Trommius's Travelogue

Learned Memories of Erasmus and Scaliger and Scholarly Identity in the Republic of Letters

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Abstract

On the basis of the autobiography of the orthodox Calvinist minister Abraham Trommius (1633-1719), this article argues that the Republic of Letters created its own cultures of memory. The very use of the word 'Republic' begs the question whether there was some kind of early modern 'state building' at play within the networks of learned men and women. Although sentiments of religious and political alliance cannot be ruled out in the practices of learned memories, the identity arising from these cultures aimed at stressing learning, friendship and communication. Its acts of memory were localized instances of learned identity formation across borders, serving traveling students regardless of their political and confessional affiliations. This article argues that memories of learning or learned memories present a new logical, although hitherto ignored, line of research, to complement well-studied political and confessional memories. Trommius draws particular attention to Erasmus and to Joseph Scaliger and his father Julius Caesar Scaliger. The article also discusses the broader memory of these towering figures to exemplify the study of early modern learned identity formation by means of cultures of memory.

Keywords: locations of knowledge, learned identity, material memory, Grand Tour, Erasmus, Scaliger, Republic of Letters

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Introduction

On the last day of April, 1656, Calvinist student Abraham Trommius, future author of the often reprinted, massive concordance of the States Translation (the Dutch authorized version of the bible) sat down in the church of Saint Stephen in Toulouse before the funeral slab of Hendri de Sponde or Henricus Spondaeus, the bishop who had written a continuation of the fiercely anti-Protestant *Annales ecclesiastici* of cardinal Cesare Baronio. In his memoirs, Trommius uttered not a single word of depreciation about Spondaeus. Instead, he published a complete transcription of the epitaph, which informed its reader that 'Spondaeus died, crushed by the years and exhausted from toiling day and night, after having either recalled Calvinist heretics back to the Catholics or utterly destroyed them'.[2] Without blinking, it would appear, Trommius then went on to report how he was showed around the 'neat' Jesuit College and how one of the Jesuit priests gave them a guided tour through the catacombs underneath a Franciscan convent, pointing out the desiccated corpses of the monks.[3]

This raises an obvious question: how could a card-carrying Calvinist such as Trommius, still a household name in orthodox Reformed circles today, be so interested in the material memory of what we should suppose to have been his arch-enemies? Moreover, why did he not seize the opportunity in his memoirs, published just a year after his death, to defame the Jesuits? After all, a next stop on his Grand Tour would be Agen, where he visited the paternal home of Joseph Scaliger, who used to rail in his letters against Jesuit attacks, complaining that 'not a single Frankfurt Book Fair passes at which I am not infested by sodomites, onanites, pedants and similar excrement of the human race.'[4] The answer to this question is usually given in terms of religious toleration which formed

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2 Trommius, 'Bevindingen', 18a.
3 The mummification practices of the Franciscans fascinated tourists until deep into the eighteenth century; see Black, *France and the Grand Tour*, 50.
4 Scaliger, *Correspondence*, VII, 310 (lines 24-26).

part of the tradition of the Republic of Letters and of the Grand Tour.[5] Yet if 'tolerance' would have been the major characteristic of the learned world, the polemically minded figures of Spondaeus and Scaliger are difficult to situate in a narrative of tolerance. What this article therefore draws attention to is not so much the practices of toleration, or of transconfessional contact, but the acts and rituals by means of which a *learned* identity was shaped. If Trommius transcended political and confessional antagonism, this was not in order to be pacifist or tolerant, but to appreciate learning and the mindset required to become learned. Trommius' admiration for learning, in other words, trumped confessional antagonism. Time and again, he checked out the libraries of the cities and villages he traveled through. I argue that a learned identity was what led scholars to identify with an internationalist community dedicated to preserving, expanding and communicating knowledge.

In doing so, this article inscribes itself into two recent shifts in the study of the relation between memory and identity. First, a new interest in studying the formation of collective political identities in the early modern period, which moves away from the overwhelming attention to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The continued interest in the fluidity, adaptability and hybridity of memories has sparked debates about the justifiability of connecting memory exclusively to the modern period and to modernity.[6] Second, there has been a growing attention for cultural and literary memories, next to the new attention for early modern political memories and the more established study of religious memories.[7] Politics and religion have been studied also in the context of early

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5 On such transconfessional interests and the freedom for Protestants to move around in Catholic places, see for example Frank-van Westrienen, *De groote tour*, 60, 190-192; Frijhoff, 'De la Courts reisjournaal', 31-32. De la Court was one of the few travelers who marveled at Catholic faith rather than appreciating it.

