific-philosophical thought was still included in a 17th-century *Aeneid*-commentary out of (antiquarian) interest in the ideas expressed in the passage. Moreover, it attests to the great

importance of tradition as a mechanism for the survival of elements throughout the centuries in various commentaries. The unequivocal way in which La Rue states the incompatibility of Anchises' world view with the Christian truth at the beginning of his discussion of the passage from *Aeneid* 6 pops up again in a lemma on a verse at the end of Anchises' discussion, functioning as a transition to the parade of Roman heroes:

La Rue A. 6.756 *Nunc age...*

A. 6.756 *Nunc age, etc.*] Ostendit Anchises Aeneae posterorum suorum clarissimos, ubi notanda quattuor. (...) IV. Hoc totum Virgilii artificium, etsi perquam insigne est, errore non carere. Is autem error est eiusmodi. Animas inducit quae iam insederant corpora, indeque egressae, tum aut purae erant, aut purgabantur, in Romanorum heroum corpora reversurae. At si erant purae, inerat iis dumtaxat 'purus aethereus sensus atque aurai simplicis ignis' [V., A. 6.747], atque ita nullus inerat sensus corporis praeteriti, multo minus futuri. Si purgabantur, nondum Lethaeis aquis imbutae, nondum praeteriti corporis memoriam exuerant, atque adeo nondum potuerant convenientes futurae olim sorti affectus assumere; igitur nec Sylvius niti hasta [V., A. 6.760], nec Romulus geminas habere cristas [V., A. 6.778-780], nec Numa mentum incanum gerere [V., A. 6.809], nec circa Marcellum Romani strepere [V., A. 6.855].

A. 6.756 'Come now...' etc.] Anchises shows Aeneas the most excellent men of his progeny, on which four things have to be noted (...) 4. [We must note] That this whole work of art of Virgil, although it is exceedingly remarkable, is not free of error. This fault is of the following kind. He brings on souls that had already lived in bodies, and that having left them, were either pure or being purified, since they were to return to the bodies of Roman heroes. But if they were pure, then there were at the very least present in them 'pure etheric sense and the fire of simple air', but then it [the pure soul] would have no sense of a previous body, let alone of a future one. And if they were being purified, as long as they had not yet been soaked in the waters of the Lethe, they had not yet laid down the memory of their former body, and thus they could not yet have taken on the attributes fitting their future fate; thus Silvius could not lean on his spear, Romulus could not have a double plume, Numa could not carry a grey beard, no Romans could murmur around Marcellus.

La Rue refers to the most appealing elements from the passage, namely the parade of famous Roman heroes (the kings of Alba Longa, all of them called Silvius (A. 6.760); Romulus, the founder of Rome (A. 6.778), Numa Pompilius, the second king

of Rome (A. 6.809), the Roman general Marcellus (A. 6.855)), thus making use of the strong rhetorical overtones in the passage.⁴⁸⁴ Through this La Rue shows that Virgil's doctrine of the transmigration of souls, as explained by Anchises, is inconsistent. La Rue is in fact attacking this traditional ontology, which was at odds with Christian ideas about the soul (and note how La Rue stresses explicitly the literary nature of the events described in the text). In the commentary tradition pointing out problematic passages or inconsistencies in a work of literature often served as a diagnostic tool that justifies an exegetical practice.⁴⁸⁵ For a commentator such as La Rue, who was a man of the Church, pointing out the inconsistency in this passage was probably of special interest because it concerns an element of potential tension between classical and early modern ideas. In a less prominent form, the awareness of this kind of contrast between ancient and contemporary beliefs is established and exploited by Pontanus in his discussion of the winds (A. 3.120 *Zephyris*), where he clearly opposes the views of the ancients to those of his own time: *Etiam venti pro diis habiti et culti sunt (...)* ('For they thought <even> the winds to be gods and they worshipped them').

What the examples discussed above show, is how the natural philosophical (metaphysical) tradition was still of importance to Virgilian commentators, albeit for its historical value and in the service of philological interpretation. Commentators especially used the more philosophical elements of that tradition to explain natural phenomena and general theories of being. This kind of lemmata should definitely be seen as the philological-historical part of the broad paradigm that constitutes the pre-modern study of natural phenomena, which often included elements from metaphysical philosophy and cosmogony. In the next section, my analysis will concern lemmata pertaining to that other branch of classical scientific activity, namely the more mathematical approach to the study of nature.

4.2 The *quadrivium*: Astronomy

In terms of prominence, astronomy is the most important subject from the quadrivium in the *Aeneid* commentary tradition.⁴⁸⁶ One of the most important

⁴⁸⁴ To cite Williams (1972-1973) in his introduction to 6.752-853: 'The pageant of Roman heroes is the most sustained of all the patriotic passages in the *Aeneid* (...) ... Virgil has transfigured these sources into majestic and sonorous poetry. (...) thus he has given form and shape to his emotional and intellectual presentation of the character of Rome.'

⁴⁸⁵ See Sluiter (f.c.) on the role of the concept of obscurity in relation to classical textual practices.

⁴⁸⁶ Geometry sometimes seems to play a minor role in commentary lemmata on geographical phenomena; musical theory is scarcely found, and I have encountered no examples of arithmetic in early modern Latin commentaries on the *Aeneid*.

factors to explain this prominence is the close connection between astronomy and cosmology on the one hand and the traditional connection between astronomy and poetry (which I have already mentioned above) on the other. Since Virgil offered several cosmologies in his poetic works (*Ecl.* 6, 31-40; *Ecl.* 4; *A.* 6) and showed a considerable interest in astronomical phenomena, his work presented ample opportunities for commentators to indulge themselves in this field. Interestingly, comments offered by early modern commentators on astronomical phenomena occasionally cross the boundaries of traditional cultural historical interest and turn into scientific reflections on astronomical phenomena, perhaps in an attempt to mirror the interest in this scientific discipline apparent from Virgil's works themselves. In modern commentaries on the *Aeneid*, astronomical phenomena are also discussed, but in a much more limited form than that found in many early modern commentators, namely purely historicizing and contextualizing. This is probably because of the completely different conceptualization of the knowledge value of a classical work of literature for general scholarship in modern times, for the *Aeneid* is no longer seen as a storehouse of knowledge relevant to fields outside the study of literature and history.

In the following sections, I will discuss several examples of lemmata on astronomy and try to establish to what extent these can be considered to be related to (contemporary) scientific knowledge and discourse. I will approach this topic from the viewpoint of three selected topics that are commented upon in the commentaries: the ether (**section 4.2.1**), astronomical signs and constellations (**section 4.2.2**), and astronomy and chronology (**section 4.2.3**).

4.2.1 *The ether*

An important concept from classical astronomical thought was that of the ether.⁴⁸⁷ The theory of ether goes back to Aristotle. It is the matter –the fifth element (the *quinta essentia*), besides earth, water, air and fire – of which the heavenly bodies are composed. In a universe governed by movement and change, it accounts for the eternity and stability of celestial bodies like the planets, the Moon and the stars and at the same time accounts for their eternal rotation. And while the scientific revolution led to the abandonment of many long-established notions in the

⁴⁸⁷ Aether was used as a concept in physics from classical antiquity up to the twentieth century. See Randles (1999) and Whittaker (1987). Clearly the significance of the concept changed a lot over time, so that for example Einstein's use of the word (e.g. Einstein 1920) should not be interpreted in Aristotelian terms.

scientific disciplines, the Aristotelian theory of ether (Latin: *aether*) remained influential.⁴⁸⁸

As a starting point for this topic, I will discuss Pontanus' lemma on A. 2.154 *vos aeterni ignes* (words spoken by the Greek Sinon who – deliberately “left behind” by the Greek armies – is trying to convince the Trojans to bring the giant wooden horse into their city):

Pontanus on A. 2.154 *vos aeterni ignes*

A. 2.154 *Vos aeterni ignes*] A<e>therem igneum, stellas quoque igneas esse Epicurus, Zeno, Anaxagoras, Plato quoque crediderunt, quorum tamen sententiam Aristoteles confutavit. Lucretius saepe aetherem igniferum vocat ex Epicuri dogmate quod sequitur, qui aetherem ex liquidissimis ignibus constare affirmavit. Germanus.

A. 2.154 *You, eternal fires*] Epicurus, Zeno, Anaxagoras and Plato believed that the ether was made of fire and that the stars were also made of fire. Their opinion was, however, refuted by Aristotle. Lucretius often calls the ether ‘fire-bringing’ because of the doctrine of Epicurus, which he follows, who affirmed that the ether consisted of the most liquid fires. <Taken from> Germanus.

Note how Pontanus needs to establish a somewhat forced connection between *aeterni ignes* (‘eternal fires’) and *aetherem igneum* (‘fiery ether’) to come to a discussion of the ether in this lemma. Citing the lemma of Germanus almost literally (he leaves out Germanus’ remark about Servius’ lemma on A. 2.154),⁴⁸⁹ Pontanus tells how Epicurus, Zeno, Anaxagoras and Plato all believed that the

⁴⁸⁸ Wright (1995), 114-116. As Wright points out, the Aristotelian theory of ether was finally refuted only by Einstein in 1905 in his paper on relativity.

⁴⁸⁹ In the 1575 Plantin edition (I have underlined the sentence left out by Pontanus): ‘A. 2.154 *Vos aeterni ignes*] Aetherem igneum, stellas quoque igne<a>s esse Epicurus, Zeno, Anaxagoras, Plato quoque crediderunt: quorum tamen sententiam Aristoteles confutat: cuius forsan auctoritate motus hic Servius, aeternos ignes de aris dici vacillanter affirmavit [‘Servius was perhaps moved by his authority when he hesitantly said that ‘eternal fires’ was said about altars’]. Lucretius saepe aetherem igniferum vocat ex Epicuri dogmate, qui aetherem ex liquidissimis ignibus constare affirmavit.’ Servius in fact writes *ad loc.*: ‘Aeterni ignes] aut ararum, quas fugit, ut exsecratio sit propter posteriora ‘vos arae’; aut certe Solem et Lunam significat. Exsecratio autem est adversorum deprecatio, iusiurandum vero optare prospera.’ [‘Eternal fires] either [the fire] of the altars, which he has fled [i.e. the Greek altars], as if it is a curse because of the later *vos area* [‘You, altars’]; or it certainly stands for the sun and the moon. Now a curse is a prayer for misfortunes (of others), an oath however praying for prosperity.’].

ether and the stars were made of fire and how Aristotle refuted those opinions. Furthermore, the lemma refers to Lucretius, *De rerum natura*.⁴⁹⁰ While the Aristotelian conceptualization of the heavens had been predominant well into the early modern period, the lemma also mentions the competing cosmologies of Plato and other classical philosophers, but does not provide any actual references for further information or any explanation, which is consistent with Germanus' lemma in which no further information is provided either. This indicates that the lemma does not so much aim to provide scientific information about how the cosmos is actually organized, but rather to offer a very concise doxography of what the ancients thought about this topic and how this relates to Virgil's poem. This is also consistent with the fact that Pontanus does not provide any information on how the cosmos is organized according to the science and scholarship of his own day, nor to the theory of ether.

A similarly limited explanation is found in La Rue's lemma on 1.608 *polus dum sidera pascet*. In this comment he sets apart the ideas of the ancients about the cosmos from those of his own time:

La Rue on A. 1.608 *Polus dum sidera pascet*

A. 1.608 *Polus dum sidera pascet*] E veterum opinione, qui solem et sidera, quia igneae atque adeo voracis naturae, pasci crediderunt aquarum humore in coelum educto. Sed frustra quidam legunt *palus*; nam Lucretius in multis Virgilii magister, dixit l.1.231 *Unde aether sidera pascit*.

A. 1.608 *So long as the sky shall lead the stars to pasture*] According to the opinion of the ancients, who believed that the sun and the stars, because they are of a fiery and thereby consuming nature, feed on the moisture of the waters when it is drawn upward into heaven. But some read in vain '*palus*' ['swamp']; for Lucretius, who was in many aspects Virgil's teacher, said in 1.231 [of *De rerum natura*] 'From what source did the ether feed the stars to pasture'.

La Rue thus explains to his readers (mostly schoolboys, since his commentary was part of the *Ad usum Delphini* series) that Virgil's conceptualization of stars was consistent with the cosmology of Virgil's day. This clearly shows an awareness of historical distance that results in a doxographical interest in this phenomenon. Moreover, La Rue's observation supports his view that there is no need to emend the text, for example by reading *palus* instead of *polus*. His argument for this is that

⁴⁹⁰ See, for example, Lucr., 5.458-458 and 5.498.

there is a parallel for Virgil's verse in Lucretius,⁴⁹¹ which means that *polus* is not problematic in view of classical ideas about astronomy. Germanus' explanation of the same passage chooses a different perspective, discussing Virgil's choice of words first briefly from the perspective of classical cosmology and then as a literary metaphor, which he thinks goes back to Callimachus:

Germanus on A. 1.608 *Polus dum sidera pascet*

A. 1.608 *Polus dum sidera pascet*] Ex Lucret. lib. 1 "flumina suppeditant, unde aether sidera pascit" [Lucr. 1.231]. Aristoteles autem lib. Meteor. 2 eludit meteorologorum opinionem, qui pabula e vaporibus igni astrisque suggerunt. Caelum tamen hic agere et pascere sidera videri potest, ut gregem pastor. Unde et supra Georg. 2 coniunctim poeta extulit: "Immissaeque ferae silvis, et sidera caelo" [V. G., 2.342], tamquam ferae in silvas, et sidera in caelum ad pascua compellerentur. Credo autem hanc metaphoram ductam ab illo Callimacho *In Delo*, ubi de Celtis: "ἢ ἰσάριθμοι // τεύξεσιν, ἥνικά πλεῖστα κατ' ἤερα βουκολέονται." [Hymn 4, 175-176].

A. 1.608 *So long as the sky shall lead the stars to pasture*] From Lucretius book 1 [of DRN 1.231] "rivers give in abundance, from which the ether feeds the stars". Aristotle, however, in book 2 of his *Meteorologica* [Ar, Meteor. 2.354b35-355a5] mocks the opinion of the meteorologists, who suggest that food for fire and stars comes from vapors. The heaven, however, can seem to lead and feed the stars, like a herdsman a flock. Because of this, the poet has written the same also earlier in *Georgics* 2: "Freed wild animals in the woods, and stars in the sky" [V. G. 2.342], as though wild animals in the woods, and stars in the sky were driven to pasture. I believe, however, that this metaphor was taken from the famous Callimachus *To Delos* [Hymn 4, εἰς Δῆλον], where he writes about the Celts: "equal in number with the heavenly signs, when they most densely flock in the sky." [verses 175-176].

Germanus also refers to Lucretius as a source for Virgil's verse, then refers briefly to Aristotle, who rejected the cosmology behind it, and finally concludes that the verse was inspired by a verse from Callimachus. The commentator thus provides both a remark on imitation (of Lucretius and Callimachus by Virgil), on the relevant classical scientific views for this verse (the reference to Aristotle), and on

⁴⁹¹ Servius *ad loc.* instead refers to Lucanus: 'A. 1.608] (...) 'Pasci' autem aquis marinis sidera, id est ignes caelestes, physici docent, secundum quos Lucanus ait *atque undae plus quam quod digerat aer.*' ['... 'The physicist teach that the stars, that is the heavenly fires, are fed by the waters of the sea, following whom Lucanus says: 'and more water is raised than the air can digest'].

the metaphor used in the passage (referring to the *Georgics* and, again, to Callimachus). This conflation of the poetical and the astronomical clearly indicates to what extent the idea that understanding and explaining classical poetry also required knowledge of astronomy was still extant.

That ether was a concept which still figured prominently in early modern astronomy is apparent from a hand-written annotation on La Rue's lemma on A. 3.585-86 *Aethra* // *siderea*:

La Rue on A. 3.585-586 *Aethra* *siderea*

A. 3.585-586 *Aethra* *siderea*] Caelestis ignis sphaera, ut aiunt, quae vocatur aether ; et pro coelo, et aere et astrorum splendore sumitur.

A. 3.585-586 *starry ether*] The sphere of heavenly fire, as they say, which is called 'ether'; and it is used for 'heaven' [i.e., the higher sky] and 'air' and 'splendor of the stars'.

The lemma itself is not that fascinating,⁴⁹² but what really sparks attention is a hand-written annotation in an edition owned by the classicist Janus Broukhusius (Joan van Broekhuizen, 1649-1707) in the margin of the lemma: 'vide Ang. Decembrius VII. De Polit. Liter. p.571' ('see Angelo Decembrio's *De Politia litteraria*, book 7, page 571). The *De Politia litteraria* by the Italian humanist Angelo Camillo Decembrio (approximately 1415-after 1467) consists of seven books (four of them in dialogue form) and was first published in 1540 and reprinted in 1562.⁴⁹³ And indeed, we find on pages 570-71 of the 1562 edition (part of book 7, caput 77: *De ae diphthongo in primis syllabis per alphabeti seriem, incipiendo tamen ab e littera, quo suis locis possint applicari diphthongi* ["On the diphthong 'ae' in first syllables, ordered

⁴⁹² Servius provides the following, somewhat more extensive, information *ad loc.*: '*Aethra* *siderea*] *per aethram* *sideream*, hoc est *per splendorem aetheris*. Sane *aether* est ipsum elementum, *aethra* vero *splendor aetheris*. Sciendum est *Homerum* et *aetherem* et *aerem* communis generis dicere, quod de *aere* nos non possumus dicere. De *aethere* *aethra* factum est, et secundum rationem istam potest *aether* et *aethra* unum esse, ut nunc sit pro *aethere sidereo*.' [*starry ether*] through *starry ether*, this means, through the *splendor of the ether*. Certainly *aether* is the element itself, but *aethra* the *splendor of the ether* [note: Servius is discerning synonyms]. One must know that Homer uses *aether* and *aer* ['air'] as of common gender [note: of the same grammatical gender], which we cannot say of *aer*. From *aether*, *aethra* is formed, and according to this reasoning *aether* and *aethra* can be one, as here for 'starry aether'.

⁴⁹³ See the introduction of Witten (2002) to his critical edition of the work for more information on Decembrio and the *De Politia litteraria*. See also Celenza (2004) for a discussion focusing on section 10 of the first book, on the formation of libraries.

alphabetically, starting however from the letter ‘e’, in order that the diphthongs may be applied at the right place”):⁴⁹⁴

Decembrio

Aether, unde ‘aetherem’, vel ‘aethera’, ‘aethereus’ et haec ‘aethra’, ‘aethrae’, caeli subita coruscatio, quam ‘igneam rimam’ [V., A. 8.392] aliquando Virgilius appellat, nocturno praecipue tempore nubes persecantem. Qui sermo cum a Graecis in foemineo genere ponatur, ut ἡ αἰθήρη, pariter a Virgilio lib. 3 servatus est ut, ‘Nam neque erant astrorum ignes neque [sic] lucidus aethra // siderea polus’ [V., A. 3.585-586]. Ita enim et sententiae et carminis ratione colligi par est, ut interpretemur ‘lucidum polum ex aethra siderea non fuisse’, hoc est, ‘fulgurante tunc supra Aeneam’. Nam sequitur ratio: ‘quin immo nox nubila intempestaque fuit, lunam in nimbo continens’ [paraphrase of V., A. 3.587-588]. Quo quidem admiror plerosque doctos, qui a Virgilio dictum exponerent, ‘Lucidus aethra’, ut si in masculino genere ponatur. (...)

Aether, from which the accusative singular *aetherem*, or the alternative accusative singular *aethera*, the adjective nominative singular *aethereus* and the nominative and genitive singular feminine *aethra*, *aethrae*,⁴⁹⁵ the sudden coruscation of the sky, which Virgil sometimes calls ‘a fiery fissure’ [V., A. 8.392], cutting through the clouds especially at night time. Because this word is used by the Greeks in the feminine [i.e. ἡ αἰθήρη], it is kept by Virgil in the same way in book three, such as ‘For neither were there the fires of the stars nor the bright sky with ether from the stars.’ [V., A. 3.585-586]. For it is reasonable to infer this both from the argument of the sentence and of the poem, that we understand ‘that there was no shining [masc.] sky [masc.] through ether [fem.] from the stars [fem.]’, i.e. ‘[Aether] that was shining above Aeneas at that point’. For the reason follows: ‘To the contrary, the night was cloudy and dark, keeping the moon in cloud.’. Because of this I am surprised at the very large numbers of scholars who would interpret what was said by Virgil as ‘Shining aethra’ [resp. masculine and feminine form], as if it was used in the masculine. (...)

⁴⁹⁴ Book 7, caput 77 (466-467) in Witten’s edition. My transcript of the Latin is taken from the 1562 edition, which is available through Google Books. In view of the page numbers mentioned by the annotator of La Rue, this clearly was the edition the annotator referred to. For the complicated text situation of the work, see Celenza (2004), 81.

⁴⁹⁵ In the Latin text, the cases and number of the nouns are clear from their declination. In addition the word *haec* is used as an article to indicate the number and case of *aethra* and *aethrae*.

This hand-written reference shows that at least this early modern reader was interested in the reference to the phenomenon of ether in Virgil, and that this interest focused on the morphological characteristics of the word and not on the (potential) physical connotations of the term. La Rue's comment contains little information,⁴⁹⁶ but by inserting the reference to the place in Decembrio, the reader made his copy of the *Aeneid* commentary much more productive in terms of its knowledge value.⁴⁹⁷ Remembering a verse from Virgil with the word *aether*, or even remembering the approximate location of this word in the epic, is a much easier tool for retrieval of information than remembering the place in Decembrio where this word was discussed. And although the discussion that is referred to does not contain further scientific information about the ether, the hand-written reference at this particular spot shows the interest an early modern reader took in the word from a philological point of view.⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁶ He offers a little bit more information in a later lemma: La Rue on A. 12.247 *Rubra ... Iovis ales in aethra*] 'Aethra, aethrae: nomen primae declinationis, αἰθρα, idem est atque aether. Aether autem iuxta Anaxagoram et Ciceronem, est illa veterum sphaera ignis aerem ambiens, ab αἰθεῖν ardere. Ideo rura a Virgilio dicta. Iuxta alios, est coeli totius et siderum compago, ab αἰεῖ θέειν 'semper currere'. Hic pro aere universum sumitur. De Iovis alite, aquila, Ae. 5.255.' ['Jupiter's bird ... in the red sky] Aethra [nom. sing.], aethrae [gen. sing.] is a noun of the first declension, aithra [Greek word], it is the same as aether. According to Anaxagoras and Cicero ether is that sphere of fire of the ancients that surrounds the air, from aithein [Greek] 'to burn'. Therefore it is called 'red' by Virgil. According to others, it is the framework of the entire heaven and of the stars, from 'aei thein' [Gr.], 'always running' [note: see Pl., *Crat.* 410b7]. Here the universe is used for 'air'. On the bird of Jupiter, the eagle, see *Aeneid* 5.255.].

⁴⁹⁷ For more on this kind of annotating practices, see my chapter 5.

⁴⁹⁸ This interest also shows from Corradus' lemma on A. 1.90 *aether*. In this lemma Corradus provides some references to classical sources on the ether, but also points out that at this point in the verse Virgil actually just refers to the sky: 'A. 1.90 Aether] Aether, inquit Servius, pro aere posuit, in quo nubes, et fulmina creantur. Poeta autem saepe ista duo confundit. Videtur Servius recte sentire: quum Plinius libro secundo capite trigesimo octavo de aere loquens, ita dicat: 'hinc nubila, tonitrua, et alia fulmina: hinc grandines, et pruinae, imbres, procellae, turbines': et Aristophanis interpres in Nubibus ita scribat: 'αἰθρα ἀντὶ τοῦ ἄερα, ὁ γὰρ αἰθήρ διακαῆς ὢν, ἀνέφελός ἐστι [Scolia in Aristophanem in Nubes 570a (ed. Holwerda 1977)]: nec Eusthathius libro decimo quinto *Odysseae* dissentiat. Cur tamen hic aether potius, quam aer ponitur, quum tam aer, quam aether hic potuisset collocari? An poeta, ut serviret maiestati carminis heroici, verbum gravius, et magis sonorum posuit? An est ὑπερβολή, qua poeta velit significare, ignes maximos fuisse: per quos, non obstantibus etiam nubibus, aether ipse videretur interdum quasi micare? An ita lucebat aer, ut aether verius dici posset: ut sit locus a notatione [i.e. from etymology]: quod aether, ut Eusthathius αἰτ ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰθεῖν, ὁ ἐστὶ καίειν, καὶ λάμπειν, dicatur: et ex altissimis ignibus, ut Cicero libro secundo de *natura Deorum* scribit, constet?'. ['Ether] He has used 'ether', says Servius, instead of 'air', in which the clouds and lightning bolts are formed. The poet however often uses the two indiscriminately. It seems that Servius thought rightly. For Pliny,

Several examples were discussed above of lemmata in early modern *Aeneid* commentaries in which commentators offer brief remarks on astronomical phenomena as a sub-category of cultural history. This antiquarian (pertaining to the cultural history of the classical world) or doxographical (pertaining to the opinions of the ancient scholars) interest sometimes appears to turn into a more scientific interest in astronomy, in which astronomical phenomena are not only discussed in the context of their relevance to the text or to the classical context, but out of interest for themselves, as we will see in the following section.

4.2.2 *Astronomical Signs and Constellations*

On the most basic level the explanation of astronomy consists of the brief identification of astronomical phenomena. Many examples of this are found in the early 18th-century commentary (1719) of the Dutch scholar Jan Minell (Minelli).⁴⁹⁹ This commentary is an interesting case because of its position at the end of the pre-modern Virgilian commentary tradition. Minell provides many astronomical notes, such as on A. 1.747-742. His annotations are brief, which is in accordance with the overall character of his commentary, in which concise explanations are offered of elements from the poem. I provide two examples:

Minell on A. 1.744 *arcturum*

A. 1.744 *arcturum*] Sidus illud pluvias excitans, Booten et Arctophylaca. Is fuit Arcas, Iovis filius ex Calisto.

when speaking about air, in chapter 38 of his second book says: ‘Hence the clouds, the thunders, and other forms of lightning: hence hailstorms, and rime, showers of rain, tempests, whirlwinds’: and the commentator to Aristophanes’ *Clouds* writes: ‘[He writes] *Aithra* instead of *aer*, for the ether, being on fire, is cloudless’: and Eustathius in the fifteenth book of the *Odyssee* does not disagree. Why however does he [Virgil] prefer to use here *aether* instead of *aer*, when not only *aer* but also *aether* could have been used here? Did the poet, to serve the majesty of the heroic poem, pick the more ponderous and more sonorous word? Or is it a hyperbole, through which the poet wishes to indicate, that the fires were very big? So that through them (no clouds being in the way) the ether itself appeared occasionally to flicker? Or did the air glitter in such a way, that it could more truly be called aether: so that it is an instance of etymology, because ether, as Eustathius says is derived from *aithrein* [‘to light up’], which means *kaiein* [‘to burn’] and *lampein* [‘to shine’]: and it consists of the highest fires, as Cicero wrote in the second book of *De natura deorum* [‘On the nature of the gods’]?].

⁴⁹⁹ His commentary, together with that of Charles de la Rue, was used by William Wordsworth in preparing his translation of the *Aeneid* (1823-24). Both appear to have been the standard 18th century commentaries.

A. 1.744 *Arcturus*] the star bringing rain, in Boötes [herdsman] and Arctophylax [Bear watcher]. He was Arcas, the son of Jupiter, born from Calisto.

Minell on A. 1.745 *quid tantum*

A. 1.745 *quid tantum*] Cur sol hieme tam cito occidat, eoque dies breviores sint.

A. 1.745 *Why so much*] Why the sun sets so quickly in winter, and because of that the days are shorter.

These comments are very brief and do not show particular interest in matters of astronomy and correspond to a general pattern in Minell's work in which concise explanations of elements from the poem are offered. What is interesting, however, about the lemma on *arcturum* is that Minell writes that Polaris causes rainfall. I will come back to this in my discussion of lemmata on Orion at the end of this section.

One level beyond the mere identification of astronomical phenomena are the lemmata that present encyclopedic information on an astronomical subject. We observe the same in lemmata that deal with antiquarian subjects, but with the distinct difference that the subject matter in the former field was more remote from the commentators' core competences. Virgil commentators were traditionally grammarians, and therefore not particularly skilled in, let alone practitioners of, the (new) scientific disciplines. It appears that, generally, what they knew was consistent with what was taught in the tradition of the *quadrivium* and with what was included in the earlier commentary tradition. As the following cases will show, this tradition was still very visible in early modern commentaries. The question is whether Renaissance Virgil commentators also made use of the new insights in the field of astronomy.⁵⁰⁰ As was just discussed, Minell's commentary, which is at the very end of the early modern era, does not include 'new' (i.e. post-classical) scientific knowledge in the field of astronomy. In the following I would like to establish whether this can be considered to be representative for early modern Virgil commentators in general, or that we do find the use of new insights in astronomy in lemmata from these *Aeneid* commentaries. As I will show, it appears that other commentators as well heavily relied on traditional explanation.

⁵⁰⁰ This question pertains not only to commentators working in the period after the most important advances in early modern astronomy were made (Copernicus, Galileo), but also to earlier scholars, who had the opportunity to make use of the (mathematical) astronomical treatises from the classical world.

Starting with the earliest early modern *Aeneid*-commentator from my corpus, I will now first discuss Landino's lemma on A. 5.42 *stellas*:

Landino on A. 5.42 *stellas*

A. 5.42 *Stellas*] quae omnes dicunt fixae octavo caelo. Non quin ipse quoque contra suum caelum non eant sed adeo tardo sunt motu, ut moveri non videatur. Nam centesimo fere anno gradum unum qui est trigesima pars unius signi, quae xii sunt, conficiunt: unde totus zodiacus peragitur sex et triginta millibus annorum. Stellarum numerus incognitus est astronomis. Mille enim et sexcentae sunt solum illae quarum cognitionem habent, quae quidem duo ac septuaginta signa conficiunt: ut si exempli causa dicamus cygnum in caelo esse unum signum et arietem aliud signum et cygnum quidem habere stellas xiii Arietem xviii ergo stellas dicimus illis singulas. Configurationem autem ex multis stellis appellamus signa, quamvis minores astrologi signa solum dicant illa xii quae sunt in zodiaco, scilicet: Arietem, taurum, geminos, cancrum, leonem, virginem, libram, scorpium, sagittarium, capricornum, aquarium, pisces. Reliquas autem configurationes imagines et non signa nominant. Sed apud scriptores promiscue et signa et imagines invenimus. Praeter autem has omnes stellas septem aliae sunt non in octavo caelo ut illae. Sed singulae in singulis septem caelis inferioribus, ut in septimo sit Saturnus, in sexto Iuppiter, in quinto Mars, in quarto sol, in tertio Venus, in secundo Mercurius, in primo Luna. Et hae stellae planetae dicuntur id est erratiles, nam *πλανουμαι* [*πλανῶμαι*] graece erro significat. Quae manifesto cernuntur contra suum coelum ferri nisi retrogradi sint.

A. 5.42 *Stars*] which according to all, are fixed in the eighth sky. Not that they themselves also do not go against their sky, but they are of such slow movement, that they appear not to be moved. For they complete one grade in almost every hundredth year, which is the thirtieth part of one sign, of which there are 12: so the total zodiac completes its course in 36.000 years. The number of stars is unknown to astronomers. For just the ones of which they are aware are 1600 [in number] and they together form 72 signs, so that, if for example, we say that Cygnus [the Swan] is one sign in heaven and Aries is another and that Cygnus has 13 stars and Aries has 18 stars, then we are speaking about individual stars. A formation however, consisting of multiple stars, we call a sign, although the minor astrologers only call signs those 12 that are in the Zodiac, which are: Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricornus, Aquarius, Pisces. The other formations, however, they call *imagines* [litt. 'images'] and not signs. But in the writers we commonly find both 'signs' and *imagines*. Except for all these seven stars however, there are others that are not in the eighth sky like these ones, as he says,

but there are single ones in each of the lower seven heavens, such as Saturn in the seventh, Jupiter in the sixth, Mars in the fifth, the sun in the fourth, Venus in the third, Mercury in the second, the moon in the first. And these stars are called 'planets', i.e. 'wanderers', for 'planoumai' [planômai] means 'to wander' in Greek. They are clearly seen to move against their sky unless they are retrograde.

In this lemma, Landino takes the opportunity to discuss astronomical information about the movement of the stars across the sky, the constellations, and the planets. While this type of discussion in itself can be considered conventional, the length of Landino's lemma on the topic and the fact that he is not providing information that is useful for the interpretation of the verse in question from the *Aeneid*, suggests that he is offering this information with a view toward providing more general knowledge on astronomical phenomena.⁵⁰¹ For example, the reference to the retrograde motion of planets at the end of the lemma shows at least a basic understanding of astronomy, for which he must have consulted an astronomical treatise. The lemma also shows the strong connection which existed between astronomical phenomena as objects of scientific study and as astrological concepts. For example the Zodiac (on which more below) is here not only an astrological, but also an astronomical, concept.

The most important question that presents itself in relation to Landino's lemma is what sources Landino depended on in writing this lemma? It appears that in a lemma on Boe., *Cons.* 1, M2, v.12 *Et victor* in the commentary by Johannes Murmellius and Rudolph Agricola (1514) on Boethius' *De consolazione philosophiae*⁵⁰² we find almost exact the same lines as in the last part of the lemma from Landino.⁵⁰³ This time, however, a source is mentioned, namely 'book two, chapter 6' of Pliny's *Natural History*. And indeed, book 2 of the *Natural History* covers the

⁵⁰¹ Servius makes a brief comment *ad loc.*: 'A. 5.42 *Stellas fugarat*] *Poetice dixit: nam si stellae a stando dictae sunt, non fugantur; semper enim fixae sunt praeter planetas.* (...) ['A. 5.42 *Had driven off the stars*] He has said this poetically: for if the stars are named from 'stare' ['to stand still'], they are not driven off; for they are always fixed except for the planets. (...)].

⁵⁰² In fact this commentary was written by Murmellius, using notes from Agricola. See Nauta (1999).

⁵⁰³ The relevant lines from Murmellius' and Agricola's commentary read: '*Praeter eas stellas quae octavo coelo infixae dicuntur, quarum numerus incognitus est astronomis, septem aliae sunt non in octavo coelo, ut illae, sed singulae in singulis septem coelis inferioribus, ut in septimo sit Saturnus, in sexto Jupiter, in quinto Mars, in quarto Sol, in tertio Venus, in secundo Mercurius, in primo Luna. Et hae stellae planetae dicuntur, id est, erratiles (nam πλανάομαι Graece erro significat: unde πλάνη error et πλάνης πλάνητος, planes, planeta, et πλανήτης, vagus, erro), quia et cursu suo feruntur, et contra coeli impetum contrario motu ad orientem ab occidente volvuntur.*'

cosmos and the stars. The reference accounts for the etymology of the word ‘planet’, which Landino in fact seems to have derived from Isidore, who wrote in his *Etymologiae*: *Sic et Graece planetas, dicta quia oris errantibus evagantur. Unde et stellae planetae, id est vagae, eo quod sui errore motuque discurrunt.* (‘And so they are called ‘planets’ in Greek because they wander in their straying orbit. And for this reason also those stars are called planets, that is the straying ones, because they stray in their own erratic and wandering way’).⁵⁰⁴ The rest of the information in the lemma seems also to be loosely based on book 2 of the *Natural History*. Interestingly, further research reveals that the type of information provided by Landino in the lemma is consistent with a larger interest in astronomical and astrological phenomena in Florentine intellectual circles: in Ficino’s *Liber de Sole* (1494) – thus published a few years after the appearance of Landino’s Virgil commentary – a similar discussion of the movement of the planets and constellations is visible, though clearly set in a Neoplatonic frame.⁵⁰⁵

Another fine example of this more extended approach to astronomy which we saw in Landino is found in La Rue’s comment on A. 2.512 *axe* (‘Under the axis’), which clearly attests to the early modern commentator’s general desire to explain accurately tiny bits of information from the epic:

La Rue on A. 2.512 *Axe*

A. 2.512 *Axe*] Coelo. Vel quia pars coeli nobis imminens signum habet maxime conspicuum, *ursam*, sive *septentriones*; quod et *plaustrum* dicitur, et *axis* ideo dici potest, iuxta Servium.⁵⁰⁶ Vel quia, sicut *poli*, ita et *axis*, pro toto coelo sumitur. Sunt enim *poli*, puncta duo axem terminantia; *axis* autem, linea ipsa sive obelus circa quem caelum volvi concipitur.

