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IN ADDITION: THE RHETORIC OF *COPIA*  
IN SERVIUS (AUCTUS)

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From the 1990s onwards, classicists have turned with novel interest towards the history and theory of commentary. In one of the earliest volumes documenting this development, Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht formulated a model of commentary as a genre which is centred around the idea of *copia* or ‘abundance’<sup>1</sup>. The commentator’s purpose, as Gumbrecht suggests, is ‘to fill up the margins’ (whether physical or metaphoric), to surround the text with as much information as possible<sup>2</sup>. The principle of *copia* drives the commentator towards writing more and more about a specific passage, selecting a greater number of textual segments for discussion, and competing with his/her predecessors not just in the content, but also in the number and length of explanatory notes<sup>3</sup>. This drive towards *copia*, however, is balanced by the constraints of the space available ‘on the margins’. Even if the commentary is detached from the main text and transferred to a separate volume, there are a number of limiting factors: the time one can afford to write the commentary, the length of the manuscript a publisher is willing to accept, and the patience of readers who must go through lengthy notes in order to find the information they are looking for. Thus the published commentary, probably even more than a paper or monograph, is the result of a great number of decisions on the author’s part about what to include in the name of *copia* and what to omit for reasons of space, where to end one note and move on to the next, resulting in what Gumbrecht calls the ‘go-and-stop rhythm’<sup>4</sup>.

Gumbrecht’s thesis, in my view, can contribute to the examination of authorial roles in (ancient) commentaries by emphasizing that in the evaluation of authorship the quantity (actual length as well as the ‘rhetoric of quantity’) is no less important than quality. Different commentators will make different decisions when trying to find the appropriate balance between letting loose and limiting *copia*; studying these decisions can thus help in drawing up the authorial profile of a commentator. Although in his rather theoretical paper Gumbrecht discusses only a few examples (none of them ancient), it also seems worthwhile to examine individual commentaries with regard to abundance. There are two basic ways of conducting such research. The first is to scan the commentaries themselves, their paratexts (such as prefaces or dedicatory letters) and any related material (letters, memoirs, etc.) for explicitly or

<sup>1</sup> Gumbrecht 1999.

<sup>2</sup> See also Fowler 1999, pp. 427-428 on the spatial metaphor of surrounding.

<sup>3</sup> On segmenting and the ‘tralaticious’ nature of *lemmata* in commentaries, see e.g. Kraus 2002, pp. 10-20; cf. Barthes 1974, pp. 11-15.

<sup>4</sup> Gumbrecht 1999, p. 446.

implicitly self-referential comments employing the rhetoric of *copia*<sup>5</sup>. The second way is to compare different commentaries on the same text and see how much space they devote to explaining a given passage, and how later commentators respond to the perceived insufficiency or (occasionally) superfluity of the information provided by their predecessors, even in absence of explicit criticism, through the length of their corresponding note.

In this paper, I am going to examine some of the ancient Latin commentary tradition employing these methods. First, I will take a look at some *copia*-related comments found in paratextual elements of various commentaries, then focus on the most obvious pair to be discussed in terms of Gumbrechtian *copia*: Servius's commentary on Vergil and its expanded version, *Servius Danielis*. I will discuss *copia*-related phenomena in the commentaries on the *Aeneid*, examining the usage of words denoting addition and superfluity, and also comparing notes containing such words in the two versions of the commentary. My main reason to focus on Vergil's epic exclusively is that Servius, as we will see, raises the issue of *copia* in the Preface specifically with relation to the *Aeneid*.

It must be acknowledged right at the outset that my approach to the examination of the Servian corpus will be somewhat unusual. Servius based his commentary (S) on earlier ones, among them that of Aelius Donatus, but since he was writing for his pupils rather than for scholars, he took over only part of the earlier comments, while also adding others of his own, providing basic grammatical and rhetorical guidance<sup>6</sup>. Donatus, as we will see, himself claimed to have produced his work (D) as an abridgment of earlier commentaries. An unknown compiler (or compilers), active probably some three hundred years later than Servius, took these related commentaries (perhaps only an excerpted version in the case of Donatus) and, by (re-)adding Donatian (and other) material which Servius had not selected for inclusion, produced an extended commentary which is now usually called *Servius Danielis* (DS) from the first publisher of this version, but also referred to as *Servius auctus* – an even more fitting title if we focus on *copia*, since it emphasizes the relative abundance of DS, and in turn also implicitly characterizes S (*Servius vulgatus*) as lacking *copia* and in need of such a supplement. The obvious and almost inevitable philological drive towards using DS to reconstruct, as far as possible, what Donatus's commentary might have looked like (if it is, indeed, the main source of the non-Servian material in DS) has been detrimental to the estimation of the compiler's role. His contribution is welcome when he is believed to transmit 'Donatus's' interpretations as transparently as possible; by contrast, his interventions into the wording of individual comments and the structure of the commentary as a whole are frequently criticized. Since he is not adding his own personal interpretations, i.e. not producing new content in the strict sense, he is not seen as an author/commentator. Taking into account Gumbrecht's thesis about *copia*, with its focus on the quantity as much as the quality of individual comments and the commentary as a whole, might allow us to consider the compiler's activity in a more permissive way. Even if he is not an author/commentator in the same sense as Donatus and Servius, the compiler (an implied rather than historical person, responsible for the differences between S and DS) represents a radically different stance towards commenting and may thus be considered as a surrogate for the kind of commentator whose chief aim is producing *copia*, one very different from Donatus and Servius, who had been striving, at least rhetorically, towards conciseness. It is in this sense that I am going to

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<sup>5</sup> See Fuhrer 2012, pp. 131-135 on how the authorial *persona* is usually constructed in prefaces, etc. Of the various means of 'staging' the author examined by Fuhrer, two seem especially relevant for discussions of *copia*: emphasizing the user-friendliness of the work and contrasting it with those of predecessors and rivals.

<sup>6</sup> See e.g. Fowler – Casali – Stok 2019 (maintaining that Donatus is the main source upon which S and DS depend) and Daintree 1990 (for a more sceptical view). The most recent summary of the issue is Stok – Ramires 2021, pp. 73-79. See also Janyce Desiderio's paper in this volume on another of Servius' sources, Aemilius Asper.

speak of S and DS as two ‘commentaries’ produced by two ‘commentators’<sup>7</sup>: not with the intention of elevating the compiler to the same authorial status as Servius and Donatus, but in order to emphasize that DS as we have it, the most substantial example of the many possible ways of augmenting Servius’s commentary, is as much the result of the compiler’s decisions with regard to *copia* as S was the result of Servius’s very different decisions with respect to the same<sup>8</sup>.

## *Copia* and Ancient Commentaries

*Copia* is a term familiar from ancient rhetoric, but in a sense different from Gumbrecht’s: it refers to the orator’s nearly unlimited repertoire of ideas and words – *copia rerum ac verborum*, as Quintilian (*Inst.* x. 1. 5) calls it – and also his ability to choose the most appropriate one in any situation, also ensuring the rhetorical variety of his speech in order to prevent the audience from becoming surfeited<sup>9</sup>. In ancient rhetoric, then, *copia* contributes to the quality of the resulting text in the first place rather than to its length. By contrast, length – especially that of a written text – is judged in a more complex way, and great length is frequently cast in a negative light. Callimachus and his followers famously criticize lengthy poetry, aiming instead at the small and refined. But relative conciseness, linguistic and narrative economy (*brevitas/syntomia*) is also a requirement put forward by ancient critics (including Servius), and prose authors also frequently express their wish to avoid superfluity<sup>10</sup>.

It is in such contexts that we encounter an expression related to Gumbrecht’s ‘filling up the margins’. In a short letter to Atticus (XIII. 34), Cicero asks his friend to let him know what people are saying about his divorce from Publilia. Cicero then concedes that the issue of public opinion is not really that important; he ironically admits to having brought it up only because he ‘wanted to fill up the page’ (*sed complere paginam volui*). Epistolographic *copia* keeps Cicero from leaving parts of the wax tablet empty<sup>11</sup>, but the desired level of textual abundance is quickly reached: ‘why should I write more?’ (*quid plura?*), he continues, and finishes the letter in one sentence. The passage, although not found in a commentary, is interesting for us because it suggests something inherent to Gumbrecht’s thesis as well: namely, that *copia* is produced by using as much of the available space as possible, not necessarily by the unlimited expansion of that space. *Copia* thus results in a visual

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<sup>7</sup> The model of curatorship, suggested by Joshua Smith in his contribution to this volume, is a possible way to approach the issue of special ‘authorship’ of the compiler(s) of DS.