6 Two Dutch research projects, concerned with early modern memory in the process of identity formation are Judith Pollmann's VICI-project at Leiden University, which was sponsored by NWO (Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research) over the course of five years (2008-2013) 'Tales of the Revolt. Memory, oblivion and identity in the Low Countries, 1566-1700'), and the VIDI-project, likewise financed by NWO, led by Lotte Jensen (Radboud University, Nijmegen), entitled (with a hint of irony, it would appear) 'Proud to be Dutch. The role of war and propaganda literature in the shaping of an early modern Dutch identity (1648-1815).' Jensen's project will finish in the course of 2017. Her new VICI-project will pay attention to communal identity formation under the impact of natural disasters. The focus in these projects is on political identities, through confessional and cultural means. A recent special issue of one of the two predecessors of EMLC was devoted to the patriotic past of the seventeenth-century Low Countries and focused on political and religious identities. In these studies, learned culture is treated as a medium or a tradition serving either of these identities, rather than as a culture representative of an independent learned identity. Lenarduzzi and Pollmann, 'Het vaderlands verleden in de zeventiende eeuw', 151: 'Beeld en woord, mondelinge vertelen zangtradities en geleerdencultuur, landschap en artefacten ontwikkelden zich vaak in een verrassende wisselwerking.' Jensen and her team focus on the *cultural* continuities between the premodern and modern periods when it comes to expressions of 'national' identities. See, e.g., Jensen (ed.), *The Roots of Nationalism*, 10. The adjective 'nationalist' should be used with particular care, because of the inherent anachronism in the usually modernist understanding of the 'nation'. See the debate between Joep Leerssen and Caspar Hirschi on the problems concerning the term 'nation' in studying early modern collective identities: Grosby, Leerssen and Hirschi, 'Continuities and Shifting Paradigms'.

7 For literary memory, see Leerssen and Rigney (eds.), *Commemorating Writers*. In their introduction, Leerssen and Rigney point out that literary memory served political identity formation: statues of cultural figures, primarily literary authors, but also painters and composers, acted as heroes of national culture. See Leerssen and Rigney, 'Introduction', 9.

modern traveling, but the possibility of the developing of other identities on learned tours has only been hinted at.[8]

I frame the subject from the historiography of memory rather than from the paradigm of confessionalisation or the broad range of studies about the Grand Tour. This will allow for a less descriptive and more analytical approach. I will use theoretical insights from the 'memory and identity' paradigm, applied often enough to the study of confessional identities, and use these to study the creation of *learned* identity. In doing so, I take the shifts to the early modern period and to literary memory, already apparent within the memory and identity paradigm, one step further by looking at 'literary' memories in the early modern understanding of the adjective 'literary': *literarius* means 'learned' in Latin, and 'letters' in the early modern period referred to learned cultures, concerned with a body of knowledge that was not yet clearly separated into science and humanities. Moreover, I argue that this learned identity was not subject to political or religious identities, but geared towards creating a sense of belonging that transcended political and religious boundaries: scholars created a collective learned identity in which such differences could be overcome.

The article will study Trommius's travelogue, in which he remembered, through material objects and remains, the virtues of great scholars. He did so on his Grand Tour, when he was constantly transcending political boundaries, traveling in the company of latitudinarian Protestants, and exchanging respect and awe for cultures of learning with the religious other. Since Trommius paid special attention to Erasmus and Joseph Scaliger, I will introduce the concept of 'learned memory' by drawing upon examples from memories of these two figures, before moving on to a close reading of the passages in which Trommius remembers Erasmus and Scaliger.

There are three reasons to focus on Trommius. First of all, he is representative of a society that was in the process of creating a political identity for itself: the Dutch Republic. Due to his fame as compiler of the concordance of the States Translation, he can be easily associated with the States Translation as a trans-provincial product, the result of co-ordinated action by the States General, which had aimed at molding a Dutch vernacular that was inclusive and that would prove to be constitutive of a Dutch identity. Second, he is interesting because he represents Dutch Calvinism in a broad sense: on account of his *Concordance*, it is tempting to associate Trommius with the orthodox Reformed Church, but his biography shows that he had a latitudinarian attitude towards his own Calvinist faith. Third, the travelogue is interesting in itself. On the one hand, it has never been studied before: it has been entirely overlooked, even if it is extensive and precise and, most importantly, was widely disseminated in printed form as part of the paratext of the famous *Concordance*.[9] On the other hand, it has the peculiarity that Trommius quotes extensively from his *album amicorum*, of which hitherto no copy has been found. As such, it constitutes a rare example of an album printed

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8 Moss, 'Comparing Ruins' 219, speaks, significantly, of 'the formation or reiteration of some form of identity-national, religious or otherwise'.