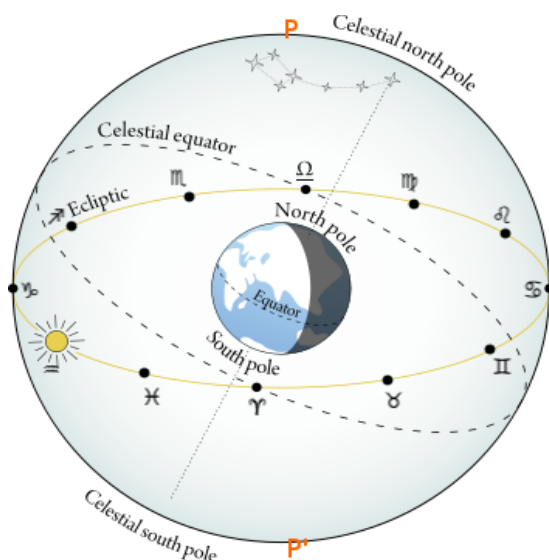
⁵⁰⁴ Is., *Etym.* 19, 24.17.

⁵⁰⁵ See especially chapters 4, 7 and 8 of *Liber de Sole*. In his dedicatory letter to Piero de’ Medici, Ficino stresses how his work on the sun was the result of his study of the writings of Plato. In addition, in his letter to the reader he emphasizes that the work should be read allegorically and not dogmatically, probably to counter possible criticism from Christian theologians.

⁵⁰⁶ Servius on A. 2.512 *Axe*: ‘*Nudoque sub axe’ hoc est sub divo, quod inpluvium dicitur. ‘Axis’ autem est aut plaustrum septentrionale, aut pars septentrionis, aut spiritus, quo mundus movetur, ut axem umero torquet stellis ardentibus aptum* [A. 4.482]: *sicut docet et Lucanus.* [‘And beneath the naked axle’, this means ‘beneath the open sky’, which is called an inpluvium [an open courtyard]. ‘Axle’ however is either the northern [constellation of Charles’s] Wain, or the northern part [of heaven], or the force, by which the earth is moved, as in ‘On his shoulders turns the axle, inset with gleaming stars’ [A. 4.482]: and so teaches also Lucan as well.].

A. 2.512 [*under*] *the axle*] Under the sky. [He writes *axe*] either because the part of the sky right over us has a clearly visible sign, the bear [the Plough] or the Seven Stars, which is also called the Wagon [Charles's Wain], and for this reason it can also be called axle, following Servius. Or [he writes *axe*] because, just as with 'poles', he takes 'axis', too, for the entire sky. For the poles are the two endpoints of an axle; the *axis*, however, is the line itself or the spit around which the heaven is thought to revolve.

This lemma offers two explanations of the use of the word by Virgil. The first (selected from the options offered by Servius, see note 506) consists of a philological approach which makes clear how the use of this word is the result of the constellation of the Plough also being called the Wagon (with the implicit argumentation that the wheels of a wagon have an axis). The second explanation goes deeper into matters of astronomy. According to La Rue, the word *axe* can also refer to the entire sky, because it can be projected along an axis with two poles, with the



III. 4 The imaginary celestial axis that runs through the North and South celestial Pole.

axis being the axle line along which the sky runs its course. In other words, he refers to the imaginary line which can be drawn through the North and South Poles and which extends outwards to the North and South Celestial Pole. When making astronomical observations, the celestial hemisphere appears to rotate along the celestial poles (see III. 4). La Rue thus explains what part of the sky is referred to by *axe*.

Finally, I will consider some lemmata on the constellation Orion that seem to exhibit some of the cultural context of the commentator's own time. In a remark on A. 4.52 *Orion*, Minell presents the following lemma:

Minell on A. 4.52 Orion

A. 4.52 Orion] Sidus navigantibus infestum, ortu et occasu tempestates, aquas, et nimbos excitans.⁵⁰⁷

A. 4.52 Orion] A constellation unwelcome to sailors, stirring up storms, waters and clouds with its rising and setting.

While offering an explanation of the *aquosus Orion* of Virgil's verse, this lemma also seems to reflect the importance of astronomy for navigation in the early modern period (or in fact in the entire pre-modern period) and the central position of naval enterprises in many early modern societies.⁵⁰⁸ In the case of this lemma one could argue that Minell is just following Servius and Pliny (see below), but even then he sometimes also adds stress on the naval element, e.g., in his lemma on A. 3.516 *Arcturum*:

Minell on A. 3.516 Arcturum

A. 3.516 Arcturum] Stellam primae magnitudinis, inter crura Boota, Sidus Septentrionale, quod nautae solent observare.⁵⁰⁹

A. 3.516 Arcturus] A star of foremost size, between the legs of Boötes, the Northern star, which sailors tend to watch.

The idea that Orion's rising and setting causes rainy storms goes back to antiquity; it is already found with the Babylonians, but also in Pliny and in Aristotle, as mentioned by Germanus *ad loc.*:

⁵⁰⁷ Servius on A. 4.52: Orion, id est dum occidit Orion, quoniam et oriens et occidens tempestates commovet. Et bene Orion opponitur, quia et Ilioneus dixerat [A. 1.535] cum subito adsurgens fluctu nimbosus Orion. ['Orion, that is when Orion sets, since both while rising and setting it causes storms. And he sets out Orion well, because as also Ilioneus has said 'When suddenly rising with a flood stormy Orion...'].]

⁵⁰⁸ For the importance of seafaring and the role of astronomy in naval navigation one need only think of the £20,000 which was offered as a prize by the British parliament in 1714 (the Longitude Act) for the solution of establishing the longitude of a ship at sea. Up to the invention of the marine chronometer, one had to depend on astronomical observations for guessing one's latitudinal position at sea.

⁵⁰⁹ Servius on A. 3.516: Arcturum, stella est post ursam in boote signo. ['Arcturus, is the star after the bear in the constellation of Boötes'].]

Germanus on A. 4.52 *Aquosus Orion*

A. 4.52 *Aquosus Orion*] Orionis tempestuosum esse sidus et turbulentum testatur his verbis Aristot. Meteor. lib. 2 [Ar., *Met.* 361b30-35]: ἄκριτος δὲ καὶ χαλεπὸς ὁ Ὠρίων εἶναι δοκεῖ, καὶ δύνων καὶ ἐπιτέλλων, διὰ τὸ ἐν μεταβολῇ ὥρας συμβαίνειν τὴν δύσιν καὶ τὴν ἀνατολήν, θέρους ἢ χειμῶνος, καὶ διὰ τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ ἄστρου ἡμερῶν γίγνεται πλῆθος· αἱ δὲ μεταβολαὶ πάντων ταραχώδεις διὰ τὴν ἀοριστίαν εἶσιν.

A. 4.52 *Rainy Orion*] That the star of Orion is tempestuous and stormy attests Aristotle by these words in the second book of his *Meteorologica*: ‘The reason why Orion is commonly regarded as a constellation which brings uncertainty and stormy weather when it rises and sets is that its rising and setting occur at a change of season (summer or winter), and, owing to the size of the constellation, last many days: and all changes are uncertain and unsettling.’⁵¹⁰

The idea that the rising of Orion causes rain has no factual foundation, as Aristotle already stated,⁵¹¹ but it fits the tradition of the supposed influence of the position of stars on nature, animals and humans on earth. A fine example of this is found in Lambertus Hortensius’ lemma on A. 3.141 *Sirius*. This lemma runs over almost two columns, discussing the position of Sirius according to ancient authors. I will cite the lemma only in part:

Hortensius on A. 3.141 *Sirius*

A. 3.141 *Sirius*] Ab effectis sideris pestilentissimi. Est enim Sirius stella praegrans et lucida, in fronte canis. Huius exortu amplissimae vires in terra sentiuntur, vapores solis accenduntur, fervent maria, fluctuant in cellis vina, moventur stagna. Canes id temporis maxime in rabiem aguntur, corpora mortalium variis tum ut plurimum pestibus iactantur. Poetae Sirium nonnumquam pro aestate usurpant. Canis huius exortu vina in apothecis mutantur, postea sibi tamen restituuntur. (...) Sed non semper stella ea pernicioosa est, nam eius vires coorientium siderum natura vel retunduntur, vel acuuntur (...).

⁵¹⁰ Translation of Aristotle from Lee (1962), slightly adapted.

⁵¹¹ Also MacLennan (2009, 82) in his commentary remarks at the same instance (V., A. 4.52 *Orion*) that Orion was associated with rainy weather because the constellation set in November and was therefore thought to bring rain.

A. 3.141 *Sirius*] Because of the effects of this most pestilential star. For Sirius is a powerful and bright star, in the forehead of [the constellation] Dog. When it rises, very strong effects are felt on earth, the evaporations of the sun are set on fire, the seas boil, wines move in the cellars, lakes are stirred. Dogs are most affected by rabies at this time, the bodies of mortals are then the most tormented by various diseases. The poets sometimes use Sirius for 'summer'. Wines are transformed into medicines by the rising of this [constellation of] Dog; afterwards, however, they are transformed back. (...) But this star is not always destructive, for its powers are weakened or sharpened by the nature of the stars that rise with it (...).

In this lemma too, all kinds of effects (heath, boiling seas, the stirring of wine and water, increased rabies in dogs and an increase of disease in man, wine turning into medicine) are attributed to the rising of a star, in this case Sirius. Servius also presents Sirius as a star bringing diseases, in a much shorter lemma.⁵¹² The information provided by Hortensius goes back to Pliny. In his *Natural History* (2.107-110) he discusses the effects that constellations can have on earth: 'For who is not aware that the heat of the sun increases at the rising of the Lesser Dog-star, whose effects are felt on earth very widely? At its rise the seas are rough, wine in the cellars ripples in waves, marshes are stirred. (...) It is indeed beyond doubt that dogs throughout the whole of that period are especially liable to rabies.'⁵¹³ The same applies to Servius, who in his lemma relied especially on *N.H.* 2.108. Hortensius' lemma, containing many references to and quotations from works of classical literature in the parts not cited above (among others Proclus, Hyginus, the Scholiast on Lycophron, Aratus, Eratosthenes) provides a doxographical account of classical information on the star Sirius, especially of its supposed effects on phenomena on earth and on its position in the sky. Again, no information from contemporary sources, nor even from post-classical scholarship, is added, so that the lemma remains based solely on information from classical literature and is in fact, again, a doxographical account of opinions of the ancients on the star Sirius.

⁵¹² Servius on A. 3.141: *Sirius stella est in ore canis posita, quae annis omnibus oritur circa viii K. Iulias, quae orta plerumque pestilentiam toto anno facit, plerumque paucis diebus, interdum innoxia nascitur.* (...) ['Sirius is a star positioned in the mouth of the Dog, which every year rises around the 8th [day before the] Kalends of July [i.e. June 24th], which rising frequently brings diseases for the whole year, frequently for few days, sometimes she rises without harm. (...).']

⁵¹³ Plin., *N.H.* 2.107 (translation by Rackham 1938): *Nam caniculae exortu accendi solis vapores quis ignorat, cuius sideris effectus amplissimi in terra sentiuntur? Fervent maria exoriente eo, fluctuant in cellis vina, moventur stagna.* (...) *Canes quidem toto eo spatio maxime in rabiem agi non est dubium.*

Returning again to the constellation of Orion, we find how La Rue in his commentary explicitly chooses to discuss Orion as a constellation and not as a mythological figure, thus criticizing Servius:

La Rue on A. 10.763 Orion

A. 10.763 Orion] De eo multa fabulosa congerit hic Servius,⁵¹⁴ sed omnino arbitror, poetam explicandum de eius specie caelesti. Maximum enim sidus est, stellis constans sex et quinquaginta lucidissimis, pingitur accinctus gladio, et clavam intendens. Unde cum mari navigantibus oritur, videtur mare medium secare: mox humeris, deinde toto corpore e fluctibus emergens. Sic quoque in terra degentibus, videtur e horizonte ad summum usque caelum pertingere.

A. 10.763 Orion] Servius has collected many legendary tales about him, but I am wholly of the opinion that the poet must be explained with regard to its [Orion's] heavenly appearance. For it is a very big constellation, consisting of fifty-six very bright stars, it is depicted with its sword girded and stretching out its club. So, because for sailors it rises from the sea, it seems to cut the sea in half, while it rises from the waves first with its shoulders, then with its entire body. So, too, for people on land, it seems to stretch from the horizon to the highest sky.



III.5 The constellation Orion depicted as the mythological figure..

⁵¹⁴ Servius *ad loc.* relates the legend of Orion at full length.

Again, this lemma combines philological argument with astronomical information. La Rue argues that Virgil's reference to Orion in verses 763-767 must pertain primarily to the constellation as it is seen in the sky, and not to the mythical figure (see ill. 5). This is a somewhat surprising interpretation, since Virgil not only describes how Orion rises from the sea with his shoulders (which indeed seems to fit nicely with the rising of the constellation), but also how he walks down a mountain (to which La Rue perhaps refers in the last sentence of his lemma).

In fact, Virgil's description comprises a combination of both the astronomical and the mythological,⁵¹⁵ but La Rue firmly rejects the latter aspect (and refers to Servius for mythological information). Probably, La Rue discards the mythological interpretation here since he has already briefly discussed the myth of Orion at A. 3.517 *Oriona*,⁵¹⁶ and he focuses instead on the astronomical aspect, giving a brief description of the constellation as it can be seen in the sky (*de eius specie caelesti*) and pointing out its visibility to sailors. Of the constellations in the night sky, Orion is one of the easiest to identify, because of its bright stars and the clearly visible belt of three stars that form its center (see ill.6). As La Rue explains, Virgil describes how for a sailor at sea, Orion seems to rise from the sea and in its rising seems to cut the sea in half. According to him, the constellation consists of 56 stars.



III.6 Orion in the night sky.

⁵¹⁵ Williams (1972-1973) notes that reference to the constellation Orion setting foot on the sea is also found in Theoc. 7.54, which reads: '...χάριων ὅτ' ἐπ' ὠκεανῷ πόδας ἴσχει' ('... and Orion's foot is even upon the sea' (transl. Edmonds 1923)).

⁵¹⁶ La Rue, A. 3.517 *Oriona*] *Orion venator fuit, comes Dianae, qui scorpii morsu in talo vulneratus occubuit et deorum miseratione in sidus mutatus est. (...). [Orion was a hunter, a friend of Diana, who wounded by a bite from a scorpion in his ankle died and, because of the pity of the gods, was turned into a star. (...)].*

In a lemma on the same instance from Virgil, Germanus writes the following, referring to Turnebus:

Germanus on A. 10.763 *Quam magnus Orion...*

A. 10.763 *Quam magnus Orion // cum pedes incedit medii per maxima Nerei // stagna*] Ex Homero, qui Orionem caeteros magnitudine gigantas superasse narrat [Hom., *Od.* 11.310-311]: οὐς δὴ μηκίστους θρέψε ζείδωρος ἄρουρα // καὶ πολὺ καλλίστους μετὰ γε κλυτὸν Ωρίωνα. Praeter autem id quod a Servio traditum est, sunt qui, ut docet Turnebus, Orioni a patre Neptuno datum dicant, ut super mare ambulet, ut Iphiclo super aristas segetes, ac super mare eum praedicat ad Vulcanum in Lemnum ab Oenopione caecatum venisse, auctor Theon in Aratum et Hyginus. Idem Turnebus, supposita ea fabula, tribuit licentiae, et nugandi poetis usurpatae facultati, quod Orion hic in vadum a Marone pedibus descendisse canatur, non autem suspensis per aequor plantis viam tenuisse. *Stagna* autem *Nerei* more Graecorum appellasse videtur, quod physici, atque adeo Aristoteles mare non enumerent inter ῥυτὰ ὕδατα, sed contendant non suo et proprio motu fluere et refluere, sed causa motus partim ducta a lunae natura, cuius est humidum excitare, partim a terrarum angustia et coercitione, aliisque fluminibus mare ipsum influentibus, aut per alia maria tandem in Oceanum desinentibus. Sane et Graeci poetae saepe Oceanum λίμνη vocitant, saepe Homerus: et Euripides in Hipp. (...) et Callimachus in Delo (...) et Aristot. Meteor (...). Maxime autem affini est cognatione cum hoc loco ille Apollonidae Epig. de urinatores, 'Νηρῆος λαθροίοισιν ὑποπλεύσας τενάγῃσσι' [Greek Anthology, Garland of Philip 24, 'On Scyllus, an under-water swimmer'], ubi 'Νηρῆος τενάγῃ', quae hic *Nerei stagna*.

A. 10.763 *Great as Orion, when he marches on foot through the greatest pools of middle Nereus*] From Homer, who tells that Orion surpassed the other giants in height [Hom., *Od.* 11.309-310]: 'men whom the earth, the giver of grain, reared as the tallest, and far the most handsome, after famous Orion.'⁵¹⁷ Except for the story handed down by Servius, there are people, as Turnebus teaches, who say that it was given to Orion by his father Neptune, that he would walk over the sea, just as to Iphicles to walk above the cornfields, and Theon [of Alexandria] on Aratus and Hyginus declare that he walked over the sea to Vulcanus on Lemnos when he had been blinded by Oenopion. Turnebus again, after having discussed this story, ascribed it to license, and to the option claimed by the poets for themselves to make jokes, that Orion here is described by Maro as having descended with his feet in the

⁵¹⁷ Translation by Murray (rev. by Dimock, 1995).

water, and that he does not hold his course with his soles suspended over the water. The 'pools' however 'of Nereus' appear to be named according to the Greek way, because the physicists, and especially Aristotle, did not count the sea among the liquid waters, but maintain that it does not flow and reflow because of its own motion, but that the cause of its movement is partly taken from the nature of the moon, whose characteristic it is to stir up moisture, partly from the narrowness and coercing of the landmasses, and through other rivers streaming out into the sea itself, or because of other seas streaming into the ocean. And indeed the Greek poets often call the ocean 'lake' (Greek: *limnê*), Homer often, and Euripides in his *Hippolytus* (...) and Callimachus in his [Hymn to] *Delos* (...) and Aristotle in his *Meteorologica* (...). The closest relationship, however, is with this passage from Apollonides in his epigram *De urinatores*: 'Swimming under Nereus' secret shallows', where it reads '*Nêrêos tenagê*', just as here '*Nerei stagna*'.

Germanus' account starts with the somewhat traditional discussion of the mythology of Orion, especially paying attention to the poetic choices Virgil made in depicting Orion (Germanus is relying on the commentary of Turnebus). Then he briefly refers to a more scientific aspect of the verse on occasion of the 'pools of Nereus', mentioning the opinion of Aristotle and other Greek physicists who maintained that the sea should not be considered to be flowing water since its flowing only occurs because of the influence of the moon. Germanus then shows that this scientific consideration is consistent with the way in which the ocean is often called 'lake' in Greek poetry, adducing the authority of Homer, Euripides, Callimachus, Aristotle and Apollonides. Virgil's imitation of the Greek poets, according to Germanus in this instance especially of Apollonides, accounts for the use of the word *stagna* ('pools') meaning 'ocean'. Thus Germanus' brief excursus on the opinion of classical Greek physicists on the nature of the motion of the ocean appears to have been included in the lemma to explain why Virgil, following the Greek poetical tradition, in composing this verse chose to call the ocean a lake. Again, the commentator does not avail himself of the opportunity to comment on the validity of the physical conceptualization laying behind this choice of words, nor does he include references to any post-classical sources of (astronomical) information. The commentator thus safely stays within his own field of expertise.

4.2.3 *Astronomy and Chronology*

One of the most important features of classical astronomy was its ability to provide a stable reference for time in an era without the pendulum clock (invented by Christian Huygens in 1656): the regular and predictable movements of celestial bodies were the only truly reliable benchmark for time measurement. In

combination with the early modern interest in chronology, it is no surprise that in *Aeneid*-commentaries one encounters lemmata in which the celestial phenomena described in the epic are used as a chronological tool. The most important and famous chronologist of the early modern era was Joseph Scaliger, who published his *Opus novum de emendatione temporum* in 1583, and who had earlier published an edition of the *Astronomica* of the Roman astrologer-poet Manilius (1st century AD).⁵¹⁸ As Grafton (1985) describes, most humanist scholars had only a limited understanding of classical astronomy and could thus only engage with a complex subject like chronology on a basic level, especially in terms of mathematics.⁵¹⁹ When they did write about a matter of chronology, this was often in the context of a philological interpretation of a classical text, avoiding the technical details. This practice seems to be very much consistent with the observations above about the way in which early modern Virgil commentators provide comments on astronomical phenomena. Perhaps the attention that early modern Virgil commentators pay in their commentaries to matters of astronomy and chronology stems not so much from interest in the scientific disciplines, but should be viewed in relation to longstanding, traditional commentary practices of the Virgilian tradition. In such a perspective, comments on matters of the natural sciences fall into the same category as those on topics from cultural history. Chronology, a discipline of great interest to Renaissance scholars, presents another interesting test case.

Again, a lemma on Orion provides a good example to start from. In his lemma on A. 1.535 *Orion*, La Rue writes:

La Rue on A. 1.535 *Orion*

A. 1.535 *Orion*] De huius signi caelestis fabula dicemus Ae. 3.517. Ex hoc autem versu probat Segresius, Virgilium non nisi Julio mense in Africam esse appulsum. Nam de triplici tantum Orionis ortu hic agi potest, de *quotidiano*, de *heliaco*, de *acronico*, quas voces explicuimus G. 1.217 et 221 et 229. Constat autem de *quotidiano* non posse explicari, sic enim Orion quotidie tempestates excitaret; non de *acronico*, qui hieme contingit; ergo de ortu *heliaco*, qui nunc in Iulii initia cadit, olim tamen in medium Junium. At vis huius sideris non ad unum ortus diem, sed ad consequentes etiam dies pertinere putanda est. Firmat opinionem hoc etiam versu libri 4.52 ubi Anna Didoni suadet, ut Aeneam per hiemem detineat: *Dum pelago*

⁵¹⁸ For Scaliger and chronology, see Grafton (1993; 1985).

⁵¹⁹ Grafton (1985), 113-114.

*desaevit hiems, et aquosus Orion. Quod omnino tunc intelligendum de ortu eius acronico, qui mensibus post heliacum circiter quinque contingit.*⁵²⁰

A. 1.535 Orion] We will speak of the tales about this constellation at A. 3.517.⁵²¹ On the basis of this verse, however, Segresius proves that Virgil [sic] can only have moored in Africa in the month of July. For it can only concern the tripartite rising of Orion, the *quotidianus* ['daily rising'], the *heliacus* ['sun rising'] and the *acronicus* ['acronical rising']; we have explained these names at *Georgics* 1.217, 221 and 229. It is certain that it cannot be explained on the basis of the *ortus quotidianus* ['daily rising'] for in that case Orion would cause storms every day; and it cannot be explained on the basis of the *ortus acronicus* either, which happens in winter; therefore it must be explained on the basis of the *ortus heliacus*, that currently falls in the beginning of July, but at some point fell in the middle of June. But the power of this constellation should not be taken to affect just the one day of its rising, but also the following days. He [Segresius] confirms his view also on the basis of this verse A. 4.52 in which Anna advises Dido to detain Aeneas throughout the winter: *While at sea winter rages and rainy Orion*. This is clearly to be understood at this point as referring to its *acronicus* rising [of Orion], which happens approximately five months after the *heliacus*.

The explanation of the different kinds of rising of Orion is part of a larger discourse in the astronomical tradition concerning the rising and setting of constellations. Already the medieval astronomical treatise *De Sphaera* by Don Bosco, mentioned by Guarino as an astronomical work to be studied for anyone planning to read classical poetry (see section 3), contains a section on 'The rise and setting of constellations'.⁵²² In this section, Don Bosco explains that the poets know three types of rising and setting of constellation, the *cosmicus*, *chronicus* and *heliacus* (contrary to the astronomers, who acknowledge only two types, the *recta* and *obliqua*). In this lemma, La Rue refers to his earlier explanation of the various types of rising in his lemmata to the *Georgics*. There indeed, La Rue explains that the *acronicus* setting (according to him being derived from the Greek ἀκρος ('extreme') and νύξ ('night')) occurs when 'Sirius descends below the western horizon, at the same moment when the sun, standing in (the sign) Taurus, descends below the

⁵²⁰ Servius *ad loc.* briefly relates the myth of Oenopion/Orion again and explains how the Greek name Ouriôn was changed into Orion before turning to the actual constellation.

⁵²¹ See note 516.

⁵²² Don Bosco, *De Sphaera*, ch. 30 *De ortu et occasu signorum*.

same horizon'.⁵²³ The *cosmicus* (probably the same as the *quotidianus*), La Rue explains at G. 1.221, is the setting of a star below the western horizon at the moment when the sun rises above the eastern horizon, and the *heliacus* is the rising of a star together with the sun (but just before it, so that it can be seen).⁵²⁴

In this lemma too, La Rue clearly separates the mythological Orion from the constellation (for the first one he refers to his comments at A. 3.517). In discussing the three different kinds of risings of Orion, La Rue refers to the 1668 translation of the *Aeneid* made by the poet Jean Regnault/Renaud de Segrais (Segresius, 1624-1701), who had used Virgil's mentioning of Orion in this verse to pin down the arrival of Aeneas in Africa to the month of July.⁵²⁵ In the lengthy preface to his translation, which mainly consists of an elaborate defense of Virgil's epic against traditional and contemporary criticism, Regnault pays special attention to the chronology of the events in the *Aeneid*. It appears that one of the motivations for this is that Virgil had been criticized by earlier commentators for letting the course of events that were narrated in the epic exceed the preferred poetical timespan of one year. This concern is also visible in La Rue's prefatory material to the *Aeneid*-commentary. In a section about the 'Nature of the Aeneid' (*De natura Aeneidos*), La Rue analyses the epic from the viewpoint of the poetic conventions for epic poems (established in his previous section, *De natura poematis epici*). In analyzing the *actio* (which has to be *una, illustris, completa* and *certae magnitudinis*: 'one, glorious, complete, of a definite length') La Rue remarks how the events narrated in the *Aeneid* cover the preferred time-span (namely one year), referring to Regnault:

La Rue, preface, *De natura Aeneidos*

Magnitudinem habet certam ac iustam. Licet enim octo circiter annis durasse actio tota dicatur, unum tamen ex iis, eumque ultimum, poeta complectitur. (...) Mambrunus quidem sexdecim menses Aeneidi attribuit, eo adductus, quod Anchises, ut ex libro 5 liquidum est, obierit in Sicilia verno tempore. (...) Pugnat contra Segresius, in egregia praefatione ad Gallicam Aeneidos interpretationem: ostenditque Aeneam e Sicilia nonnisi Julio mense, quarto nempe post obitum patris, in Africam appulisse, toto illo intervallo temporis, vel reficiendae classi, vel expectandae commodae tempestati, curisque aliis impenso. Atque ita legitimo

⁵²³ La Rue on G. 1.217, *Candidus auratis*.

⁵²⁴ La Rue on G. 1.221, *Ante tibi Eoae*.

⁵²⁵ I have consulted *Traduction de l'Énéide de Virgile par Mr. De Segrais*. Paris : chez Claude Barbin, 1668 ; and *Traduction de l'Énéide de Virgile. Par Mr. de Segrais* (2 vols.). Paris: chez Denys Thierry & Claude Barbin, 1681. Both volumes are available through Google Books.

unius anni spatio Aeneis tota continebitur, quod suis locis probabimus, praesertim lib. 1, v.539 et 760.

It [the *Aeneid*] has a definite and correct length. Although it is said that the whole course of events stretches over about eight years, the poet has taken only one of these, namely the last year. (...) Mambrunus⁵²⁶ has assigned 16 months to the *Aeneid*, on the strength of the fact, that Anchises, as is clear from book 5, died in Sicily in springtime. (...) Segresius attacks this vision, in his excellent preface to his French translation of the *Aeneid*. And he shows that Aeneas can only have arrived in Africa from Sicily in the month of July, namely four months after the passing away of his father, having devoted all the time in between to the repair of his fleet, or the wait for suitable weather and to other practical affairs. And thus the entire *Aeneid* will be comprised by the proper one-year interval, which we will show at the proper places, especially in book 1 at verse 539 and 760.

The passage in which Regnault discusses this criticism and his discussion of *A. 1.535 Orion* is interesting, because it provides a broader intellectual context for La Rue's lemma. Moreover, Regnault, referring to Quintilian, comments on the importance of astronomical knowledge for reading the classical poets. For both these reasons, I provide the relevant parts of his preface in full in Appendix 1. I will quote the most important passages here:⁵²⁷

Regnault

'La seule chose à laquelle il me reste à répondre, en traitant la conception entière de l'Eneide, et où j'aurai besoin de m'étendre un peu davantage, est l'opinion que quelques Savants on eue, que l'Enéide contenait plus d'une année dans le temps que le Poète prend pour la représentation de son action principale. (...) Et il est aisé de s'imaginer que le bon sens a voulu que l'action qui fait le sujet d'un Poème héroïque, fût enfermée dans le cours d'un an (...). On ne trouvera point dans la belle Ordonnance de Virgile, que son ciel ne s'accorde pas avec ce qu'il dépeint (...) Il en est de même de son Enéide. (...) Mais pour preuve encore de ma supposition, on doit observer que (...) il attribue la tempête qui avait jeté les Troyens sur les

⁵²⁶ Petrus Mambrunus (Pierre Mambrun, 1601-1661), a French Jesuit professor of philosophy at Caen. He wrote a treatise on epic poetry, *De epico carmine dissertatio peripatetica* (1652), of which the seventh *quaestio* of the first part deals with the 'length of the narrative' ('De magnitudine Actionis').

⁵²⁷ In my transcription of the passage from De Segrais, I have modernized the 17th-century orthography and punctuation.

bords de Carthage, au lever d'Orion. *Cum subito assurgens fluctu nimbosus Orion*. On tient que le lever de ce signe est orageux. Or Virgile qui était savant dans l'Astronomie, comme on le juge par tout ce qu'il a écrit (...) Il a sans doute entendu son lever héliaque, ou son lever achronique, comme parlent les Astronomes (...) Et cette observation ne doit pas passer pour vaine; Quintilien marque expressément dans ses Institutions oratoires que l'Astronomie est nécessaire pour l'intelligence des Poètes, et qu'ils se servent du lever et du coucher des Etoiles, pour marquer les différentes saisons.'

It appears that La Rue's lemma is nothing more than a concise summary of Regnault's lengthy argumentation. From its inclusion both in a French translation of the *Aeneid* and in La Rue's Delphin commentary, it is clear that the discussion of matters of chronology and astronomy was considered highly relevant for studying the epic. As Regnault states forcefully, referring to Quintilian,⁵²⁸ the understanding of astronomical phenomena was deemed necessary for understanding the poets, who used astronomy – especially the position and orbit of stars and constellations – as a poetic indicator for chronology. This explicitly provides one of the reasons why lemmata on astronomical phenomena were included in early modern poetical commentaries like that of La Rue, or were in fact part of the tradition of writing commentaries on a work such as the *Aeneid*. This conceptualization fits the image of the poets, and especially of Virgil, as savants whose works could be conceived of as storehouses of (veiled) knowledge. The astronomical lemmata are not just grounded in a tradition of antiquarianism or in a revived interest in cultural history, but are a fundamental expression of the way in which the *Aeneid* was conceptualized, studied and read in the early modern period. Moreover, they are firmly connected to the classical poetic tradition in which astronomy and poetry were intricately linked. In turn, this connection between astronomy and chronology in the poets perfectly fitted the early modern interest in chronology. The (apparent) continuity of the classical tradition is thus employed in a new context. All this makes one wonder even more why (early modern) scientific progress did not seem to find its way into the Virgilian commentary tradition. In the two remaining lemmata that will be discussed in this section, this question will become even more pressing.

La Rue's comment on *A. 2.340 Oblati per lunam* is another example of the connection between astronomy and chronology and of the role they might play in a Virgilian commentary. Again, the description of an astronomical phenomenon by

⁵²⁸ Q., *Inst.* 1.4.4.

Virgil (in this case the shining of the moon) is used to anchor the exact date of an event in the epic – in this case the fall of Troy:

La Rue, A. 2.340 *Oblati per lunam*

A. 2.340 *Oblati per lunam*] Probat enim Scaliger, de Emendatione temp. lib. 5, captam esse Troiam circa plenilunium et finem veris. Idque etiam patet ex Petronii fragmento *De expugnatione Troiae*: *Iam plena Phoebe candidum extulerat iubar*, at tum luna maxime lucida est. Igitur *silentia lunae*, ut antea dixit Virgilius v. 255, de *media nocte* explicanda sunt, quod tempus vocatur *conticinium*, quia tunc tacent omnia.⁵²⁹ Luna autem nocturni silentii praeses dicitur. Unde Horat. Epod. 5.51 *Nox, et Diana quae silentium regis*.⁵³⁰

A. 2.340 *Exposed by the moon*] For Scaliger demonstrates in his fifth book of *De emendatione temporum* that Troy was captured about the time of the *plenilunium* [full moon] and the end of spring. This is also apparent from a fragment by Petronius, *On the capture of Troy*: ‘The full moon had already shown her bright light’ [Petr., *Sat.* 89], and that is when the moon is at its brightest. Consequently ‘the silence of the moon’, as Virgil said before at verse 255, has to be understood as ‘in the middle of the night’, which time was called the ‘*conticinium*’ [the period between nightfall and dawn; derived from *conticesco*, ‘to fall silent’], because at that time all is silent. And indeed the moon is called the warden of nocturnal silence, hence Horace in *Ep.* 5.51 ‘Night, and Diana, you who preside over silence’.

The problem which La Rue tries to solve in this lemma is the apparent inconsistency brought about by A. 2.255 *tacitae per amica silentia lunae* (‘amid the friendly silence of the quiet moon’) and A. 2.340 *oblati per lunam* (‘exposed by the moon’), since the former passage implies that the moon was not shining, while the later tells that it did shine. Referring to the authority of Scaliger as a chronologist and to a passage by Petronius, La Rue claims that Troy was taken when there was a full moon (*plenilunium*). He solves the apparent inconsistency between both verses by interpreting the ‘silence of the moon’ in verse A. 2.255 as ‘the middle of

⁵²⁹ La Rue on A. 2.255 *silentia lunae*] *Ne explices de luna cum sole coniuncta, quae tum dicitur silens, quia minime lucet; sed intellige de media et silente nocte, ut explicamus v.340.* [‘You should not explain this from the conjunction of the moon with the sun [i.e. a lunar eclipse], [the moon] which is called ‘silent’ at that time because she gives no light; but you should take this as being about the middle of the silent night, as we explain at verse [2.]340.’].

⁵³⁰ Servius on A. 2.340: *Oblati per lunam, agniti per lunae splendorem.* [‘Exposed by the moon, recognized through the splendor of the moon’].

the night'. This time of night, he says, was called the *conticinium*, of which the etymology goes back to *conticesco*: 'fall silent'. Therefore, La Rue concludes, verse A. 2.255 refers to the moon in its role as the keeper of nocturnal silence, and not to its light. In this reading, verse A. 2.340 can indeed be used as an aid in dating the moment of the fall of Troy, as Scaliger had done in his *De emendatione temporum* (1593). Scaliger was a logical source to turn to for matters of chronology because of this work and his commentary on Manilius' *Astronomicum* in which he offers an overview of classical astronomy. In explaining the meaning of the words *plenilunium* and *conticinium* while solving the apparent contradiction between both verses from the *Aeneid*, La Rue does not go into the argumentation on which Scaliger's verdict rests that Troy must have been taken during a moonlit night in spring time.⁵³¹ Thus only the dating is presented and the terminology is explained, but – again – the astronomical and chronological specifics of the case are left out of the discussion.