<sup>8</sup> I will use S and DS for the two versions of the commentary, and occasionally refer to the compiler’s additions as the ‘Supplement’; I am aware, however, that such labelling (necessarily, for my partly statistical approach) implies a simplified model of a much more complex manuscript tradition. Servian passages will be quoted from Rand et al. 1946, Guillaumin 2019, Jeunet-Mancy 2012, Murgia – Kaster 2018; and also Thilo – Hagen 1881 where recent editions are not available. For the sake of consistency, the Harvard format will be used throughout to discern S and DS. Translations, where not noted otherwise, are mine.

<sup>9</sup> See Fitzgerald 2016, pp. 47-51 on *copia* and variety.

<sup>10</sup> See Lazzarini 1989, pp. 93-104 on *brevitas* in Servius and ancient criticism; see also Curtius 1973, pp. 487-489 and Janson 1964, pp. 96, 154-155 on brevity as a stylistic ideal and ‘brevity-formulas’ in prose prefaces.

<sup>11</sup> Ovid also states in *Amores* 1. 11 that he ‘hates when much of the shining wax is left empty’ (*odi, cum late splendida cera vacat*; 20). He expects Corinna to write him a long letter in reply, filling up even the margins of the wax tablet (*oculosque moretur / margine in extremo littera †rasa†meos*; 21-22). But then he realizes that ‘it is enough if the tablet holds a single word only: “come!”’ (*hoc habeat scriptum tota tabella: ‘veni’*; 24). The passage thus starts as a praise of *copia*, only to end with the admission that anything more than the one word the poet hopes to read would be superfluous.

impression, that of the page filled up, rather than in the absolute length of the text in question<sup>12</sup>.

The same expression can also be found in commentaries, emphasizing that the commentator wants to avoid filling up the page with ‘superfluous’ information. So does Cassiodorus in his note on the title verse of Psalm 33/34:

*Psalmus David cum mutavit vultum suum coram Abimelech et dimisit eum et abiit. Cum historia tituli istius Regum lectione pandatur, superfluum est copiam fontis illius in hac brevitate derivare, ne nobis totam areolam paginae unius loci effusa relatio complere ac tegere videatur; sed rem cum nominibus suis breviter intimamus.*

**The Psalm of David when he pretended to be mad before Abimelech, who sent him away, and he left.** Since the story behind this title can be read in the Book of Kings, it would be superfluous to derive a short summary from that abundant spring. I do not want to make the whole precious space of this tiny page seem to be filled and covered by the lengthy retelling of a single passage. Nevertheless, I will give a short introduction to the story and the characters.

(*In psalm. 33. 1*)

Cassiodorus suggests more explicitly than Cicero that the space available for filling up is always limited by using *areola*, the diminutive of *area*, in addition to *pagina*. The commentator must carefully select his notes and leave space for the really important problems. However, this sentence emphasizing the constraints of space is conspicuously exuberant, full of water metaphors (*superfluum, fontis, derivare, effusa*)<sup>13</sup>, and it turns out to be a *praeteritio*, since Cassiodorus decides in the end to offer a short summary: the explanation of the story is not that superfluous, after all, as he started by suggesting.

The promise to not fill up the page with unnecessary information also allows the commentator to implicitly or explicitly criticize his rivals for having done precisely that. This is what Aelius Donatus does in the prefatory letter of his commentary on Vergil:

*Inspectis fere omnibus ante me qui in Virgilio opere calluerunt, brevitati admodum studens quam te amare cognoveram, adeo de multis pauca decerpsi, ut magis iustam offensionem lectoris expectem, quod veterum sciens multa transierim, quam quod paginam compleverim supervacuis.*

After reviewing nearly all those who before me were skilled in the work of Vergil, quite concerned with the brevity I have learned that you appreciate, I have excerpted a few details from many, so that I might await the just annoyance of the reader, because knowingly I had omitted many details of earlier worthies rather than because I have filled up my page with superfluities.

(Don. *Epist. I. pp. 15, 3-8* Brugnoli Stok; trans. M. C. J. Putnam)

Donatus’s professed reason for writing a commentary is that Munatius, the dedicatee and ideal reader of his work, values brevity, but existing commentaries have been found too lengthy (cf. *de multis* and *multa*). He has excerpted them so sparingly that he expects justified criticism because of this lack of *copia* (i.e. abundance in a positive sense) rather than because of ‘having filled up the page with superfluous material’ (*paginam compleverim supervacuis*; abundance in a negative sense). Unlike Cassiodorus in the previously quoted passage, then,

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<sup>12</sup> In some cases, of course, even ‘filling all the available space’ can result in a too lengthy text. Juvenal criticizes that kind of *copia* in *Satire 1*, condemning an unduly long tragedy about Orestes: although ‘written on both sides and using up all the space at the end of a large papyrus roll’, normally left empty, ‘it is still unfinished’ (*summi plena iam margine libri / scriptus et in tergo necdum finitus Orestes*; Iuv. 1. 5-6).

<sup>13</sup> *Areola*, also used in the sense of ‘seed-bed’ (*OLD s.v. 2*), also contributes to the geographical/agricultural metaphor.

Donatus explicitly connects the avoidance of superfluous notes with the overall brevity of his commentary, presenting it as a shorter and thus more practical handbook than those of his predecessors, while also acknowledging the dangers of conciseness as far as the reception of his work is concerned; he also suggests (through the contrasting use of *te*, referring to Munatius, and *lectoris*, referring probably to the general reader) that different people will have different opinions about the optimal length of a commentary.

## *Copia* in the Servian Preface

Unlike Donatus's letter to Munatius, the Preface of Servius's commentary is conspicuously impersonal in its tone<sup>14</sup>. Servius does not state his reasons for writing the commentary, and he does not explicitly characterize it as either 'concise' or 'abundant', whether in itself or compared to other commentaries. Nevertheless, the issue of including or excluding something, and also the key adjective *superfluous* (already encountered in Cassiodorus and recalling Donatus's *supervacuous*), does come up twice in the Preface. The relevant passages are usually discussed with respect to their relationship to similar statements in the Suetonian/Donatian *Vita Vergilii*<sup>15</sup>; for me it is more important how the rhetoric of *copia* manifests itself in the Servian text. *Superfluous* occurs for the first time when the commentator relates the circumstances of the first edition of the *Aeneid*:

*Augustus vero, ne tantum opus periret, Tuccam et Varium hac lege iussit emendare, ut superflua demerent, nihil adderent tamen.*

Yet Augustus, lest so great a work perish, commanded Tucca and Varius to prepare it for publication with this proviso, that they take away the redundant but add nothing.

(*Serv. praef. Aen.* 30-32 Rand; trans. M. C. J. Putnam)

The editorial strategy which Varius and Tucca (and Augustus) are credited with aims at making the text a bit more 'concise' and less 'copious'; furthermore, it suggests that the issue of *copia* is as important for poetic texts as it is for commentaries. Even in a canonical text like the *Aeneid*, there might be aesthetically detrimental examples of *copia*, and such 'superfluous' passages (like the pre-proem and the Helen episode, both of which Servius goes on to quote) may be deleted precisely in order to confirm the poem's canonical status. Additions, by contrast, are not allowed – not only, perhaps, because they would be inauthentic, but also because they would be superfluous<sup>16</sup>. Servius's statement also implies a certain typology of passages making up the text of the *Aeneid*. There are 'core' passages which are obviously indispensable, but the fate of the rest – let us call them 'secondary' – depends on the editors. Some will be found justified as instances of beneficial *copia* and retained; others will be deemed 'superfluous' and deleted. Varius and Tucca, then, are said to have taken away (part of) that unnecessary *copia*. Servius seems to agree with their decision: he does not criticize Varius and Tucca in the Preface, does not offer comments on either the pre-proem or the Helen episode, and even states explicitly that the editors were right in his comment on II. 592

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<sup>14</sup> See Lafond 2012, pp. 17-18 on the lack of the first person plural in S (and its usage by Donatus and the compiler). Lafond also notes that this is Servius's way of constructing his authorial *persona* rather than a sign of not trying to construct it at all.