9 Trommius is not mentioned in the classic Dutch book on the subject, Frank-van Westrienen, *De groote tour*, 347-351, nor in the latest comprehensive survey of the subject, Verhoeven, *Europe within Reach*. Since we have Trommius's account only in printed format, it is also absent in the list of travelogues transmitted in handwritten form, compiled by Lindeman, Scherf and Dekker (eds.), *Reisverslagen*.

in fragments in the early modern period itself. A collateral fourth reason is that there is still a shortage of material on 'tourism' by people from the Low Countries, relative of the literature about German, English and French tourists. The identification of a substantial travelogue of approximately fifty thousand words, extremely rich in detail, presents a discovery, since it is now brought into the scholarly discussion for the first time.

Learned Memory

'Learned memory' requires an introduction, because it constitutes a novel approach. In the study of early modern history, the world of learning has been called a 'third domain' – a domain of *stadiium*, next to the *regnum* of the State and the *sacerdotium* of the church.[10] In an institutionalized form, the world of knowledge manifested itself in the university: a bottom-up self-organized community of scholars – basically an early form of the European guild. Like guilds, universities were never entirely 'free', since they had to be sanctioned by the political and divine powers. In the early modern period, however, the initiative continued to be with provincial or municipal elites rather than with central government bodies. In principle, universities had borderless jurisdiction in Europe: the doctoral degree was accepted throughout Christendom. The European language of learning, Latin, was politically neutral, and knowledge was regarded as universal. In its uninstitutionalized form, the world of learning inhabited a cultural space known from the fifteenth century onward as the *Respublica literarum* or *Respublica literaria*: the Republic of Letters. But cultures of learned memories have almost entirely been ignored in the study of the Republic of Letters. This is unfortunate, for the very use of the word 'Republic' begs the question whether there was some kind of early modern 'state building' at play within the networks of learned men and women.

Historians have not neglected to study the values or principles underlying the Republic of Letters. Most of these studies have identified a set of 'ideals' as values shared by those who thought of themselves as citizens of the Republic of Letters. A very important ideal is, for example, the actors' category of *commercium literarium*: learned exchange, or the exchange of knowledge.[11] Other historians have pointed at the murky realities of controversies and polemics: personal, religious and political antagonisms led to fierce competition, as well as to slander and gossip.[12] Yet, from the negative assessments we can also gather the positive ideals. In the correspondence of Joseph Scaliger, for example, we can reconstruct from his extensive use of abusive and obscene words an ideal of manly, disciplined, intelligent and heterosexual cleanliness.[13] Around 1700, there was a proliferation of histories of negative examples, indicating renewed interest in defining good and bad scholarly conduct.[14]

In studying the Republic of Letters, the historian is helped by the fact that its members constituted a cultural elite that has left a plethora of printed and handwritten sources on

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10 Rüegg, 'The Europe of Universities', 39.
11 Bots and Waquet (eds.), *Commercium litterarium*.
12 Goldgar, *Impolite Learning*; Mulsow, *Die unanständige Gelehrtenrepublik*.
13 Van Miert, 'Scaliger Scatologus'.
14 Kivistö, *The Vices of Learning*; Haugen, 'Controversy, Competition, and Insult'.

collective memory.[15] Early modern scholars by default worked within a frame of reference defined by the past: the Renaissance brought renewed attention for the pagan past and the Reformation invited scholars to return to a pristine state of Christianity. There is no way of escaping the religious backdrop of scholarly memory in the early modern period: theological stances and confessional identities pervade early modern discussions of the past, in particular protestant ones. Early modern confessional memory, material and scriptural, continues to be further developed by modern scholars.[16]

Religion continued to exercise a profound influence on the production of knowledge, perhaps even more so than political antagonism, since political antagonism was less founded on metaphysical or ideological concerns than religious antagonism was. Yet, as an edited volume on the impact of religion and politics on the exchange of letters has shown five years ago, the third realm was deeply affected by both.[17] Its contributors address individual conduct. The scholarly self is a subject which is currently drawing attention.[18] It is time, however, to move on to study a *collective* learned identity, which was on the rise from the seventeenth century onwards.

In other words: we have to face the question whether there was enough independence, enough self-awareness for the scholarly community to assert itself as a third force in society. Since the official discourse of the Republic of Letters revolved around the imperative of sharing knowledge, and since the practice of sharing knowledge involved such epistemic virtues as trustworthiness, honesty, altruism, and contributing to the common good, the study of identity formation within the deeply historical mindset of the Republic of Letters could focus on the ways in which such non-political and non-religious values were remembered and transmitted.

One way is to look at accounts of Grand Tours and *peregrinationes academicae*. These tours marked the rite of passage from adolescence to manhood, and students created their own memories when they were on the road. They did so by keeping travelogues, but also by carrying around an *album amicorum*, in which they asked scholarly figures of repute to jot down a motto, a poem, a drawing, or a signature, with a date and name. *Alba amicorum* were usually discontinued after a student returned home and settled down, but they acted as a collection of business cards: a rolodex for aspiring scholars to fall back upon later in their careers.[19] It is significant that the protagonist in this article, Trommius, cited extensively from his own *album amicorum* in the account of his Grand Tour.[20]

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15 John Gilles went as far as to say that common people never even took part in institutionalized memory; see Pollmann and Kuijpers, 'Introduction', 4.