A more extensive discussion of the connection between astronomical phenomena and time than in the previous lemma from the commentary by La Rue is found in Pontanus' lemma on 3.284 *interea magnum ... annum*. In this lemma, Pontanus discusses the relation between the length of the year and the orbit of the planets:

Pontanus on A. 3.284 *interea magnum ... annum*

A. 3.284 *interea magnum ... annum*] Mensis, lunae annus est, intra quem caeli ambitum lustrat. Nam et a luna mensis dicitur, quia graeco nomine luna μήνη vocatur. Virgilius ad discretionem lunaris anni, qui brevis est, annum, qui solis cursu efficitur, significare voluit, dum 'magnum' appellavit, comparatione scilicet lunaris. Nam cursus quidem Veneris atque Mercurii paene par soli est. Martis vero annus fere biennium tenet: tanto enim tempore caelum circumit. Iovis autem stella duodecim et Saturni triginta annos in eadem circuitione consumit. Macrob. in *Som. Scip.* lib. 2 cap.11. Idem *Saturnal.* lib.1. cap.14. Sicut lunaris annus mensis est, quia luna paulo minus quam mensem in Zodiaci circuitione consumit, ita solis annus hoc dierum numero colligendus est quem peragit dum ad id signum <s>e denuo vertit ex quo digressus est, unde annus 'vertens' vocatur et habetur 'magnus', cum lunae annus brevis putetur. Horum Virgilius utrumque complexus est. Hinc Ateius Capito annum a 'circuitu temporis' putat dictum, quia veteres, 'an' pro 'circum'

⁵³¹ See Scaliger, *De emendatione temporum*, 377a ff. (*De Ilii excidio*: 'on the fall of Troy'), esp. 377b-378a.

ponere solebant,⁵³² ut Cato in *Originibus*, ‘an terminum’, id est, ‘circum terminum’, et ‘ambire’ pro ‘circumire’.⁵³³

A. 3.284 *Meanwhile the great ... year*: A month is the lunar year, in which the moon passes through its celestial orbit. For actually *mensis* [‘month’] is named after the moon, because in Greek the moon is called ‘mênê’. In order to distinguish it from the lunar year, which is brief, Virgil wanted to indicate the year, which is brought about by the orbit of the sun, by calling it great (in comparison, obviously, to that of the moon). For the orbit of Venus and of Mercury is almost the same as that of the sun. The Martian year on the other hand almost takes two [solar] years: that’s how much time it takes to complete its orbit. The planet Jupiter however takes 12 years, and Saturn 30 years for the same revolution. See Macrobius in the *Som. Scip.* book 2, chapter 11 and of the same author *Sat.* book 1 chapter 14. Just as the lunar year is a month, because the moon completes its orbit of the Zodiac⁵³⁴ in a little less than a month, so the year of the sun must be formulated as that number of days that it takes to return again to precisely that constellation from which it had departed. For this reason the year is called ‘revolving’ and known as ‘great’ because the year of the moon is deemed short. Virgil has encompassed both of these things. Hence Ateius Capito [a Roman legal scholar] thinks that the year is named after the *circuitus* [‘revolution’] of time, because the ancients used to say ‘an’ instead of ‘circum’ [‘around’], e.g., Cato in his *Origines*, ‘an terminus’, that is ‘circum terminum’ [‘around the end’], and ‘ambire’ [‘to go round’] instead of ‘circumire’ [‘to go around’].⁵³⁵

The fact that Pontanus chose to write a lemma on the ‘great year’ in A. 3.248 is not surprising: already Servius (see note 533) explained that the solar year was called the great year to avoid confusion with the shorter year of the moon. Interestingly,

⁵³² A direct citation from Macr. *Sat.* 1,14.5

⁵³³ Servius provides a discussion of the solar and the lunar year, referring to Euxodus, Ptolemy and Cicero (*De natura deorum*).

⁵³⁴ The Zodiac consists of an apparent band of constellations in the sky through which the orbits of the sun, moon and the planets run. The *Oxford Dictionary of Astronomy* (online version, 2014) gives the following definition: “The strip of sky up to 8° either side of the ecliptic against which the Sun, Moon, and major planets appear to move. The strip is divided into twelve *signs of the zodiac*, each 30° long. These signs were named by the ancient Greeks after the constellations of the zodiac that occupied the same positions some 2000 years ago. As a result of precession, the constellations have moved eastwards by over 30° and no longer coincide with the signs.”

⁵³⁵ See Maltby (1991), s.v. *ambio*. This etymology of *annum* links the word to the revolving of the year.

Pontanus takes the occasion to not only discuss the lunar and the solar year, but also to make some remarks about the revolutions of the planets. It should be noted that Pontanus' discussion concerns the movement of celestial bodies across the Zodiac (the traditional band of twelve astronomical signs across the night sky), not their orbit around the sun or the earth. However, the number of years given by Pontanus for each of the planets corresponds more or less to that of their orbit around the sun. This is because from the viewpoint of the earth, the sun and most of the planets of the solar system appear to travel around the night sky in the same path, which is called the ecliptic plane (a path which is tilted by 23.4 degrees in respect to the celestial equator, see also **iii.7** below).⁵³⁶

Surprisingly, while Servius refers to Mentor, Eudoxus, Ptolemaeus and even Cicero for more astronomical information, Pontanus only extensively quotes Macrobius (in fact, the entire second part of the lemma is a direct quotation from Macrobius), but does not refer to any classical or contemporary astronomical works or authors. Thus it seems that while Pontanus did consider astronomical phenomena to be of relevance in his commentary, he did not really engage with the material, but just built on the work of previous commentators and classical scholars, not even mentioning all the sources referred to by Servius.

We return to La Rue's commentary for another lemma on the orbit of celestial objects across the night sky. In his lemma on A. 7.100, in conjunction with an earlier, much longer one on G. 1.238 (contained in the same commentary volume), he writes:

La Rue on A. 7.100 *utrumque recurrens* etc.

A. 7.100 *utrumque recurrens* etc.] Magnitudinem notat futuri imperii Romani; vel ab oceano orientali ad occidentalem, qua sol diurno motu recurrit; vel ab oceano septentrionali ad meridionalem, qua sol annuo motu discurrit. De *vario solis motu*, G. 1.238.

A. 7.100 *each returning* etc.] He delineates the vastness of the future Roman empire; <stretching> from the eastern to the western ocean, along which path the sun moves back in its daily course; <stretching> from the northern to the southern

⁵³⁶ See the *Oxford Dictionary of Astronomy* (online version, 2014), s.v. 'ecliptic' and 'obliquity of the ecliptic'. The inclination of the earth's equator to the ecliptic (also known as the obliquity of the ecliptic) decreases because of the gravitational pull of the other planets in the solar system, oscillating between 22 and 24.6 degrees over a period of 41 000 years.

ocean, along the path of the sun in its annual course. On the various courses of the sun see *Georgics* 1.238.

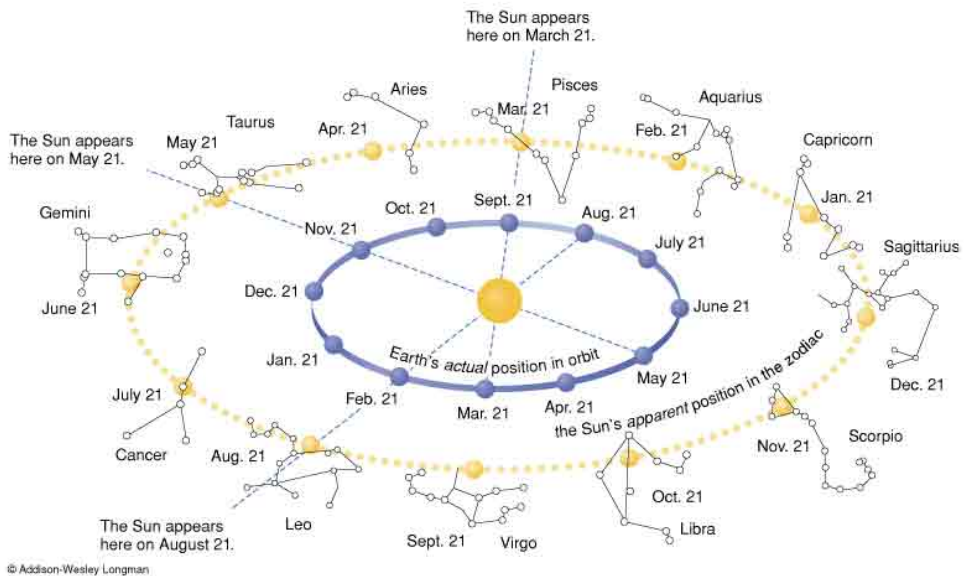
La Rue on G. 1.238 *Via secta*

G.1.238 *Via secta* etc.] Zodiacus, circulus obliquus, in quo duodecim signa caelestia spatiis aequalibus descripta sunt. De eo ista quinque notanda. I. Dividitur in partes, sive gradus, 360, signa singula in gradus 30, e quibus unum circiter gradum singulis diebus motu proprio sol conficit, ab occidente in orientem procedendo. Atque ita uno circiter anno duodecim signa decurrit. Interea dum communi motu, qui raptus dicitur, ab oriente in occidentem procedendo, quattuor et viginti horarum spatio orbem terrarum circuit. II. Signarum ordo et nomina his versibus continentur (...) [La Rue sums up the twelve signs of the Zodiac]. Quae quia maxima ex parte animalia sunt, hinc circulus zodiacus appellatur, a ζῳδιον, animal. III. Mensi Martio respondet aries, in quem ingredi sol dicitur circa vigesimum Martii, signumque totum decurrere, usque sub vigesimum Aprilis: quo tempore in taurum subit. Atque ita fere de caeteris. IV. Obliquus dicitur, quia non distat aequaliter a polis: sed per zonam torridam transversus, utrumque tropicum attingit, et aequatorum circulum bis secat. Attingit in primo gradu cancri tropicum septentrionalem, qui inde tropicus cancri dicitur. Attingit in primo gradu capricorni tropicum meridionalem, qui inde vocatur tropicus capricorni. Secat aequatorem in primo gradu arietis, et in primo gradu librae. V. Cum sol pervenit ad tropicum cancri, circa 21 Junii, tunc nobis est aestas summa, sive solstitium. Cum ad tropicum capricorni, circa 21 Decembris, tunc hiems summa, sive bruma. Iique tropici dicuntur a τρέπω, verto, quia sol quando eorum alterum attingit, ad alterum vertit cursum. Cum vero sol pervenit ad sectionem arietis, sub 20 Martii, tunc est aequinoctium vernal. Cum ad sectionem librae, 23 Septembris, tunc est aequinoctium autumnale.

The Zodiac, an ellipse, in which the twelve signs are represented at equal intervals. The following five things are important about it. 1. It is divided in 360 parts, or degrees, with one sign every 30 degrees, of which the sun completes with its own motion about one degree every single day, going from west to east. And thus it runs through the twelve signs in about one year. In the meantime while in its regular motion, which is called 'raptus' ['carrying off'], going from the east to the west, it goes round the earth in an interval of 24 hours. 2. The arrangement and names of the signs are included in these verses (...) [La Rue sums up the twelve signs of the Zodiac]. Because these are for the most part derived from names of animals, hence the circle is called the Zodiac, from *Zôdion*, 'animal'. 3. *Aries* [The Ram] corresponds to the month of March. The sun is said to enter it around the

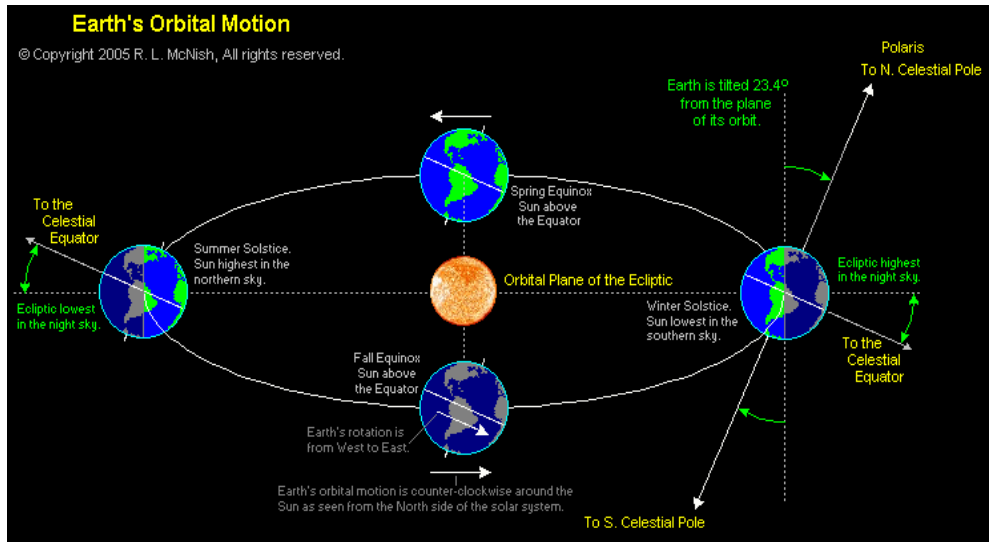
twentieth of March and it runs through the whole sign, until the twentieth of April, at which time it enters *Taurus* [The Bull]. And almost the same goes for the other signs. 4. It is called elliptic since it does not stand at a symmetrical distance from the poles, but having passed through the *Zona torrida* ['dry zone'], it touches both tropics, and it cuts twice through the equatorial circle. In the first grade of Cancer it touches on the northern tropic, which is therefore called the Tropic of Cancer. In the first grade of Capricorn it touches on the southern tropic, which is therefore called the Tropic of Capricorn. It cuts the Equator in the first degree of *Aries* [The Ram] and in the first degree of *Libra* [The Scales]. 5. When the sun arrives at the Tropic of Cancer, around the 21st of June, then we have the height of summer, or the *solstitium* [solstice]. When it arrives at the Tropic of Capricorn, around the 21st of December, then we have the height of winter, or the *Bruma* [the winter solstice]. The Tropics derive their name from 'trepô', *verto* ['to turn'], because when the sun reaches one of them, it reverts its course to the other. And when the sun reaches the division of *Aries* [The Ram], around the 20th of March, then it is the Spring Equinox. When it reaches the division of *Libra* [The Scales], around the 23rd of September, then it is the Autumnal Equinox.

In his lemma on A. 7.100 La Rue refers to the two different paths of the sun, namely the daily one (moving from east to west) and the annual one (moving from north to south). This explains why Virgil writes in this verse 'where the sun, returning to both of each, views the ocean'. In his lemma on G. 1.238 La Rue had already explained quite lengthily the movement of the sun across the Zodiac, explaining Virgil's words in verses G. 1.231-258. As a whole, *Georgics* 1 was very well suited for this kind of astronomical explanation, since Virgil discusses extensively the stars and the heavens (in fact the entire passage runs from G.1.204 to G. 1.258). La Rue's explanation, however, goes further than Virgil's remarks and in fact offers a reasonably comprehensive overview of the movement of the sun across the sky (see **ill.7** below for a modern depiction of the phenomenon described by La Rue).



III. 7 Because of earth's orbit around the sun, the sun appears to travel across the signs of the Zodiac in the night sky.

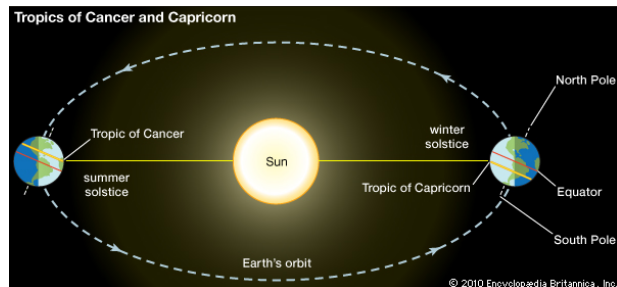
La Rue's fourth and fifth remark on G.1.238 discuss the apparent movement of the sun through the various celestial circles. This movement is only apparent, since the earth actually orbits around the sun. It does not become clear from the lemma whether La Rue starts from a geocentric or a heliocentric model: while his description of the sun's apparent path through the zodiac can be excused on the ground that he is only trying to explain the phenomenon as described by Virgil, this is more difficult with regard to his depiction of the sun's movement across the celestial plane. For he writes at the end of his first remark that 'the sun orbits the earth in about 24 hours', which is only consistent with a geocentric view of the cosmos. See III. 8a and 8b for a modern depiction of the astronomical process as described by La Rue in his third and fourth remark.



III. 8a The relation between earth's orbit around the sun and the apparent movement of the sun from and to the Equator.

The discussion offered by La Rue clearly fits the importance attached to astronomical knowledge for the understanding of Virgil that we have encountered before. But again, new advances in astronomy seem to play no part at all in these explanations. La Rue's sources for astronomical information appear to have been

traditionale ones, such as book 8 of Martianus Capella *De Nuptiis* and Pliny, *Natural History*. Moreover, it appears that La Rue's description of the sun's (apparent) movement across the zodiac starts from a geocentric rather than a heliocentric view of the cosmos. This is at least surprising for us, and



III. 8b. The relation between earth's orbit around the sun and the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn.

was possibly confusing for his readers. Of course, there is a certain inherent tension in the lemma between the accommodation of the astronomical explanation to Virgil's cosmology and the explanation of the astronomical phenomena *per se*. In the first approach, it does not matter whether Virgil's description of the sun's celestial orbit is adequate or not; the commentator simply focuses on explaining to his readers the astronomical model laying behind Virgil's verses. In the second approach, the commentator is not just trying to explain Virgil, but is relating the

phenomena Virgil mentions to more general – albeit often outdated – knowledge on astronomy. With respect to other disciplines (such as grammar, rhetoric and history) this second approach is characteristic for early modern commentators of Virgil: they take a critical approach to phenomena mentioned in the epic, in that they confront the epic and its commentary tradition with actual, contemporary knowledge. I have already shown this in my chapters on the language sciences (ch. 2) and on antiquarianism (ch. 3). An element that should be considered is that in the two aforementioned fields of expertise the early modern commentator could consider himself to be on equal footing with Virgil and with classical grammarians, being skilled in the same areas of study, while evidently this was not the case for where the scientific disciplines are concerned. On the other hand, however, it certainly does seem that La Rue was intending to provide additional astronomical information (though not current one, although many advances were made in astronomy in the early modern period (see section 3 above) to his explanation of Virgil. One could then draw the conclusion that La Rue's information was inadequate. Or, in view of the assumptions already made in the above, one could maintain as a working hypothesis that this lemma forms another indication of the fact that the literary commentary and the developments in the new sciences were two very separate discourses and that thus new developments were not incorporated in the early modern Virgilian commentary.

4.3 Natural History

The final category of lemmata to consider are those about natural phenomena in the tradition of natural history. Citing the canonical author of this discipline, Pliny the Elder, Pontanus comments on various forms of lightning on the occasion of *A. 2.649 fulminis afflaviv ventis*.

Pontanus on *A. 2.649 fulminis afflaviv ventis*

A. 2.649 fulminis afflaviv ventis] 'Fulminum genera plura traduntur', ait Plinius lib. 2 ca.25. 'Quae sicca veniunt, non adurunt, sed dissipant; quae umida, non urunt, sed infusant. Tertium est quod clarum vocant, mirificae maximae naturae, quo dolia exhauriuntur, intactis operimentis, nulloque alio vestigio relicto, aurum et aes et argentum liquatur intus, sacculis ipsis nullo modo ambustis ac ne confuso quidem signo cerae. Marcia, princeps Romanorum, icta gravida partu exanimato, ipsa citra ullum aliud incommodum vixit.' Plura alibi idem scriptor et multa in *Naturalibus* Seneca.⁵³⁷

⁵³⁷ In his lemma on *A. 2.649* Servius provides a short paraphrase of the same passage in Pliny.

A. 2.649 *breathed upon me with the winds of his bolt*] ‘Many types of lightning are handed down’, says Pliny in chapter 25 of his second book [*N.H.* 2.137]. ‘Those that come dry do not burn, but scatter things; those that are moist, do not burn, but blacken things. The third kind is that which they call bright, of a most wonderful nature, by which casks are emptied, leaving the covers intact, and leaving no other trace behind, gold, copper and silver are melted within, while their sacks are not burned in any way nor is the wax seal even melted. Marcia, a distinguished Roman, was struck while pregnant, the fetus died, while she herself survived without any other harm.’ More on this in other passages of the same author and much more in Seneca’s *Naturales quaestiones*.

Pontanus adduces Pliny and refers to Seneca as valuable sources of information on the types of lightning that can be discerned.⁵³⁸ Although his reasons for providing this lemma may have been rooted in his antiquarian interest in the classical world, it is telling that he calls upon these classical authors for the explanation of a natural phenomenon: unlike other antiquarian material, natural phenomena generally do not limit themselves to specific chronological eras. On the other hand, Aristotelian meteorology remained influential well up into the seventeenth century, which brought about that weather phenomena were mostly studied in the natural philosophical tradition (with its focus on the study of causes).⁵³⁹ From this one can conclude that, unlike in the case of lemmata on astronomical phenomena, for the explanation of natural phenomena such as lightning, authors such as Aristotle, Pliny and Seneca often remained a prime source of state-of-the-art information for a commentator like Pontanus, because these authors retained a prominent position in the early modern study of these phenomena. This means that the cultural-historical or doxographical approach to natural phenomena in Virgilian commentaries is not necessarily (only) a sign of the influence of the classical tradition and the commentator’s inability to traverse into other fields of learning, but sometimes also the result of the circumstance that the knowledge contained in classical texts was still considered to be the starting point for the study of natural phenomena. This means that in studying lemmata on topics pertaining to the scientific disciplines, one should be careful to observe whether the commentator is only giving the traditional account, or that the information offered by him is actually in accordance with current scientific practices. Another example of this is

⁵³⁸ See for example Sen., *Nat. quaest.* 2.12-30.

⁵³⁹ See Martin (2011), 5-6.

found in the discussion offered by Pontanus at A. 3.28 *huic atro liquuntur sanguine guttae* of the bleeding of trees. In this lemma Pontanus refers to Pliny and Manilius⁵⁴⁰ (and not to contemporary botanical works).⁵⁴¹ I will now discuss some further examples of lemmata dealing with lightning, to see whether other commentators provide a similar discussion as the one in Pontanus. Landino provides the following comment on A. 1.42 *Iovis ... ignem* (where Iuno mentions how Minerva had used Jupiter's bolts of lightning to sink the Greek fleet):

Landino on A. 1.42 *Ignem Iovis*

A. 1.42 *Ignem Iovis*] Potuit ut se ulcisceretur alienis uti armis. Ceterum fulmen secundum physicos est vapor ignitus compactus et solidus impetuose cadens. Gignitur ex vapore grosso ex contrariis et diversis composito vehementi calore inflammato, et ventorum nubiumque concussionem impulso, et quasi lapis igneus sit de concavitate nubis deorsum per violentiam pulso. Raro cadit in frigidissima hieme, quia propter frigus vapor in aere non gignitur. Raro etiam in vehementi aestate, quia propter siccitatem et subtilitatem aeris vapores in nubibus non aggregantur, sed calore consumuntur. Eadem ratione in partibus orbis aut callidissimis aut frigidissimis rariora cadunt et in ea parte Italiae quae a septentrione ad meridiem discedit crebriora apparent. Ergo in vere et autumnus vapores multi eleuantur, et condensantur, et ignescunt. Prisci fulmen quibusdam sacris eliciebant non sine periculo. Nam Hostilius Rex cum eliceret omni regia crematus est. Ethruscorum litterae teste Plinio [*N.H.* 2.138] novem deos fulmina emittere dicunt eaque esse undecim generum, sed Iovem tria emittere. Romani duo tantum statuerunt, diurna, quae Iovi, et nocturna, quae Sumano tribuunt. De Sumano meminit Plautus [*Bac.*, v.895]. Refert Aristoteles tria esse genera fulminum. Unum quod adurit. Alterum quod quia humidum est, non urit, sed quae tangit, nigra reddit. Tertium est clarum et mirae naturae. Nam vinum effundit intactis vasis. Aliquando fracto vase ita obstupescit vinum ut per tres dies non fluat. Aurum in saccis et vasa argentea in capsulis ita liquefacit, ut sacci capsulaeque

⁵⁴⁰ Pontanus on A. 3.28 *huic atro liquuntur sanguine guttae*: '(...) Alioqui habent et sanguinem suum arbores, et alia quoque quae in animalibus reperiuntur (...). Qua de re Plin. lib.16 cap.28. (...)’ [‘From this trickle drops, through black blood’] (...) In another way trees also have their blood, and a different one too is that which is found in animals (...). On this topic Pliny, chapter 28 of book 16 [of the *N.H.*].’

⁵⁴¹ In an article on the reading of ancient botanical texts in a number of humanist commentaries on Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* and Dioscorides's *De materia medica* De Beer (2013) also observes the continuing predominance of classical botanical knowledge, and the tension that could arise from the confrontation of this classical knowledge with contemporary insights (see especially De Beer (2013), 332 and 338).

integrae maneant. Comburent corpora intactis vestibus. Martia Romana mulier gravida icta fulmine partu exanimato illaesa permansit. Propter hanc triplicem naturam trisulcum fingitur a poetis fulmen. Refert Acron ceterorum deorum manubias albas nigrasque esse, Iovis vero rubras. Huius rei haud ignarus Horatius. Inde de Iove dixit: 'et rubente // dextera sacras iaculatus arces' [Hor., *Carm.* 1.2, 2-3].

A.1.42 *The fire of Jupiter*] In order to take revenge she could use another's weapons. However that may be, lightning is, according to the physicists a vapor, burning, closely packed and solid, that falls down violently. It is born from a thick vapor composed from opposite and diverse matter, set on fire by intense heat, struck by a clash of winds and clouds, and violently driven downwards from the inside of a cloud as if as a stone on fire. It rarely strikes in the coldest part of winter, since because of the cold no vapor is born in the air. It also rarely strikes in the heat of summer, since because of the dryness and the thinness of the air vapors are not joined together in the clouds, but they are devoured by the heat. For the same reason they seldom strike in the parts of the world that are very hot or very cold, and in that part of Italy that stretches from the north to the south they appear more frequently. Accordingly in spring and in autumn many vapors are lifted up and are condensed and ignite. The ancients provoked lightning by means of certain sacred rituals, not without risk: when king Hostilius provoked it, he was incinerated together with the entire palace. According to Pliny [the Elder, in *N.H.* 2.138], the books of the Etruscans state that nine gods throw lightning and that those are of eleven types, but that Jupiter hurls three kinds. The Romans acknowledged only two <types>, day-time lightning, which they attribute to Jupiter, and nocturnal lightning, which they attribute to Sum<m>anus ⁵⁴². Plautus mentioned Sum<m>anus [*Bac.*, v.895]. Aristotle says [in fact Pl., *N.H.* 2.137] that there are three kinds of lightning. One that burns. Another that because it is wet, does not burn, but blackens what it touches. The third kind is bright and of a wondrous nature. For it casts away wine while leaving the jars intact. Occasionally when a jar has broken, the wine is so stunned that it does not flow for three days. It liquefies gold in bags and silver vases in caskets in such a way that the bags and the caskets remain intact. They incinerate corpses leaving the clothing intact. Martia, a Roman woman was struck by lightning while pregnant: she herself survived without any harm while the fetus died. Because of this trifold nature lightning is made three-forked by the poets. Acron [commentator of Horace] reports that the strokes of lightning of the other gods are white and black, that those of Jupiter, however, are

⁵⁴² A god who hurled lightning. See Mueller (2012), s.v. *Summanus*.

red. Horace was by no means ignorant of these things. For this reason he said about Jupiter: 'and he had struck the sacred fortresses with his red right hand' [Hor., *Carm.* 1.2, 2-3].

Landino presents his lemma as if it is based on various classical source texts: Pliny, Aristotle, and classical authors (Plautus and Horace). In fact, almost the entire lemma is based on a condensed version of Pliny's account in *N.H.* 2.135-139, in spite of the additional references adduced by Landino. Still he did some research of his own: the second sentence of the lemma, containing the definition of lightning, for example, seems to have been taken over from a (medieval) encyclopedic work.⁵⁴³ This structuring of the lemma and its presentation may suggest a doxographical or antiquarian interest in classical views on lightning, but as the first half of the lemma shows, it should also be understood in another way: the knowledge derived from the classical source texts consists of further elaboration of the factual statements in the first half of the lemma on the origin of lightning. This explanation is in turn also based on classical sources, though these are not mentioned explicitly. This confirms how early modern *Aeneid*-commentators working in the field of natural history kept turning to the same sources of information for this field as their classical precursors had done. Moreover, as I have observed above, in the case of lightning Landino's lemma was in accordance with contemporary scientific practices. This is confirmed by a lemma from Corradus on *A.* 1.90 *crebris* in which the commentator offers a discussion, with references to classical sources, on whether during a thunderstorm one first sees the flash of the lightning or first hears the sound of the thunder:⁵⁴⁴

Corradus on *A.* 1.90 *Crebris*

A. 1.90 *Crebris*] *crebris ignibus* [V., *A.* 1.90], περίφρασις τῶν ἀστραπτῶν, quas Cicero fulgura, et fulgores, Plinius etiam fulgetra vocat libro secundo capite quinquagesimo quarto, ubi scribit ita: 'fulgetrum prius cerni, quam tonitrum audiri, quum simul fiant, certum est.' [*N.H.* 2.142]. Certum fuit Plinio, fulgur et tonitrum simul fieri [*N.H.* 2.142]. Anaxagoras tamen prius fulgur, quam tonitrum fieri

⁵⁴³ This first part of the lemma (*vapor ignitus compactus ... per violentiam pulso*) is, almost literally, also found in Bartholomeus Anglicus (13th century), *De rerum proprietatibus* 11.15 (an encyclopedic work). The words *vapor ignitus compactus et solidus impetuose cadens* are also found in the commentary on Boethius, *De consolatione* that was probably written by Guillelmus Wheatley (14th century). Wheatley attributes the definition to the 11/12th-century Arabian theologian and physicist Algazel (Al-Ghazzali).

⁵⁴⁴ Corradus, *In lib. 1. Aeneid. Virg.*, 130-131.

putavit, ut Aristoteles libro secundo μετεωρολογικῶν refert, quam sententiam Cicero secutus videri potest, quum libro secundo de Divinatione fulgura tonitribus praeposuit, quam tamen Aristoteles totam confutavit, quum multis argumentis ostendit tonitrum ante fulgur fieri. Id quod Alexander in quaestionibus ita probat, ut tamen dubitet, quum dicat aut tonitrum ante fulgur, aut tonitrum, et fulgur simul fieri. Quamvis fulgur prius cernamus, quam tonitrum audiamus, quod visum subtiliorem auditu acutioremque habeamus, et quod lux, ut ait Plinius, sit sonitu velocior. Quum visus sit acutior, sit, inquit Alexander, ut, si lignum procul verberetur, ictum statim videamus, sonum vero serius audiamus, quamvis simul ictus, et sonus fiant. Ea ratio movit, ut opinor, Ciceronem, ut in oratione pro Milone [section 58] scriberet ita: ‘Non sanguine et vulneribus suis crudelissimi inimici mentem oculosque satiavit’, quod sanguis prius videri soleat, quam vulnus illatum cognoscamus. Poeta tamen hoc loco rem potius ipsam quam quod videtur respexit, et rem suo ordine collocavit, praesertim quum videret rem et orationem sic etiam crescere et amplificari, quod plura fulgura, quam tonitrua, esse, et frequentius fieri soleant, ut hic mihi videatur ἐπιμονὴ esse, quo poeta melius rem possit explicare. (...).

A. 1.90 *frequent*] ‘frequent fires’ [V., A. 1.90], a periphrasis of lightning, which Cicero calls *fulgura* [‘lightning’, nom. sing. ‘fulgur’], and *fulgores* [‘lightning’, nom. sing. *fulgor*], Pliny however calls them *fulgetra* [‘lightning’, nom. sing. *fulgetrum*] in chapter 54 of his second book, where he writes as follows: ‘It is certain that the flash is seen before the thunderclap is heard, even when they occur simultaneously.’ [N.H. 2.142]. For Pliny it was certain that lightning and the thunder occur simultaneously [N.H. 2.142]. Anaxagoras however was of the opinion that lightning occurred earlier than the thunder, as Aristotle tells in the second book of his *Meteorologica*, which view Cicero may seem to have followed, when he put lightning before thunder in the second book of *De Divinatione*, which opinion was however completely refuted by Aristotle, when he showed on many grounds that thunder occurs before lightning. Alexander approves of this in his *Quaestiones*, but leaves some doubt, for he says that either thunder occurs before lightning, or thunder and lightning occur together. This is in spite of the fact that we see lightning earlier than we hear the thunder, because our sight is more precise and sharper than our hearing, and because light, as Pliny says, travels faster than sound. Because our sight is sharper, says Alexander [of Aphrodisias, a commentator on Aristotle], we may compare it to this: when wood far-away is struck, we immediately see the strike, the sound however we hear later, although the strike and the sound occur simultaneously. This line of argument, I suppose, moved Cicero to write in his *Oratio pro Milone* [section 58] as follows: ‘He did not satisfy

the mind and eyes of his most cruel enemy with his blood and wounds', because blood tends to be seen earlier than that we perceive the inflicted wound. At this place [A. 1.90] however, the poet rather had in mind the thing itself than what was perceived, and he established the thing in its regular order, especially because he saw that the thing and the narrative would thus grow and extend, because there tend to be more and more frequent flashes of lightning than claps of thunder, so that this seems to me an *epimônê* [the accumulation of clauses, see Lausberg (1998), 838.1], so that the poet could better illustrate the matter at hand. (...).

The lemma starts with philological remarks on the different, related, forms of the Latin word used by classical authors for 'lightning' (*fulgur/fulgor/fulgetrum*). Corradus thus begins his discussion of lightning with a very traditional, grammatical point. The first quotation from Pliny, to show that he indeed used the word *fulgetrum*, forms a bridge towards a discussion of the ancient views on the order of thunder and lightning. It appears that this discussion provides again a doxographical overview of opinions of the ancients on lightning and thunder, which – in view of the dominant position of Aristotle in early modern meteorology – was also in accordance with contemporary views. What is striking however, is that Corradus' lemma in fact seems to concern a much more limited problem, not explicitly mentioned by the commentator, namely the question why Virgil in his text first mentions the thunder, before lightning, while actually lightning should be seen before thunder is heard. At the very end of his lemma Corradus solves this problem by explaining Virgil's composition of the verse on stylistic and rhetorical grounds (namely that Virgil wished to stress the impressive nature of the thunderstorm by describing the thunder and lightning more at length). In his commentary to the first book, Conway (1935) also signals this problem, mentioning that some have for this reason wished to delete the 'et' in A. 1.90. He himself however, just as Corradus, explains the phrasing from considerations of poetical composition (in this case from the way in which Virgil constructs sentences).⁵⁴⁵ Corradus solves this problem at the very end of his lemma, after having given a quite lengthy discussion of opinions of the ancients on the order of lightning and thunder. This approach conforms to what I have observed above, namely that early modern commentators tend to insert explanations of natural phenomena into their lemmata, based on classical sources. And again, it appears that the commentator is clearly interested in the discussion of natural phenomena, but that – at least in the

⁵⁴⁵ See Conway (1935) on A. 1.90.

case of astronomy – this interest does not lead to innovation, in the sense of the inclusion of post-classical knowledge of the phenomenon.

5. Conclusion

At the beginning of this chapter the question was raised whether early modern Latin commentaries on the *Aeneid* underwent the same kind of influence of the rise of the sciences as I have observed in chapter 3 for the lemmata on cultural history because of the developments in thinking about history. In the second section I have discussed the prime characteristics that define modern science and given an overview of the scientific tradition of the classical, medieval and early modern world. A confrontation of these findings with lemmata from Renaissance *Aeneid*-commentaries has shown that while commentators in fact display a vivid interest in those elements of Virgil's epic that pertain to the scientific domain, they do not refer to, let alone include, recent developments in the scientific disciplines. On the contrary, early modern Virgil commentators appear to continue to operate in the spectrum that was set out for them by the classical commentary tradition. To a certain extent, this was in accordance with contemporary scientific practices, as I have observed in relation to lemmata on natural history. In this way a classical author such as Pliny remained one of the most important points of reference. In the case of other fields of study however, such as astronomy, the use of classical knowledge was outdated in view of the many developments that took place in the early modern study of nature. This brings about that although the information provided in these commentaries is often more extensive than, for example, in the commentary of Servius, this additional information generally does not include contemporary material or of new insights. An exception might be, as we have seen, chronology, in which the new insights produced by Scaliger are mentioned.