<sup>15</sup> See e.g. Goold 1970, pp. 122-130.

<sup>16</sup> See Donatus's report at *VSD* 41 that many had tried to supplement the half-lines in vain, because they were of 'full and perfect meaning' (*absoluto perfectoque ... sensu*) except for one. Variants of *superflua demerent, nihil adderent* return in many of the ancient lives of Vergil, a curious exception being Version 1 of Philargyrius, where the editors are said to have been prohibited from *deleting* anything (111-113).

(*aliquos hinc versus constat esse sublato, nec inmerito*, followed by arguments). Nevertheless, Servius quotes the passages in question and thus allows later editors to re-insert them into the main text if they want. All in all, Servius's treatment of the two 'superfluous' passages in question preserves their status as additional and in some sense paratextual to the core text of the *Aeneid*: as passages which are (in his view) authentic and worthy of preservation but do not constitute an integral part of the poem<sup>17</sup>.

The second usage of *superfluous* in the Preface is in a passage which allows us a glimpse into how the commentator is producing *copia*. After summarizing the poet's life (of which the mention of Varius's and Tucca's deletions forms part), the commentator continues his *accessus*-type introduction and in due course arrives at the issue of the number and sequence of books<sup>18</sup>.

*De numero librorum nulla hic quaestio est, licet in aliis inveniatur auctoribus; nam Plautum alii dicunt unam et viginti fabulas scripsisse, alii quadraginta, alii centum. Ordo quoque manifestus est, licet quidam superflue dicant secundum primum esse, tertium secundum, et primum tertium, ideo quia primo Ilium concidit, post erravit Aeneas, inde ad Didonis regna pervenit, nescientes hanc esse artem poeticam, ut a mediis incipientes per narrationem prima reddamus et non numquam futura praeoccupemus, ut per vaticinationem: quod etiam Horatius sic praecepit in Arte Poetica 'ut iam nunc dicat iam nunc debentia dici, pleraque differat et praesens in tempus omittat' [Ars 43-44]: unde constat perite fecisse Vergilium.*

There is no question about the number of books in this case, although there is with other authors, for some say Plautus wrote twenty-one plays, others forty, others one hundred. The order of books is also obvious, although some say unnecessarily that the second is first, the third second, and the first third, since Ilium falls first, and then Aeneas wanders, arriving at queen Dido's land; they are ignorant, therefore, that this is poetical art, so that beginning in the middle of things by the narration we return to first things and sometimes anticipate things about to happen, as if by prophecy. Horace also gives a precept in the *Ars poetica* as follows: 'so that [the poet] says now what ought to be said just now, and postpones and omits many things for the time being'. It follows that Vergil has done this expertly.

(Serv. *praef. Aen.* 87-96 Rand; trans. M. Irvine)

The commentator hits a problem here: namely, that he sees no philological problems to be discussed and solved. The number of books is 'not questioned'; their sequence is 'manifest'. The fixed structure of the *accessus* (announced at the start of the Preface), however, does not allow Servius to skip these items entirely, and he goes out of his way to fill the gap. In the first case he does so by briefly mentioning the notoriously uncertain number of Plautine comedies – a useful bit of information about literary history for Servius's students, to be sure, but does it contribute to the understanding of the *Aeneid*? Not much, and it can be regarded as something of a Freudian slip that Servius moves to the next issue, the sequence of books, by criticizing others precisely for making a 'superfluous' comment (*quidam superflue dicant*). The observation that narrative order does not correspond to the order of events in the story is, of course, correct in itself. Servius himself does not deny that, but he adds another charge, that of ignorance: the anonymous critics made that superfluous comment only because they do not know how good poetry works (*nescientes hanc esse artem poeticam*). At the same time, Servius also positions himself as the real expert, who can even quote Horace's *Ars poetica* as

<sup>17</sup> See recently Kayachev 2011 and Mac Góráin 2018, esp. pp. 428-430 on the pre-proem; cf. Jansen 2014 on paratextual phenomena in Roman literature. The compiler postpones quoting the text of the Helen episode until *Aen.* II. 566 (cf. *praef.* 42-44), thus moving the 'superfluous' passage back to its (supposedly) original location in the epic. On the Helen episode, see e.g. Goold 1970 and, with recent bibliography, Murgia 2003 and Horsfall 2006-2007.

<sup>18</sup> See Irvine 1994, pp. 126-137 on Servius's employment of the *accessus* structure in the Preface.

the standard work on poetics. The commentator thus solves the problem of not having anything to say in a much more clever and complex, if somewhat disingenuous, way now than in the previous case. Instead of simply making a comment of limited relevance, he credits other critics with a ‘superfluous’ observation, which he nevertheless borrows and cites in order to ‘fill up the page’ as a commentator should, and even usurps that criticized observation to demonstrate his expertise and praise Vergil as an exemplary poet. Servius has his cake and eats it, being ‘concise’ in rhetoric and ‘abundant’ in practice at the same time – or, to put it in another way, he makes the supposedly bad *copia* of the unnamed rivals part of his assertive statement displaying (as he would undoubtedly like us to read it) a better kind of *copia*. Furthermore, the passage he quotes from Horace seems to fit the excellent commentator as much as the exemplary poet<sup>19</sup>: to include all relevant information (*nunc debentia dici*) in a note while omitting everything else (at least for the time being: *in praesens tempus*), to stop just when ‘good’ *copia* would turn into superfluous gabble; these are the aims of Gumbrecht’s ideal commentator as well.

## The Vocabulary of *Copia* in the Servian Corpus

After Servius set the stage in the Preface, if only in an oblique way, for the discussion of poetic and philological abundance, examples of *copia* (whether excessive or justified, poetic or philological) are time and again pointed out in the commentary proper of both S and DS. Before having a more detailed look at some selected notes, I present the results of my statistical investigations, offering only straightforward examples without further discussion for the time being. In addition to the number of occurrences, it was also important, in my view, to count frequencies as well, given that the two constituent parts of the corpus, S and the additions in DS, are of unequal length: the former is roughly twice as long as the latter<sup>20</sup>. Even a somewhat lower number of occurrences in the Supplement might thus mean that a given word (or group of words) is used more frequently there than it was used by Servius.

In Donatus’s letter to Munatius, *supervacuuus* was used, as we have seen, to denote excessive *copia*. This adjective is used only in DS (see below), but its cognate verb *vacare* is employed in both versions to call attention to linguistic elements which, in the commentator’s opinion, are unnecessary because they do not add to the meaning of the given passage; these instances are pointed out without explicitly criticizing the poet. In some cases, potential claims of redundancy are refuted with justification, or the commentator recognizes both possibilities. As the table of statistics below shows, these usages are almost exclusively Servian, employed by the compiler only occasionally.

*adoro* ‘ad’ *vacat*, et est metri causa additum.

*ad* is not necessary, added only for metrical reasons.

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<sup>19</sup> The section on *in medias res* (*Ars* 146-149) may also spring to readers’ minds; that passage, however, is about both brevity and narrative order; cf. Brink 1971, *ad* Hor. *Ars* 140-152 and 148. Cf. Frances Foster’s and Thomas Kuhn-Treichel’s contributions to this volume on how references to other authors (named or unnamed) may raise the perceived authority of a commentator.

<sup>20</sup> The length of S (186541 words) and the compiler’s additions (101480 words) were calculated as the difference between S, as prepared by Giuseppe Ramires on digilibLT (digiliblt.uniupo.it), and DS according to Thilo-Hagen (1881), downloaded from Perseus (perseus.tufts.edu). Occurrences of keywords were looked up and reviewed in the Thilo – Hagen edition available on the Packard Humanities Institute website (latin.packhum.org; all sites accessed on 03 June 2020).

(Serv. *Aen.* X. 677; Turnus prays to the winds while chasing the likeness of Aeneas on a boat.)