16 For fascinating examples of material memory in the protestant domestic sphere, see Walsham, 'Domesticating the Reformation'. See also for a wider discussion: Walsham, 'History, memory, and the English Reformation'. See for France LaGuardia (ed.), *Memory and Community in Sixteenth-Century France*.

17 De Landtsheer and Nellen (eds.), *Between Scylla and Charybdis*.

18 See the research project 'The scholarly self: character, habit, and virtue in the humanities, 1860-1930', led by Herman Paul (Leiden University).

19 It was due to such an *album amicorum* that Janus Dousa, long after his studies in Paris, managed to recruit Joseph Scaliger for the University of Leiden. See Heesakkers, *Een network aan de basis van de Leidse Universiteit*, 7-8, 87-88.

20 The importance of *alba amicorum* for studying the history of the educational travels was predicted by Frank-van Westrienen, *De groote tour*, 5.

Poetry was not just inscribed on paper. The paper version of a funeral poem, for example, was seen as a replacement of a material monument. Scholars published numerous 'epitaphs' which were never actually hewn in stone. But this custom implies that a grave or funeral moment of a scholar acted as a *lieu de savoir*.[21] This is precisely what we see in the case of Trommius' memory of Erasmus and Scaliger. It should also be observed that Erasmus and Scaliger are ignored as tourist attractions in two extensive monographs on the Grand Tour of seventeenth-century Dutch travelers.[22] In this regard, one might want to distinguish between the aristocratic Grand Tour tradition and the academically inspired *peregrinatio academica* – for example by sons from families of scholars and preachers such as Pieter de la Court and his companions. De la Court did visit Basel and had himself shown round the library by Buxtorff.[23] Basel was certainly a hub for traveling students in the sixteenth century.[24] Aristocratic English travelers, on the other hand, seem to have spent little time in Basel and fail to mention Erasmus.[25]

Remembering Erasmus During the Golden Age

The *lieu de savoir* brings us to one of the most exemplary instances of public memory: the statue on a square. It is significant that the first public statue of an individual ever to have been erected in the Low Countries was not of a political or a religious leader, but of a scholar. In 1549, the city of Rotterdam installed a wooden statue of Erasmus. Apparently, this statue was replaced by a more endurable statue or stone or even marble in 1557. The use of Erasmus in this case was primarily political. This stone statue was torn down by a Spanish soldier in 1572, in the midst of the Dutch Revolt. For Spain, Erasmus was a Lutheran. His works were put on the Roman Index of Forbidden books of 1559 and 1564, as well as on the Index of the Spanish Inquisition.[26] The destroyed statue was replaced shortly afterwards by a wooden one, ridiculed by the Catholic propagandist Petrus Opmeer, and replaced by a stone one again in 1593.[27]

In 1616, the Remonstrant pensionary of Rotterdam and humanist scholar, Hugo Grotius, advised the Rotterdam city council to replace the stone statue with a bronze one. This

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21 According to Christian Jacob, who coined the term *lieu de savoir*, a place of knowledge not only enhances a learned identity, but also stimulates reflection about the process of identity formation itself. With Trommius, this appears not to be the case, as we will see below. Jacob, 'Lieux de mémoire, lieux de savoir'.

22 Frank-van Westrienen, *De groote tour*; Verhoeven, *Europe within Reach*.

23 Frijhoff, 'De la Courts reisjournaal', 22-23.

24 Felici, 'A World in Motion', 166 and 179.

25 Black, *Italy and The Grand Tour*; Idem., *France and the Grand Tour*. The older, popular, history of Hibbert, *The Grand* Tour, 86, observes about Basel that 'few Tourists remained there long' – which refers largely to eighteenth-century British aristocratic travelers again.

26 Bataillon, *Erasme et l'Espagne*.

27 Schlüter, *Standbeelden van Erasmus*. The description of the wooden statue has only recently been discovered in a work of Petrus Opmeer (1526-1595), who died in 1595. This description appears in his *History of Catholic Martyrs from Holland*, printed posthumously only in 1625. See Zinman, *'Pictura Batava'*, 60-61; Idem, 'From Ausonia to Batavia', 219

was in the midst of the religious troubles between the Arminians and Gomarists during the Twelve Years' Truce. In the same year, the Leiden sub-regent of the Theological State College Caspar Barlaeus published a *Small dissertation* in which he complained about the Gomarists: 'Considering the awful manners of some of them, you would swear they were the priests not of the reformed, but of the deformed religion.'[28] Barlaeus advises the Gomarists to read more Erasmus, singling out in particular the theologian Matthew Slade or Matthaeus Sladus.[29] Barlaeus decries the defamation of Erasmus's statue:

> I would like to tell […] a very special crime of a certain Contra-Remonstrant, committed against Erasmus – not alive, but dead; and not against his writings and books (which he does not understand), but against the statue which the Rotterdamers erected in a square to his memory; and not orally, not even by pen, which was all too vulgar for this man, but with help of another part of his body, with which (pardon my language) he could urinate against the statue. And this shameless Diogenes did urinate! Urinate? Worse even: in the company of prudent and learned men he boasted that he had dared to do this. For with this deed he wanted to give testimony that he hated Erasmus, Erasmus's theology and Erasmus's faith beyond measure.[30]

The erection in 1622 of the new bronze statue, designed by Hendrick de Keyser, was preceded and followed by many protests from the side of Reformed ministers.[31] Was a positive reception of Erasmus at odds with a Reformed identity? In the Reformed tradition, the evaluation of Erasmus would indicate a division between orthodox Calvinists and latitudinarian reformed theologians, such as the Remonstrants. As Grotius's modern biographer writes, 'The symbolic use to which Arminians and Gomarists put Erasmus is remarkable. Erasmus, the famous humanist who stood on the boundary between Rome and the Reformation, appeared repeatedly in the pamphlets, for his ideas were still seen as valuable for the controversies of the age'.[32] It is no coincidence that it was Jean le Clerc, a leading Remonstrant, who published the Leiden edition of the *Opera omnia* of Erasmus in 1703-1706. Admiration for Erasmus from a mid-seventeenth century Dutch perspective seems to have placed the admirer in a latitudinarian camp. Is this also true for Trommius?

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28 Barlaeus, *Dissertatiuncula*, 5: 'nec tam reformatae amplius, quam pessimis aliquorum moribus deformatae religionis antistites esse jurabis.'

29 Ibidem, 24: 'Hoc unum Theologiae studiosos monitos velim, ut si serium sibi, et virile de rebus sacris judicium formare studeant, Erasmum consulant, libros ejus studiose lectitent, et vanissimus habear, nisi propediem mecum iudicaturi sint'.

30 Ibidem, 24-25: 'Verum priusquam ex hoc argumento exeam, libet narrare et seculo nostro commendare insigne aliquod Ecclesiastae cuiusdam Contraremonstrantis facinus, commissum in Erasmum, non vivum, sed mortuum, non in scripta ac libros ejusdem, quos non intelligit, sed in statuam memoriae ejus a Roterodamensibus in foro erectam, non ore, non calamo, vulgare hoc nimis viro fuit, sed ea corporis parte, qua statuam eandem (sit venia dicto) commingere potuit, et impudentissimus Diogenes comminxit. Comminxit? Imo hoc se ausum apud viros cordatos et doctos gloriatus est. Scilicet hoc facto testatum voluit se Erasmus et Erasmicam Theologiam ac fidem supra modum odisse.' According to Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Philosophers*, 6.2.46, the Greek cynic Diogenes of Sinope was said to have urinated on a man who insulted him.

31 See also Barlaeus, *Bogermannus ἐλεγχόμενος*, in which he defends Erasmus, 'that miracle of nature' (*naturae illud miraculum*, sig. (.)3ʳ) against Sladus, on 46-67.

32 Nellen, *Hugo Grotius*, 186.

Trommius's Travelogue

Abraham Trommius was born in Groningen 3 September (new style) 1633, as the son of a cloth dyer and a German mother. He studied theology in Groningen in 1650-1655 and then went on his Grand Tour for two years. After his return he served as a preacher in Haren for fourteen years (1657-1671) and then moved back to Groningen, where he preached until his death in 1719. A year later his *Findings of himself during the course of his life* were published in his hometown. These memoirs were subsequently reprinted more than once amongst the prefatory material of his *Concordance*. The account of his Grand Tour covers eighty percent of the pages of this autobiography and covers the period April 1655 to May 1657; it was evidently the most important event Trommius had to relate, and this speaks to his scholarly identity.[33]

As a student, Trommius read Descartes with the Groningen professor of Greek Tobias Andreae. In his disputation *On the liberty of philosophizing*, he took a middle position between Aristotle and Descartes.[34] Whereas the *Concordance* would seem to place Trommius, a Calvinist minister, in the orthodox Reformed wing of the Dutch Reformed Church, it is noteworthy that the project of the concordance was initiated by his father-in-law Johannes Martinus, a friend of Johannes Coccejus, who would later advise Trommius.[35] Coccejus is often seen as a sympathizer of Descartes. But although the idea of a 'Coccejan-Cartesian' body of ideas, created in the seventeenth century by adversaries of Coccejus and Descartes, is still prevalent in historiography, recent research by Jetze Touber has made this untenable.[36] Trommius made his Grand Tour in the company of the Cartesian Louis Wolzogen and he married the daughter of the anti-Cartesian, somewhat difficult to classify philosopher Martinus Schoock, who fell out with Voetius over the ecclesiastical usufruct of secular chapters. A second companion of Trommius was Johannes Hotton, son of the preacher in the Walloon Church Godfroy Hotton, who sought a reconciliation between the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches.[37] In short, Trommius's company reflected the broad range of Dutch Reformed positions.