Despite all this, it is quite clear that the scientific disciplines mattered to early modern commentators of Virgil, if only because it was traditionally thought that they mattered to Virgil. As became clear from the analysis in this chapter, it is mainly the natural philosophical tradition that remained dominant in these commentaries, sometimes combined with elements from the classical mathematical tradition of the scientific disciplines (especially in lemmata dealing with astronomy). As I showed in the lemmata on lighting, since classical natural philosophy remained influential in meteorology up into the seventeenth century, classical texts still provided knowledge that was considered state-of-the-art or at least highly relevant. In other fields I have however not found any cross-over with insights from the new sciences. On the contrary: also in these cases classical works of scholarship remained the prime point of reference. This is very different from

lemmata dealing with classical culture, in which reference is often made to treatises by other early modern scholars (see chapter 3).

What may be concluded from the observations in this chapter is that the relation between early modern *Aeneid*-commentaries and the scientific disciplines is a multifaceted one. On the one hand, it is clear that commentators in explaining natural phenomena stay within the traditional boundaries that were laid out for them in the Virgilian tradition. On the other hand, it was in some cases not really necessary for them to transverse those boundaries, because classical knowledge of natural phenomena was in some fields of study still considered to be up-to-date. Still, the observations in this chapter suggest that the taking up of new insights and ideas from the sciences for use in other forms of scholarly discourse may be a rather modern practice. It appears that in the early modern world, both discourses – philology and the study of nature – were (already) very much separated, and the inclusion of new developments in the scientific disciplines, which could enhance, supplement or correct the (traditional) explanation offered by the Virgil commentators was neither expected nor desired. So while elements from the classical sciences had traditionally found their way into the explanation of Virgil's poetry (through the classical commentaries), early modern Virgil commentators generally made no effort to update this knowledge – in fact, they seem not to have thought of this idea at all. By including, but not updating, lemmata on domains pertaining to the scientific disciplines, it is very well possible that these early modern commentators unconsciously have accelerated the crumbling of the idea that classical literary works such as Virgil's *Aeneid* could be seen as storehouses of knowledge valuable to the contemporary world. In this respect, the literary commentary seems to have been trapped in its own traditional system: the interest in matters of chronology or astronomy, which is very visible in some of the case studies presented in this chapter, did not result in an effort to update the knowledge handed down by the commentary tradition (thus turning their lemmata into storehouses of up-to-date knowledge), nor did commentators turn their lemmata on these issues into the kind of scholarly essays such as the one from La Cerda on the Roman toga (chapter 3). So while on the one hand early modern Virgil commentators continued the tradition of writing on phenomena from nature, it is clear that on the other hand they no longer innovated within this tradition, but let it fossilize in its classical form. This is also true in the case of natural philosophy and natural history, in which by chance the influence of classical texts continued up into the end of the early modern era.

Thus, while early modern scholars of nature often also concerned themselves with philology, the established genre of the literary commentary – or at least the *Aeneid* commentary – did not follow on the new developments in the scientific

disciplines. Hence, despite the fertile ground that was provided by the Virgilian tradition – with its emphasis on literature as a vehicle for universal knowledge and its traditional attention to the study of nature – both forms of intellectual discourse (the grammarian-philological approach to texts and the new scientific disciplines) appear to have been two worlds too much separated to allow for interaction and cross-pollination in the Renaissance commentary on the *Aeneid*.

6. Appendix:

Jean Regnault, part from the preface to *Traduction de l'Énéide de Virgile* (1681)

La seule chose à laquelle il me reste à répondre, en traitant la conception entière de l'Énéide, et où j'aurai besoin de m'étendre un peu davantage, est l'opinion que quelques Savants on euë, que l'Énéide contenait plus d'une année dans le temps que le Poète prend pour la représentation de son action principale. Et l'on prétend qu'un Auteur qui faisait les choses avec tant d'art et de justesse, n'a pas dû pécher contre un règle, qu'on juge aussi essentielle à un Poème Épique et à un Roman, que la règles des vingt-quatre heures à une Tragédie, ou aux autres pièces de Théâtre. (...) Et il est aisé de s'imaginer que le bon sens a voulu que l'action qui fait le sujet d'un Poème héroïque, fût enfermée dans le cours d'un an (...). Ronsard est le premier Auteur de ces derniers temps, qui a supposé cette règle de l'unité de l'année, et qui a condamné Virgile d'y avoir manqué. (...) Mais avec le respect que je dois à de si fortes autorités, je crois que ce n'est pas tout-à-fait bien calculer. (...) [les excellents Poètes] ne s'attachent pas à un ordre de Chronologie si exact, qu'ils marquent les mois et les jours. On ne trouvera point dans la belle Ordonnance de Virgile, que son ciel ne s'accorde pas avec ce qu'il dépeint, et jusques dans une Églogue où il aura parlé des chaleurs d l'Esté, ou de la beauté du Printemps, tout sera posé sur ce fondement, sans que rien se contredise. Il en est de même de son Énéide. (...) Sur ce fondement, qu'on ne peut combattre par des bonnes raisons, je trouve que tous les endroits où il est parlé des saisons, s'accordent fort bien, et proportionnent parfaitement le temps nécessaire aux évènements qu'il décrit. Mais pour preuve encore de ma supposition, on doit observer que dans la harangue qu'Ilionée fait à Didon au premier livre, ce qui se rencontre dans les trois ou le quatrième jour de l'ouverture de la Scène, il attribue la tempête qui avait jeté les Troyens sur les bords de Carthage, au lever d'Orion. *Cum subito assurgens fluctu nimbosus Orion*. On tient que le lever de ce signe est orageux. Or Virgile qui était savant dans l'Astronomie, comme on le juge par tout ce qu'il a écrit, n'avait gardé d'attribuer ce présage au lever journalier de ce signe, parce que comme il n'y a point de signe qui ne se lève chaque jour, il s'ensuivrait que chaque jour Orion

exciterait des tempêtes. Il a sans doute entendu son lever héliaque, ou son lever achronique, comme parlent les Astronomes: le lever héliaque d'une constellation, est quand elle sort de dessous les rayons de Soleil, et qu'elle commence à se faire voir un peu devant le jour: son lever achronique, c'est quand elle se lève en opposition du Soleil qui se couche. Mais à toute rigueur ce lever héliaque n'est supputé présentement qu'au sixième jour de Juillet, et ce lever achronique environ cinq mois après. Je n'ignore pas que du temps de Virgile il les faut supputer un peu auparavant ; mais cela ne va qu'à quinze jours ou trois semaines. Il faut donc forcer ce passage, si on veut faire partir Enée plutôt; car même à n'entendre que ce lever journalier d'Orion, Ilionée ne l'aurait pu voir, s'il fût parti avec les Troyens au commencement du Printemps, selon l'autre supposition; car alors cette constellation était sous les rayons du Soleil, où l'on ne la peut voir. Mais le Poète n'y agit pas si légèrement: et il est à remarquer que quand la sœur de Didon lui conseille d'arrêter Enée pendant l'Hiver elle parle encore d'Orion, *Dum pelago desaevit hiems et aquosus Orion*, et sur nôtre supposition si Ilionée entend le lever héliaque de ce signe, ce que dit Anne doit être entendu de son lever achronique, et ces épithètes différentes de *nimbosus* et *aquosus*, semblent encore le designer. Car le Poète appelle Orion orageux dans son lever héliaque qui arrive l'Été, et il l'appelle pluvieux dans son lever achronique qui n'arrive que l'Hiver. Et cette observation ne doit pas passer pour vaine; Quintilien marque expressément dans ses Institutions oratoires que l'Astronomie est nécessaire pour l'intelligence des Poètes, et qu'ils se servent du lever et du coucher des Etoiles, pour marquer les différentes saisons.

5. THE COMMENTARY AND THE READER: READER ANNOTATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE ORGANIZATION

1. Introduction

The previous four chapters have each placed a particular field of study or a specific discipline in early modern commentaries on the *Aeneid* in its intellectual context, and connected it to an important question relevant to the field of Renaissance studies. In this chapter I will again relate these commentaries to a theoretical issue in the field, but my approach will be a different one than in the previous chapters. Instead of doing a contextualizing study that starts from the printed commentaries themselves, I will now focus on material that is external to the printed text. This material consists of the handwritten annotations in these commentaries left by early modern readers. In all their variety, these annotations are an important tool for the study of the intellectual history of the early modern era.⁵⁴⁶

The central question of this chapter is what early modern annotations on *Aeneid* commentaries can tell us about the ways in which early modern readers used these works for acquiring and (re)organizing knowledge. To this end I will present five case studies of early modern handwritten annotations in five printed Virgil commentaries. The annotations that are discussed in this chapter date from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with an example of late-seventeenth-century annotation in sections 2.4 and 2.5. I will elaborate on the selection of these annotations in my introduction to section 2. The findings of the study of a selection of annotations in this chapter will to a certain extent provide an opportunity to test the observations and conclusions of the previous chapters of this dissertation. Nevertheless, I would like to point out that the discussion in this chapter can necessarily only concern a relatively small selection of reader-responses to *Aeneid* commentaries. Thus, while the selection of annotated editions that are discussed in this chapter has been checked against reader annotations present in editions from an extensive private collection of Virgil commentaries,⁵⁴⁷ I do not claim that my observations in this chapter are representative for early modern reader annotations on Virgil commentaries in general. Still, since the discussion of a selection of case studies has proven its merit as a method for the study of (early modern) intellectual history,⁵⁴⁸ the findings of my study in this chapter, especially in relation to those of other scholars, will offer illustrations of facets of the early modern

⁵⁴⁶ See also Blair (2010), 62-116; Kallendorf (2015), 107-108.

⁵⁴⁷ See section 1.2.

⁵⁴⁸ See my remark on New Historicism in section 8 of chapter 1.

reading of *commentaries* on Latin classical (poetical) texts (rather than of the primary text of Virgil itself).

This chapter is structured in the following way. In the remainder of **section 1**, I will discuss Renaissance reading and the management of knowledge, thus elaborating on what has been said about commentaries and their readers in chapter 1 (section 8). In **section 2**, I will present a discussion of handwritten annotations in several selected early modern *Aeneid* commentaries while relating these observations to the more theoretical discussion of Renaissance reading in section 1. Finally (**section 3**), I will address the question of what early modern annotations on *Aeneid* commentaries can tell us about the way in which Renaissance readers used these works for acquiring and (re)organizing knowledge, and I will relate the findings from this chapter to the conclusions of the other chapters of this dissertation.

1.1 Annotation in Renaissance Commentaries

Important features of early modern reading are (1) the fundamentally active nature of reading, often aimed at (later) production, and (2) the desire of readers to relate a text to the larger body of knowledge external to the text.⁵⁴⁹ Especially this second aspect of Renaissance reading is highly relevant for the topic of this dissertation, since through handwritten notes the printed commentary – itself an instrument of knowledge organization – is in turn commented upon and related to other sources of information. Thus the study of annotations enables us to investigate a second level of knowledge organization in early modern commentaries. Early modern readers often annotated their texts selectively, as will become clear from my observations in section 4. The fact that marginal annotations often accompany only part of a text suggests that readers only read those parts of the work.⁵⁵⁰

Reading in the early modern period was much more of an active, communal activity than it is today.⁵⁵¹ This is especially true for the commentary, which often originated in, or was closely related to, the oral situation of classroom teaching, in which an (annotated) text – for example, a commentary – that was read out by a

⁵⁴⁹ Jardine & Grafton (1990), 45-48.; Blair (2010), 62-116; Kallendorf (2005), 115-117; Grafton (1997), 5-9; 225-226; Sherman (1995), 53-78.

⁵⁵⁰ Blair (2003), 17.

⁵⁵¹ Jackson (2001), 50-51. I am well aware that early modern reading practices – however distinct they may be – are in many respects linked to or even the result of much older medieval, or even classical intellectual traditions (thus also Blair (2003), 13). In this chapter, I will refer to classical and medieval practices only where this is relevant for the aims of this study.

teacher was taken down by students.⁵⁵² But also outside the classroom reading was an activity that was often aimed at later productive activity (e.g. the writing of a treatise or a poem). Scholars often read their classical texts in combination with several other classical or contemporary works of literature or scholarship, as is shown for instance in the well-known depictions of the Renaissance scholar in his study, surrounded by books.⁵⁵³ This type of reading was not only aimed at mere consumption of what was read, but at bringing additional information from other sources to the text, resulting in its transformation and appropriation. This can be taken very literally, as can be seen from editions with handwritten annotations in which the printed text and its paratexts (such as commentaries on a classical work of literature) are restructured by the hand of the reader: passages are underlined, or marked by handwritten keywords in the margin; texts are corrected by writing down sections from other editions; and sometimes whole indices or lists of sources are created by readers to facilitate their use of the work.⁵⁵⁴ In fact, these practices clearly show how closely related the reading and annotation of these texts were to the compilation of *variae lectiones*. Marginal annotations, sometimes published as *variae lectiones*, are part of the same continuum as the printed commentary, with private reading annotations and extensive, printed scholarly commentaries each on opposite ends of the spectrum.⁵⁵⁵ It is often supposed that this active type of reading became less prominent over the course of the seventeenth century, to disappear altogether in the eighteenth century (resulting among other things in the end of the commonplace book).⁵⁵⁶ As I will show in my study of two *Aeneid* commentaries that were annotated by late seventeenth-century scholars (sections 2.4 and 2.5), this supposition is not unproblematic.⁵⁵⁷

It is through their active engagement with other texts that Renaissance readers made their texts productive, not only for themselves, but also for others: handwritten annotations not only served as private mnemonic aids, but also formed building blocks for the production of other texts, such as scholarly tractates

⁵⁵² Wilson-Okamura (2010), 19; Kallendorf (2013), 318-319; Kristeller (1988), 8.

⁵⁵³ Blair (2003), 16; see also Enenkel (2005), 4-5.

⁵⁵⁴ See my discussion in section 2 for more examples. See also Kallendorf (2013), 318; 320-321; Blair (2004) and (2003), 18.

⁵⁵⁵ The commonplace book is a very important genre in this respect. See Moss (1996) and Kallendorf (2013), 320-321.

⁵⁵⁶ Moss (1996), 275-281; Sherman (2009), 3; Kallendorf (2005), 112; 116.

⁵⁵⁷ For good examples of the way in which marginal annotations can be made productive, see Kallendorf (2013), Palmer (2012), and Jardine & Graton (1990).

or reference works, such as commentaries.⁵⁵⁸ This 'reading aimed at production' could even result in 'reading for others', such as in the case of a semi-professional reader clarifying a text by annotation.⁵⁵⁹

In view of the above, it is somewhat surprising that the attention to marginal annotations is a relatively recent phenomenon in intellectual history, or even in Renaissance studies.⁵⁶⁰ As will also be visible in my discussion of annotated commentaries in section 4, handwritten notes in the margins of early modern works were not only neglected for a long time,⁵⁶¹ but sometimes even destroyed or severely mutilated through the trimming of the margins of pages that occurred in the process of rebinding.⁵⁶² Through my study of examples of early modern annotation in *Aeneid*-commentaries, I hope to contribute to our knowledge of early modern annotative practices and the way in which readers read their Virgil.

What do we know about the way in which Virgil was read by early modern readers? In a series of case studies of handwritten annotations in editions of Virgil, Kallendorf (2013) not only demonstrates how Virgil was firmly established in education, but he also makes explicit the way in which these reader annotations functioned in their particular contexts. His study shows how the active reading of Virgil can be demonstrated very clearly on the basis of early modern annotations. Since Kallendorf's work is of great relevance to my current study, I will briefly discuss some of his observations. He shows how certain types of handwritten annotation that are often encountered in early modern editions (e.g., marginal words, underlining, compiling indices, marking parallel passages from other authors) actually appear in specific contexts. For instance, an early modern schoolmaster marked parallel passages from ancient authors, provided references to other commentators, and singled out passages from the *Aeneid* that could convey moral lessons by underlining them in the text.⁵⁶³ Apparently, this was prompted by the educational contexts. The underlining of passages appears to have been a common practice, often coinciding with brief marginal annotations (often only one word, signifying the importance of the passage, e.g., from a moral or rhetorical point of view). Reader annotations could be aimed at classroom

⁵⁵⁸ Sherman (2009), 4.

⁵⁵⁹ Jardine & Grafton (1990), 30-31; 35; Scott-Warren (2011), 160-163.

⁵⁶⁰ See for example the recent studies of Kallendorf (2015) and Palmer (2014), and Blair's discussion of early modern note-taking in Blair (2010), 62-116.

⁵⁶¹ This is not only true for early modern studies, but also for the study of marginal annotations in medieval studies. Teeuwen (2011), 19.

⁵⁶² See also Kallendorf (2005), 112.

⁵⁶³ Kallendorf (2013), 314.

teaching, at the compilation of commonplace books (which themselves fulfilled an important role in the production of works of literature and scholarship), or indeed at poetic composition.⁵⁶⁴ As I hope to show through my own series of case studies in the following sections, this practice extended into the realm of early modern learning and scholarship, so that readers of the *Aeneid* not only read their text as a source for moral lessons or stylistic and rhetorical excellence, but also as a starting-point or as the center for the retrieval and organization of knowledge that could be used in later scholarly production.⁵⁶⁵ As I will show, annotations could serve as a way to restructure the commentary (section 2.1), bring additional knowledge to it (section 2.2), emend the work (section 2.3), virtually destroy the interface of the printed text (section 2.4), or turn the commentary into a sort of proto-encyclopedia (section 2.5). What these uses have in common, is that through his annotations the reader-annotator is turning his edition into an interface (a hypertext) to the web of knowledge that lies behind Virgil's text and – more importantly – the scholarship that was printed next to the text. An analogy that comes to mind is that of the (early) internet: texts are structured through underlined hyperlinks, providing access to additional information and facilitating a discontinuous, extensive type of reading. Because of this, as will appear from my case studies, almost all forms of annotation that I have encountered are in some way related to the management of knowledge.

1.2 Introduction to the Case Studies

In what follows, I will focus on the question to what extent and in what way the annotations function as and are a display of knowledge organization. The volumes

⁵⁶⁴ As Bruni notes in his *De studiis et litteris* (ca. 1422-1429), understanding literary texts and composing one's own works formed the flip-sides of the same coin (par. 4): *Nam neque doctorum hominum scripta satis conspicue intelliget, qui non ista fuerit peritia eruditus, nec ipse, si quid litteris mandabit, poterit non ridiculus existimari.* ['The one who lacks knowledge of literature will neither understand sufficiently the writings of the learned, nor will he be able, if he himself attempts to write, to avoid making a laughingstock of himself.']. See also par. 29 (*Adhibenda insuper est litterarum peritia non tenuis neque contemnenda. Haec enim duo sese invicem iuvant mutuoque deserviunt* ['Needed too is a well-developed and respectable literary skill of our own. For the two together reinforce each other and are mutually beneficial.']). Guarino, *De ordine docendi ac studendi* (1459) writes in the same vein (par. 21): *Eam namque multarum et variarum rerum lectio pariet, Flacco teste, 'scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons'.* ['A style like that (i.e., the rich one of Cicero in his letters) will come from wide and varied reading, witness Horace: 'Knowledge is the source and principle of writing well.' [Hor., *Ars*, 309]']. The texts and translations are taken from Kallendorf (2002), 94-95.

⁵⁶⁵ See also Kallendorf (2013), 320-321.

selected for my case studies come from the collection of Leiden University Library. Leiden University, founded in 1575, was one of the most important centers of scholarship in early modern Europe and consequently provides a wealth of material for the study of reader annotations in an early modern intellectual environment.⁵⁶⁶ The collection of early modern editions in its library has in large part been created from the libraries of famous Leiden professors and other prominent early modern Dutch scholars. In some cases, it is even possible to identify certain annotations as made by one of those scholars.

My selection of annotated commentaries for this chapter was governed by two principles. First, a temporal delimitation ranging from the 16th until the later 17th century, which corresponds to the time-span defined for the study carried out in this dissertation. Secondly, I have focused on annotations in editions containing one or more of the printed commentaries that were discussed in the other chapters of this dissertation.⁵⁶⁷ As I explained in the introduction to this chapter, I do not aim to present an extensive overview of all sorts of early modern annotations, but a discussion of a selection of annotated volumes. The findings of the analysis in the next sections can however be contextualized with the help of the findings of other scholars, which I have discussed in section 1.1. Moreover, I have had the opportunity to check the findings of my case-studies against annotated volumes in an extensive private collection of early modern Virgil commentaries.⁵⁶⁸ I will occasionally refer to annotations I have encountered in these annotated volumes to further contextualize my findings in the volumes from Leiden.

The following case studies of handwritten annotations on *Aeneid* commentaries will be discussed in sections 2.1-2.5.

⁵⁶⁶ For Leiden University in the early modern period see for example Grafton (2003) and Otterspeer (2008).

⁵⁶⁷ To identify annotated editions of *Aeneid* commentaries, I have mainly made use of the *Incunabula short title catalogue* of the British Library (for 15th century editions), the *Short-Title Catalogue Netherlands* (for editions printed in the Netherlands for the period 1540-1800) and Kallendorf (2012). Since library catalogues generally do not indicate whether handwritten annotations are present in an edition, I have also conducted surveys of early modern Latin commentary editions of the *Aeneid* in the collections of Leiden University library and the Dutch Royal Library (National Library of The Netherlands in The Hague).

⁵⁶⁸ The owner of this private collection wishes to remain anonymous. The supervisors of this dissertation have had full access to the volumes in question.

- **2.1 Restructuring the Text (Leiden University Library 1369 C 39)**
Aeneis Vergiliana cum Servii Honorati grammatici huberrimis commentariis, cum Philippi Beroaldi seculi nostri principis doctissimis in eosdem annotationibus suis locis positis. Cum Donati argutissimis subinde sententiarum praesertim enodationibus. Cumque familiarissima Iodoci Badii Ascensii elucidatione atque ordinis contextu. Accessit ad hoc Mapphei Veggii liber addititius cum Ascensianis annotatiunculis. Addita praeterea sunt ipsius poetae ac operum eius illustrium virorum praeconia. Aeneidos argumenta et quaedam eiusdem poetae nostri epitaphia. Paris: Jean Petit/Thielman Kerver, 1501.
- **2.2 Bringing Knowledge to the Text (Leiden University Library 1367 B 13)**
Publii Virgilii Maronis Mantuani opera cum quinque vulgatis commentariis. Expolitissimisque figuris atque imaginibus nuper per Sebastianum Brant superadditis. Exactissimeque revisis atque eliminatis. Strasbourg: Grüninger, 1502.
- **2.3 Emending the Text through Comparison of Editions (Leiden University Library 760 B 5)**
Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolicorum, Eclogae X. Georgicorum, libri IIII. Aeneidos, libri XII. Et in ea Mauri Servii Honorati grammatici commentarii, ex antiquissimis exemplaribus longe meliores et auctiores. Ex bibliotheca Petri Danielis I.C. accessit Fabii Planciadis Fulgentii liber de Continentia Virgiliana, auctor e Mss. Codd. Item Junii Philargyrii commentariolus in Bucolica et Georgica Virgilii. Cum certissimo ac copiosissimo indice. Paris: Sebastianus Nivellius, 1600.
- **2.4 Destroying the Text: Coetier (1647-1723) (Leiden University Library 760 B 7-8)**
Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolicorum Eclogae X, Georgicorum libri IIII, Aeneidos libri XII, et in ea, Mauri Servii Honorati grammatici commentarii. Geneva: Petrus & Jacobus Chouët, 1620.
- **2.5 The Commentary as a Proto-Encyclopedia: Broekhuizen (1649-1707) (Leiden University Library 759 C 21)**
Publii Virgilii Maronis opera; interpretatio et notis illustravit Carolus Ruaeus ... ; Ad usum Serenissimi Delphini. Amsterdam: s.n., 1690.

2. The Reader: Case Studies of Annotated *Aeneid*-commentaries

I have structured my analysis of the following five case studies in the following way. First, I will discuss the general features of the handwritten annotations in each volume by focusing on the annotations found on the commentary of the first

book 1 of the *Aeneid*. This selection will facilitate a comparison of the features of the annotations in the individual volumes. Second, I will occasionally include additional discussion of annotations on the other books of the epic, for example in the case when these are of a significantly different type than those on the first book. Third, I will indicate the spread of the annotations found throughout an edition to give more insight into the question which sections of the epic were (heavily) annotated and which ones were not.⁵⁶⁹

It is not easy to identify early modern annotators. For each of the selected volumes, I have made an effort to do so, without however always being able to do so. Often I can only provide a general chronological demarcation of the annotations. In general, even in cases where the handwriting of an annotator is identified with certainty (for example because the annotator has identified himself by writing his name on the first page of the book), modern scholars often pay relatively little attention to a description of their handwriting. Even in the case of Isaac Vossius (from whose library a volume will be discussed below) no good study of his handwritten annotations is available.⁵⁷⁰ In addition, more general studies on early modern annotations such as that by Sherman (2009), which is often referred to by scholars writing on early modern annotations, in fact do not provide any practical aid for reading and dating early modern handwriting. And although several very good case studies are available, it is striking that such an important and fruitful area as the study of early modern annotations generally lacks any explicit paleographic methodological basis. For example the well-known case study of Jardine and Grafton (1990) presents a discussion of one fascinating exceptional case of reader annotations. Though this case study shows the great merit of studying the traces left by early modern readers, it cannot serve as a general frame of reference for the study of early modern annotations, just because of the particularities of that specific case. Accordingly, what one should learn from that famous case study in my opinion, is that every analysis of early modern annotations should start from a meticulous study of the material, and not from preconceived ideas about the identity of the annotator, the dating of the

⁵⁶⁹ A quantitative approach to marginalia is possible when multiple annotated copies of a text are available. See for example Palmer's analysis of marginalia in early modern editions of Lucretius, Palmer (2012), 400. This kind of analysis however is not the aim of this chapter.

⁵⁷⁰ For example the article by Derksen (2012, esp. 257), which discusses manuscript notes in books from the Vossius collection, at first appears to offer a discussion of the handwriting of the Vossii. In fact it offers a very limited discussion of the identification of the handwriting of the Vossii: the author notes that the handwriting of Isaac Vossius was not very remarkable, and offers two examples of annotations that should be attributed to Isaac Vossius because of their contents.

handwriting, or the type of annotations one would like to encounter. In other words, one should make explicit the difficulties one encounters in studying early modern annotations.

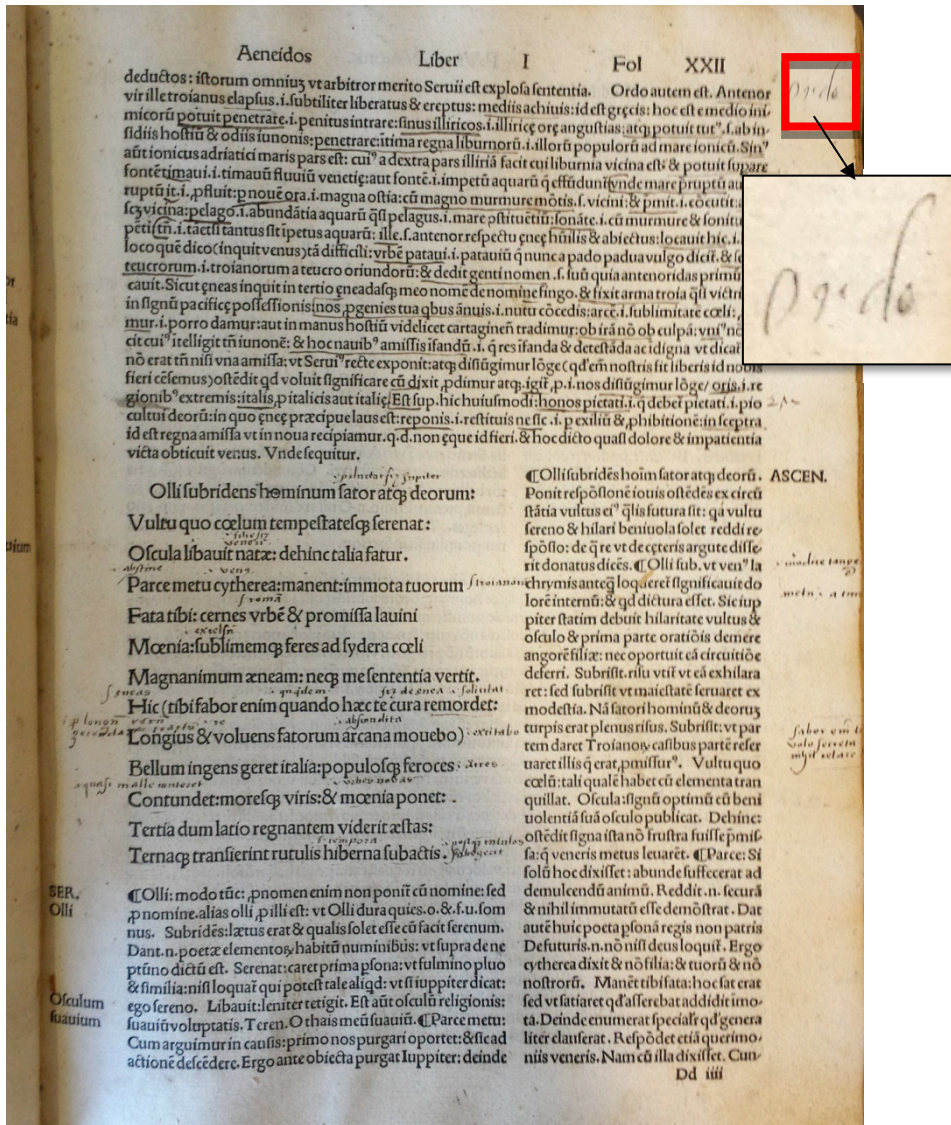
For the aims of this current study, I have tried to date the various handwriting by comparing features such as the handwriting, letter form, the type of ink and the abbreviations that are used (and in all cases the publishing date of the annotated volume of course serves as a *terminus post quem*). All annotations are early modern, but it is often difficult to give a more precise date. Although identification or precise dating has not been possible in most of my case studies, this is not problematic for my analysis of this material, since it focuses on the process of knowledge management (and not on the historical development of annotating practices). This process, the restructuring of the text, is reflected in the annotations themselves and does not depend on a precise dating or identification of the author.

Lastly the annotations left by Renaissance readers in their copies of *Aeneid* commentaries may not always seem very spectacular at first sight, but I hope to show that an analysis of these annotations in a selected number of volumes, against the background of the discussion about early modern reading in the previous section, can be very insightful for our understanding of how these *Aeneid* commentaries were used. Moreover, as I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, through the presentation of selected case studies of reader annotations, I also aim to offer a view of various relevant facets of early modern reading practices of *Aeneid* commentaries that provides additional context for the case-studies in the other chapters in this dissertation.

2.1 Restructuring the Text (Leiden University Library 1369 C 39)

2.1.1 General Characteristics

The annotations in this 1501 volume mainly consist of synonyms written next to the words from the literary text, often combined with indexing notes that are written next to the commentary (see ill. 9 below). This kind of annotation is an example of how readers manage knowledge through the annotation of mere words. As I will demonstrate, the synonyms inserted function as an additional layer of organization that facilitates the use of the commentary, on top of the organizational principles already in place, such as printed marginal pointers or an index.



Ill. 9 Fol. 22r. showing reader annotations on the text of A. 1.254-266, the commentaries by Servius and Ascensius on the passage, and the final part of the *ordo* of the previous verses.

In this particular edition, we find both interlinear and marginal annotations (see ill. 9). Judging on the basis of the form of the letters, the abbreviations that are used, and the handwriting, I would date the handwriting in this edition to the earlier part of the 16th century, since the shape of the letters and in fact the handwriting in general became less formal over the course of the 16th and 17th century: In this case, the shape of the letters still resembles the more formal handwriting of scribes that

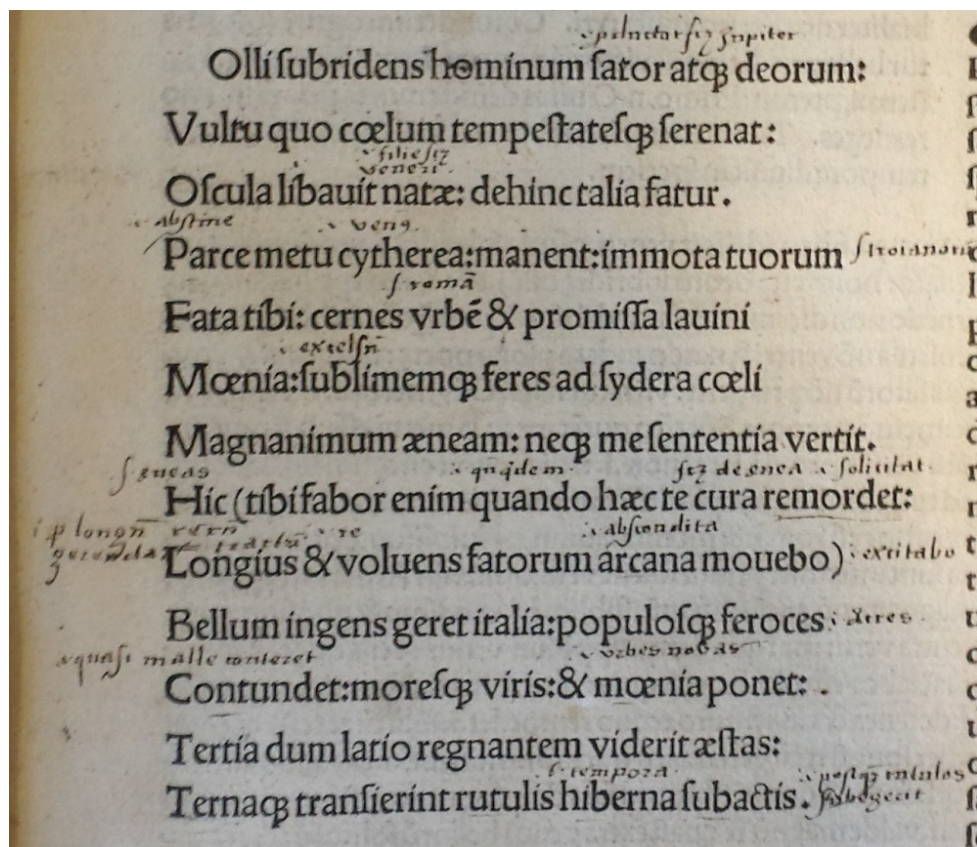
we encounter in 15th-century manuscripts. I am aware that the variation between the handwriting of individual annotators could well be greater than that between 16th and 17th-century handwritings, but given that this particular edition was printed in 1501 and my observations on the handwriting of the annotator, I would propose that a 16th-century dating is more probable than a later one.⁵⁷¹

Illustration 9 shows how handwritten notes are scribbled between the lines and in the margin of the text. On this page, we see annotations on the three elements of this printed commentary: the text of *Aeneid* A. 1.254-266 (in the middle of the page), the *ordo* (the top half of the page, on the verses of the *Aeneid* that were printed on a previous page) and the commentaries by Servius (below the text of the *Aeneid*) and Badius Ascensius (the small column on the right). As can be seen in illustration 9, the annotations consist of the underlining of parts of the *ordo* – the prose paraphrase of the course of events in the epic –, interlinear annotation of synonyms in the main text, the writing of marginal notes next to the commentary, and the indication of verse numbers. The starting point of the *ordo* is explicitly indicated in the margin (where the annotator has written *Ordo*), though, judging from the more italic hand-writing (and the shape of the letters, e.g. ‘d’), probably by a different annotator (‘annotator 2’) than the one who has written the interlinear notes (‘annotator 1’). The type of annotations visible on this page is representative for the annotations throughout this edition, although frequent underlining is not limited to the *ordo*, but also takes place in the text of the commentary. I will now discuss some examples from this page to see what is happening in terms of the management of knowledge through annotations.

a) Annotating the epic: the provision of synonyms (interlinear annotation)

As appears from illustration 10 below, the annotations written between the lines of the *Aeneid* (A. 1.254-266) consist of providing synonyms.

⁵⁷¹ In trying to date the early modern annotations that are discussed in this section, I have not only relied on my own observations, but I have also consulted the selected examples of handwriting in Sherman (2009), Fairbanks and Wolpe (1960), and Tannenbaum (1931).



Ill. 10 Fol. 22r. showing the reader annotations at A. 1.254-266.