[*Tyrrhenum*] *navigat aequor* [...] *Et non vacat quod 'Tyrrhenum' addidit; videtur enim dicere, iam eis Italiam esse vicinam.*

It is not without reason that *Tyrrhenum* is added, for Juno seems to emphasize that they are now approaching Italy.

(Serv. *Aen.* I. 67; Juno complaining about Aeneas's fleet.)

*iamque adeo aut vacat 'adeo': aut certe 'sic' significat, ut sit sensus: 'adeo', sic praeparatur in proelia, ut iam universa praeter galeam arma portaret.*

*adeo* is either unnecessary, or used in the sense of *sic*, so that the meaning is that he has prepared for battle so well that he is now wearing all his arms except the helmet'.

(Serv. *Aen.* XI. 487; description of Turnus's arming.)

	S	Suppl.	Total
<b>X vacat</b>	38	2	40
<b>X non vacat</b>	11	3	14
<b>X vacat aut significat</b>	13	0	13
<b>Total</b>	62	5	67
<b>Ratio of frequencies</b>	(0.000332)	<b>6.78:1</b> (0.000049)	

*Superfluous* and *supervacuous* are used more sparingly than all the above variants of *vacare* taken together: 39 times in total (including the Preface), 31 of which are found in relevant contexts involving literary criticism in a broad sense, including one instance of *supervacuous* (DS *Aen.* II. 173). Sometimes, these adjectives are used in the same sense as *vacare*, i.e. in a relatively neutral way, but in other cases some criticism seems to be implied, or even becomes explicit. As in the Preface, there are two targets of such criticism: either the poet is blamed (by the commentator or by other critics)<sup>21</sup> for adding a superfluous element, or the commentator's rivals are blamed for making superfluous, nitpicking remarks.

*ille superfluum hoc loco pronomen.*

The pronoun is superfluous here.

(DS *Aen.* II. 779)

*arma manu nam praeter vocem, gestum etiam flagitantis expressit, nec est superfluum 'manu', ut quidam volunt.*

For not only the words, but also the gestures of the demand are expressed; thus *manu* is not superfluous, as some say.

(DS *Aen.* XI. 453; the Italians demand arms [*arma manu trepidi poscunt*], hearing the news about the approach of Trojan and Etruscan armies.)

*aeternis regis imperiis et fulmine terres volunt quidam superfluo 'regis' ad deos referri, 'terres' ad homines, nescientes quia maioris potestatis est idem posse circa deos, quod circa homines.*

<sup>21</sup> These citations are mostly anonymous, except for DS *Aen.* II. 173 (Probus) and Serv. *Aen.* XII. 508 (Donatus).



There are some who superfluously say that *regis* refers to the gods, *terres* to men, but they are not taking into account that, having greater power, he has the same might over gods and men.

(Serv. *Aen.* I. 230; Venus's address to Jupiter, starting with *o qui res hominumque deumque* in the previous line.)

	S	DS	Total
<b>superfluity in the text</b>	5	4	9
<b>superfluity in the text (according to other critics)</b>	3	5	8
<b>superfluity in commentaries</b>	14	0	14
<b>Total</b>	22	9	31
<b>Ratio of frequencies</b>	(0.000118) <b>1.33:1</b> (0.000089)		

As we can see, Servius is the more frequent user again, but the difference between S and DS is much smaller<sup>22</sup>. The most important result which comes from this table is, in my view, the relatively large number of instances where Servius blames other critics. Of the two occurrences of *superfluus* in the Preface, the second (related to the sequence of books) was, as it turns out, the one foreshadowing Servius's typical use of the term. The usage of *superfluus* with reference to unnecessary elements in the *Aeneid* (or other literary texts, occasionally) is, by contrast, although present in Servius's commentary as well, more typical of DS, where the adjective is used only in this sense. This divergence in the usage of *superfluus* is in conformance with the traditional view about the different constructions of the commentator's *persona* in Servius and the Supplement: while Servius emphasizes his authorial presence and authority as a critic by judging his predecessor's interpretations, the language used in DS (even if the relevant comments are taken over from Donatus or other non-Servian source) rather fits a compiler, indeed, who is producing a *variorum* commentary, channelling others' opinions rather than formulating his own.

My third and final query involved words denoting addition which – as per *superflua demerent, nihil adderent* ('[so] that they take away the redundant but add nothing') above – can be related to the subject of this paper. Claims that Vergil has 'added' some words or expressions to his text imply that these are 'secondary' elements (as I term them) and raise the issue of *copia*, whether justified or detrimental. Early in Servian studies Robert Benson Steele carried out a detailed stylometric comparison of S and DS<sup>23</sup>. He also discussed words of addition, observing that the two commentators prefer different synonyms; among other clues, this fact also suggested that the authors are not the same. Steele, however, counted only the absolute number of occurrences. By calculating frequencies as well, we may get results which do not question Steele's conclusions, but bring to light something else as well. For the statistics, I counted all occurrences of the relevant words (in whatever context) including not only verbal forms but also related participles and nouns, but I filtered out occurrences found in Servius's quotations of Vergil and other texts.

*dives opum modo tantum dives dicimus, antiqui adiungebant cuius rei, ut 'dives equum, dives pictai vestis et auri', iungentes tantum genetivo casui.*

We used to say simply that someone is rich, while the ancients also added what they are rich in, like 'rich in horses, rich in painted clothes and gold', attaching it in the genitive case.

<sup>22</sup> It must be noted, however, that the compiler misleadingly employs *superfluus* as a translation of the term *acyrologia* in two cases (IV. 419, V. 690); cf. Guillaumin 2019, p. 382 n. 6.

<sup>23</sup> Steele 1899, pp. 363, 386.

(Serv. *Aen.* I. 14; description of Carthage.)

*expirantem flammam* [...] *ut superius pleno nomini adiecit 'opum', id est 'dives opum', sic hic verbo; cum enim plenum sit 'expirantem', addidit 'flammam'.*

As he added *opum* to a nominal word above, i.e. *dives opum*, here to a verb; for, although *expirantem* would be perfect in sense, he added *flammam*.

(Serv. *Aen.* I. 44; the punishment of Ajax for the rape of Cassandra.)

*spemque metumque inter dubii spes bonorum, metus malorum; et ideo subiunxit 'seu vivere credant, sive extrema pati'.*

Hope is for the better, fear for the worse; thus he added 'whether they should believe them to be alive or dead'.

(DS *Aen.* I. 218; the Trojans anxiously looking for their lost comrades after the shipwreck.)

	S	DS	Total	Ratio of freq.
<i>addere</i>	109	93	202	1:1.57
<i>iungere</i>	76	80	156	1:1.94
<i>coniungere</i>	69	48	117	1:1.28
<i>subiungere</i>	9	43	52	1:8.83
<i>adicere</i>	19	29	48	1:2.80
<i>subicere</i>	1	19	20	1:34.6
<i>adiungere</i>	6	11	17	1:3.37
<i>subdere</i>	2	0	2	-
<b>Total</b>	291	323	614	<b>1:2.04</b>
<b>Total (without <i>coniungere</i>)<sup>24</sup></b>	222	275	497	<b>1:2.28</b>

As we can see, the total number of occurrences is a bit greater in the Supplement (323 vs. 291 in S), and the same holds true for most individual words except *addere*<sup>25</sup>, *coniungere* and the rarest one, *subdere*. The difference is even more conspicuous if frequencies are counted: the ratio is 1:2.04 in the compiler's favour for the total, and all individual words (except *subdere* which is used only by Servius) are also more frequently used by the compiler.