Trommius first traveled from Groningen to Amsterdam, then went east. His company shook hands with the Cartesian professor of philosophy Johannes Clauberg in Duisburg and were warmly received by Jesuits in Cologne, who showed them their public and private college libraries.[38] Turning south along the Rhine, via Heidelberg, Speyer and Strasbourg he went on to Basel, where he spent the summer from May to September 1655 with the Hebrew scholar Johannes Buxtorf the Younger.

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33 Trommius, 'Bevindingen'. The travel-account account of his 'foreign travels' (chapters III and IV) is on pages 4-21.

34 Van Berkel, *Universiteit van het Noorden*, I, 178-179.

35 De Jong, 'Trommius'.

36 Touber, 'Biblical Philology and Hermeneutical Debate'.

37 Knipscheer, 'Hotton'; Hotton, *De Christiana inter Europeos Evangelicos concordia sive tolerantia*. Trommius, 'Bevindingen', 9a, also met R. Fesch who signed his Album amicorum and whose 'besigheyt het was om over al voorslagen te doen van een temperament tusschen de *Lutheranen* ende ons.' Note the alterity in the use of 'Lutherans' in distinction to 'us'. Also, in the original text, *Lutheranen* appears italicized.

38 Trommius, 'Bevindingen', 5b.

In September he set off to the Calvinist capital Geneva, via a long and adventurous detour through the Swiss Alps. There he was in particular impressed by the library of Sankt Gallen and again well received by Jesuits in Freiburg in Switzerland.[39] He stayed in Geneva for half a year, from October to March 1656.

North of Grenoble, Trommius went out of his way to visit *La Grande Chartreuse*, the famous Carthusian convent, where he and his friends were shown around by a Flemish father. In Lyons, Trommius and his friends witnessed a disputation at the Jesuit College.[40] In Aix-en-Provence, he made an effort to visit the grave of the famous scholar Nicolas Claude Fabri de Peiresc, which reminded him of the famous biography by Pierre Gassendi that Trommius had read with great satisfaction. In fact, Gassendi's biography was a bestseller across Europe; it highlighted the ideal scholarly *persona* and created a learned domain outside the realm of politics: Peiresc's tolerant attitude, his undogmatic scholarship and his cosmopolitanism constituted an example for citizens of the Republic of Letters to live by.[41] Near Marseille, Trommius sought out the grave of Nostradamus.

Paying special attention to Roman antiquities, Trommius continued through Nîmes, Arles, Montpellier and Toulouse before he halted at Montauban, where he had an intriguing meeting with Jean De Labadie. Labadie, a former Catholic, had converted to Calvinism in 1650, and would turn into an increasingly radical puritan, looked on with suspicion by other reformed preachers. In 1668 he would become embroiled in a conflict with Trommius's fellow-traveler Wolzogen. Dispelled by the Walloon Synod in 1669 because of his inability to compromise, Labadie went on to set up his own commune. Trommius wrote his account for a Dutch public, and since the story of Labadie was well known in Dutch society, he must have assumed it would interest his readers. Trommius relates this story after the fact, and that might have colored the impression he had of his meeting with Labadie in 1656: 'He made too much of an effort in showing to us, who were but strangers, the particular industry he invested in his services, not without speaking lowly of the work of his fellow-ministers, so this conversation displeased us and instilled in us anxiety about the consequences.'[42] Whatever the truth of this characterization, it was evidently not done for a scholar to boast of one's own accomplishments and belittle those of others.

After Montaubon, Trommius held at Agen. Via Bordeaux he visited La Rochelle, where he paused to commemorate the strong Reformed legacy, and he spent the summer of 1656 in the Calvinist stronghold of Saumur (June to September).[43] Following the classic 'short tour' via the Loire Valley (Tours, Amboise, Blois, Orléans), Trommius arrived in Paris and then crossed over London, where he stayed the following winter (November – March

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39 Ibidem, 12a.
40 Ibidem, 16a.
41 See Miller, *Peiresc's Europe* for the impact of Gassendi's biography.
42 Trommius, 'Bevindingen', 18b: 'Voorts, dewijle onder de predikanten deser gemeynte een was, die uyt het Pausdom overgekomen zijnde, sich aldaer een groote naem maeckte, Iean de Labadie genoemt, soo hadden wy lust den selven te begroeten, wy wierden met groote beleeftheyt en ook eenigh onthael van hem ontfangen; doch alsoo hy in sijne discoursen met ons, die wy maer vreemdelingen waren, te vele liet blijcken den sonderlingen yver die hy betoonde in sijne bedieninge met eenige minderachtinge van 't werck sijner mede-dienaren aldaer, soo gaf ons dit gespreck eenigh misnoegen, ende sorge van quade gevolgen.'
43 Other Calvinists stopped in La Rochelle as well; see Verhoeven, *Europe within Reach*, 173.