I will discuss some examples. At A. 1.257 the annotator has written *Abstine* ('Refrain from'), providing a synonymous reading for *Parce* ('Spare'), clarifying the meaning of this word. This type of annotation comes close to an explanation of the text through providing continuous short synonyms or paraphrases. For instance at the same verse, the annotator writes *Venus* above *Cytherea* thus explaining the honorary title *Cytherea* ('Lady of [the island] Cythera') as referring to the goddess Venus.⁵⁷² And one verse later (A. 1.258) the annotator has written *Romam* above *urbem* ('city') indicating what city is meant, and a few lines later the note *Aeneas* explains to whom *hic* (A. 1.261) refers. The words *Venus* and *Aeneas* are preceded by an s-shaped symbol, probably an abbreviation for *scilicet* ('namely').⁵⁷³ This kind

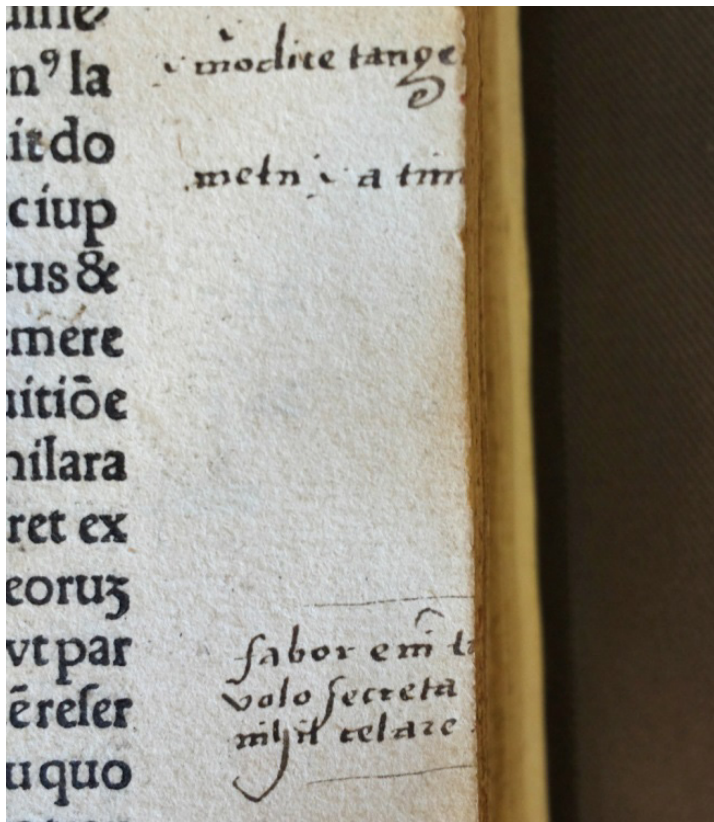
⁵⁷² At *natae* (genitive of *nata*, 'daughter') in A. 1.256 the annotator had already added the paraphrase *filiae* [genitive of *filia*, 'daughter'], *videlicet Veneris* [genitive of *Venus*].

⁵⁷³ Cappelli (2006: 336), s.v. *S*, *scilicet*.

of annotations enhances the understanding of the verses and vocabulary, and might either be an indication that the text was studied by a reader for his own benefit or that the reader was preparing for teaching the texts to others. It corresponds to the practice of early modern teachers, who read out paraphrases to their pupils or let students write paraphrases themselves (see chapter 2).

b) Annotating the epic: (re)using the Ordo (marginal annotation)

Besides the interlinear (and occasional marginal) annotation of synonyms, we find annotations in which the reader interacts with the text in another way (ill. 11).



Ill. 11 Fol. 22r showing the annotators notations next to Ascensius' commentary.

Unfortunately, as can be seen in illustration 11, the marginal annotations in this edition have often been rendered virtually illegible because the pages of the book were cut off at the sides in the past (probably in the process of rebinding the volume). In this case this does not really pose a problem, as will appear below.

In this particular volume, most of the marginal annotations of this kind (i.e. that consist of merely providing synonymous words) are found in Book 1 and at the beginning of Book 2 of the *Aeneid*. In fact it appears that these marginal annotations had a similar function to that of the interlinear ones discussed before, which also provide synonyms by the way of short explanations of words or paraphrases of word groups from the epic. The three annotations on the section displayed in illustration 11 read:

On A. 1.257 *libavit*:

i[d est] modice tange<ndo>

'That is, 'gently touching''

On A. 1.257 *metu*:

metu i[d est] a tim<ore>

'Fear, that is, from *timor* ['fear']'

On A. 1.261 *fabor enim...* ('Indeed I speak...'):

fabor enim t<ibi>: volo secreta <pandere, et te> nihil celare

'Indeed I speak <to you>: I wish to <unfold> secrets <and> hide nothing <from you>'

All three annotations have been taken from the *ordo* printed on the next page (fol. 22v). The annotator has made a few changes in copying these excerpts:

Ordo

Libavit: Libavit i[d est] modice tangendo praebuilt.

Metu: Metu i[d est] a timore.

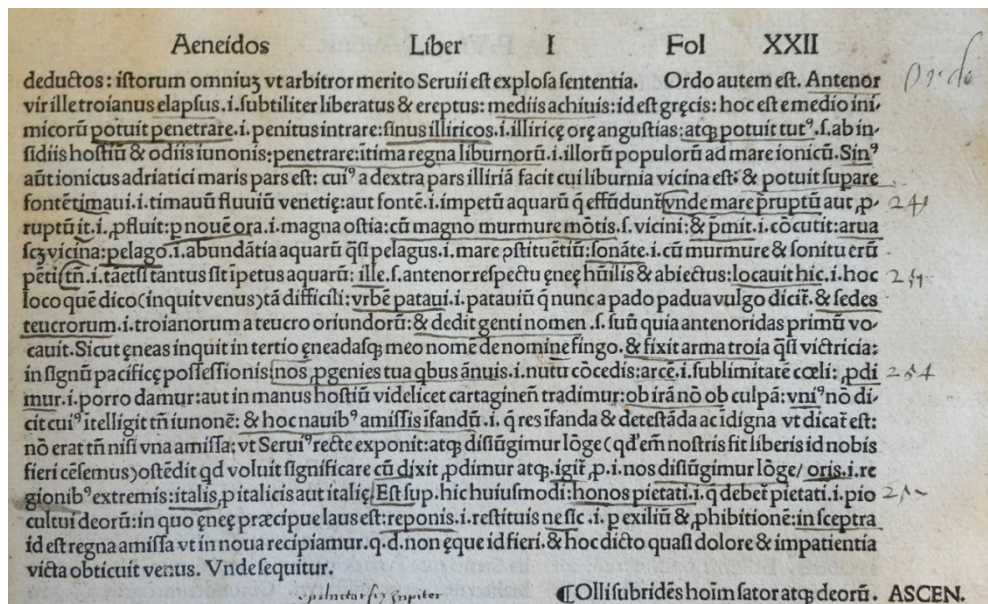
Fabor enim: Fabor enim tibi. Hoc est quia volo tibi secreta pandere et te nihil celare

This shows that annotator 1 was particularly interested in the *ordo*, and not so much in the commentaries by Servius and Ascensius that are also printed next to the text. Annotator 2 too has indicated the start of the *ordo* in the margin, and structured it by underlining parts of it. Annotator 1 furthermore copied words from the *ordo* into the lines of the main text. In his interlinear annotations annotator 1 has used the letter 's' (*scilicet*: 'namely') as an indicator that the following word provides additional explanation to a word or group of words from the poem, and in copying elements from the *ordo* he has taken over the printed abbreviation 'i' (*i[d est]*). These marginal annotations contain information that is in most cases directly derived from the *ordo*, but made more readily accessible by the annotator by

copying down parts of it into the margin of the page. The annotator is thus redistributing the information offered by the printed commentary.

c) *Annotating the Ordo*

The third kind of annotations encountered in this edition are those on the *ordo* itself, which appears to have been annotator 2's main point of interest. This observation is confirmed when one considers the way in which he actively worked on the printed text of the *ordo* itself, as appears for example from the section in illustration 12.



Ill. 12 Fol. 22r showing annotations of the *ordo* of A. 1.242-253.

Annotator 2 has added in the margin numbers referring to the verses that are discussed in the *ordo* (A. 1.242-253 in modern editions). This added structuring of information – which in fact provides an additional interface – makes it easier to link the verses to the information in the commentary. The underlining indicates words quoted from Virgil's verses, and the verse numbers in the margin make the *ordo* much easier to use. Both annotator 1 and annotator 2 indicate the starting point of the *ordo* and underline certain words from it (it is difficult to tell which one of the annotators has underlined what part of the text, though annotator 1 seems to have a preference for circling certain words). Both show, however, that the active addition of this kind of structuring by the annotator might point to the intention to use the commentary repeatedly: by adding underlining and marginal notes to

certain parts of the commentary, the annotator facilitates the retrieval of information, for instance for future use in studying or teaching of the text. The annotator (or multiple annotators) seems to be someone who is not so much himself bringing additional information to the text of the printed commentary, but who is relying on the printed commentary for his reading of the *Aeneid*. The annotator is integrating the *ordo* to a higher degree into the printed text of the *Aeneid* than the printer had done.

2.1.2 (Re)organization of Knowledge from the Commentary

There are some other points of interest in the annotation of Book 1. First, I will discuss the annotation of a passage from the *ordo* and the drawing of a *maniculus* ('little hand') on fol. 7r; second, I will come back to the way in which the annotator(s) in this volume have made use of the *ordo* by copying pieces of it into the text of the *Aeneid*.

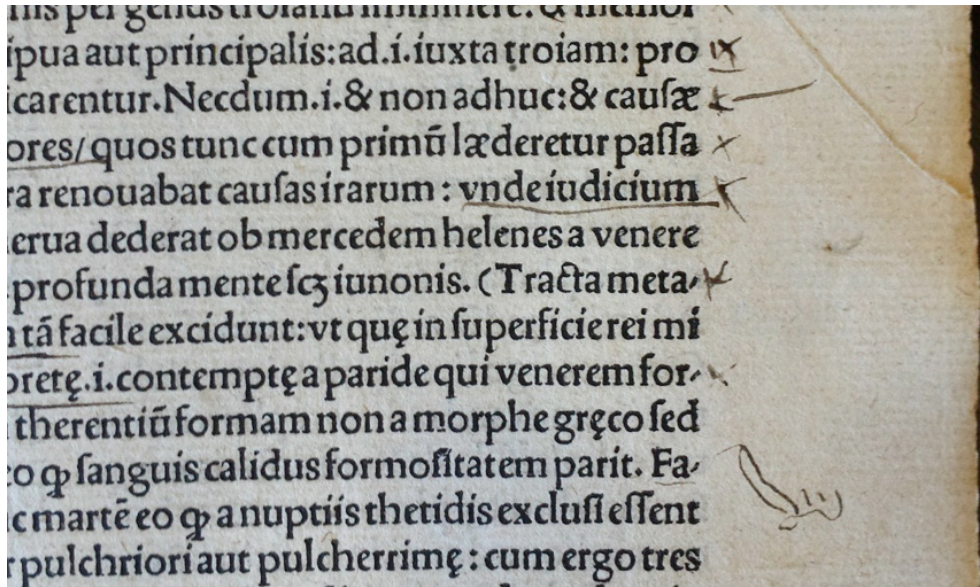
a) Structuring the Ordo: the *maniculus*

The entire passage on fol. 7r (ill. 13 below) seems to have particularly attracted the interest of the annotator, since he has written little crosses next to the text of the commentary of Ascensius at the bottom half of the page, and throughout the text he has underlined or circled words from the commentary. These are for the most part the *lemmata* themselves: the words from the text of Virgil on which the commentator offers his commentary. If indeed the annotations are from two different annotators, it appears that while annotator 1 focused on integrating parts of the *ordo* into the printed text of the poem, annotator 2 (while also interested in the *ordo*) was also paying attention to the printed commentary.

catilina: q̄ quousq; catilina. Potius dicerem particulā enim vacare cu3 dicit sed enim nisi vna sit pars ora-
tionis posita pro eo quod est sed certe: aut nisi perficiatur sic: sed sup. nouit fata non sinere: audierat enī
progeniem duci. vbi nullo modo dicerem duci positū pro eo quod est ductū iri: non tam quia satis oia Duci
presentia sunt: vnde quē nobis futura sunt ipsa iam tunc ductū: q̄ q̄ multo magis vrgeat iunonem q̄ au-
dierat progeniem duci. i. iam ortam produci vsq; ad eū q̄ tyrias olim arces verteret. vt sc3 in æneam gra-
tius exandescat verita ne sit a quo progenies ducatur. Sed enim. i. sed certe: audierat sc3 ex fatorum re-
uelatione. (Ridiculū autē est quod Seruius dicit: quia apud Enniū Iuppiter romanis promittit excidiū
carthagini: nō enī id audierat sed forte auditura erat: sed Ennius id vaticinio tali pronūciat quo Maro
multa: post factū sc3) progeniē duci. i. deduci & p̄trahi a sanguine troiano: q̄ verteret. i. fundit̃ deleret:
olim. i. quouis tempore futuro: arces tyrias. i. carthagenes quas tyrii coloni tūc tenebant: & audierat
populum regem. i. regentem late. i. ample: & superbum. i. nobilem aut elatum bello. i. gloria bellica aut
re militari: venturus hinc. i. ex hac troianorum progenie excidio. i. in excidium & euersionem: libyæ. i.
carthaginis quę caput erat libyę. (Alii sic cōstruūt. Audierat populū venturū hinc late: & audierat regē
superbū bello venturū hinc &c.) & audierat parcas. i. deas fatales (quę quia nemini parcūt dīcē sunt: de-
quibus in Bucolicis late dictum est) voluere sc3 filiā aut stamīna sua. sic. i. ad talem exitum rerum. Et ipsa
saturnia sc3 iunō saturni filia metēs id. f. excidium carthaginis per genus troianū imminere: & memor
belli veteris. i. iam diu gestit: quod ipsa gesserat prima. i. p̄cipua aut principalis: ad. i. iuxta troiam: pro
argis. i. argiuis. i. græcis: charis. i. dilectis: eo q̄ troianis imicarentur. Ne dum. i. & non adhuc: & causæ
irarum. i. ob quas primū troianis irasci cōperat: & træi dolores quos tunc cum primū laceretur passa
erat: non exciderant etiā adhuc aio. f. iunonis hoc est cum ira renouabat causas irarum: vn̄ de iudiciū
paridis quod pro venere contra iunonē & pallada seu minerva dederat ob mercedem helenes a venere
promissū: manet repositum. i. repositum: & reueruatū: alta. i. profunda mente sc3 iunonis. (Tracta meta-
phora a vasis ac aliis repositoriis altis: e quibus reposita non tā facile excidunt: vt quę in superficie rei mi-
nus profundē locantur) & iiuria formę. i. pulchritudinis: sp̄re. i. contemptę a paride qui venerem for-
mosissimam iudicauit sup. manet reposita &c. (Donatus in therentiū formam non a morphe gręco sed
a forno vocabulo latino quod calidum significat deducit: eo q̄ sanguis calidus formositatem parit. Fa-
bula de iudicio paridis notissima est. dicunt enim bellonā ac martē eo q̄ a nuptiis thetidis exclusi essent

Ill. 13 Fol. 7r showing underlining and circling of words in the text, in addition to crosses and a finger in the margin.

As I have observed earlier in relation to the underlining of words from the *ordo*, the underlining of the entry-words of lemmata facilitates the use of the printed text of the commentary, which offers virtually no aid (apart from a few scattered printed marginal pointers such as *Duci* in ill. 13) to finding the start of a lemma. On fol. 7r the annotator (probably annotator 2) has singled out specific passages from the text of the commentary, by writing little crosses in the margin and drawing a little pointing finger, a *maniculus* (see ill. 14). This practice is encountered occasionally in the commentary.



Ill. 14 Fol. 7r showing marks of emphasis (especially the pointing hand at the bottom) written down by the annotator.

The drawing in the illustration above resembles a hand with a stretched index finger pointing to the text. It is a clear and helpful pointer that stands out when quickly glancing through the volume.⁵⁷⁴ Next to the hand, the annotator has underlined the following word from the text of the commentary: *Fabula* ('the tale'). This word marks the beginning of the tale of the Judgment of Paris in Badius Ascensius' commentary ('The tale of the Judgment of Paris is very well-known. For they tell...'),⁵⁷⁵ which had resulted in Helena being chosen as the most beautiful woman in the world, forming the dramatic prelude to the Trojan war. The pointer in the margin makes it much easier for a user of the commentary to retrieve the information about this piece of mythology.⁵⁷⁶

⁵⁷⁴ On the little hands often found in early modern annotations, see Sherman (2009), 25-52.

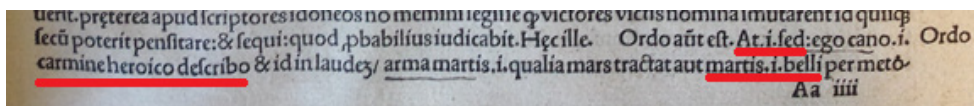
⁵⁷⁵ "*Fabula de iudicio Paridis notissima est. Dicunt enim...*".

⁵⁷⁶ Compare for example fol.40r where the annotator indicates a passage of interest by writing a key-word in the margin (in this case 'Hesperia', next to a lemma on the word *Hesperia* in A. 1.530).

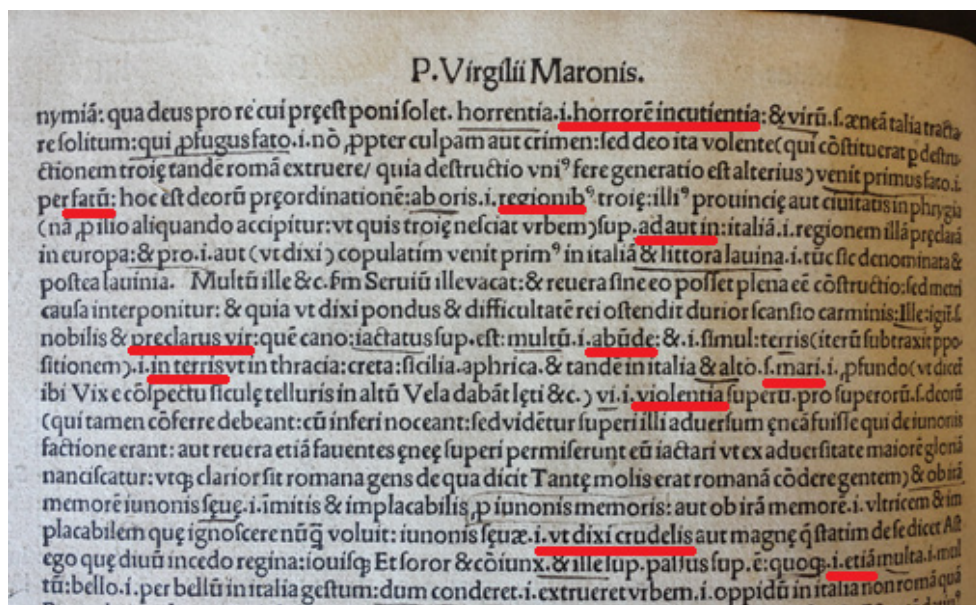
explanation or addition. In my transcription some of the annotations are printed in bold: these annotations are visible in illustrations 16 and 17.

<i>Ille ego: iam notissimus</i>	<i>cano: carmine heroico</i>	<i>passus: s[cilicet] est;</i>
<i>poeta</i>	describo	<i>urbem: i[d est] Troiam</i>
<i>avena: ex tenui stylo</i>	<i>oris: regionibus</i>	<i>Latio: i[d est] in Latium</i>
<i>carmen: s[cilicet]</i>	<i>Italiam: ad vel in</i>	<i>unde: i[d est] a quo</i>
<i>Bucolicen</i>	<i>fato: per fatum</i>	<i>unde: s[cilicet] unde</i>
<i>vicina coegi: Georg[ica];</i>	<i>lavinaque: p[ro] i</i>	<i>originem traxerunt</i>
<i>in praecepta redegi</i>	<i>multum: abunde</i>	<i>Latinum: s[cilicet]</i>
<i>avido: cupido</i>	<i>ille: s[cilicet] vir</i>	<i>denominationem</i>
<i>parerent: obedire<n>t ex</i>	praeclarus	<i>traxerunt</i>
<i>praeceptis meis</i>	<i>terris: in</i>	<i>Albanique patres: i[d est]</i>
<i>colono: agricola</i>	<i>alto: f mari</i>	<i>qui in Alba civitate</i>
<i>at: sed</i>	<i>vi: violentia</i>	<i>regnarunt</i>
<i>horrentia: horrorem</i>	<i>saevae: i[d est] crudelis</i>	<i>patres: i[d est] principes</i>
incutientia	<i>quoque: etiam</i>	<i>et reges</i>
<i>Martis: belli</i>	<i>et bello: s[cilicet] ille ; per</i>	
<i>virumque: Aeneas</i>	bellum	

As I noted before, the long s indicates that the annotation does not consist of a synonym, but an explanation or addition that has to be kept in mind while reading the text. For example at *carmen* ('poem') the annotator inserts a long s and explains that the words refers to Virgil's *Bucolics*, while at *avido* ('needy'), where the long s is absent, the annotator presents the word *cupido* ('longing') as a (close) synonym for the word. A few lines further on, the annotator has written *carmine heroico describo* ('I describe in a heroic poem') next to *cano* ('I sing'), in this way providing a paraphrase of the word. To get a better view of how the handwritten annotations and the *ordo* are related, the illustrations below (ill. 16 and 17) show a slice of the relevant part of the *ordo* on this passage. In the text, I have underlined the words from the *ordo* that have been scribbled between the printed text of Virgil's verses by the annotator.



Ill. 16



III. 17

In the illustrations (ill. 16-17) we see, among other things, that the annotator directly copied the phrase *carmen heroico describo* from the text of the *ordo*. A comparison of the words underlined in red in illustration 17 and my transcription of the interlinear annotations in illustration 15 shows clearly how the annotator has copied many elements from the *ordo* into the text of the epic. Thus the annotator appears to have been occupied with transcribing the paraphrases and short explanations from the *ordo* on key words of the epic into the printed text of the *Aeneid*. The insertion of synonyms or short paraphrases taken from the *ordo* is much like the kind of paraphrasing commentary offered by teachers that was characteristic for the teaching of classical texts in early modern schools.⁵⁷⁸

Concluding remarks

In sum, the annotations in this volume seem to be written by annotators occupied with integrating parts of the *ordo* into the text of the *Aeneid*. This would point to a type of annotator who is studying the *Aeneid* for himself, at a basic level (aimed at an enhanced understanding of the text of the epic and, possibly, at improving Latin vocabulary), or at a teacher who is preparing his editions for the teaching of others. The annotator has (re-)organized the information that is disclosed through the

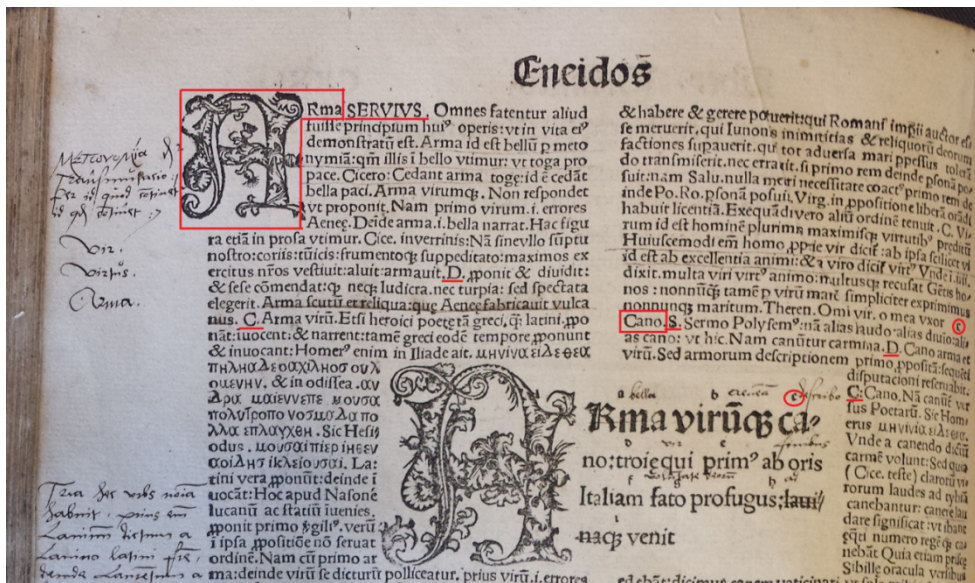
⁵⁷⁸ Grendler (1989), 244; 246.

commentary (especially the *ordo*) by adding an additional layer of information management (the interlinear and marginal annotations and underlining). The reader of this volume however did not bring additional information external to this edition to his copy of the epic. That indeed readers not only restructured their copies of the *Aeneid* (as this annotator did), but added information, will become apparent from the other volumes studied in this chapter.

2.2 Bringing Knowledge to the Text (Leiden University Library 1367 B 13)

2.2.1 General characteristics

In this edition from 1502, which came into the possession of Leiden University Library through a bequest by Jacobus Perizonius (1651-1715, professor of Classics at Leiden and Franeker), the annotator has not only made efforts to further organize the knowledge offered by the commentary, but also added information to the printed text.



III. 18 Fol. 121v

The edition of the *Aeneid* in this volume comes with the commentaries by Servius, Tiberius Claudius Donatus and Landino, and contains illustrations by Sebastian Brandt. The comments of the various commentators are printed together, integrated and organized according to the lemmata (catena-style). In illustration 18, red boxes indicate the lemmata on the words *Arma* (in the left box) and *cano* (in the right box). Each lemma is followed by the comments of three commentators on that

word. The names of the respective commentators are indicated by the first letters of their names that are printed in the text: 'S' stands for 'S[ervius]', the 'D' for 'D[onatus]' and the 'C' for 'C[ristoforo Landino]' (see the underlined initials in ill. 18). The lemmata from the commentary are visually linked to Virgil's text by small, footnote-like references in the main text using the letters of the alphabet to identify the relevant notes from the commentary (see illustration 18 again, in which I have circled in red the letter 'c' printed in the text of the *Aeneid* next to the word *cano* and the corresponding 'c' in the commentary). The more detailed illustration in ill. 19 shows these footnote-like references even more clearly (here: a – i).



Ill. 19 Fol. 121v showing the footnote-like printed references in the main text (using the letters of the alphabet over the word on which comments are to be found).

As I also noted in the introductory sections to this chapter, the dating of handwriting is an arduous task. In this case, on the basis of the form of the letters and the use of abbreviations (e.g. the word *Aenean* (written as *Aeneā*) on top of *virumque* (printed as *virūque*) in ill. 19 above) there is no question that the handwriting is early modern. The handwriting is different from that in the volume discussed in the previous section: the handwriting is more italic and some of the consonants are written in a curly style. This probably suggests that the

handwriting in this edition could be of a later date than the one discussed in the previous section (e.g. later 16th century or 17th century).⁵⁷⁹

The annotations found in this volume consist of interlinear annotations, in the *Aeneid* text and marginal notes, often combined with underlining in the text of the commentary. Judging from the handwriting, two commentators have been at work: one writing on the *vita* (which will not be discussed in this section), the other on the *Aeneid*.

a. Interlinear annotation

As can be seen in illustration 19, the interlinear notes in the text of the *Aeneid* are quite similar to those found in the edition discussed in the previous section, in that they also provide synonyms or short explanations of words from the epic. So, for example, in the passage displayed in illustration 19, the annotator has written *bella* ('wars') above *A.1.1 Arma* ('weapons'), *Aenean* ('Aeneas') above *A.1.1 virumque* ('And the man'), *describo* ('I describe') above *cano* ('I sing'), *finibus* ('from the borders') above *oris* ('from the coast') and *voluntate deorum* ('because of the will of the gods') above *fato* ('through fate'). Though in this case these notes are not dependent on a printed *ordo*, these short explicatory annotations appear to have been derived from the printed commentary. For example *bella* goes back on a line underlined in Servius' commentary (*Arma, id est bellum per metonymiam...*) and *describo* is found in Donatus' commentary where it reads *Sed armorum descriptionem primo...* ('But first, the description of the weapons').

b. Marginal annotation

The annotations in the margins of the text single out passages from the commentary that were apparently of interest to the reader. In the printed commentary on the very first word of the *Aeneid*, *Arma*, the annotator has underlined Servius' remark that the word is a metonymy for *bellum*, 'war'. Servius writes the following:

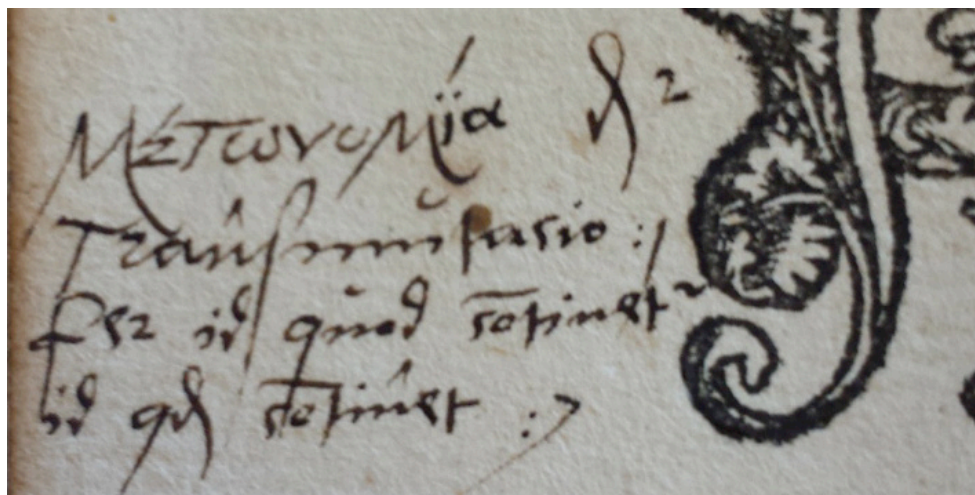
Servius on A. 1.1, *Arma*

(...) Per 'arma' autem bellum significat, et est tropus metonymia. Nam arma quibus in bello utimur pro bello posuit, sicut toga qua in pace utimur pro pace ponitur, ut Cicero "cedant arma togae", id est bellum paci.

⁵⁷⁹ See the examples in Fairbanks and Wolpe (1960).

By *Arma* ['weapons'] he however means 'war', and the trope is 'metonymy'. For he has put 'weapons', which we use in war, instead of 'war', just as 'toga', which we use in times of peace, is put instead of 'peace', as Cicero "The weapons yield to the toga", that is, war [yields to] peace.

Next to this passage from Servius' commentary, the annotator has written the following remark in the margin of the text (see ill. 20): *Μετωνυμία: id est*⁵⁸⁰ *transmutacio per id quod continetur, id quod continet* ('Metonymy: a change of word, that what contains [Lat. *continet*] through that what is contained [Lat. *continetur*]').



Ill. 20 (fol.121v).

This annotation cites the definition of metonymy from the *Etymologiae* of Isidore of Seville (1.37, *On Tropes*). By writing this citation in the margin of the commentary, the annotator explains that a metonymy such as *arma* for *bellum* is made by a change of words in which the (inclusive) term in question (*bellum*, 'war') is replaced by a word that is included in it ('war': 'weapons'). This explanation presents the more general rule for the examples offered by Servius in his lemma.

Another example of the identification of rhetorical tropes and figures is found at V. A. 1.33 *Tantae molis*, where the annotator has written next to these words 'epiphonema' (ill. 21). In classical rhetoric an epiphonema is an exclamation that acutely summarizes that which has preceded and at the same time rounds off that

⁵⁸⁰ The curly symbol following the word 'metonymia' probably is an abbreviation for 'id est.'

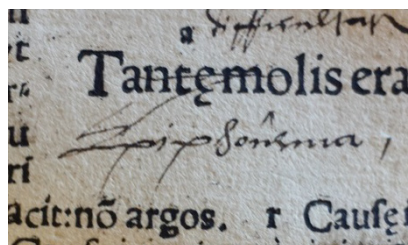
part of the text.⁵⁸¹ Virgil's famous phrase *Tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem* ('Such an arduous task it was to found the Roman people') rounds off the passage in which Virgil has told of the wrath of Juno. In fact, this particular verse is cited by Quintilian as a prime example of this figure of speech.⁵⁸² In the printed text of Landino's commentary in this edition, Landino explains that *Tantae molis* is an epiphonema which can also be found in Cicero. In his lemma, the definition of epiphonema and the example from Cicero are in fact both cited from Quintilian.

Landino on A. 1.33 *Tantae molis*

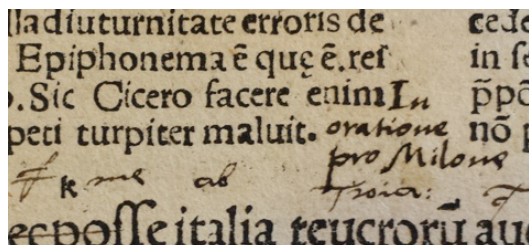
Epiphonema est quae est rei enarratae vel probatae summa acclamatio. Sic Cicero "facere enim probus adulescens periculose quam perpeti turpiter maluit".

This is an epiphonema, which is the concise exclamation of something narrated or discussed. Thus Cicero "For the virtuous youth chose to act with his peril, rather than to suffer with disgrace." [Cic., *Mil.* 4].

The annotator adds a somewhat more exact reference (see ill. 22) to the work of Cicero in question by writing next to the lemma *In oratione pro Milone* ('In his Oration for Milo').



III. 21 fol.124r



III. 22 fol.125r

This annotation shows how the annotator has read Landino's commentary on *Tantae molis* as an epiphonema and looked up (perhaps in another commentary or in Quintilian) the specific passage in Cicero that Landino refers to. By inserting this reference into his copy of the *Aeneid*-commentary, the annotator creates a small, but efficient referential and mnemonic tool: he needs only to remember Virgil's

⁵⁸¹ See for example Lausberg (1998), par. 879.

⁵⁸² Q. 8.5.11: 'Est enim epiphonema rei narratae vel probatae summa acclamatio: tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem!' ('An epiphonema is the concise exclamation of a narration or a discussion: 'Such an arduous task it was to found the Roman people').

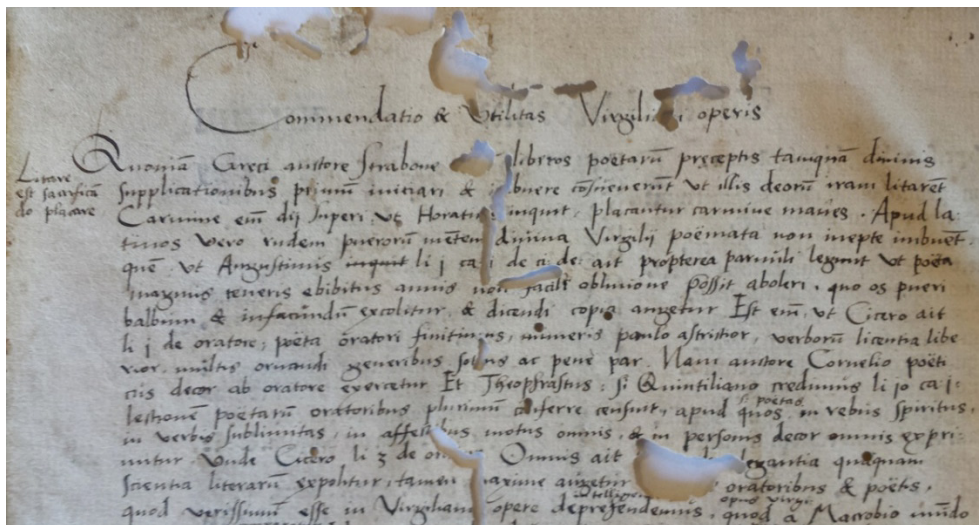
famous verse *Tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem* (V., A. 1.33) – which was especially easy to memorize because it was the last verse of the programmatic opening of the epic – to get access to information on the figure of epiphonema. Moreover, this kind of annotation could also serve for the teaching of others: a teacher going through the text of the *Aeneid* in his teachings, could use his annotations for the instruction of his pupils.