These results are somewhat unexpected. Servius, as we have seen, is the more frequent user of *vacare* and *superfluous*, but it is the other way round with words of addition. The two commentators prefer different terminology not just with respect to additions (as Steele has already observed), but also to issues of *copia* in a more general sense. Furthermore, since words of addition as a group have many more occurrences, the compiler remains the more frequent user even if we add up all words examined up to this point: the ratio of frequencies is

<sup>24</sup> Not all occurrences included in these statistics are, of course, equally relevant for a study of *copia*. *Coniungere* and its cognates, in particular, prove to be of slight interest, since this group of words covers some common expressions of kinship and marriage, and grammatical terms like *coniunctivus* and *coniunctio*. The group of *coniungere*, however, is also the most balanced with regard to frequency; thus, if we ignore this group, the results do not change much, and only in the compiler's favour (1:2.28). Another special case, related to the segmentation of the poetic text, is the combined usage of (*sub*)*distinguere* in the sense of 'assuming a semantic break' and (*sub*)*iungere*, 'to treat as a semantic unit'. This pair of terms, however, is used only 16 times (5 by Servius, 11 by the compiler), and is thus statistically insignificant; if we ignore these cases as well as occurrences of *coniungere*, the ratio of frequencies changes slightly (1:2.25).

<sup>25</sup> On *addere* as part of Servius' technical vocabulary, see also Massimo Gioseffi's contribution to this volume (pp. XX-YY).

1:1.65or 1:1.74 (including and excluding *coniungere*, respectively). The compiler's additions are thus especially interesting from the point of view of *copia* not only inasmuch they form a Supplement to Servius' commentary, but also because issues of *copia* (produced by the poet and/or the critics) are raised in this Supplement with significantly greater frequency than in Servius' commentary.

## Some Examples

The above statistics were accompanied by only some rather simple examples. Now I would like to discuss a selection of notes with respect to how the issue of *copia* is implicitly raised or explicitly discussed in S and DS. There are a number of factors which may make a comment especially noteworthy in that respect. Such is the concurrent use of multiple *copia*-related terms (like in Servius's definition of pleonasm: *pleonasmus est, qui fit quotiens adduntur superflua*, 'pleonasm is the addition of superfluous elements'; Serv. *Aen.* I. 208), and using the vocabulary of *copia* in the Supplement where Servius did not.

As we have seen, both *vacare* and *superfluus* can be used without explicit criticism. It is also typical, however, that the poet is applauded for making an addition<sup>26</sup>. The standard formula is *bene addidit*, but some variants also occur, Servius being the more frequent user<sup>27</sup>.

*fato profugus* '*fato*' *ad utrumque pertinet, et quod fugit, et quod ad Italiam venit. Et bene addidit 'fato', ne videatur aut causa criminis patriam deseruisse, aut novi imperii cupiditate.*

*Fato* refers both to his escape and his arrival in Italy. And Vergil was right to add *fato*, lest Aeneas seem to have deserted his country because of some crime, or because of a desire for new power.

(Serv. *Aen.* I. 2)

Servius, as is well known, is prone to commend Vergil for any and every poetic decision he makes, but in these cases, he is applauded specifically with relation to *copia*. The poet is demonstrated as providing just the right amount of information using the right number of words. The kind of information provided is almost secondary in importance, but in some cases, as in the above quoted comment on I. 2, the most important ideological issues of the *Aeneid* are concerned. Vergil, Servius points out, was right to add the word *fato* in order to signal that the hero did not have dishonourable reasons to leave Troy: he didn't flee from his country because of having committed some crime (like betrayal, as in an alternative mythical variant known to Servius)<sup>28</sup> and he didn't go to Italy because of a lust for power. Here we have an example of the phenomenon discussed at length by Richard Thomas, namely, of Servius ruling out – but also simultaneously recording – interpretations which are hard to reconcile with a truly Augustan or 'optimistic' reading of the *Aeneid*<sup>29</sup>. In the case of *fato*

<sup>26</sup> The opposite happens only twice. Both cases concern character speech and, curiously, involve the Trojans: Vergil is commended for not making an addition at IV. 417, where Dido omits something like *Teucris* as subject (*undique convenere bene non addidit, qui: intellegitur, 'they have assembled from everywhere' she is right in not adding the subject: it is unambiguous*; DS *Aen.* IV. 417), and at XII. 38, where Latinus does not utter the word *Troianos* in order not to provoke Turnus (*socios sum adscire paratus bene non adiecit quos, ut levaret invidiam, 'I am ready to recognize them as allies' he is right in not adding who they are, in order to mitigate [Turnus'] hate*; DS *Aen.* XII. 38).

<sup>27</sup> *Bene addidit*: 40 by Servius, 14 by the compiler; *bene adiecit*: 3 in S; *bene adiungitur*: 1 in the Supplement. *Prudenter addidit* is also used once for a Sallustian addition by Servius (*ad* I. 518). Praise of Vergil is thus expressed in 34% of the instances of *addere/adiungere*, against the compiler's 14%.

<sup>28</sup> Serv. *Aen.* I. 242; see Thomas 2001, pp. 71-73.

<sup>29</sup> Thomas 2001, pp. 93-121.

*profugus*, Servius's comment implies two kinds of *copia*, that of the poet and that of the commentator, which are in tension. Vergil's *copia* on the verbal level is pointed out while the commentator tries to restrict the variety of legitimate interpretations (and in turn the commentary space dedicated to discussion of the passage). In the implicit Servian literary theory, Vergil's commendable additions remove textual blanks (in an Iserian sense) which, if left in the text, could be filled by readers at will. Servian comments like the one on I. 2 about Vergil's additions warn them that they are not allowed to do that. There is, furthermore, an amount of self-advertisement in comments of the *bene addidit* type (as well as those of *non vacat*). By pointing out that certain seemingly unimportant elements in Vergil's text are there for a good reason and are meaningful, the commentator implicitly claims that they are worthy to be commented upon, and thus his comment is also important and justified: Servius himself *bene addidit*, his remark *non vacat*. The discovery of the supposedly right level of *copia* in the poetic text thus goes hand in hand with implying that the commentary also provides remarks of the necessary number and length.

The effect, however, is different when variants of the *bene addidit* formula are employed in the Supplement. If Servius's comment and the compiler's extended version can be compared (a prerequisite, of course, of the following reading – a point I will return to at the end of the paper), the impression readers may get is not only that the extended commentary presents itself as 'ideal' with respect to *copia*, but also that the compiler 'corrects' Servius where the latter had been found to be lacking the necessary abundance, either because he had nothing to say, or because he offered a simpler interpretation, or only one where there are more possibilities, as demonstrated by the extended version of the note in question. The compiler never makes an explicit comment to that effect, but interestingly enough there are some scholia in Vergilian manuscripts, recently discussed by Daniel Vallat, where the *scriptor* emphasizes that 'Servius does not mention' (*hoc non dicit Servius*)<sup>30</sup> something which the anonymous *scriptor* includes a comment upon.

The extended note at VIII. 708 seems to be a good example. In the Actium scene of Aeneas's shield, Cleopatra 'was to be seen calling the winds and spreading the sails, and letting loose the slackened ropes more and more' (*ipsa videbatur ventis regina vocatis / vela dare et laxos iam iamque immittere funis*, VIII. 707-708).

*iam iamque immittere funis scilicet aviditate fugiendi.*

*Bene 'iam iamque' addidit, quia tempus operis in pictura declarari non poterat.*

Namely, in her urge to flee. / He was right to add *iam iamque*, since the temporality of this activity cannot be represented visually.

(Serv./DS *Aen.* VIII. 708)

Servius interprets *iam iamque* with respect to the event depicted: the queen is eager to sail, and the adverb signals her anxiety and haste. This is all good and fine, of course, but the compiler offers an alternative interpretation as well, according to which the adverb is a self-reflexive element in the ecphrasis, emphasizing that the still image cannot depict movement in time: Cleopatra is 'almost' moving, 'almost' letting loose the ropes on the picture, but she is frustrated by the medium of representation. In the end, however, it is the two remarks together (as we can read them in DS) which, in my view, may lead to the best interpretation of Vergil's *iam iamque*. The queen must surely be in a hurry, as Servius notes, but Vergil does not mention this in a simplistic way, rather by taking the frozen image of Cleopatra on the shield

<sup>30</sup> Vallat 2018; cf. Steele 1899, pp. 386-387.

(as emphasized by the compiler's addition) and 'unfreezing' it with the help of poetic language, capable of describing movement and also suggesting the 'almostness' of lifelike images. A fine addition by Vergil, indeed – and a valuable addition by the compiler<sup>31</sup>.