1657) before returning through Flanders to Groningen in May, of course after having visited Oxford and Cambridge extensively.[44]

This is not the place to comment in extension on Trommius's trajectory, but it appears he did a classic Grand Tour through France, preceded by the usual interest in Switzerland, and with the customary disregard for German countries.[45] For Dutch sons of senior officials, regents and merchants, France was more useful for educational purposes than 'frivolous Italy': the humanist ideals were not lost on the elites of the Northern Netherlands.[46] Trommius's tour seems to have been largely oriented on Protestant strongholds in Switzerland, France and England. Reformed identity played a part, but since so many other Dutch travelers from the same period did visit Italy, an appreciation of religious motivations in mapping out the route requires more extensive research. Trommius' tour shares some of the characteristics of a *peregrinatio academica*, but was perhaps more of an 'educational journey' – the most frequent objective of most of the Dutch seventeenth-century travelers.[47]

Trommius Remembers Erasmus

During the first phase of his trip, Trommius spent no less than four months in Basel, where Johannes Buxtorf the Younger made a special effort to teach him and his fellow travelers Hebrew for an hour a day. Trommius recalls how Buxtorf treated them with familiarity and friendliness, in fact as a father – 'I still feel it in my heart, when I think back to it'. Buxtorf gave them the 'freedom' to use his books, and even lent them books from the university library (he was the librarian).

> We used this freedom without reservation, and when we left, we remunerated everything thankfully: it was custom (as we were told) to sometimes donate a book to the library, for the borrowing and use of the academic books. To this end, we left behind the works of Descartes in two volumes, which we had bought

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44 See on the 'short tour': Moss, 'Comparing Ruins', 226 and 232, note 45; Black, *France and the Grand Tour*, 39; Verhoeven, *Europe within Reach*, 64 and 67-68. With Pieter de la Court, Trommius was one of the few Dutch travelers who visited London; Verhoeven, *Europe within Reach*, 62.

45 Verhoeven, *Europe within Reach*, 63-66, points out that Calvinists were generally more interested in the Swiss academies than in Italian riding schools and (in the seventeenth century) in attending Catholic universities, although the popularity of Switzerland declined over the course of the seventeenth century. See on the disregard for Germany Frank-van Westrienen, *De groote tour*, 3.

46 Verhoeven, *Europe within Reach*, 55, 61. Black, *Italy and the Grand Tour*, stresses the importance of Italy for eighteenth-century British travelers. Likewise, its centrality in the German Kavaliersreise is well known (see, e.g., Imorde and Pieper (eds.), *Die Grand Tour*) and of course, the peninsula was the main destination for classical scholars. Black, *France and the Grand Tour*, 29, concludes that 'most tourists [understood are British eighteenth-century travelers] saw little of France other than from the road to Paris from Calais and the route from Paris to Italy'. The main destinations in France were Paris, the Loire valley and the cities on the Mediterranean, whence one could cross over into Italy (39).

47 Frank-van Westrienen*, De groote tour*. Compare the similar character of the journey conducted by Pieter de la Court, which according to Frijhoff, 'De la Courts reisjournaal', 18, presents a border-case between study trip and educational journey. Thirty-six percent of the Netherlandish travelers in the early seventeenth century had education as a primary motivation; Verhoeven, *Europe within Reach*, 54.

there and perused for ourselves, as a token of remembrance. And for our common pleasure, I drafted something on the title page to that effect, which all of us signed with our own hands.[48]

Here we see the creation of learned memory in practice, expressing virtues such as the freedom to read, reciprocity of knowledge exchange, honoring institutions and praising the scholarly virtues of intimate, friendly and responsible conduct. Strikingly, Trommius and his friends had been studying not only Hebrew but also the philosophy of Descartes, which was officially banned from major Dutch universities such as Utrecht and Leiden precisely at the time he was traveling. No doubt his studies at the University of Groningen, where Cartesianism had been admitted, and particularly the lessons of the professor of philosophy Tobias Andreae, had made Trommius perceptible to this new philosophy.[49] The fact that the fiercely Calvinist theologian Samuel Maresius, also professor in Groningen, defended Descartes against his Utrecht colleague Gisbertus Voetius, shows that an interest in Descartes did not necessarily make one less strictly Calvinist.