The other annotations in this volume consist of marginal indexing notes, or provide information on matters of cultural historical interest, or references to other classical authors. In the latter case the annotations often add information to the references given in the printed commentary. In this way the annotations improve the organization of information that is provided by the commentary. In the remainder of this section, I will briefly discuss several longer annotations found in the volume.

2.2.2 Longer Annotations

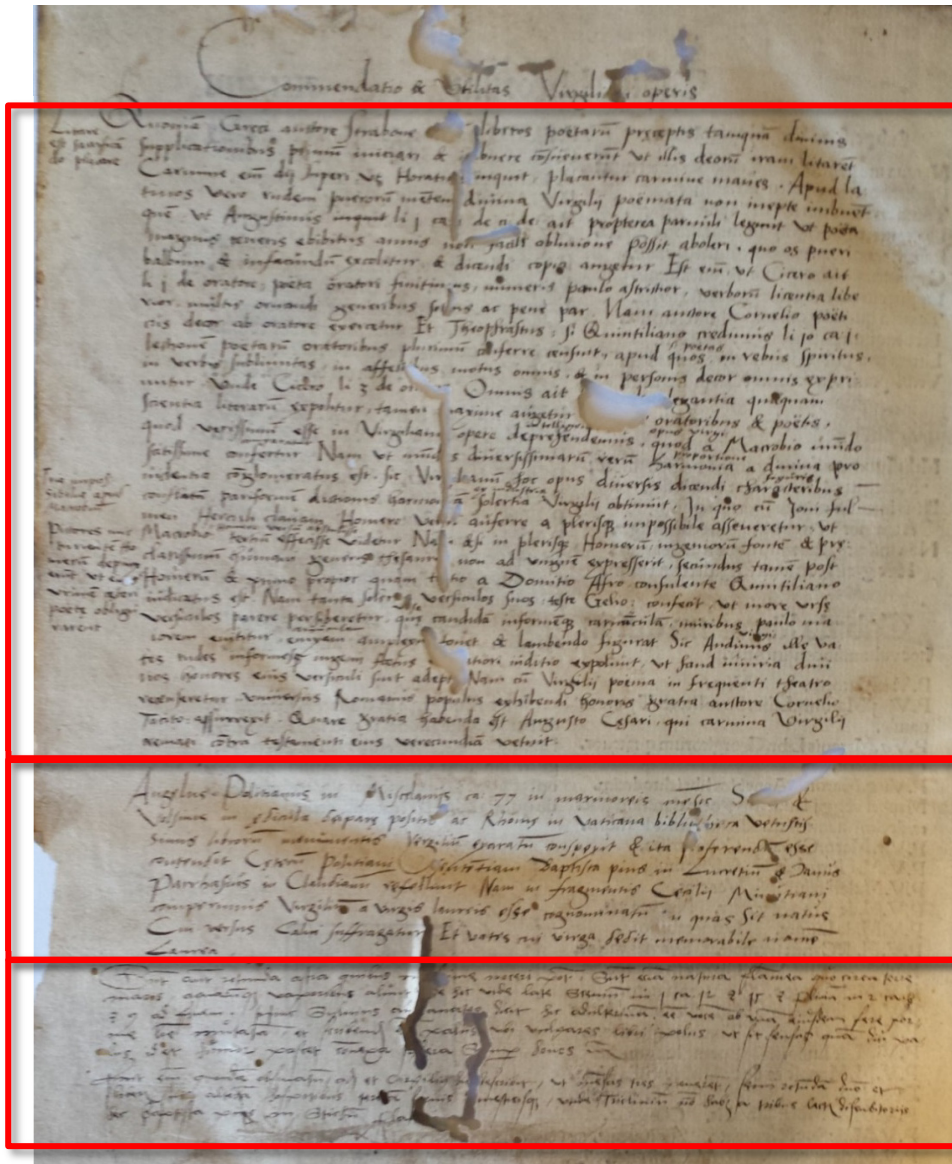
a. Transcribing from Other Works

Most annotations in this volume consist of short remarks, but the last folio-page of the volume, which does not contain any printed text, has been covered in full with writing (see ill. 23). The passage is titled *Commendatio et utilitas Virgili<an>i operis* ('Appraisal and usefulness of the work of Virgil'), and is probably transcribed from another (printed) text.



Ill. 23 The upper part of the back of the very last folio of the volume (fol.34v; fol.34r presents the table of contents of the volume (*Tabula librorum qui in hoc volumine continentur*)).

The text of the passage has been damaged by bookworms, leaving a stretched vertical gap running through the middle of the text and several other holes. The annotations on the page appear to consist of three segments (see ill. 24).



Ill. 24 fol.34v.

The first passage concerns the (literary) quality of the works of Virgil; the second contains comments on editions of Virgil, starting from that by Angelo Poliziano;

the third segment contains annotations on the stars and the sea. The first passage (of which the first part is shown in ill. 23) is carefully written down, while the second, but especially the third passage, have been scribbled in much less intelligible handwriting.

The first few lines of the first passage read as follows (see also ill. 23):

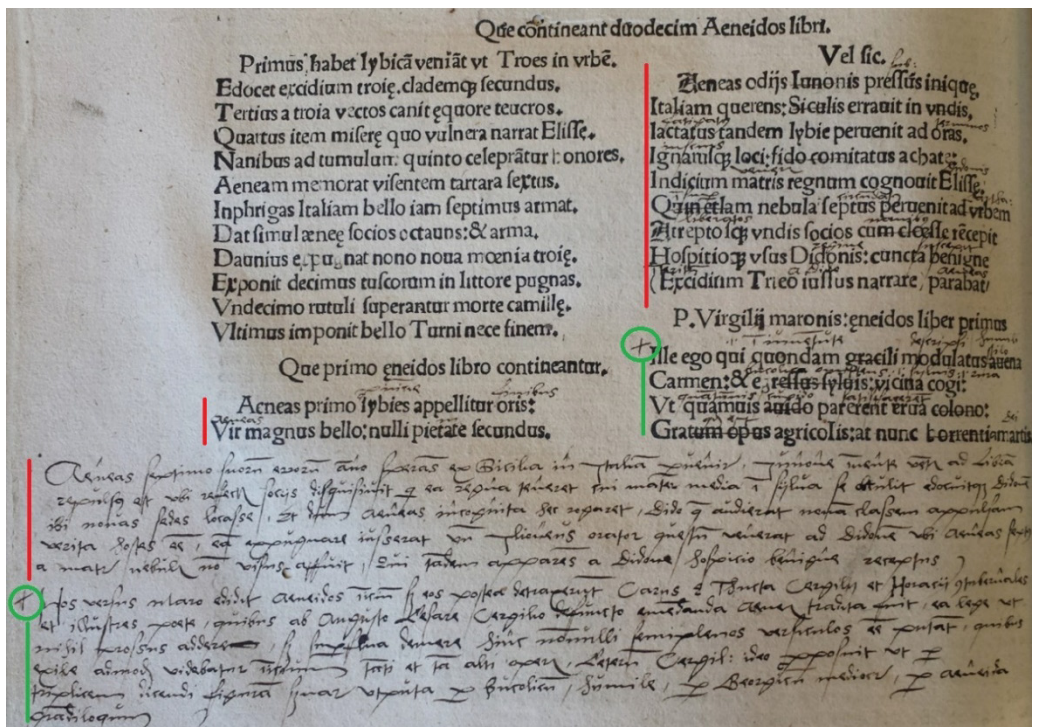
Commendatio et utilitas Virgili<an>i operis. Quoniam Gr[a]jeci auctore Strabone [...] liberos poetarum praeceptis tamquam divinis supplicationibus primum initiari et i<m>buere consueverunt ut illis deorum iram litarent. “Carmine enim dii superi” ut Horati<u>s inquit, “placantur carmine manes”. Apud Latinos vero rudem puerorum mentem divina Virgilii poemata non inepte imbuent “quem” ut Augustinus ~~inquit~~ li[bro] j ca[pite] <ii>i de ci[vitate] de[i] ait [Aug., Civ. 1.3] “propterea parvuli legunt ut poeta maximis teneris ebibitus animis non facile oblivione possit aboleri”, quo “os pueri balbum” et infacundum excolitur et dicendi copia augetur.

“The value and usefulness of the work of Virgil. Since the Greeks, according to the author Strabo [Strab. 1.2.3] [...] were used to introduce and imbue their children first with the precepts of the poets, as if with divine offerings, so that <through these> they could atone for the wrath of the gods. For “With a poem the gods above”, as Horace says [Epist. 2.1.138], “are pacified, with a poem the god below”. With the Latins at the same time it will not be improper for the divine poems of Virgil to saturate the unformed minds of boys; Virgil, “Who”, as Augustine says in book 1, chapter 3 of *De civitate dei* “they read in their early years, for this purpose, that the poet cannot easily be destroyed <through forgetfulness>, when he has been soaked up by their most tender minds”, by whom “the stammering” and ineloquent “mouth of a boy” [Hor., Epist. 2.126] is cultivated and his vocabulary is increased.”

The first passage consists of references to various classical authors (Strabo, Horace, Augustine) that commend the study of the works of the poets for the young. I have unfortunately not been able to identify the source of this passage, but I would suggest that the annotator has transcribed this passage from a prefatory text from another edition since the type of passage reminds one of the prefatory texts that were traditionally printed in editions of the works of classical authors. Although

the identity of our annotator is unknown,⁵⁸³ the transcribing of this kind of passage suggest that he planned to use this information for future use, such as producing his own work of Virgilian scholarship or teaching Virgil to others.

Another longer annotation is found on fol.120v, where the annotator has written down two passages containing information on the *Aeneid* (see ill. 25). This page precedes the text and commentary of the *Aeneid* and contains two hexametric summaries, one of the contents of the entire epic (the text printed on the left) and one of the first book (on the right). At the bottom of the right column the four, often deleted lines of A. 1.1a-d are printed.



Ill. 25 fol.120v Two handwritten passages on the folio-page directly preceding the start of the *Aeneid*.

At the bottom of the text, there are two long, handwritten annotations. In fact both relate to the printed text. The first handwritten passage, indicated by a red line, is

⁵⁸³ The handwriting of this passage seems to be somewhat different than that which is found at other places in this volume. Perhaps another early modern annotator was at work here, or our annotator was employing a neater, better legible handwriting at this point because of the handwritten passage here not being an annotation to the text, but an additional text on its own.

connected to the printed passage on the right side of the page, also indicated by a red line. This printed summary of the contents of the first book is part of a series of *Argumenta* ('summaries') for each book of the *Aeneid* that was sometimes attributed to Ovid.⁵⁸⁴ On the bottom right-hand of the printed text, the handwritten cross that is written next to the beginning of A. 1.1a (circled in green by me) links the printed text to the second handwritten passage that is written on the lower part of the page (next to the green line). Apparently the annotator was particularly interested in both printed passages, as is also shown by the handwritten corrections that are scribbled between the printed lines. This seems to suggest that the annotator has been collating his edition with another one. From this I would suggest that both handwritten annotations at the bottom half of the page also consist of material transcribed from another printed edition by the annotator. In this way the annotator made sure that he could use this material again in the future.

The second handwritten passage (with the green line) tells the traditional story of how the four verses of A. 1.1a-d – which were not printed in this edition – were originally part of the *Aeneid* (*Hos versus Maro edidit Aeneidos...* ('Maro wrote these Aeneid-verses')), but removed by Varius and Tucca (*postea detraherunt Varius et Tucca Vergilii et Horatii contubernales, et illustres poetae* ('Later Varius and Tucca, friends of Vergil and Horace, and famous poets, removed them')), on the orders of Augustus, who stipulated that they should add nothing to the work, but could take out certain parts. This story is told in the *Vita Vergilii* that was traditionally accompanying editions of the *Aeneid*.

The first handwritten passage (next to the red line) presents a prose paraphrase of the printed poetic paraphrase of the events of the first book:

Transcription of the first handwritten annotation (fol.120v)

Aeneas septimo suorum errorum anno sperans ex Sicilia in Italiam pervenire, Iunone invidente ventis ad Libiam repulsus est ubi refectis sociis disquisivit qui ea<m> regionem teneret cui mater media in silva se ostendit edocuitque Didonem ibi novas sedes locasse. Et cum Aeneas incognita sic rogaret, Dido quae audierat novam classem appulsam verita hostes esse eam appropinquare iusserat; unde Ilioneus orator questus venerat ad Didonem ubi Aeneas septus a matre nebula non visus accessit, qui tandem apparens a Didone hospitio benigne receptus.

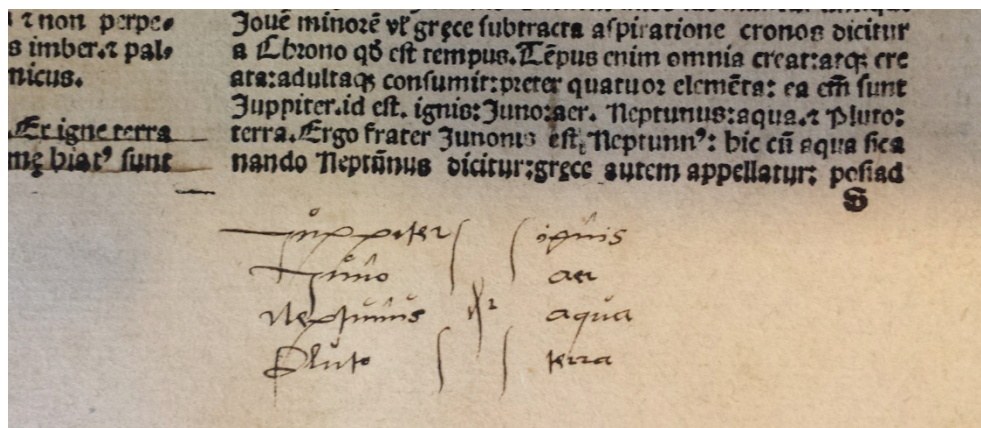
⁵⁸⁴ In Heyne's 1830 edition of the works of Virgil the *Argumenta* are printed under the heading 'The *Argumenta* of the *Aeneid* of some scholastic poet under the name of Ovid' (*Scholastici cuiusdam poetae argumenta Aeneidis sub nomine Ovidii*).

In the seventh year of his wanderings Aeneas, leaving Sicilia expecting to arrive in Italy, because of the wrath of Juno, was pushed back by the winds to Libya, where, after having refreshed his comrades, he investigated who reigned that region. To him appeared his mother in the midst of the forest and she informed him that Dido had built a new place of residence there. And [while] Aeneas thus asked what he did not know, Dido, who had heard that an unknown fleet had pushed ashore, fearing that they were enemies, had ordered to attack it; from them [the Trojans] the orator Ilioneus pleadingly came before Dido, where Aeneas, invisible, being hidden by his mother in a cloud, approached, who in the end showing himself received a warm welcome from Dido.

This handwritten passage is consistent with my observation in chapter 1 that the paraphrase played an important role in the study and teaching of the *Aeneid*. In this case it presents the reader with a prose narration of the events of the first book, containing more information than the printed verse lines. It seems to be taken over from another non-identified edition in which this paraphrase, often called *Argumentum*, was printed next to the poetic paraphrase of the first book.

b. Restructuring and Adding Information

An annotation found at fol.129r shows a little scheme drawn up by the commentator at the bottom margin of the page (ill. 26).



Ill. 26 fol.129r.

The scheme summarizes in the following way Landino's explanation of V. A. 1.130 *Iunonis*:

Juppiter ignis	Jupiter - fire
Juno aer	Juno - air
Neptunus aqua	Neptune - water
Pluto terra	Pluto - earth

In the relevant part of the lemma (also visible in Ill.), Landino writes the following:

Landino on A. 1.130 *Iunonis*

(...) Cronos dicitur a Chrono, quod est tempus. Tempus enim omnia creat, atque creata adultaue consumit, praeter quattuor elementa, ea enim sunt Juppiter, id est, ignis; Juno: aer; Neptunus: aqua; Pluto: terra. (...)

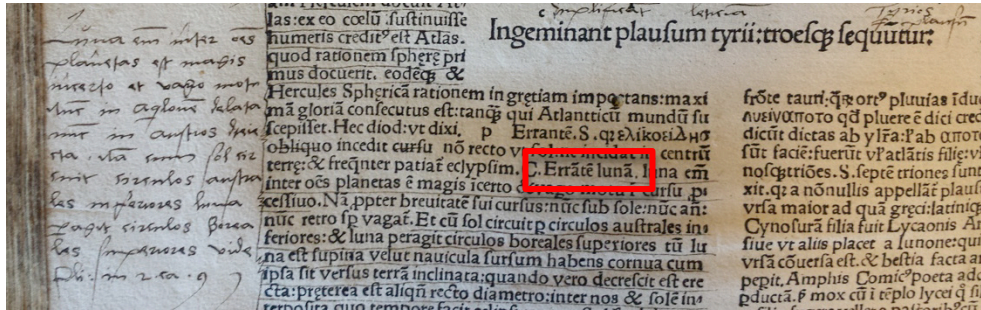
(...) [The god] Cronos is so called from [the Greek word] ‘Chronos’, which means ‘time’. For time creates all, and devours all things created and grown, except the four elements, for these are Jupiter, which is, fire; Juno: air; Neptune: water; Pluto: earth. (...)

This example shows how the annotator is making the information contained in the dense commentary easier to retrieve: the schematic drawing not only provides a clever aid to remembering Landino’s comment, but also makes it easier to find this lemma again.⁵⁸⁵ The drawing thus serves as a tool for the organization and retrieval of knowledge contained in the printed text of this lemma. In fact, one could say that the annotation serves as an additional interface to the printed text. This shows how even in an edition like this one, which is relatively well organized (with references to the lemmata printed in the text of the *Aeneid* through the use of footnote-like letters), this kind of restructuring of knowledge through annotation could be beneficial to the reader.

The previous annotation showed that the annotator at work in this volume was interested in the knowledge contained in the printed text of the commentary. His annotations also show how the interest of an early modern reader stretched out to fields of knowledge that were not directly linked to the grammatical or the literary domain, such as metaphysics or natural science. Another example of this is

⁵⁸⁵ I am not completely sure of the meaning of the symbol that is drawn between the two columns of the table. It could be similar to the long s that we encountered earlier in this chapter (in which case the annotator appears to have written the first two letters of the word: sc[ilicet]). In that case it would stand short for ‘scilicet’ (‘namely’), and indicate that the gods of the left column should be equated to the elements in the one on the right.

found on fol.155v. where the annotator has underlined selected passages from Landino's lemma on V. A. 1.742 *errantem lunam*, discussing the orbit of the moon, and transcribed them in the margin of the page (ill. 27).



Ill. 27 fol.155v.

The annotation reads:

Annotation next to Landino on A. 1.742 *errantem lunam*

Luna enim inter omnes planetas est magis incerto et vago motu nunc in aquilone<m> elata, nunc in austros deiecta,⁵⁸⁶ et cum sol circuit circulos australes inferiores, luna peragit circulos boreales superiores.⁵⁸⁷ vide Plin. 2 ca. 9.

For the moon, among all the planets, has a movement more uncertain and wandering, now elated into the north, now again lowered into the south, and while the sun runs through the lower southern orbit, the moon runs through the higher northern orbit. See Pliny, book 2, ch. 9 [2.43].

The annotator has copied several phrases from Landino's commentary in the margin of the text, with a reference to Pliny's *Natural History*, where more information on the orbit of the moon could be found. A reader annotation such as this one shows how an early modern reader was interested in information concerning astronomical phenomena. This attention for the explanation of natural phenomena goes beyond a merely antiquarian interest. A similar interest is, for example, visible in the underlining by a 16th or early 17th-century annotator in an

⁵⁸⁶ Pl., *N.H.* 2.40.

⁵⁸⁷ Pl. *N.H.* 2.43.

edition from 1532-1533 from the private collection I have studied.⁵⁸⁸ In this edition, which includes the printed commentary of various commentators, the annotator has underlined several passages from the printed commentary that concern matters of astronomical interest or chronology. The annotator has for example underlined parts of the commentator Pierio's lemma on A. 3.141 *Sirius* and marked this lemma by a vertical stripe in the margin. In the lemma the commentator discusses the (nefarious) effects of the rising of the star. Further on, the annotator has underlined parts of Servius' lemma on A. 5.49 *Iamque dies, ni fallor, adest*. The transcription preserves the underlining by the annotator:

An annotator underlining Servius on A. 5.49:

Ni fallor] Non quasi nescius dixit, sed propter anni confusionem. Nam ante Caesarem, cuius rationem de anno nunc sequimur, intercalabantur dies, ut in Verrinis [2,52] legimus; scilicet lunae non congruente ratione. Annum autem, primo Eudoxus, deinde Hipparchus, deinde Ptolemaeus, ad ultimum Caesar deprehendit.

'If I am not mistaken] He did not say this as if he were ignorant, but because of the confusion about the year. Because before Caesar, whose system of the year we follow now, (intercalary) days were inserted, as we read in The Verrine orations [Cic. Ver. 2.52]; this is evidently because of the incompatibility with the system of the moon. For first Euxodus, then Hipparchus, next Ptolemy and finally Caesar brought the year into balance.'

The underlining shows how the annotator was interested in Servius' remark about the (correct) calculation of the length of the year. He has underlined the part in which Servius mentions several authoritative classical scholars (and Caesar, who

⁵⁸⁸ The edition consists of two volumes: (1) P[oblii] V[irgilii Maronis] poetarum [principis opera accuratissime] me cas[tigata et in pristinam for-]mam restituta, cum acerrimi iudicii vi[rorum] com-]mentarii[s,] Seruii, Donati, Mancinelli, Probi, Domitii Calderini, atq[ue] Ascensii, quibus acutis-]simae adnotationes sunt additae Christophori Landini, A[ugustini] Dathi, et] Philippi Beroaldi. Accesserunt insuper ex ueterum codic[um] collation-]ne castigationes et uarietates Virgilianae lectionis p[er] eru-]ditissimum uirum Ioannem Pierium Valerianu[m] (...) Venice, 1533; (2) P[oblii] Virgilii Maronis / poetarum principis aeneis accuratissime castigata, et in pristinam formam restituta, cum acerrimi iudicii viro[rum] commentariis, Seruii, Donati, atq[ue] Ascensii. Quibus acutissimae adnotationes sunt additae Christophori Landini, Augustini Dathi & Philippi Beroaldi. Accesserunt insuper ex ueterum codicum collatione castigationes & uarietates Virgilianae lectionis, per eruditissimum uirum Ioannem Pierium Valerianum (...) addito Maphaei Vegii .xiii. lib ro non ineleganti, Venice: 1532.

corrected the calendar) who had worked on the problem. This forms an indication that matters pertaining to the scientific disciplines, which - as I have discussed in chapter 4 on the scientific disciplines in the early modern *Aeneid*-commentary – form an important but problematic field of knowledge in the Virgilian commentary tradition, were used by readers. The annotations discussed above supplement my analysis in that chapter, which focused on the productive side of the commentary tradition (the writing of commentaries), by offering evidence of the use of, or at least the interest in this kind of material with early modern readers of *Aeneid* commentaries.

Concluding Remarks

In sum, the annotations in the volume discussed in this section show how early modern readers could use their printed commentaries as aids for the storage of information. The more extensive annotations point to a reading of the commentary in relation with other works of (classical) literature and scholarship, such as Pliny's *Natural History*, or a *Vita* or other prefatory texts taken from other editions. The annotator appears to have been enhancing his edition by restructuring the knowledge contained in it (making it better accessible).

2.3 Emending the Text through Comparison of Editions (Leiden University Library 760 B 5)

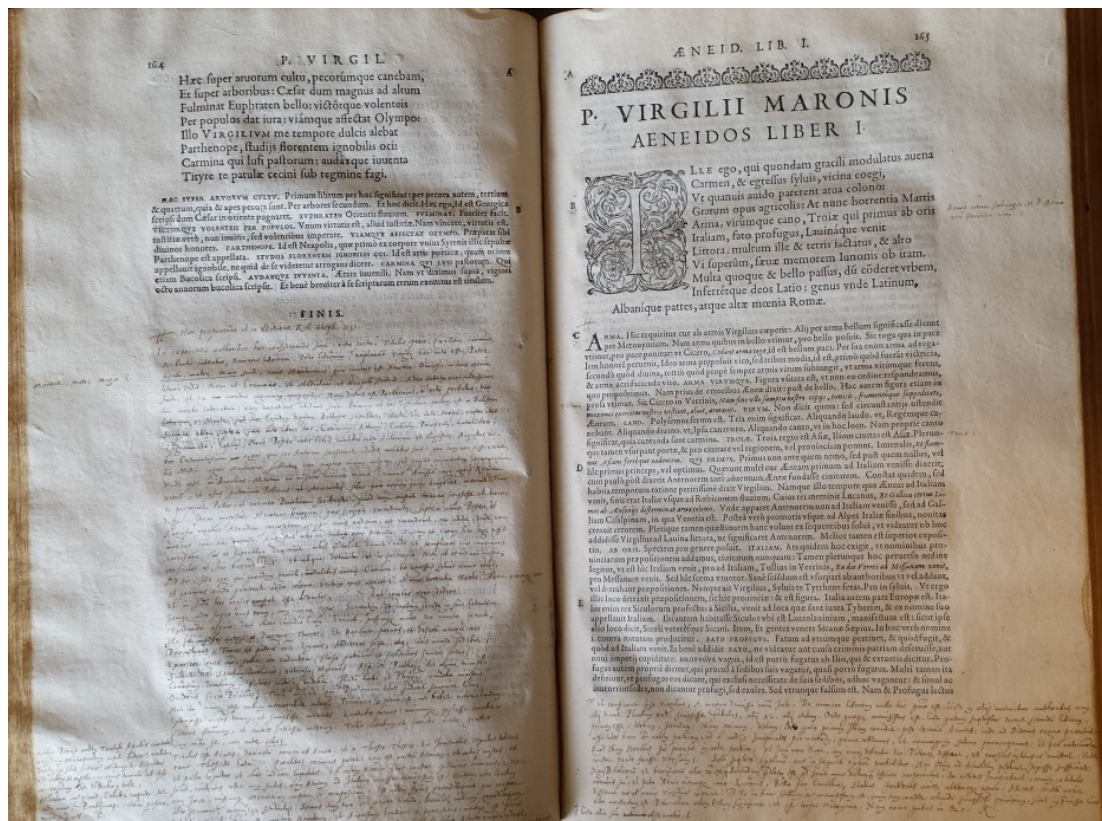
General Characteristics

This edition, containing Servius' and Fulgentius' commentaries on the *Aeneid*, was part of the library of Isaac Vossius (1618-1689). It contains many short marginal annotations and several larger ones. Even the handwriting of Gerardus and Isaac Vossius has been poorly described in modern scholarship, but it seems quite certain that the annotations in this volume are not by one of them. The small, but neat and regular handwriting of the annotator differs from the somewhat sloppy writing of Gerardus Vossius and the neat writing of Isaac, which has larger and rounder letterforms (as appears from handwritten notes in other editions).⁵⁸⁹ The annotator has used brown ink and scarcely uses the abbreviations often found in 16th-century annotations. Because of this, and because of the annotations I have seen in other early modern editions, I would suggest that the annotations date from the (later) 17th-century.

⁵⁸⁹ See the examples in Derksen (2012).

Transcribing Passages from Other Editions

The *Vita* of Virgil that precedes the commentary on the *Aeneid* has been heavily annotated, as is the first book of the epic. The annotations on the other books are much more scarce and almost come to an end after book 7. There is a long annotation at the bottom of pages 164-165, at the end of the *Vita* by Phocas and before the start of book 1 of the *Aeneid* (see ill. 28).



Ill. 28

This annotation consists of the traditional prefatory material: guidelines for interpretation that were often printed in commentary editions of the *Aeneid* and that were originally part of the commentary by Servius.⁵⁹⁰ In this case, the annotation is transcribed from another edition, as is indicated at the start of the annotation:

⁵⁹⁰ This tradition of *prolegomena* originated in (late) antiquity. See Mansfeld (1994).

‘Haec praeponenda ut in editione Rob. Steph. 1533.

In exponendis authoribus haec considerata sunt, vita poetae, titulus operis, qualitas carminis, scribentis intentio, numerus librorum, ordo librorum (...)

‘These are to be placed before, as in the 1533 edition by Robertus Stephanus.

In explaining authors, the following are to be considered: the life of the poet, the title of the work, the genre of the poem, the intention of the writer, the number of books, the order of the books (...).

The annotator has transcribed passages from the Stephanus 1533 edition throughout his volume.⁵⁹¹ These transcriptions are indicated by the addition of an ‘R’ at the end of the annotation. Occasionally, reference is also made to another edition, indicated by a ‘C’. The annotator is thus adding information (in this case a passage from the prefatory texts to Servius’ commentary that had not been included in this edition) to his own edition of the *Aeneid* by inserting information from other texts. This results in an improvement of the value of the edition as a work of reference. For example, on p. 168 next to Servius’ lemma on A. 1.22 *volvare Parcas* the annotator writes:

Sicut lucus a non lucendo: bellum a nulla re bella. R.

Such as ‘grove’ from ‘not being light’; ‘war’ from ‘nothing beautiful’ [from the Latin ‘bellus’]. R.

Here, the annotator’s edition did not print these words from Servius,⁵⁹² which have to be inserted into the printed text (indicated by the annotator by placing an insertion mark in the printed text).

It appears that the annotator has been correcting the printed text of Servius’ commentary on the basis of the other editions. This becomes even more clear at p.252. There, next to Servius’ lemma on A. 2.615 *Tritonia ... Pallas*, of which the first sentence has been underlined (‘These are two cases of *antonomasia*⁵⁹³ without a

⁵⁹¹ Virgilius, *opera*. Parisiis, ex officina Roberti Stephani, 1533.

⁵⁹² Servius on A. 1.22: ‘(...) sicut lucus a non lucendo, bellum a nulla re bella.’ This is an *etymologia a contrario*, see August., *De dialectica* 6.

⁵⁹³ A rhetorical figure in which an epithet is used instead of a proper name.

proper name’),⁵⁹⁴ the annotator writes ‘Two have to be noted. R.’.⁵⁹⁵ This indicates that the references to R, to the *editio Rob. Steph.* 1533, are the result of a careful collation of the two editions of Servius’ commentary.⁵⁹⁶ The commentator has enhanced his own edition by adding the text of Servius’ commentary printed in the Stephanus 1533 edition in cases where this edition rendered an alternative reading of the text of Servius’ commentary.

Concluding Remarks

The handwritten annotations in this edition make clear that the annotator was comparing the printed text of the commentary to that of another edition and transcribing parts from Servius’ commentary that were left out or printed differently in his own copy. This collation of the commentary with C. and especially R. results in a version of the commentary that is superior to that of the printed text. By comparing both his edition to C. and R., and by transcribing additional lines of comment into the printed text of Servius’ commentary, the annotator is making sure that his edition of the work is providing adequate and complete information.

2.4 Destroying the Text: Coetier (1647-1723) (Leiden University Library 760 B 7-8)

General characteristics

This volume from 1620 may well be the most fascinating and the most frustrating annotated Virgil commentary studied in this chapter. It is fascinating because the way in which the annotator in this edition engages with the text can only be described as a form of creative destruction, both on the physical and on the intellectual level. Physically, the original printed edition has been taken apart to allow for the insertion of folio leaves after each page, resulting in two new, interleaved volumes.⁵⁹⁷ Intellectually, the number of annotations is so great and at times so messy that the annotator with his very annotations comes close to destroying the careful organization of knowledge provided by his edition of the

⁵⁹⁴ ‘Duo antonomasia sunt sine proprio nomine.’

⁵⁹⁵ ‘Notandum duo R’.

⁵⁹⁶ As I indicated above, references to other editions or *codices* also appear. For example on p. 216 there are three short annotations that end with a ‘C.’ ‘C.’ is first referred to in an annotation on fol.2v, at the bottom of the life of Virgil by Servius. I have not been able to identify this edition.

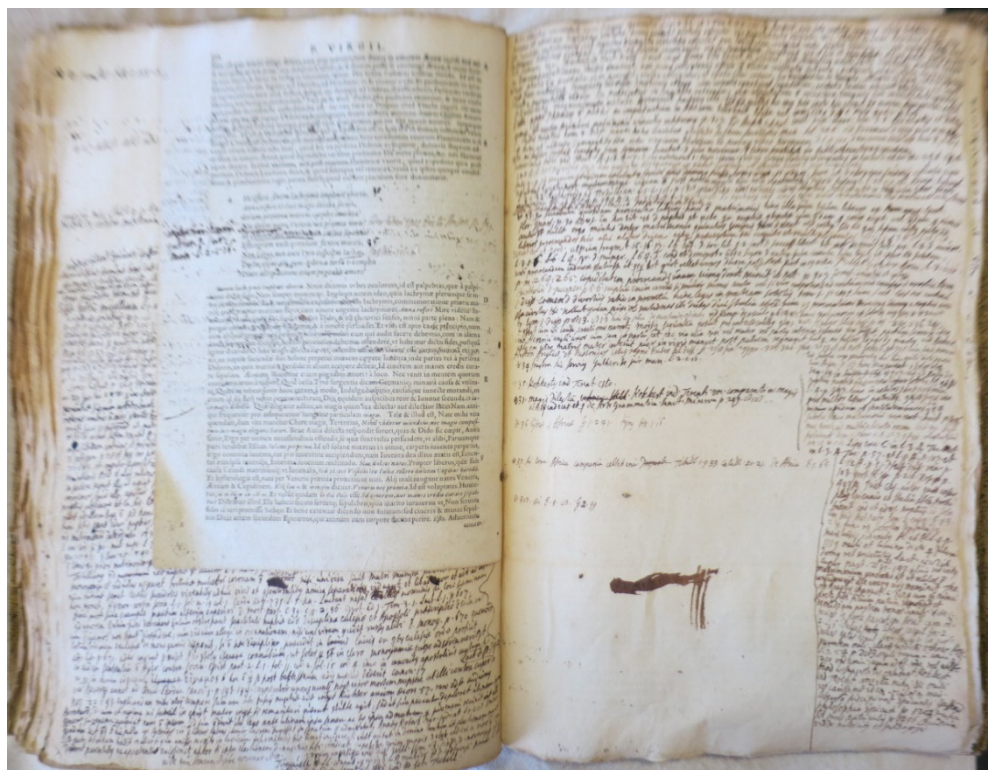
⁵⁹⁷ This kind of extremely active reading and interaction with the printed book was in itself not uncommon; see Sherman (2009), 9.

Aeneid. Where the annotations on Servius' commentary studied in section 2.2 made efficient use of the mechanisms for knowledge organization already available in the printed edition (inserting annotations between the lines for synonyms and longer ones in the margin; marking annotated passages from the commentary by underlining them; using footnote-like reference marks to link printed text and annotation), in this work the annotations completely overshadow the printed text (even literally, since the heavily scribbled folios obscure the smaller pages of the printed edition).

The annotations in this edition are written by the Dutch scholar Willem Coetier (Arnhem, 1647 – Franeker, 1723), as I will show in the next subsection. Coetier studied at Leiden under Gronovius. He became a professor of history and rhetoric at the University of Harderwijk (1670-1672), which he left in 1672 as result of the French invasion of the Low Countries. In 1681 he became professor of rhetoric and history at Deventer, which he left in 1693 for the University of Franeker, where he had been offered a professorship in the same field. He stayed at Franeker until 1721.⁵⁹⁸

As I have already hinted above, Coetier's exemplar of an annotated commentary edition of the *Aeneid* is both a scholar's dream and his worst nightmare. On the one hand, the leaves are full of annotations, most of them quite extensive. On the other hand, the handwriting is difficult to read and the organization of the annotations is often messy (ill. 29).

⁵⁹⁸ Van der Aa, vol.3 (1858), 599-601; Boeles (1878), 337-340.