Uses like the above of *bene addidit* and similar formulas can backfire, however, in the case where the commentator's remark is not deemed valuable enough. The decision is always up to the user of the commentary, of course, but a section of the long note on the opening line of the epic seems to provide an example of such problematic remarks. Servius, as he has already revealed in the Preface, does not believe that this had originally been the opening line:

*arma* Multi varie disserunt cur ab armis Vergilius coeperit; omnes inania sentire manifestum est, cum eum constet aliunde sumpsisse principium. [...]

Alii ideo 'arma' hoc loco proprie dicta accipiunt, primo quod fuerint victricia, secundo quod divina, tertio quod prope semper armis virum subiungit, ut 'arma virumque ferens' [XI. 747] et 'arma acri facienda viro' [VIII. 441]. [...]

'Virum' autem quem non dicit, sed circumstantiis ostendit Aenean.

**virum** quem non dicit, sed circumstantiis ostendit Aenean.

Et bene addidit post 'arma' 'virum', quia 'arma' possunt et aliarum artium instrumenta dici, ut 'Cerealiaque arma'.

Many critics have explained in various ways why Vergil started with the word *arma*, but clearly they are all wrong, since he did, in fact, start the poem elsewhere. [...] / Others think that *arma* is used here in its proper meaning, first because these weapons are victorious, second because they are divine, and third because he almost always adds 'man' after 'arms', like 'drawing along arms and man' and 'weapons are to be made for a fierce man'. [...] / He does not name the *vir*, but the context reveals that it is Aeneas. / And he was right to add *virum* after *arma*, since *arma* can be instruments of another kind as well, like 'milling equipment'.

(Serv./DS *Aen.* I. 1)

The compiler, in addition to making minor modifications of wording, supplements Servius's note at both its middle and end. The second supplement, interestingly, comes not from the compiler's non-Servian source, but is taken over almost word by word from Servius's comment on I. 119, although with only one parallel mentioned:

*arma virum bene addidit 'virum'*,

*id est, virorum.*

'Arma' enim dicuntur cunctarum artium instrumenta, ut 'Cerealiaque arma' [I. 177], item 'colligere arma iubet' [V. 15] et alio loco 'dicendum et quae sint duris

<sup>31</sup> See also Fratantuono–Smith 2018, *ad loc.* on the other three instances of *iam iamque* in the epic, of which *iam iamque tenet similisque tenenti* (XII. 754), a simile of a hound hunting a deer, stands out as *similis tenenti* echoes ecphrastic language: see V. 254, VII. 502, VIII. 649–650 with Horsfall 2013, *ad* VI. 603 and Horsfall 2000, *ad* VII. 502. See also Georgii 1891, pp. 385–386 on the Servian comments *ad loc.*, Lazzarini 1989, pp. 104–109 on ecphrasis and temporality in Servius, and Stefano Poletti's contribution to this volume on the issue of *energeia* with relation to the comments on Vergil's 'subjective style' in DS.

*agrestibus arma*’ [Georg. I. 160].

He was right to add *virum*, / that is to say *virorum*. / For *arma* is used with reference to other kinds of instruments as well, like ‘milling equipment’ and ‘he orders the [ship’s] equipment to be fastened’ and elsewhere ‘we must also speak about the tools of tough farmers’.

(Serv./DS *Aen.* I. 119)

The procedure followed by the compiler has been heavily criticized by Goold: ‘as if *virum* in the first line of the *Aeneid* were a genitive plural [as it is at I. 119], a mere afterthought of the poet’s, added for the purpose of clarifying the first’<sup>32</sup>. The remark is, indeed, quite awkward; the *bene addidit* formula, in this case, makes the compiler seem inept rather than improving our impressions of his abilities as a commentator. Nevertheless, I think that his second supplement of the note can be at least partially redeemed if viewed in context of the first one. For the compiler has already included an additional remark earlier about the addition of *virum*, preserving the important observation (not made by Servius) that *arma* and *vir* are repeatedly used together by Vergil in a quasi-formulaic manner and in various grammatical relations to echo the *incipit* of the epic (which is, by the way, another argument for rejecting the pre-proem, *pace* Servius) and emphasize its generic status<sup>33</sup>. Thus the occurrence of *arma virum* at I. 119, where the criticized remark was taken from, would actually have been worthy of quotation just like the other two parallels (VIII. 44, XI. 747), but for some reason the compiler copied Servius’s note instead of the Vergilian line itself and, probably because they are taken from different (Servian and non-Servian) sources, he wrote down the two remarks separately rather than successively.

Servius’s tactic of using *superfluous* to criticize his predecessors is also risky. If the remarks made by his rivals are unnecessary, then why bother citing them? In the Preface, as we have seen, the fixed structure of the *accessus* provided some excuse, but in individual notes Servius might have easily chosen to silence the ‘nitpicking’ remarks entirely. By not doing so, he gains the opportunity to confirm his authority as a critic, pointing out others’ mistakes, but does the prize outweigh the risk of being blamed for reproducing the superfluity of his predecessors? One might even judge the cited remarks as not superfluous, after all, and question Servius’s authority in that respect. The compiler seems to do something like that at I. 119 – the very same line where he took the above discussed Servian remark from. The poet is describing how *apparent* [...] / *arma virum tabulaeque et Troia gaza per undas* (‘the arms of men, planks and the treasures of Troy appear among the waves’; I. 119-120). It is the last item of the list which is now of interest:

*gaza Persicus sermo est et significat divitias; unde Gaza, urbs in Palaestina, dicitur, quod in ea Cambyzes, rex Persarum, cum Aegyptis bellum inferret, divitias suas condidit. Est autem generis feminini, ut ‘et gaza laetus agresti’*

*gaza Persicus sermo est et significat divitias; est autem generis feminini, ut ‘et gaza laetus agresti’. Quo exemplo apparet quoque superfluo quaeri a multis*

<sup>32</sup> Goold 1970, p. 111.

<sup>33</sup> The two words in the same line at *Aen.* I. 1, I. 119, VI. 490 and 651, IX. 777 (on the bard Cretheus, who *semper equos atque arma virum pugnasque canebat*, ‘he always used to sing about heroes’ arms and battles’), X. 672, XI. 747. On *arma+vir* in the *Aeneid* and post-Vergilian poetry, see recently Mac Góráin 2018, pp. 430-443, with further bibliography at p. 433 n. 76.

[V. 40]. *Quaeritur tamen a multis*

*quemadmodum potuerit aurum natare, nescientibus gazas, id est, opes, dici omne quod possidemus.*

*Aut certe hyperbole tempestatis, ut etiam ponderosa ferri potuerint.*

It is a Persian word, meaning wealth; this is where the name of Gaza, a town in Palestine, comes from, because Cambyses, the Persian king had hidden his wealth there when he made war on Egypt. It is a feminine word, cf. ‘furnished with the wealth of countryside’. But many ask (DS) / It is a Persian word, meaning wealth; it is feminine, cf. ‘furnished with the wealth of countryside’. Nonetheless, many ask (DS) / This example shows that it is superfluous to ask, as many do, (S) / how gold can be afloat. They do not know that anything which we possess may be called *gaza*, i.e. wealth. / Alternatively, it can certainly hint hyperbolically at the scale of the storm: even heavy objects could stay afloat.

(Serv./DS *Aen.* I. 119)

In the first part of the note, the compiler supplements the etymological information on *gaza* provided by Servius. In the second part, unnamed critics are blamed for superfluously raising the problem of whether gold is able to float at all; then comes the refutation by Servius (starting with *nescientibus*, the same formula we have seen in the Preface with *quidam superflue dicant*)<sup>34</sup>: *gaza* can denote any kind of valuable possession. The compiler reproduces Servius’s critical remark and the refutation, except for one important word: he deletes *superfluo*. Even if their opinion remains rejected, the unnamed critics are thus exonerated from the charge of excessive *copia*; Servius’s criticism, by contrast, is implicitly deemed as too harsh. That the deletion of *superfluo* was not by chance is also suggested by the compiler’s second supplement at the end of the note, where he reproduces another, non-Servian explanation for the apparent inconsistency: under normal conditions, heavy objects do not stay afloat (thus the problem raised by the unnamed critics does exist), but this storm, initiated by Juno, was of supernatural dimensions.

