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

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[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 Ramminger (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] Ramminger (2005), 68.

[6] See also his earlier study, Ramminger (2005), 77-85.

[7] As Ramminger (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 '*répresentation institutionelle*'.[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

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[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 institutionelle de la lecture comme representation'.

[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 *meta*text) 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

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[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

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[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

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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

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[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

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[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 materiarum genera conplexus 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 conpetenter attenderis et eorum mentem congrue conprehenderis, 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., *Interpr. 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

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[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

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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.* l.267: *cognomen Iulo* and on *A.* l.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 regnaturos*). 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 translatum 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

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[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

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[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 Ramminger 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 epic[90] 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

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[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]

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[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

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[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):

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[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

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[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 scibilium 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), *Vergil*.

[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 &

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[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,

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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

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[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 excellance*.[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

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[131] As Black (2001, 325-330) shows in a short case study of the glossing of Boethius' *De consolatione*, 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 the 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 Spanmüller; 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.