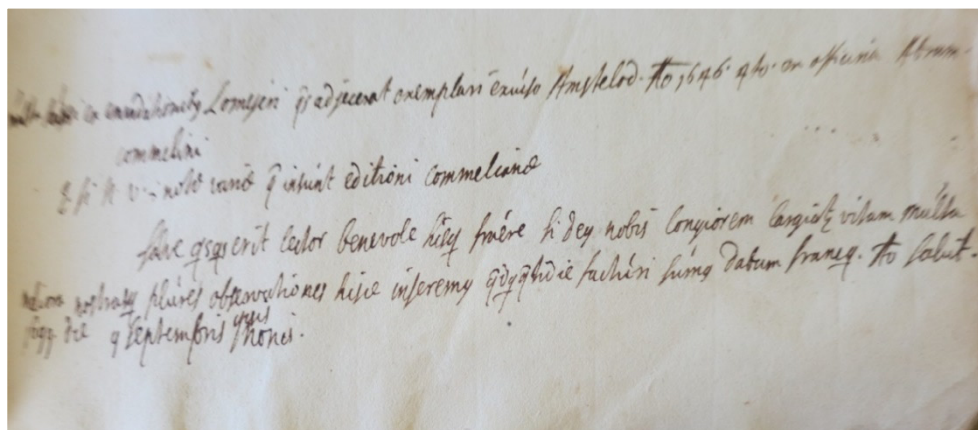
III. 29 Coetier's annotations

Contrary to what might seem at first, the annotations in this edition are systematically organized. The annotations consist, on the one hand, of short remarks written next to and between the lines of the printed text of the *Aeneid* (mainly references to other classical works) and the commentary of Servius (most of these appear to be corrections of Servius' text, which would be consistent with the remark found on the first leaf of the second book, *Servii errores* ('the mistakes of Servius')), and, on the other hand, longer annotations on the leaves that have been inserted. The annotations to the printed commentary of Servius contain many corrections, derived from a collation with the editions that are mentioned in the alphabetical list at the beginning of the work. See for example the annotations on the leaf next to p.170 of the edition, where the annotator makes a number of corrections to the text printed in the edition based on the edition by La Cerda.

The Identification of the Annotator

On one of the first pages of the book an annotation in a later handwriting informs us about the owners of the manuscript. Among other things, it states how the

manuscript was sold at an auction of 1806 and how it had been previously owned by Petrus Burmannus the Second. Moreover, the annotator remarks, the annotations were written by Guillelmus Coetier ('He who has written the collected notes next to it, lived in Franeker, in the year 1699, see the manuscript note on page 732. Thus he was Willem Coetier, see Vriemoet, *Athenarum Frisiacarum* page 911ff.').⁵⁹⁹ And indeed, at the very end of the text of the second volume, on the last leaf next to Servius' commentary, the early modern annotator identifies himself as someone living in Franeker ('Greetings kind reader, whoever you are (...) Given at Franeker in the year 1699 on 9 September, at the ninth hour [ca. 16:00h] (ill. 30).⁶⁰⁰



Ill. 30 Coutier's annotation at the end of the second volume

The Annotator at Work: Reference Works

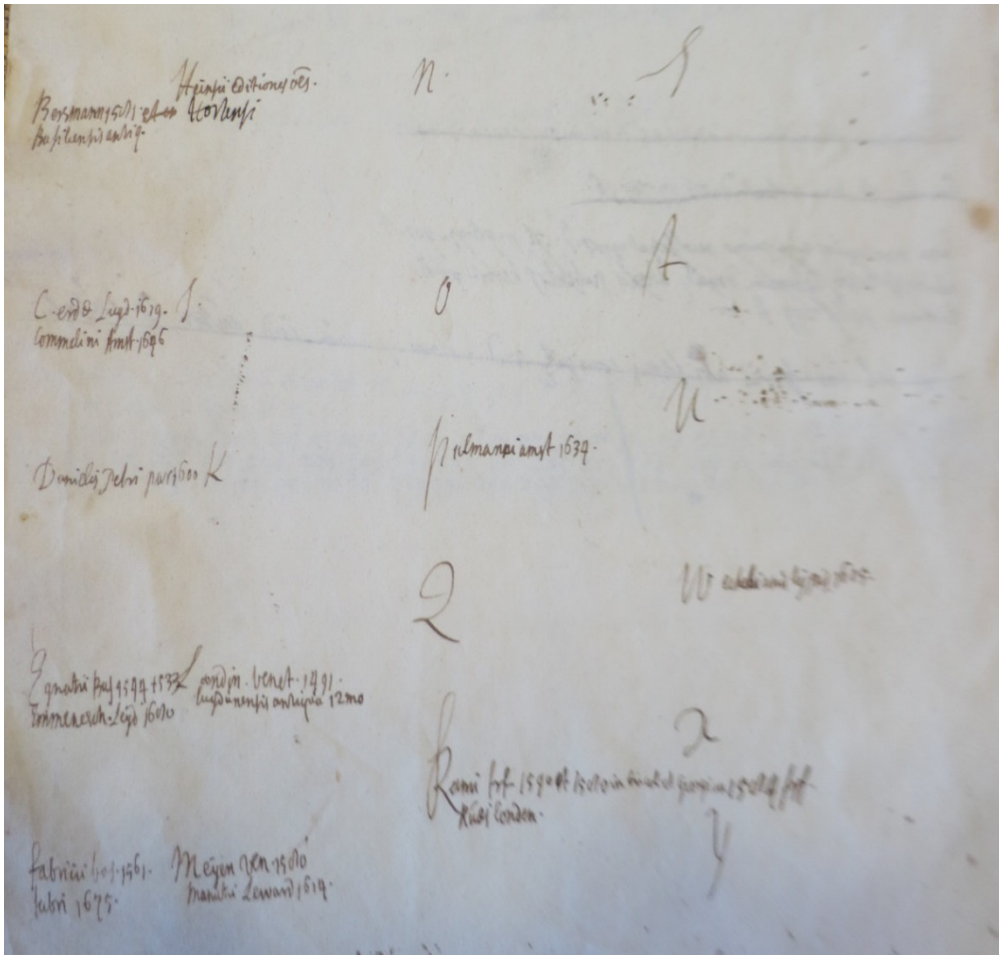
The annotations of Coetier are of particular interest to the topic of this chapter because they show how he was studying his volume of the *Aeneid* with the help of other commentaries and other scholarly texts on the epic. This shows how an early modern reader could use a large number of printed commentaries to create his own, personalized reference work. As a university professor, Coetier may have

⁵⁹⁹ 'Qui collectanea adscripsit, vixit Franekere, A. 1699- vid. MS. ad p.732. Fuit itaque Guil. Coetier, v. Vriemoet Ath. Fris. p. 911 sq'.

⁶⁰⁰ 'Salve quisquis [eris (instead of *erit*, which has to be a slip of the pen)] lector benevole hisque frueri; si deus nobis longiorem largietur vitam, multa meliora nostrasque plures observationes hisce inseremus quodque quotidie facturi sumus. Datum Franeq<urae>, Anno salut<is> 1699, die 9 Septembris [apud] nonis.' ['Greetings kind reader, whoever you are, enjoy these things; if god will grant us a longer life, we will insert many better things and more observations of ours and all what we shall do daily. Given at Franeker in the year 1699 on 9 September, at the ninth hour [i.e. around 4 p.m.]'.

prepared these notes for personal study, for the production of scholarly works, or for teaching.

On the first few pages of the first book (fol.1v and fol.2r) Coetier has written practical notes. On the left page (fol.1v), he appears to have compiled a record of all the editions and manuscripts he refers to in his handwritten comments. The letters of the alphabet are written down in vertical rows, some of them accompanied by references to authors and/or books (ill. 31).



Ill. 31 Coetier's list of works on Virgil (detail).

The first three rows of the utmost left column visible in illustration 23 read (my underlining): *Bersmann 1581 Basiliensis antiq.*;⁶⁰¹ *Cerda Lugd. 1619*⁶⁰² // *Commelini Amst. 1646*;⁶⁰³ *Danielis Petri par 1600*.⁶⁰⁴ The annotator appears to have listed alphabetically the editions of Virgil he had consulted. The right page (fol. 2r) has a list containing other works on Virgil.⁶⁰⁵ The first entry reads *Virgil. Guellii et appendix cum Jos. Scaliger commentar. folio ap. Plantini 1575*.⁶⁰⁶ All the following entries also start with 'Virgil' (indicated by the horizontal stripe), followed by the name of the work in question, the size of the book (e.g. *folio*), and the year and place where it was printed (though these later pieces of information are lacking for most of the works listed). Thus we find on the second line the commentary by Jacobus Pontanus (*--- cum symbolis Pontani Lugd. 1603 fol.*), on the seventh that by Corradus (*Corradi Florent 155<5>*). Coetier thus appears to have listed a large number of Virgil commentaries and other scholarly works on Virgil, which he had probably consulted in writing his annotations.

The end of the first book contains another long, hand written list of what appear to be all the (contemporary) sources Coetier has consulted (ill. 32).

⁶⁰¹ The Basel 1581 edition of the works of Virgil, with notes by Gregor Bersmann.

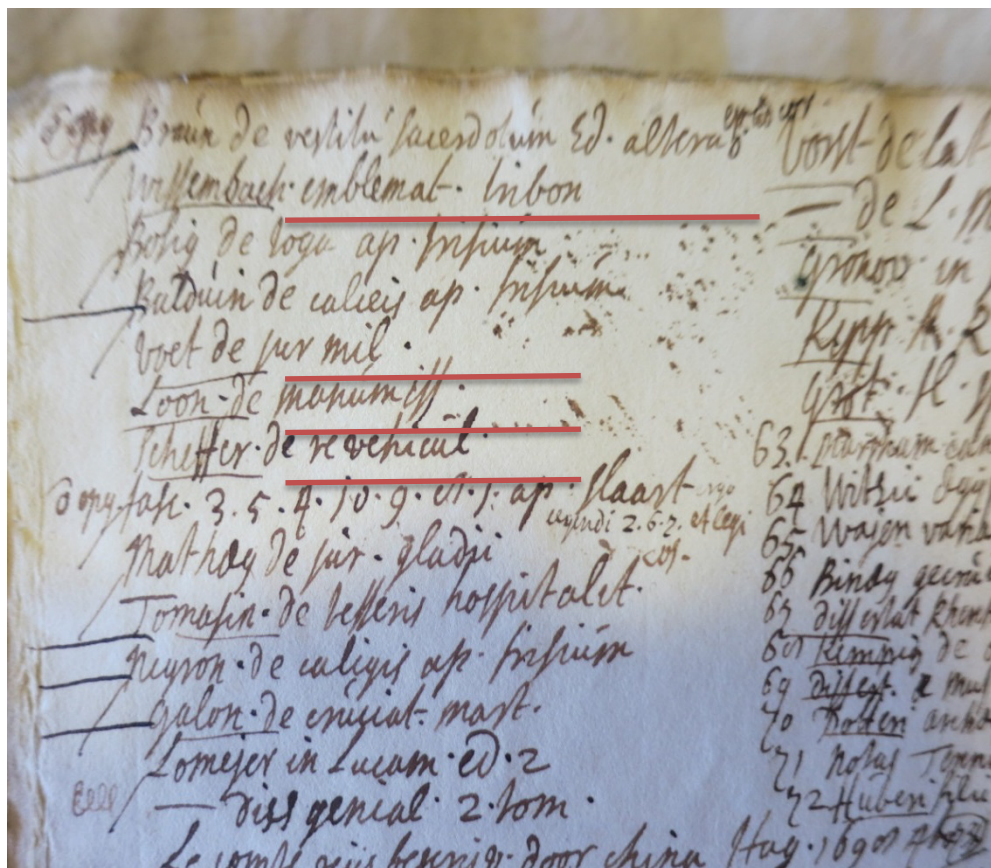
⁶⁰² The Lyon 1619 edition of La Cerda's commentary on the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*.

⁶⁰³ The 1646 edition of the works of Virgil, edited by Gualterus Valkenier, printed by Abraham Commelinus.

⁶⁰⁴ The Paris 1600 edition of the works of Virgil by Pierre Daniel, which contained the first printed edition of the *Servius auctus*.

⁶⁰⁵ The same kind of list is found further on, on the leaf next to p.6 of the printed edition.

⁶⁰⁶ The Antwerp 1575 edition of the works of Virgil, including the annotations by Germanus Valens Guellis and the *Appendix Vergiliana* with the notes of Scaliger.



Ill. 32 Coetier's list of reference works (detail).

We find, for example (ill. 32), Wissenbach, *Emblem. Tribon*,⁶⁰⁷ Voet, *De iur mil.*,⁶⁰⁸ Loon, *De manumissime*,⁶⁰⁹ Scheffer, *de re vehicul*,⁶¹⁰. These four works – on the Roman *Leges Pandectarum* (the writings of Roman jurists), on military law, on the freeing of slaves, and on Roman ways of transportation – attest to the wide scope of works Coetier consulted in writing his annotations. Furthermore, they suggest that Coetier used his Virgil commentary – and the other works of Virgilian scholarship he apparently consulted – as a starting point and a collecting point for

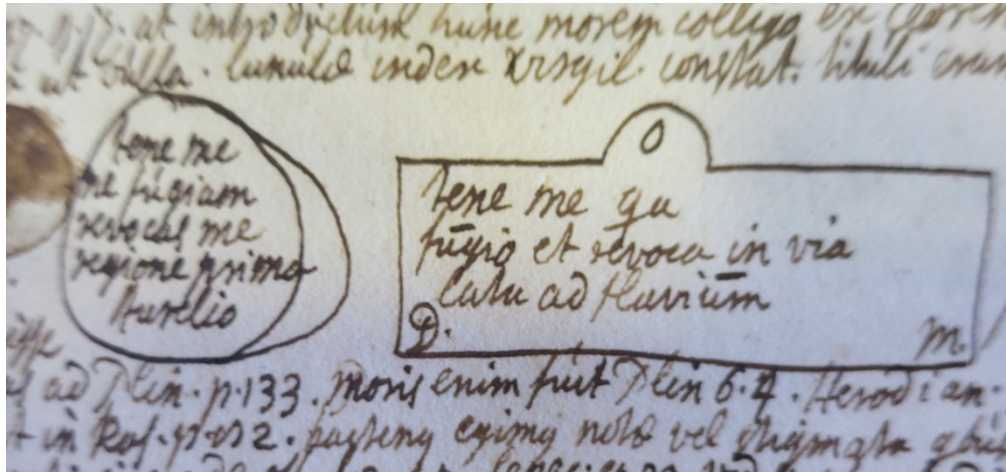
⁶⁰⁷ Johann Jacob Wissenbach (1607- Franeker 1665), *Emblemata Triboniani* (1642, reprint of an older edition from 1633).

⁶⁰⁸ Johannis Voet (1647-1713), *De iure militari liber singularis*.

⁶⁰⁹ Willem van Loon (after 1724), *Eleutheria sive de manumissione servorum apud Romanos* (1685).

⁶¹⁰ Scheffer, *De re vehiculari veterum* (1671).

annotations on a wide variety of subjects. That the topics of these annotations need not necessarily be directly related to the printed text appears from two drawings on the leaf accompanying p. 334 of the printed text (ill. 33.).



Ill. 33 Detail of Coetier's annotations on the leaf accompanying p. 334 of the edition.

In the host of unstructured, difficult to read annotations, these drawings stand out. The drawing on the right represents an inscription from the collar of a runaway slave: 'Arrest me, for I have fled, and bring me back to the broad way to Flavius, my lord.'⁶¹¹ The drawing on the left is also an inscription from the collar of a slave; it reads 'Arrest me so that I will not flee. You bring me back to my original location. To Aurelius.'⁶¹² It seems a bit curious to find the drawings of these inscriptions at this passage of the *Aeneid*. In verses A. 4.129-159 Virgil provides a grand depiction of the gathering of the hunting party of Dido and Aeneas. Although the handwritten annotation appears to start a bit earlier, at verses A. 4.140-150, there still is no indication of slavery in the text of the epic or in the printed commentary. The annotation, however, definitely concerns slaves, as becomes even more apparent from the bottom left folio-page, where Coetier discusses, among other things, the branding of slaves (especially the Dutch word 'gebrandmerkt' [Dutch for 'branded'] stands out among his scribbblings). We can only guess at how Virgil's description of the hunting party of Dido and Aeneas perhaps triggered Coetier's annotation on (runaway) slaves, though no slaves are mentioned by Virgil. It is

⁶¹¹ 'Tene me quia fugio et revoca <me> in via<m> lata<m> ad Flavium D<ominum> M<eum>'. *CIL* 15, 7186.

⁶¹² 'Tene me ne fugia<m>. Revocas me <in> regione prima Aurelio.' *CIL* 15, 7183.

maybe safe to presume that the annotation is not connected in a very direct way to the text of the epic, and that some element of the epic only formed the trigger for the writing of this annotation. The annotation would then in this respect resemble La Cerda's long note on the Roman toga (see chapter 3), for which the words *gentemque togatam* in the text of the epic also only served as a point of reference for the information in the lemma. This hypothesis is consistent with the reference to Loon's works on slaves in the list of sources consulted by Coetier.

Concluding remark

Coetier's annotations present a host of material of which a discussion in this chapter can only be a very limited one. His annotations show the active, creative reading of a learned early modern reader. Coetier engages with his edition of Virgil, even to the point where the *Aeneid*-commentary becomes completely overwhelmed by the annotations of its reader. As the handwritten lists of sources show, he has used several other Virgil commentaries, classical texts and many works of early modern scholarship. In fact, Coetier's annotating practices in this respect seem to mirror the printed commentary of a scholar like La Cerda. In view of this, his manuscript annotations merit a future closer study. Nonetheless they already testify to the productive way in which an early modern scholar engaged with his Virgil.

2.5 The Commentary as a Proto-Encyclopedia: Broekhuizen (1649-1707) (Leiden University Library 759 C 21)

General characteristics

This volume from 1690 comes from the library of Janus Broukhusius (1649-1707; Dutch: Joan van Broekhuizen) and contains handwritten annotations on Virgil's text and on La Rue's commentary. The annotations are probably by Broekhuizen himself, as the hand writing on the title page (*Jani Broukhusii*) matches that of the annotations in the rest of the text (ill. 34).



Ill. 34 Detail of the frontispiece of Broukhusius' edition.

The annotations start at the *Vita* by Donatus and especially focus on providing references to other sources. They present a nice example of an active reading that is focused on study, in which the text is enhanced by annotating it with references to other works of scholarship. In fact the annotations mirror the practice of the printed commentary itself. As will become apparent from the examples discussed in this section, the annotations of Broekhuizen turn the commentary into a sort of 'proto-encyclopedia', in which the text of the *Aeneid* serves as the organizational principle for handwritten annotations.

Broekhuizen's annotations to the *Aeneid* are mainly written next to the text of the *Aeneid* (which is printed on the top half of the page) and not next to La Rue's commentary. This is not so much a depreciation of the commentary, as a practical use of the limited space on the page and a clever use of the index function of Virgil's verses: retrieval of an annotation written next to a verse of the *Aeneid* is much easier than of one connected to a phrase from the commentary. Right at the beginning of the *Aeneid*, Broekhuizen writes a remark on the title of the work: 'See Servius on *Aeneid* 6.752, where he mildly jests about this title. If these remarks are really by Servius.' (ill. 35).⁶¹³

⁶¹³ p. 243: 'v. Servius ad VI. Aen.752 ubi super hoc titulo suaviter nugatur. Si tamen ista sunt Servii.'

v. Servius ad VI. Aen. 752. ubi super
hoc titulo suaviter nugatur. si tamen
ista sunt Servii.



P. VIRGILII MARONIS
ÆNEIDOS

LIBER. I.

ARGUMENTUM.



Repositione & invocatione premisis, narratio incipit a septimo Æneæ expeditionis anno: quo tempore, Trojani e Sicilia in Italiam solventibus, Juno tempestatem excitat, conciliato sibi Æolo. Sedat tempestatem Neptunus. Naves Æneæ septem in portum Africæ se recipiunt, reliquis alio disiectis. Venus apud Jovem de filii calamitate queritur. Solatur eam Jupiter, exposita Æneæ ejusque posteritatis futurâ felicitate. Mittitur Mercurius, qui Carthaginiensium animos Trojanis placabiles reddat. Venus habitu venatrix occurrit Æneæ, regionem cum Achate exploranti: indicatque Didoni ac regionis conditione, utrumque nebula septimâ Carthaginem dimittit. Illic Æneæ, templum ingressus, primum in belli Trojani picturas incidit: deinde in Didonem, & in socios, quos fuitibus oppressos putaverat, Didoni supplicantes. Dat se in conspectum Æneæ: à Regina benigne excipitur: accersitur per Achatem Ascanius: cujus in locum dolo Veneris Cupido substituitur, ut Æneæ amorem Didoni inspiret. Abeunt omnes in aulam ad convivium.

Ille ego, qui quondam gracili modulatus avena
Carmen; & egressus sylvis, vicina cœgi
Ut quamvis avido parerent arva colono:
Gratum opus agricolis: at nunc horrentia Martis

INTERPRETATIO.

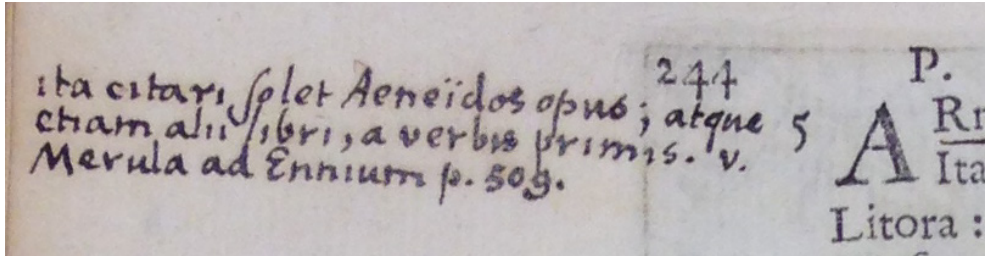
Ego ille sum; qui olim cecini cantilenas tenui | pido; quod opus jucundum fuit rusticis. Sed jam
calamo: & egressus e sylvis cœgi propinquos | horrida Martis
agros, ut obedirent agricolæ quantumlibet cu-

Hh. iij

Ill. 35 p. 243.

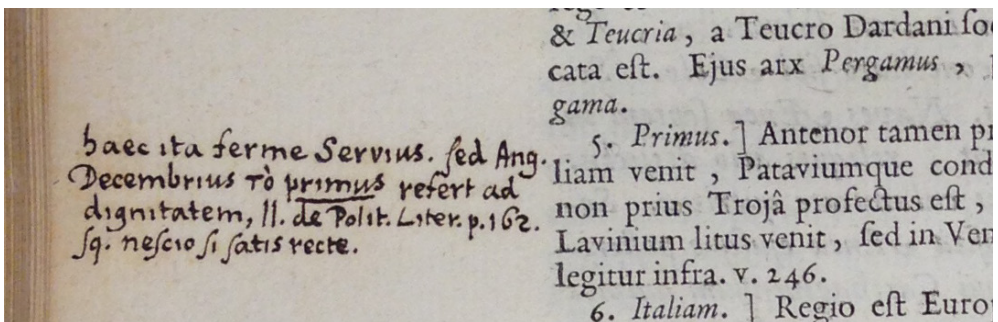
Next to the famous opening words, he writes (ill. 36): 'This is how the *Aeneid* is commonly cited; and other books too <are referred to> by their first words. See

Merula on Ennius, p. 509.⁶¹⁴ Most of his other scribbling next to the opening verses provide references to classical writers and commentators.



III. 36 p. 244.

Also, right at the beginning of La Rue's commentary, the annotator writes a comment on La Rue's explanation, in which he notes that the commentator's explanation of A. 1.1 *primus* is in line with that of Servius, but that Angelo Decembrio in his *De Politia litteraria* offered an alternative interpretation (ill. 37).⁶¹⁵



III. 37 p. 244.

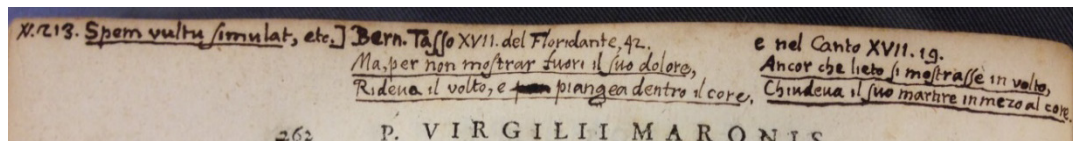
Here too, the annotator adds references to additional information or explanations of matter from the epic or, in this case, from the commentary.

⁶¹⁴ p. 244: 'ita citari solet Aeneidos opus; atque etiam alii libri, a verbis primis. v. Merula ad Ennium p. 509.'

⁶¹⁵ p. 244: 'Haec ita ferme Servius. Sed Ang. Decembrius τὸ primus refert ad dignitatem, ll. de Polit. Liter. p. 162. Sq. Nescio si satis recte.' ('Servius has these things for the most part. But Angelo Decembrio relates the <word> *primus* to dignity, in *De Politia litteraria*, p. 162ff. I don't know if this is sufficiently correct.'). See note 493 for Angelo Decembrio. It is striking that the annotator employs the use of the Greek article 'to' (τὸ) to signify that the word *primus* is being quoted – this is Greek scholia-language.

Works of Reference

The number of authors referred to by Broekhuizen in his annotations is impressive: they not only include classical Greek and Roman authors, but also commentators on the *Aeneid* and on other classical works, as well as references to early modern secondary literature. And indeed also to early modern works of literature, as for example on p.262 (ill. 38) on A. 1.209 *Spem vultu simulat* where the annotator refers to Bernardo Tasso (1493-1569).⁶¹⁶



Ill. 38 p. 262.

One can imagine the annotator sitting in his study or in the library and compiling all his remarks and references. Probably, the annotator made good use of the references provided by the other commentaries he uses (he mentions among others Germanus, Tib. Donatus, and La Cerda). It appears as if the annotator is compiling all these references to make a definitive commentary for his own use by which he could easily retrieve all the scholarship he had studied earlier. The organizational principle of the commentary – lemma by lemma organization following the verses of the *Aeneid* – is now used as the interface for the storage of this additional knowledge. In this way the annotator is turning his edition of La Rue's commentary into a sort of meta-index to past and present scholarship on the *Aeneid*, or even into a sort of proto-encyclopedia in which the information is organized according to Virgil's text. The annotator therewith turns his printed copy into an improved, better commentary.⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁶ p.262: 'v.213. Spem vultu simulat, etc.] Bern. Tasso xvii del Floridante, 42.

Ma, per non mostrar fuori il suo dolore
Rideva il volto, e piangea dentro il core.

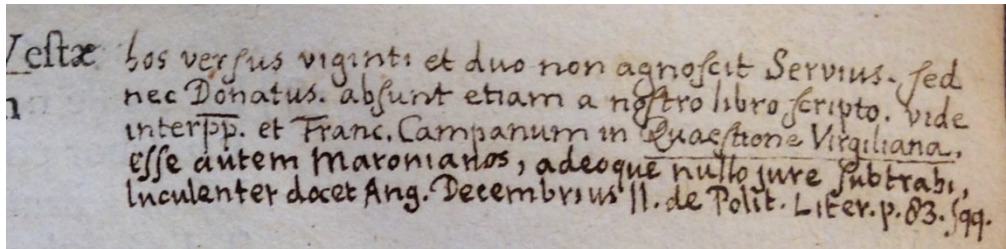
E nel Canto xvii.19.

Anchor che lieto si mostrasse in volto,
Chiudeva il suo martire in mezo al core.'

⁶¹⁷ This use of a commentary is in itself consistent with how throughout the commentary tradition commentators have made use of the work of other, earlier commentators. See for example Sluiter (1998), 12-14 and Sluiter (2000), 187, 202.

Two examples of the annotated commentary as a nucleus of scholarship

While most annotations serve the purpose of providing references to other works, sometimes they turn into more informative notes. For example, on p. 331 (ill. 39) the annotator inserts a note on textual criticism at A. 2.567, *Iamque adeo super...*: 'Servius does not acknowledge these 22 verses.⁶¹⁸ But neither does Donatus. They are also absent from our text. See the interpreters and Franc. Campanus in *Quaestio Virgiliana*. However that they are Maro's, and that therefore there is no ground to remove them, is taught brilliantly by Ang. Decembrius in his *Liber de Polit. Liter.* p.83ff.'⁶¹⁹

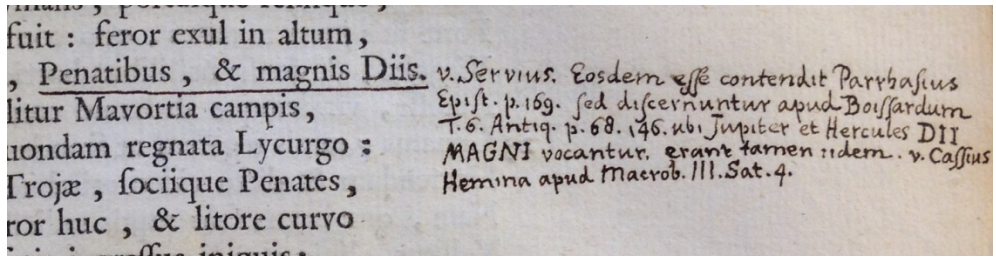


Ill. 39 p. 331.

Again references to other authoritative sources form the central part of the annotation, which only shows its true value when viewed in concordance with La Rue's explanation: La Rue mentions that some say that these 22 verses were removed by Varius and Tucca, and refers to the authority of the commentator Nascimbaenus for reasons to keep the lines in place. The handwritten annotation next to the text of the *Aeneid* thus provides additional sources of information for this question and at the same time marks out this passage for easier further retrieval. A similar type of annotation, this one on mythology, is found further on (p. 345) on A. 3.12 *Penatibus et magnis Diis* (ill. 40).

⁶¹⁸ Servius on V., A. 2.566 *ignibus aegra dedere*: 'post hunc versum hi versus fuerunt, qui a Tucca et Varro oblii sunt.' ['After this verse, there were those, that have been deleted by Tucca and Varro']. Servius ignores these lines: his next comment is on A. 2.589 *cum mihi se*.

⁶¹⁹ p. 331: 'Hos versus viginti et duo non agnoscit Servius. Sed nec Donatus. Absunt etiam a nostro libro scripto. Vide interpp. et Franc. Campanum in *Quaestione Virgiliana*. Esse autem Maronianos, adeoque nullo iure subtrahi, luculenter docet Ang. Decembrius ll. de Polit. Liter. p.83 sqq.'



III. 40 p. 345.

La Rue comments on A. 3.12:

'And with the Penates and the great Gods] 'Great' are Jupiter, Juno, Mars and the other communal gods; the *Penates* are the house gods and are not named.'⁶²⁰

The annotator, then, has written in the margin of the same verse:

'See Servius. Parrhasius, *Epist.* p. 169 thought that they were the same, but they are distinguished in Boissardus t.6. *Antiq.*, p.68.146 where Jupiter and Hercules are called GREAT GODS. But they were the same, see Cassius Hemina in Macrobius 3, *Sat.* 4.'⁶²¹

Here too, the annotation next to the verse adds extra information to the interpretation provided by the commentator. Interestingly, Servius seems to be the primary authority to adduce – which might seem logical from a modern point of view, but which is not a given in the early modern period, in which Virgilian scholarship used a great abundance and variety of different materials.⁶²²

Concluding remark

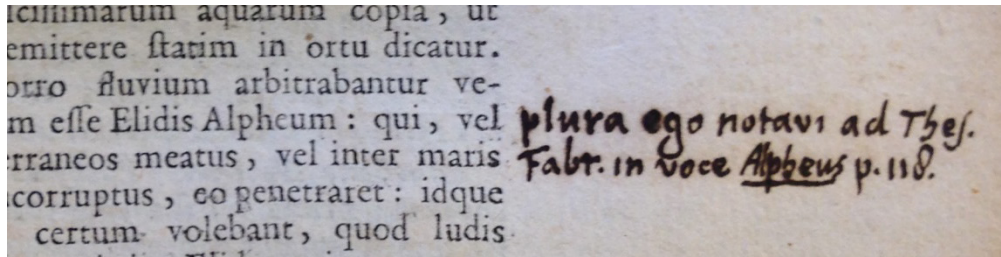
The great use this annotator has made of various authors and works of scholarship tells much about the way in which (late) early modern scholars read a work like the *Aeneid*. Broekhuizen cross-references his own hand-written annotations in

⁶²⁰ p.345: 'Penatibus et magnis Diis] Magni sunt Jupiter, Juno, Mars, etc. communes Dii: Penates, domestici, nec nominati, AE. 2.717.

⁶²¹ p. 345: 'v. Serviu[m]. Eosdem esse contendit Parrhasius *Epist.* p.169. sed discernuntur apud Boissardum t.6 *Antiq.* p.68.146 ubi Jupiter et Hercules DII MAGNI vocantur. erant tamen iidem. v. Cassius Hemina apud Macrobi. III. *Sat.* 4.'

⁶²² Though even Servius sometimes errs, according to the annotator. E.g., p.276 next to A. 1.408: 'male hic Servius, melius Barthius ad Papin. 2. Theb. 296. Acro in Horat. 1. ad 18 v.11.'

other editions: e.g., on p. 393 next to La Rue's lemma on A. 3.694 *Alpheum fama est*: 'I have written more in [my edition of] Thes. Fabr. on the word Alpheus, p. 118' (ill. 41).⁶²³



Ill. 41 p. 393.

This only once more shows how he is turning his edition of Virgil into a treasure-trove of information, that is structured in accordance with the verses of the epic. In effect the annotator is adding an additional layer on top of the text: the first layer consists of the verses of the *Aeneid*, the second of the printed commentary on these verses, and the third of the annotator's remarks on the verses and the commentary. This makes clear how the annotator is not only using his printed commentary as a means to study the works of Virgil, but also how he is using the edition itself as a tool for additional studying, compiling, organizing, storing and retrieving knowledge.

3. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined handwritten annotations left by early modern readers in their printed *Aeneid* commentaries. The guiding question of this chapter is what these early modern annotations show about the way in which early modern readers used these works for acquiring and (re)organizing knowledge. I have only been able to present a selection of annotations from a selection of annotated commentaries. However, as I have noted in the introduction to this chapter, the discussion of a selection of case studies can serve as a fruitful method for the study of (early modern) intellectual history in showing illustrations of facets of (early modern) reading practices.

First, it appears that most annotators were involved in *structuring* the information offered to them by the printed commentary. Readers appear to have worked their way through (parts of) the text, in the process adding marginal

⁶²³ p. 393: 'Plura ego notavi ad Thes. Fabr. in voce Alpheus p. 118.'

pointers (keywords or little drawings), underlining the beginning of lemmata, and using other tools for the (re)organization of information (adding cross-references between text and commentary). Apparently, the printed commentary with its dense text provided a starting point for learning, teaching and scholarship that was both welcome and arduous, because of the host of material that was included, but often not presented clearly enough.

Secondly, some annotators bring *additional* information to the text of the printed commentary. As we have seen, this can range from providing references to passages from other works of (classical) literature to the addition of lists of relevant works of scholarship. This addition of information is best visible in the annotations of learned readers such as Coetier and Broekhuizen, who turned their printed volumes into storehouses of information and reference works for future use. But also the less extravagant annotations of other readers point to the commentary as a possible focal point for gathering knowledge from various sources. This use of the commentary is probably closely connected to its principle of organization: in closely following the verses of the *Aeneid*, the printed commentary provides a useful organizational principle or index, even for information that was not included in the printed text.

Thirdly, bringing additional information to the text could result in the annotations taking prominence over the printed commentary. In the case of Coetier this almost resulted in the *destruction* of the text, while in the case of Broekhuizen the annotations *enhanced* the printed text by adding an additional layer of information.

The annotations of early modern readers, such as those discussed in this chapter, show how reading in the Renaissance often entailed writing and production and not only passive consumption of the printed text. Moreover, as I have noted in this chapter, at least some early modern readers took an active interest in information provided by the commentary that was not of direct relevance to a grammatical or literary understanding or teaching of the text, such as information on astronomical phenomena. Thus the *Aeneid*-commentary really was perceived as a storehouse of knowledge and a starting-point for learning and scholarship.

6. GENERAL CONCLUSION

In this study, I have examined the role of early modern Latin commentaries on the *Aeneid* as tools for organization of knowledge and used them as a lens to look at developments taking place in the early modern period in knowledge management and intellectual traditions. In each of the preceding four case studies I have discussed a research question from modern Renaissance studies from the perspective of these commentaries.