In the examples quoted above, only some Vergilian words (or even just a prefix, as with *adoro* at X. 677) were the subject of discussion by the commentators. In a small number of comments, however, the issue of Vergilian *copia*/superfluity is raised with relation to whole lines. Probus is cited as having the opinion that Vergil should have omitted I. 21-22 and IV. 418 (*hi duo si eximantur, nihilominus sensus integer erit*, ‘if these two lines are omitted, the sense remains just as perfect’; DS *Aen.* I. 21; *si hunc versum omitteret, melius fecisset*, ‘It would have been better if Vergil had omitted this line’; DS *Aen.* IV. 418). In three further occasions, *superfluo* is used in a similar context. I discuss only the most important and interesting case, the last line of the shield ecphrasis and also of *Aeneid* VIII<sup>35</sup>:

<sup>34</sup> See also Serv./DS *Aen.* I. 230 and Serv. *Aen.* II. 668.

<sup>35</sup> In the other two cases there is no explicit criticism of Vergil. DS *Aen.* II. 546 records that according to some the line just repeats the sense of 545 (*alii ... superfluum putant*, ‘other deem it superfluous’; cf. Horsfall 2008 *ad loc.* on why this interpretation is unconvincing), but also that the repetition is excused as a variation (*duplicationem narrationis per επεξεργασίαν excusant*, ‘they excuse the narrative repetition as an instance of επεξεργασία’). Servius *ad* XI. 183 quotes IV. 585 as an example for ‘superfluous but frequently found’ elements (*quod licet superfluum sit, in multis tamen locis invenitur*, ‘although superfluous, it occurs in many passages’) in Vergilian descriptions of dawn whose wording, according to Asinius Pollio, is always influenced by the narrative

*attollens umero famamque et facta nepotum Si 'fata' legeris, hoc est, quae nepotes fataliter fecerunt. Hunc versum notant critici quasi superfluo et humiliter additum nec convenientem gravitati eius: namque est [eius] magis neotericus.*

*famamque gloriam. nepotum posterorum.*

If you read *fata*, it refers to what his descendants achieved according to fate. This line is blamed by critics as a superfluous and shallow addition, incongruous with Vergil's lofty style; it is also rather post-classical. / *fama* glory; *nepotes* offspring.

(Serv./DS *Aen.* VIII. 731)

The compiler supplements Servius's note, consisting of trivial glosses only, with much more important information. He records the variant reading *fata* (now usually accepted by editors) for *facta*, and cites some critics who blamed the line for being a 'superfluous and shallow addition' (*superfluo et humiliter additum*). The charge is stylistic in nature: the boldly metonymic expression 'shouldering the fame and fate/deeds' instead of the shield itself seemed 'incongruous with Vergil's lofty style' (*nec convenientem gravitati eius*) and 'rather post-classical' (*magis neotericus*). The supposed problem would be easily solved. *Aeneid* VIII could end with line 730 as well. Actually, it is even possible to read DS *Aen.* VIII. 731 as questioning authenticity: the line may have been 'marked with a critical sign' (*notant critici*) as a 'later addition' (*additum; neotericus*)<sup>36</sup>. However, the criticism raised here is usually interpreted together with Probus's comments cited above, i.e. as targeting Vergil himself rather than suspecting interpolation, and I agree (whether Probus is behind the *critici* in this case as well is another matter)<sup>37</sup>. *Notant critici* in the Servian corpus usually implies aesthetic criticism of Vergil rather than spuriousness, and *neotericus*, although frequently used with reference to post-Vergilian authors, is never employed as part of an argument suggesting interpolation<sup>38</sup>. What I would like to propose here is to read the critical comments about superfluous lines preserved by DS in light of Servius's report about the 'emendation' of the text by Varius and Tucca, despite the fact that the comments in DS and the report in S are found in distinct branches of the Servian tradition. Users of the *Servius vulgatus* learn from the Preface about Augustus's precept to remove unnecessary sections (*ut superflua demerent*), but they are presented with just two examples (the pre-proem and the Helen episode), since in the running commentary Servius goes out of his way to defend the integrity of the Vergilian text. Users of the DS version, however, lose as much as they gain. They have access to more examples of what might have been removed as well, dispersed throughout the commentary, but miss the Servian context, for the compiler chose to replace the biographic section of Servius's Preface with Donatus's *vita*, where there is no equivalent of *superflua demerent* (we learn only about a single alleged omission, that of the pre-proem, and without justification at *VSD* 42). Thus DS, while providing additional examples for 'unnecessary' and thus removable lines, does not suggest, as S did, that the hunt for Vergilian superfluity had already

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context – suggesting that such elements do, indeed, have their function.

<sup>36</sup> Thus Peirano 2012, p. 220.

<sup>37</sup> On Probus's criticism of 'unnecessary' lines and the usage of *neotericus* in the Servian corpus, see Georgii 1891, p. 387; Zetzel 1981, pp. 48-49; Delvigo 1985, pp. 154-157; Vallat 2012, pp. 264-268; cf. Cameron 1980 on *neotericus* in (late) antique prose.

<sup>38</sup> Serv. *Aen.* II. 668, V. 685, X. 861, XI. 188, DS *Aen.* II. 465, XI. 24 (*notant [critici]* with criticism of Vergil); Serv. *Aen.* VI. 187 and 320, XI. 715 (*neotericus* with reference to post-Vergilian authors).



started with the first editors. What we see here, then, is the failure of *copia*; the two thematically related (if not historically connected) pieces of information, Servius's report and the comments transmitted by the compiler, fail to come together in DS; they do so only in critical editions which accommodate both traditions.

Finally, I would like to have a look at a comment on another famous passage which played an important role in the reception history of the *Aeneid*. It is Servius's infamous – and quite extensive, at some 250 words long – note on the Golden Bough (Serv. *Aen.* VI. 136). It is neither possible nor necessary here to examine the interpretative worth of the *publica opinio* cited by Servius, namely that Vergil's poetic model for the Bough was the cult of the *rex nemorensis* at Aricia<sup>39</sup>. It is more important for us that in connection with this interpretation Servius calls attention to a Vergilian addition:

*latet arbore opaca aureus [...] Nunc ergo istum inde sumpsit colorem. Ramus enim necesse erat ut et unius causa esset interitus: unde et statim mortem subiungit Miseni.*

It follows that, at this point in his narrative, he [i.e. Vergil] has taken his rhetorical effects from here [i.e. the cult of Aricia]. For it was essential that the bough should also be the cause of one death: this is the reason why he immediately appends the death of Misenus.

(Serv. *Aen.* VI. 136; trans. C. M. C. Green)

The first sentence quoted here, stating that Vergil has taken the bough as a *color* from the Arician cult<sup>40</sup>, exerts a closing effect, as *ergo* suggests. Servius's comment could very well end at this point, but he decides to go on. The second quoted sentence, which received less attention than the report about the cult at Aricia, might still form part of the traditional interpretation, but it can also be read as Servius's own contribution, his personal interpretation. If the latter is true, then the commentator is apparently not entirely convinced by the *publica opinio*, but, rather than rejecting it, he looks for additional evidence in the Vergilian text to corroborate it, and discovers that someone gets killed in the *Aeneid* episode, just like at Aricia, and that Vergil / the Sibyl mentions that 'in addition' to the passage concerning the Bough. The word of addition chosen here is noteworthy: *subiungere* is employed only occasionally by Servius (9 times against the compiler's 37, not counting instances of the phrase *subiungere et distinguere*). The verb may just be a drop-in synonym for the more usual *addere* or *adiungere*, but the change of the prefix could also have significance, suggesting that the relation pointed out is one of 'subordination' and is thus emphatically more integral than 'coordination'<sup>41</sup>. Even the chosen terminology may thus suggest that the finding of the Golden Bough and the burial of Misenus do not just happen to be mentioned next to each other by the Sibyl as the two requirements of entering the Underworld, but are tightly related. Such a tight connection, however, is not self-evident, and Servius, as has been pointed out, exaggerates with *causa interitus*. The Golden Bough is not causing Misenus's death (which happens earlier than the plucking of the Bough, anyway) in the way the Arician bough can be said to cause indirectly, by being plucked and thus initiating the contest, the death of either the *rex* or the slave challenging him<sup>42</sup>. On the other hand,

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<sup>39</sup> See e.g. Green 2000; Dyson 2001, pp. 133-147; Parvulescu 2005, with a useful bibliography at p. 883 n. 4; Ossa-Richardson 2008.