In **chapter 2** I have discussed the question of the continuity and discontinuity of intellectual traditions on the basis of an enquiry into the language disciplines in early modern *Aeneid* commentaries. From this it appeared how the commentator can be seen as a nucleus in a vast network of knowledge and scholarship, with his commentary serving as a focal point through which this knowledge is filtered, focused, sharpened and made (more) accessible for an audience of readers that is not as highly trained and as profoundly invested in these knowledge systems as the commentator. The examination of the role of the language disciplines has shown how the influence of longstanding traditions of scholarship is clearly discernable in early modern commentaries on the *Aeneid*. The explanation of matters pertaining to those fields had been part of the competence of the grammarian since antiquity itself, and a longstanding tradition of grammarians writing commentaries on works of poetry such as the *Aeneid* was available to early modern commentators. Nonetheless, there appears to have been room for innovation, for the commentator's own preferences and interpretations. So, for example, Cristoforo Landino created his own interpretative frame (a combination of an allegorical Neoplatonic reading and rhetorical analysis in the tradition of Tib. Cl. Donatus), and Jacobus Pontanus turned his commentary into a sort of proto-encyclopedia for Virgilian (and in fact classical) studies. Grammar, rhetoric and poetical theory had always been prominent fields in the commentary tradition of the *Aeneid* and they retained that position in the early modern era. Because of the changing context however – the rediscovery of classical texts, the renewed focus in education on rhetoric, and overtime also the changing epistemological value of a classical text of the *Aeneid* – there was need for adaptation and room for innovation in the commentator's discussion of these lemmata. This shows how the early modern commentary was a flexible genre, resulting in various types of commentaries (e.g. allegorical, grammatical, encyclopaedic).

Chapter 3 presented a discussion of the views and approaches to the classical world in the commentary of Juan Luis de la Cerda. I have situated the conceptualization of the classical past in his commentary in the broader context of how early modern scholars viewed the classical world. This approach fits the debate in modern renaissance studies about the ways in which humanist scholars approached the past. The examination of La Cerda's lemmata on the *toga*, the port of Carthage, and the *quadris* bread has shown how he sometimes turns his lemmata into a sort of scholarly essays in which he presents a well-informed contribution to the state of scholarship on a particular topic. In the case of these lemmata, the text of the *Aeneid* serves as index to the commentary. I have shown how in these discussions La Cerda is not only dependent on classical sources of information, but also presents material from post-classical scholarship. Moreover, as I have discussed, La Cerda engages with the material he presents, rhetorically stressing the sometimes innovative line-of-thought he himself proposes. As I have noted in my conclusion to chapter 3, it seems that La Cerda was on the one hand a scholarly observer, who viewed the classical past from a distance, as a period which is very different from his own and which is in need of further clarification, while on the other hand the effort he makes in discussing this material, the host of references he provides, and the interest he seems to take in establishing definitive interpretations, indicate that he still very much thought that the classical mattered to his own world. La Cerda frequently tried to establish connections between the classical era and the early modern world, without assimilating the ancient world to his own time or appropriating its concepts for contemporary use. This shows how indeed the early modern *Aeneid*-commentary could also be the place for innovation, not only in approach (the way in which La Cerda approaches the classical world), but also in form (the way in which La Cerda presents his findings). So in the field of cultural history – which in the form of the explanation of *realia* had been part of the Virgilian commentary tradition since classical antiquity – the early modern commentary could cater to early modern interests and scholarly practices, or at least La Cerda's commentary could. This is probably also one of the reasons that La Cerda's work was readily used and referred to by many later (modern) commentators.

The interaction between changing contexts and the *Aeneid*-commentary also lays at the heart of the discussion of the Virgilian commentary and the rise of the sciences in **chapter 4**. In this chapter, I have studied the relation and interaction between traditional scholarship and the new sciences in early modern commentaries on the *Aeneid*. In view of the hypothesis that Virgil's epic sparked the writing of commentaries that came to function as treasure-troves of knowledge, a study of the

role of the emerging new scientific disciplines was indispensable. As I have shown, an examination of that topic touches upon the issue of tradition and innovation in these commentaries: did early modern commentators include newly available knowledge in their works or did they stay within the predefined boundaries of the commentary tradition? As appeared from chapter 2 and 3 innovation was possible with regard to the language disciplines and cultural history. Both of these fields were however firmly rooted within the commentary tradition of the *Aeneid*. As we have seen in chapter 4, topics pertaining to the study of nature had traditionally also been part of Virgilian commentaries, often in the domain of cultural history or natural philosophy. With the rise of the new early modern sciences disciplines then, the authority of the established philological disciplines was at stake, and especially the position of the commentary as a nucleus of and starting point for knowledge and scholarly information. As appears from the analysis in chapter 4, early modern *Aeneid*-commentators do not refer or respond to the developments in the new sciences. Topics pertaining to the scientific domain are still discussed in the commentaries, but in the context of the established tradition. The discussion of several lemmata on lightning showed how sometimes classical knowledge that had traditionally laid at the basis of the discussion of these phenomena was still up-to-date, since the scientific study of these phenomena was still grounded in, for example, the Aristotelian tradition of natural philosophy. In other areas of study on the other hand, for example in astronomy, important progress was made in the early modern period, which, as I have shown, was in no way included or referred to in the *Aeneid*-commentaries. I am aware that in classical antiquity also the inclusion of astronomical knowledge in commentary lemmata can perhaps not unproblematically be seen as an effort on the commentator's part to include up-to-date scientific material. The difference with the early modern period, however, is that while both classical and early modern commentators of the *Aeneid* emphatically claimed the knowledge value of their work for a wide array of studies, in the early modern period this claim came to be highly problematic in view of the advances made in some of these disciplines, which were no longer based on the philological study of texts, but on empirical observation. Thus, just because of the commentator's claim to knowledge that was universal (instead of only pertaining to the text of the *Aeneid* and its context, as in modern commentaries) his position, and that of his work, became somewhat problematic. And so the very knowledge function which had been so central for the commentary tradition of the *Aeneid* appears to have been gradually undermining the authority of the commentary in the early modern era, since commentators were unwilling or unable to innovate as for example La Cerda had done for the discussion of topics from cultural history. It seems that the literary commentary and the developments

in the new sciences were two very separate discourses, perhaps also because – as chapter 2 made clear – the commentator was a grammarian: highly-trained in the language disciplines, but not necessarily also invested in other fields of study.

In **chapter 5** I have discussed a selection of annotations left behind by early modern readers in their copies of *Aeneid*-commentaries. The leading question of this chapter was how early modern readers read their Virgil. In this way, the analysis of annotations functioned as a way of testing the assumptions and conclusions of the other chapters. The annotations show how early modern readers through their annotations are (re-)organizing bits of knowledge. Sometimes they organize the information that is already available in the text of the printed volume – for example by underlining parts of the text, by writing marginalia, adding keywords, or drawing up convenient schematic drawings – while on other occasions they add information of their own (such as references to other volumes, transcriptions of information from other works) turning their annotated copies into (enhanced) storehouses of knowledge. In this respect the annotating practices of early modern readers mirror those of the commentator, who in his commentary is also bringing additional information to the text of the epic and occasionally also reorganizes information contained in the *Aeneid*. The annotations moreover show that early modern readers took interest in information that was not directly relevant to the grammatical or literary understanding of the *Aeneid*, such as information on astronomical phenomena or elements taken from natural philosophy. Thus the selected annotations confirm that the *Aeneid*-commentary was really perceived and used as a storehouse of knowledge and a starting-point for learning and scholarship.

The case studies of the previous chapters confirm how early modern commentaries on the *Aeneid* were perceived as storehouses of knowledge. This conceptualization was dependent on the epistemological value that was attributed to the *Aeneid* – and in fact also to other prominent works of classical literature –, which was perceived to be a source of information. This notion originated in classical antiquity and dominated the commentary tradition of the *Aeneid* up into the early modern period to a large extent. The study of lemmata in this study has shown how this approach of early modern scholars to the *Aeneid* resulted in commentaries that are in many ways fundamentally different from modern ones, in which the epic is approached as a work of literature, from a philological point of view, and no epistemological claims are made with regard to knowledge outside the realm of classical studies. The case studies of this dissertation show how over the course of the early modern period the approach of early modern *Aeneid*-commentators became problematic:

gradually commentary practices got out of sync with developments in other fields of study in thinking about knowledge and the epistemological value of classical texts. Throughout the early modern period commentaries retained their role in education (though, as the commentaries of Farnaby and La Rue show, probably also in a changing context), and several of them remained in use well after the early modern period, sometimes even up into the 19th-century. The knowledge-value of these works, however, changed because, as I have shown, the organization of knowledge in these commentaries was to a large extent defined by the commentary tradition of the *Aeneid*. Among other things, this resulted by the end of the 16th-century in the monumental, encyclopaedic commentaries of Pontanus and – two decades later – La Cerda. In the context of the commentary tradition of the *Aeneid* these works are in many ways the *non plus ultra*, for the host of (references to) earlier and contemporary (Virgilian) scholarship they include and the wide array of topics they cover. On the one hand they are a symbol for the (apparent) continuity of the centuries-old commentary tradition, on the other they also indicate why this rich tradition could no longer retain its central position in learning and scholarship. For in their learned and sometimes ingenious explanations of the epic, both commentators also show – through their use of (classical) sources and through their comments – how their work of scholarship was essentially part of the literary, cultural historical domain and did not traverse into other fields of study. Looking back from the 21st century at the commentary tradition of the *Aeneid* this might appear to be consistent with that very tradition. As I have shown in the case studies of this study, from a early modern point of view this was however problematic in view of the traditional claim of *Aeneid*-commentaries as sources of knowledge pertaining to the literary *and* the non-literary domain.

The early modern commentaries on the *Aeneid* that I have discussed in this study are monuments to the erudition of early modern scholars of Virgil. For not only did they need to deal with centuries of Virgilian scholarship, but they also needed to cover a daunting array of topics from a wide variety of disciplines. Our modern approach to Virgil is a different one, but it appears that nonetheless modern scholars of Virgil might profit from the labour of their early modern counterparts, especially because of their profound knowledge of classical literature and the classical tradition. Moreover, as I have shown in this study, these works are of great value to modern scholars of the early modern era, since they preserve a glimpse of the intellectual world of the early modern past.

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⁶²⁴ Other than the Oxford Classical Text.

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NEDERLANDSE SAMENVATTING

Eeuwenlang hebben commentaren op (klassieke) teksten een cruciale rol gespeeld in de vorming, overdracht en het gebruik van kennis in vele verschillende velden van wetenschap. Dit proefschrift bestudeert vroegmoderne Latijnse commentaren op de *Aeneis* van Vergilius als voorbeelden van een eeuwenoude geleerde traditie van kennisorganisatie, die door ontwikkelingen in de vroegmoderne tijd in een versnelling raakte. De werken van de Romeinse dichter Vergilius (70 - 19 v.C.) waren sinds de oudheid zeer invloedrijk. Dit gold met name voor zijn epos over Aeneas, de stamvader van het Romeinse volk. Ook in de Renaissance had dit werk een centrale positie in onderwijs en wetenschap. Veel vroegmoderne geleerden beschouwden Vergilius als één van de meest eminente klassieke schrijvers.

Het **eerste hoofdstuk** bespreekt de methodologische en cultuurhistorische achtergronden van het vroegmoderne Vergiliuscommentaar. Anders dan soms wel wordt beweerd, is het commentaar niet een tekst die puur secundair, of zelfs dienend is ten opzichte van de tekst die wordt becommentarieerd, maar staat deze commentaartekst in veel gevallen zelf centraal voor de lezer. Er is veelal sprake van een symbiotische relatie tussen tekst en commentaar. Het genre van het commentaar werd beoefend sinds de oudheid. Het vroegmoderne commentaar was enerzijds onderdeel van de hernieuwde interesse in de klassieke wereld, die vaak zo kenmerkend is voor de Renaissance, maar was anderzijds ook het resultaat van een eeuwenlange traditie van geleerdheid, waarbij in de vroegmoderne tijd ook weer expliciet op klassieke voorbeelden werd teruggegrepen (bijvoorbeeld het commentaar van de 5^e-eeuwse grammaticus Servius). In het algemeen lijkt het vroegmoderne literaire commentaar te worden gekenmerkt door een grote interesse in grammatica, retorica en stijl, en het identificeren van vergelijkbare passages in andere klassieke auteurs. Ook besteden vroegmoderne commentatoren veel tijd aan het uitleggen en analyseren van de cultuurhistorische achtergronden van de gebeurtenissen die plaatsvinden in de becommentarieerde tekst.

De *Aeneis* werd al sinds de klassieke oudheid gezien als een werk vol van kennis over allerlei wetenschapsgebieden. In de vroegmoderne tijd, een periode waarin het herontdekken en organiseren van kennis over de klassieke wereld een hoge vlucht nam, resulteerde dit in de productie van soms enorme commentaren op dit werk. Het onderzoek in dit proefschrift sluit aan bij de relatief recent opgekomen belangstelling in renaissancestudies voor de wijze waarop in de vroegmoderne tijd de grote hoeveelheid kennis die (opnieuw) beschikbaar kwam werd georganiseerd en bestudeerd. Omdat het becommentariëren van de werken van Vergilius, in het bijzonder de *Aeneis*, een vrijwel onafgebroken traditie kent

vanaf de klassieke oudheid, zijn vroegmoderne Vergiliuscommentaren bij uitstek een geschikt studieobject om vragen te bestuderen die te maken hebben met de (dis)continuïteit van intellectuele tradities en disciplines en de ontwikkelingen daarin in de Renaissance. In dit onderzoek staat dan ook de vraag centraal welke rol het literaire commentaar speelde in de organisatie van kennis in de vroegmoderne tijd en hoe de rol van de verschillende in het commentaar betrokken disciplines in die tijd veranderde. Het Vergiliuscommentaar dient daarmee als een lens om te kijken naar de complexe ontwikkelingen die in de vroegmoderne tijd plaatsvonden, zowel op het gebied van kennisorganisatie als in intellectuele tradities. Elk van de vier analytische hoofdstukken van deze dissertatie fungeert als een uitgebreide casestudy die inzicht geeft in een belangrijke onderzoeksvraag op het gebied van de Renaissancestudies, aan de hand van het Vergiliuscommentaar:

- I. het vraagstuk van de continuïteit en discontinuïteit van intellectuele tradities, in het bijzonder de grammaticale traditie;
- II. de vroegmoderne conceptualisatie van het klassieke verleden;
- III. de relatie tussen traditie en innovatie in de commentaartraditie, en daarbij in het bijzonder de verhouding tussen de klassieke filologie en de opkomende natuurwetenschappen;
- IV. de vraag hoe vroegmoderne lezers hun commentaren lezen en gebruikten (vroegmoderne leesgeschiedenis).

Bij de bestudering van elk van deze vragen staan in het bijzonder zes commentaren centraal, namelijk die van (steeds tussen haakjes de plaats en datum van de eerste druk van het commentaar):

- de Florentijnse humanist Cristoforo **Landino** (Florence, 1487/8)
- de Parijse humanist en drukker Jodocus **Badius** Ascensius (Parijs, 1501)
- de Duitse Jezuïet Jacobus **Pontanus** (Augsburg, 1599)
- de Spaanse Jezuïet Juan Luis de **la Cerda** (Frankfurt, 1617)
- de Britse schoolmeester Thomas **Farnaby** (Londen, 1634)
- de Franse hofpredikant Charles de **la Rue** (Parijs, 1675)

Het **tweede hoofdstuk** presenteert een analyse van commentaarlemma's op het gebied van de taaldisciplines, ook wel de "grammaticale traditie" genoemd. Deze omvat (onder meer) grammatica, retorica en poëtica. De grammaticale traditie is een belangrijk, zo niet essentieel onderdeel van de commentaartraditie op de werken van Vergilius. Omdat deze traditie vanaf de klassieke oudheid

ononderbroken doorloopt naar de vroegmoderne tijd, kan het bestuderen van lemma's die onderwerpen op het gebied van de grammatica, retorica of poëtica bespreken inzicht bieden in mogelijke discontinuïteit in deze ogenschijnlijk continue intellectuele traditie. Uit het hoofdstuk blijkt onder meer dat uit de interactie tussen deze gevestigde traditie en een nieuwe context vaak nieuwe soorten commentaar konden voortkomen (bijv. geïnspireerd door een bepaald filosofisch kader, toegesneden op een bepaald onderwijsprogramma, of gericht op de cultuurhistorie van de oudheid), die verschillende benaderingen van het werk van Vergilius representeren. Bovendien ontsluit het hoofdstuk, door zijn bespreking van de vaak zeer technische materie in deze lemma's, een selectie van dit voor het Vergiliuscommentaar zo belangrijke materiaal voor een breder publiek van wetenschappers die zich bezighouden met de vroegmoderne (intellectuele) geschiedenis, maar niet getraind zijn in de klassieke filologie. De analyse van commentaarlemma's laat eerst zien dat vroegmoderne Vergiliuscommentaren dikwijls in een onderwijskundige context werden gebruikt. Zo kan het sterk Neoplatonisch geïnspireerde commentaar van de 15^e-eeuwse Florentijnse humanist Cristoforo Landino bezwaarlijk los worden gezien van zijn onderwijs aan de Florentijnse *studio* (een instelling voor hoger onderwijs). Ook het eind 16^e-eeuwse haast encyclopedische commentaar van de Duitse Jezuïet Jacobus Pontanus is sterk verbonden met het onderwijs, maar dan met dat van de Jezuïeten. In het voorwoord op zijn monumentale commentaar verwijst Pontanus naar de grote hoeveelheid commentaren en andere geleerde werken die er in het verleden al over de *Aeneïs* waren geschreven en benadrukt hij vervolgens hoe hij al dit materiaal heeft bestudeerd, geselecteerd en op georganiseerde wijze in zijn eigen commentaar heeft opgenomen. Op die manier, zo zegt Pontanus, is het commentaar ook geschikt voor diegenen die Vergilius bestuderen, maar daarbij de bijstand van een leraar ontberen. Ook de 17^e-eeuwse commentaren van de Britse onderwijzer Thomas Farnaby en de Franse hofprediker Charles de la Rue richtten zich op het faciliteren van de bestudering van de *Aeneïs*, maar nu op een ogenschijnlijk minder vergevorderd niveau. Beide commentaren zijn veel compacter dan die van hun voorgangers. Farnaby merkt dit soms ook expliciet op: sommige achtergrondinformatie moet hij buiten beschouwing laten omdat hij anders buiten de bondigheid treedt die hij zichzelf tot doel had gesteld. La Rue maakt een soortgelijke opmerking in zijn voorwoord, als hij stelt dat hij in zijn commentaar niets heeft weggelaten dat behulpzaam kan zijn bij het lezen Vergilius, maar dat hij ook niets heeft opgenomen dat enkel dient om eruditie tentoon te spreiden. Dit geeft de spanning aan die welhaast inherent aan het vroegmoderne Vergiliuscommentaar lijkt te zijn: enerzijds is er de wens om een commentaar te schrijven dat de lezer behulpzaam is bij zijn studie en lectuur, anderzijds bestaat er

de soms nauwelijks ingehouden behoefte om een veelheid aan kennis in het commentaar op te nemen die soms nog maar in losse relatie tot de tekst van het epos staat. De verschillende case studies die in het hoofdstuk worden besproken (steeds een aantal lemma's op het gebied van grammatica, retorica en poëtica bij de verzen 1 tot en met 10 van boek 1 van de *Aeneïs*) bevestigen dit beeld. Zij laten ook een ander spanningsveld zien, namelijk dat tussen traditie en innovatie. Hoewel elk van de in dit hoofdstuk besproken commentaren duidelijk in de grammaticale traditie staan, verschillen zij soms ook sterk onderling, omdat zij ieder een andere benadering van het epos kiezen of een andere selectie maken uit het al beschikbare materiaal. Er lijken op zijn minst drie verschillende typen vroegmoderne Latijnse Vergiliuscommentaren te kunnen worden geïdentificeerd: het (vroeg) humanistische commentaar (Landino, maar ook Leto en Badius), het Jezuïtische encyclopedische commentaar (Pontanus, La Cerda) en het 17^e-eeuwse op (school)onderwijs gerichte commentaar (Farnaby, La Rue). Dit toont de flexibiliteit van het genre en de variëteit aan commentaren die daaruit voortkomt.

Het **derde hoofdstuk** bestudeert de relatie tussen het vroegmoderne *Aeneïs*-commentaar en het antiquarianisme (de bestudering van de cultuurgeschiedenis en materiële overblijfselen van de klassieke oudheid die opkwam in de vroegmoderne tijd). Het hoofdstuk richt zich exclusief op het monumentale commentaar van De la Cerda en daarbinnen op de lemma's die zich bezighouden met onderwerpen op het gebied van de klassieke oudheid. De centrale vraag daarbij is welke benadering en welk beeld van de klassieke oudheid in deze lemma's naar voren komt. Een van de redenen om specifiek naar lemma's te kijken die zich met de klassieke oudheid bezig houden is dat in de moderne renaissancestudies veel gezegd is over de manier waarop vroegmoderne geleerden naar het verleden keken. Sommige moderne geleerden hebben zich daarbij op het standpunt gesteld dat deze benadering in de vroegmoderne tijd fundamenteel verschilde van die van eerdere perioden, omdat men het verleden als een tijdperk ging zien dat radicaal verschilde van de eigen tijd. Dit lijkt in sommige opzichten paradoxaal, omdat juist in de vroegmoderne tijd vele geleerden zich op een zeer intensieve manier met de klassieke oudheid bezig hielden en het klassieke verleden ook als een moreel voorbeeld voor de eigen tijd werd gezien. Dit geldt ook voor La Cerda, die in zijn commentaar niet alleen een grote kennis van de klassieke literatuur en cultuur tentoonspreidt, maar ook aangeeft dat het klassieke verleden er nog steeds toe doet, bijvoorbeeld als inspirerend voorbeeld voor hen die een carrière nastreven in publieke dienst.

De centrale vraag van het hoofdstuk wordt beantwoord aan de hand van drie lemma's, die als casestudy fungeren. De eerste is een (ook voor dit commentaar)

lang lemma dat La Cerda schreef over de Romeinse toga. In dit lemma – dat is opgenomen bij een van de meest memorabele verzen van de *Aeneïs* (A. 1.279), waarin de oppergod Jupiter de toekomstige wereldheerschappij van de Romeinen profeteert – bespreekt La Cerda tot in detail de vraag of de Romeinse toga rond of vierkant was. Hij verwijst daarbij naar klassieke en latere auteurs en weegt kritisch de verschillende bronnen tegen elkaar af. Het lemma krijgt daarmee iets van een wetenschappelijke beschouwing, een essay of artikel bijna, waarin een bepaald punt wordt gemaakt (in dit geval dat de toga rond was) en *en passant* ook nog een tegenstrijdigheid tussen twee belangrijke bronnen wordt opgelost. Een lemma als dit staat zozeer los van de tekst van de *Aeneïs* dat het niet enkel tot uitleg of verduidelijking van een passage uit het epos kan dienen. Het lemma staat dus duidelijk in de vroegmoderne antiquarische traditie, waarin het bieden van informatie over de (materiële) cultuur van de klassieke oudheid centraal stond. Dit blijkt ook uit andere lemma's in zijn commentaar, zoals bijvoorbeeld een lemma waarin hij bespreekt hoe de Romeinen ronde broden als bord gebruikten. Deze broden waren, aldus La Cerda, zowel horizontaal als verticaal ingekerfd (om ze makkelijk eerlijk in vieren te kunnen delen), zodat er de vorm van een kruis op stond. De Christenen, zo vervolgt hij, hebben dit gebruik overgenomen, maar wel de betekenis veranderd, zodat het kruis voortaan tot eer van Christus diende. Ook in dit lemma wil La Cerda duidelijk een bepaald punt maken (nl. dat het hier in de tekst van Vergilius om broden gaat en niet om tafels, zoals ook wel werd gesteld), waarbij hij ook het verleden met het heden verbindt (nl. op het punt van de kruisvormige indeling van het brood). Uit dit soort lemma's blijkt dat de klassieke oudheid voor La Cerda niet enkel een object van studie was, maar ook daadwerkelijk nog van belang was voor zijn eigen tijd. Dit resulteert in het schrijven van doorwrochte, soms lange lemma's die vaak het karakter van een essay krijgen. Dat leidt er op zijn beurt weer toe dat het commentaar soms de overhand krijgt op de tekst van Vergilius: niet de uitleg van de *Aeneïs* staat centraal, maar de informatie die in het lemma is opgenomen. De verzen van het epos – die een belangrijke plaats innamen in het vroegmoderne onderwijs en daarom door velen grotendeels uit het hoofd werden gekend – dienden dan soms als niet meer dan een kapstok – of een *interface* – voor het organiseren van informatie over de klassieke oudheid. Dit alles laat zien hoezeer de klassieke wereld ertoe deed voor een vroegmoderne geleerde als La Cerda, die rond de *Aeneïs* een eigen encyclopedie van de klassieke wereld organiseerde.

Het **vierde hoofdstuk** richt zich op de relatie en interactie tussen traditionele geleerdheid en de nieuwe (natuur)wetenschappen in vroegmoderne *Aeneïs*-commentaren. Gelet op de hypothese die het uitgangspunt voor deze dissertatie

vormt, namelijk dat Vergiliuscommentaren als bewaarplaatsen voor grote hoeveelheden kennis werden gebruikt, onderzoekt dit hoofdstuk de vraag wat de rol van de natuurwetenschappen in deze commentaren is en of in deze werken iets zichtbaar is van de grote ontwikkelingen die zich in de vroegmoderne tijd in velden als de astronomie, de biologie en de natuurkunde voordeden. Was de vroegmoderne Vergiliuscommentator, die vrijwel altijd in de klassieke filologie was opgeleid, bereid en in staat om ook hier over de grenzen van zijn eigen discipline heen te kijken? Dit onderwerp heeft in de moderne bestudering van het vroegmoderne literaire commentaar (vooralsnog) vrijwel geen aandacht gekregen – al wordt wel, zonder verdere argumentatie, aangenomen dat van enige kruisbestuiving geen sprake was – en wordt mede daarom in dit hoofdstuk uitvoerig behandeld.

Het hoofdstuk valt uiteen in twee delen. In het eerste deel wordt gedefinieerd wat eigenlijk onder natuurwetenschap zou moeten worden verstaan in de moderne en vroegmoderne tijd (en in de eeuwen daarvoor). Ook wordt beknopt de historische ontwikkeling van de natuurwetenschappen geschetst, met een focus op natuurfilosofie, astronomie en natuurlijke geschiedenis. De reden om met name naar deze drie velden te kijken is dat vanouds in Vergiliuscommentaren lemma's voorkomen die juist deze onderwerpen bespreken. Ook wordt kort ingegaan over de relatie tussen de natuurwetenschappen en de *humaniora* in de vroegmoderne tijd het algemeen. Hieruit kan de voorzichtige conclusie worden getrokken dat met de snelle ontwikkelingen in de natuurwetenschappen de autoriteit en legitimiteit van de traditionele (humanistische) geesteswetenschappen onder druk kwam te staan. In het tweede deel van het hoofdstuk wordt een groot aantal lemma's besproken uit de zes commentaren die in dit proefschrift centraal staan, waarin onderwerpen van natuurwetenschappelijke aard aan de orde zijn. Het gaat daarbij onder meer om lemma's over de (ogenschijnlijke) beweging van de zon door de tekens van de dierenriem, de ether en de sterren, chronologie en de bliksem. Uit een analyse van de lemma's blijkt dat vroegmoderne commentatoren van de *Aeneïs* duidelijk geïnteresseerd zijn in deze materie, maar dat zij hierbij niet verwijzen naar recente ontwikkelingen in het natuurwetenschappelijke domein. Integendeel, de commentatoren lijken vast te houden aan de kaders die door de klassieke commentaartraditie waren vastgesteld, en daarmee ook aan de in de klassieke commentaren aangehaalde klassieke natuurwetenschappelijke teksten. Deels stemt dit overeen met wat in de vroegmoderne natuurwetenschap gebeurde – zo bleef een auteur als de Romeinse encyclopedist Plinius een belangrijke autoriteit voor vroegmoderne biologie en botanie – maar op andere punten, bijvoorbeeld in de astronomie, was de kennis die in de klassieke teksten was vastgelegd duidelijk achterhaald geraakt. Dit leidt tot de paradox dat waar enerzijds de

natuurwetenschappen voor vroegmoderne commentatoren van belang waren (al was het alleen maar omdat ze traditioneel een onderdeel van de commentaartraditie waren), anderzijds elke vernieuwing op dit punt, door het opnemen van nieuwe informatie, lijkt te ontbreken. Dit vormt een groot contrast met de lemma's over klassieke cultuur (hoofdstuk 3), waarin juist wel sprake was van innovatie en het opnemen van verwijzingen naar contemporaine geleerden. De relatie tussen het vroegmoderne *Aeneïs*-commentaar en de natuurwetenschappelijke disciplines is er dus een met verschillende gezichten, waarin een belangrijk aspect lijkt te zijn dat de geestes- en natuurwetenschappen ook toen al in veel opzichten gescheiden werelden waren. Dit is natuurlijk problematisch in het licht van de positie die het Vergiliuscommentaar zichzelf toebedeelde, namelijk als een bron van allerlei soorten, ook niet-literaire, kennis. Want ondanks het voorbeeld van klassieke Vergiliuscommentaren, waarin wel contemporaine kennis(bronnen) voor natuurwetenschappelijke kennis werden opgenomen, kon het vroegmoderne commentaar in de nieuwste ontwikkelingen niet meer meegaan.

Het **vijfde hoofdstuk** richt zich op de zichtbare sporen die vroegmoderne lezers van *Aeneïs*-commentaren hebben achtergelaten: handgeschreven annotaties bij de gedrukte tekst. De studie van handgeschreven aantekeningen in vroegmoderne boeken is relatief recent opgekomen in de renaissancestudies. In het kader van deze dissertatie is een studie van die annotaties vooral van belang omdat het ons kan laten zien hoe vroegmoderne lezers hun commentaren gebruikten en of dat in overeenstemming is met de hypothesen daarover in de andere hoofdstukken van dit proefschrift. De annotaties die in dit hoofdstuk worden besproken dateren uit de 16^e en 17^e eeuw. Het gaat hier noodzakelijkerwijs om een relatief kleine selectie annotaties, die dus niet tot uitspraken kunnen leiden die betrekking hebben op hoe vroegmoderne lezers in het algemeen Vergiliuscommentaren lazen. Wel vormen de bevindingen uit deze case studies een nuttige illustratie voor de wijzen waarop lezers in de vroegmoderne tijd Vergiliuscommentaren lazen.

Het hoofdstuk besteedt eerst aandacht aan de wijze waarop in de vroegmoderne tijd werd gelezen. Kenmerkend daarvoor zijn dat lezen een actieve activiteit was, vaak gericht op de productie van andere teksten, waarbij lezers vaak de behoefte aan de dag lijken te leggen om de gelezen tekst aan andere kennis te relateren. Dit laatste is natuurlijk bij uitstek interessant voor het onderzoek van deze dissertatie, waarin het commentaar als een instrument voor kennisorganisatie centraal staat. Uit studies die door andere moderne geleerden zijn gedaan blijkt dat bepaalde vormen van annotaties vaak in bepaalde contexten voorkomen. Zo zal een leraar vaak stukken uit het commentaar onderstrepen of synoniemen bij

moeilijke woorden toevoegen voor later gebruik in het onderwijs, terwijl een lezer die geïnteresseerd is in poëtische compositie (bijvoorbeeld omdat hij zelf een epos wil schrijven) vooral opmerkingen over stijl zal markeren en annoteren. In mijn eigen case studies laat ik zien dat annotaties kunnen dienen om het commentaar te herstructureren, extra kennis aan het commentaar toe te voegen, het commentaar te verbeteren, het commentaar als interface op het epos (haast) te vernietigen, of het commentaar in een soort van proto-encyclopedie kunnen omvormen. Al deze vormen van annotatie hebben gemeen dat de lezer met zijn aantekeningen zijn editie van de tekst verrijkt door er een *interface* (een hypertext: een tekst met woorden die verwijzen naar andere tekstgedeelten) van te maken op de verzameling kennis die in de tekst van Vergilius en – vooral – het commentaar verscholen ligt.

In de **conclusie** worden de bevindingen uit de vier analytische hoofdstukken op een rij gezet en besproken in het licht van de hoofdvraag van deze dissertatie. De analytische hoofdstukken bevestigen dat vroegmoderne *Aeneïs*-commentaren als instrumenten voor de opslag van kennis werden gezien. Dit hing samen met de epistemologische waarde die aan de *Aeneïs* werd toegekend, als belangrijke bron van kennis over allerlei onderwerpen. Deze opvatting ontstond in de klassieke oudheid en bleef dominant in de commentaartraditie tot in de vroegmoderne tijd. Dit leidt tot een wijze van becommentariëring die fundamenteel anders is dan die in moderne commentaren, waarin de *Aeneïs* als een literair werk wordt gezien. De claims die in moderne commentaren worden gemaakt hebben, in tegenstelling tot de observaties van vroegmoderne commentatoren (doorgaans) geen betrekking op kennis buiten het domein van de studie van de klassieke wereld. Het onderzoek waarvan deze dissertatie een weerslag vormt, laat zien hoe de benadering van vroegmoderne commentatoren steeds problematischer werd: langzamerhand raakten de traditionele commentaarpraktijken uit balans met ontwikkelingen die zich in andere velden van wetenschap voordeden en waarin anders werd gedacht over kennis en de rol daarin van klassieke teksten. Het commentaar bleef in de gehele vroegmoderne tijd, en soms nog ver daarna, dominant in het onderwijs. Daarbuiten veranderde echter de epistemologische waarde die aan deze werken werd toegekend. Dit leidde, onder meer, tot het verschijnen van grote, monumentale commentaren aan het einde van de 16^e-eeuw die in het licht van de commentaartraditie tot dan toe in veel opzichten als het *non plus ultra* konden worden gezien in termen van kennisorganisatie. Zij zijn een symbool voor de continuïteit in de eeuwenoude commentaartraditie, maar wijzen er ook op waarom die traditie zijn centrale positie niet langer kon vasthouden. Het commentaar bleef immers stevig verankerd in het literaire, cultuurwetenschappelijke domein en sloot

nieuwe, opkomende wetenschapsgebieden niet in. Voor de traditionele epistemologische pretentie van het *Aeneïs*-commentaar als bron voor een veelheid van kennis was dit op zijn minst zeer problematisch.

De vroegmoderne commentaren op de *Aeneïs* die ik in deze dissertatie heb besproken zijn monumenten voor de eruditie van vroegmoderne geleerden. Niet alleen moesten zij rekening houden met een eeuwenlange traditie van Vergiliuswetenschap, ook moesten zij zich bezighouden met een angstwekkende hoeveelheid onderwerpen uit een veelheid van disciplines. Onze moderne benadering van Vergilius is een andere, maar het lijkt erop dat moderne wetenschappers toch ook van het werk van hun vroegmoderne voorgangers kunnen profiteren, juist vanwege hun enorme kennis van de klassieke literatuur en de klassieke traditie. Bovendien zijn deze werken van onschatbare waarde voor het onderzoek in de renaissancestudies, omdat wij door de studie ervan een glimp opvangen van het intellectuele leven van het vroegmoderne verleden.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Maarten H.K. Jansen was born in The Hague (the Netherlands) on 11 January 1984. Between 1996 and 2002 he attended the gymnasium at College het Loo (Voorburg). He studied Classics at Leiden University, where he received his M.Phil (with the highest distinction) in 2008. In 2007-2008 he worked as a Tax Trainee in the research department of PricewaterhouseCoopers. In 2008 he began his doctoral research at Leiden University, funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) and the Spinoza-grant of Ineke Sluiter. His supervisors were Ineke Sluiter (Leiden University) and Craig Kallendorf (Texas A&M University). From 2005 onwards, he presented papers at national and international meetings, e.g. in Uppsala, Venice, Washington and Amsterdam. In addition to doing research, he taught courses on Latin grammar and literature at Leiden. Between 2010 and 2013 he was a member of the University Council of Leiden University (vice-president 2012-2013). During his doctoral research, he studied Dutch law at the Open Universiteit Nederland, from which he graduated in 2014 (with the highest distinction). Since 2014 he has been working as an associate at Pels Rijcken & Droogleever Fortuijn attorneys and civil-law notaries, where he is a member of the Supreme Court Litigation and Law Enforcement & Criminal Law practice groups.