<sup>40</sup> On the meanings of *color* (here emphasizing, probably, that the alleged allusion to the Arician cult influences the meaning of the passage indirectly rather than directly), see Green's note accompanying her translation: Green 2007, p. 299 n. 7 and Calboli Montefusco 2003, esp. pp. 121-122 on Servius.

<sup>41</sup> See also the debate between Heyne and Wagner whether or not *subiungere* implies closer relationship than *addere*: Heyne – Wagner 1833, ad X. 156-157 (*Aeneia puppis / prima tenet rostro Phrygios subiuncta leones*).

<sup>42</sup> Emphasized by Parvulescu 2005, pp. 884-885.

Misenus belongs to the series of Trojans who die just before Aeneas makes another step towards fulfilling his mission: he is another human sacrifice and, as Segal points out, his death (and Aeneas's confrontation with his death and his corpse: VI. 156-182) may be a prerequisite of finding the Bough<sup>43</sup>. In that sense, there is some sort of causality in the relationship of Misenus and the Bough. Furthermore, as Vergil's readers will soon learn, Misenus was a challenger just like the Arician slave, and this caused his death: as a trumpeter he contested the gods, and was killed by his rival Triton (VI. 171-174).

Servius's additional comment on Misenus thus can be seen as having some interpretative merit indeed, even though he fails to mention the motif of the challenge as a further point of contact, focusing exclusively on death. Now the question remains as to whether Servius's additional comment on Misenus should be seen as an example of good or bad *copia*. As we have already seen with some comments in both S and DS (such as the remark in the latter on *arma virum*, I. 1), the answer is not straightforward and some readers will probably lean towards praise, others towards blame. What I would like to emphasize is that Servius, who has been mockingly called the 'schoolmaster' because of the many simple and unimaginative explanations he offers, is in this case apparently willing to take a greater intellectual risk as a critic. Had he stopped right after reporting the *publica opinio*, he would have been relatively safe from criticism, since as a commentator he is expected to summarize standard interpretations even if he does not agree with them, but he decided to go on (whether the additional comment is his own or still inherited from his predecessors) and with *causa* even hazarded using a problematic term just to emphasize the motif of death as a point of contact between Misenus and the Arician bough. What I would criticize Servius for is rather that he did not allow for even more *copia* in his 'additional' remark (before beginning the third part of his long comment, on the symbol of Y in Pythagoreanism) for raising the shared motif of challenge as well, but even his failure to do so might be seen as an example of what Gumbrecht writes about the 'go-and-stop rhythm' and the arbitrariness of how typical commentary notes end: some space is always left on the conceptual margins of the text to be filled.

## Conclusion

I would like to close my study by making three remarks on how the examples provided by ancient commentaries, and especially the Servian *corpus*, may be used to supplement or in some respects modify Gumbrecht's thesis concerning commentaries and *copia*. The first is that we have to distinguish between abundance as perceived and evaluated by users of a commentary, or by theoreticians of philology, on the one hand, and the rhetoric of *copia* and/or conciseness, on the other, as practised by the commentators themselves, anticipating possible reactions by their readership to the amount of information they are providing. As we have seen in the case of Donatus's letter to Munatius, ancient commentators sometimes employ an almost anti-Gumbrechtian 'rhetoric of brevity' advertising the principle of 'less is more' and claiming that they have produced a more concise work than their predecessors. That practice can be interpreted as the commentator's way of guarding himself against the potential charge of 'filling up the page' too much by making 'superfluous' comments. In Servius's original commentary, as we have seen, this tactic goes hand in hand with criticizing predecessors repeatedly for the supposed superfluity of their comments.

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<sup>43</sup> Segal 1965-1966, p. 622.

The second point concerns the relationship between philological *copia* (in both of the above outlined senses) and poetic *copia*, as perceived and discussed by the commentator. The nature and degree of this relationship is without doubt historically contingent. Most modern commentators would not emphasize that ‘the poet was right to add’ certain expressions to the text, but in the case of the Servian *corpus*, as I hope to have shown, such remarks allow us to link discussions of abundance in the poem and in the commentary. *Bene addidit, non vacat* and similar phrases, followed by the interpretation of a particular expression, belong to the many tropes by which the commentator can legitimize his own reading by attributing it to the poet himself. However, by calling attention to the supposedly additional or ‘secondary’ nature of the expression, he can claim indirectly not only that his interpretation conforms to the poet’s intention, but also that going ahead with a note and making an additional remark was the right decision: that beneficial poetic *copia* is matched by a similarly useful abundance of information on the critic’s part. Remarks of the *bene addidit* type seem to suggest even that such ‘secondary’ or additional expressions can be read as Vergil’s way of offering himself something of a commentary on the ‘core’ elements of his text, guarding the text against misinterpretation (i.e. interpretation which is considered erroneous by the commentator), as if all Servius had to do was ‘translate’ Vergil’s poetic comments into the critical language used in the commentary.

Finally, it should be emphasized that *copia* and conciseness are relative concepts and this determines their perception to a great degree. There is no ‘standard’ or ‘optimal’ level of abundance, understood as a constant ratio of length between the primary passage to be explained and the commentary space devoted to discussing it. Thus, to examine *copia*, we usually need at least two commentaries which we can compare; even when the ‘rhetoric of *copia*’ manifests itself in a single commentary, comparison with other commentaries (real or imagined, accessible or lost) is implied. The works of the ancient commentators Servius cites, with or without naming them, have not survived, but his commentary was developed into an extended version – let us call it again *Servius auctus* – and both versions were copied over and over during the Middle Ages, until finally they found their way into print. It was the work of the compiler and that of later scribes which made possible the examination of Servian *copia*, but we should also not forget about the contributions of classical philologists who produced critical editions, and now digital editions as well, of the Servian corpus. The medium and the format in which the two versions of the commentary are preserved and presented matters<sup>44</sup>. The philological data needed for a detailed comparison might be there, mostly, in the manuscripts themselves, but must be extracted and made available in a way which facilitates interpretation. Typographic means such as Thilo and Hagen’s italics and especially the two-column format of the Harvard Servius, with the left column being almost always fuller than the right, are not just means of separating two versions of the commentary, but also means of visualizing their relative *copia* in a way which would not be possible even by putting two editions side by side, one containing Servius, the other *Servius auctus*. Detailed, note by note comparison of the two versions thus cannot have been typical throughout the long reception of Servius (although, as the few *hoc non dicit Servius* comments show, such a comparison was not impossible). Nevertheless, there were in Antiquity and the Middle Ages some privileged persons who could compare, and must have compared, different commentaries on the same texts and different versions of notes on the same passages. They were the primary subjects of this collection of papers, the authors and compilers of the commentaries, who produced their own versions by carefully studying those of their predecessors; thus, when we

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<sup>44</sup> On the importance of the layout in which a commentary is (re)produced with respect to the perception of authoriality by the commentary’s users, see Ute Tischer’s contribution to this volume.

study their *copia* or conciseness, in many cases we probably get closer to them than to their ancient and medieval readers<sup>45</sup>.

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*Abstract*

In this paper I am using Hans-Ulrich Gumbrecht's thesis on the role of *copia* in commentaries to examine Servius' commentary on the *Aeneid* and its expanded version, Servius 'auctus'. Starting with Servius' prefatory remarks on the publication of the *Aeneid* and the supposedly 'superfluous' comments regarding the order of books in the epic made by some ancient critics, I move on to the notes themselves in both versions of the commentary and discuss the vocabulary of *copia*, suggesting through a statistical survey that the Compiler's version is especially interesting with respect to *copia* not only because it is mainly the result of 'additions' to Servius' commentary, but also because issues of *copia* are raised more frequently in the additional comments than in Servius' own notes. Finally, I offer a more detailed reading of selected notes (Serv. *Aen.* I. 2; VI. 136; Serv./DS *Aen.* I. 1; I. 119; VIII. 708; VIII. 731).