Trommius of course visited the house where Erasmus's library had been kept. Trommius tells us that Erasmus had bequeathed his library to his good friend Bonifacius Amerbach. 'Apart from a large quantity of books, there were also many old medals, which had been bestowed on him [Erasmus]'. The collection was now (1655) being looked after by two women 'to whom the library had been devolved by inheritance'. The Elector of Brandenburg had tried to purchase the collection, but the women and their representatives had refused, as they told Trommius. Trommius added that he had 'later heard' (that is, after returning from his tour) 'that the Magistrate of Basel had bought all of it, to the satisfaction of the owners, because of their particular reverence for that famous man, who had been their citizen for such a long time and who had let so many excellent books be published in this city of theirs by Froben and shared them with the learned world.'[50] Indeed, in 1662, the *Amerbach-Kabinett*, as his son Basilius had baptized the collection of books and curiosities of his father, was finally purchased by the city and the University of Basel, thus laying the foundation for Europe's first public museum.[51]

Trommius's remark is intriguing because Erasmus, as far as we know, did not leave his library to Amerbach, but to the Polish scholar Johannes a Lasco. Bonifacius Amerbach, as the executor of Erasmus's testament, drew up a shortlist of 413 titles that he dispatched to Poland (the books we dispersed soon after, due to Lasco's turbulent life).[52] What Amerbach *did* administer, was the *Legatum Erasmianum*: a bequest of 5000 florins from the interest

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48 Trommius, 'Bevindingen', 7a. Also noticed by Van Berkel, *Universiteit van het Noorden*, 178.

49 Ibidem, 175-179.

50 Trommius, 'Bevindingen', 7b: 'Men syde ons dat de Keurvorst van Brandenborgh een grote somme gelts daer voor had laten bieden, maer dat de voormonders het daer voor niet hadden willen laten; doch naderhant hebbe ick wel gehoort, dat de Magistraet van Basel het alles soude hebben gekocht tot benoegen [sic] der eygenaren, uyt bysondere hooghachtinghe van dien vermaerden Man, die soo langen tijdt haer inwoonder was geweest, en soo vele uytgelesene boecken in dese hare stadt door Frobenus had laten drucken, aen de geleerde wereldt mede gedeelt' [sic].

51 Chevrier et al., *From Basel*, 78.

52 Zehnter, 'Die Bibliothek des Erasmus'. On the *Legatum Erasmianum*, see Roth, 'Das Legatum Erasmianum'; Hartmann, 'Bonifacius Amerbach als Verwalter der Erasmusstiftung'; Felici, 'A World in Motion'; Felici, 'The Erasmusstiftung and Europe'; Felici, *Erasmusstiftung: la fondazione erasmiana*.

Fig. 1 Memorial monument to Erasmus in the Munster Cathedral in Basel, where Erasmus was buried in 1536. Photo by courtesy of the Freunde Basler Münsterbauhütte.

of which he paid alms to the poor and granted students scholarships. The latter task made him into an extremely well sought-after man, who dispensed numerous scholarships to Protestants and Catholics alike.[53] What exactly Trommius saw remains unclear: he may have mistaken Amerbach's library for Erasmus's; maybe he misunderstood or misremembered the German explanation of the two women.

In the so-called Münster Church in Basel, Trommius went to see the memorial plaque for Erasmus, the inscription of which he copied out – faithfully, as we can check; for this plaque is still with us (fig. 1). The monument said that it had been erected by Bonifacius Amerbach, Hieronymus Froben, and Nicolaus Episcopius, for Erasmus' mortal remains and 'not for his memory, which he rendered immortal for himself by publishing his well-wrought studies; through these, as long as the world will exist, Erasmus will survive and speak to the erudite members of nations [*gentes*] everywhere.'[54]

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53 Welti, 'Amerbach', 44-45.
54 Trommius, 'Bevindingen', 7b: '[…] patrono optimo non memoriae, quam inmortalem sibi editis lucubrationibus comparavit; iis tantisper dum orbis terrarum stabit superfuturo, ac eruditis ubique gentium colloquuturo, sed corporis mortalis quo reconditum sit, ergo, hoc saxum posuere'.

For Trommius, Erasmus's Basel heritage was clearly important: Amerbach, who converted to Protestantism with some reservations in 1534, five years after the city itself had officially gone over, had helped to guard the city's latitudinarian reputation. But Trommius's attention for the legacy of Erasmus was not so much due to his own confessional identity. After all, Erasmus had remained a Catholic, and back in the Dutch Republic, Erasmus was associated with Arminianism throughout the seventeenth century, while Trommius was evidently not.

What appears to have been far more important for Trommius is, that Erasmus was a prince of the Republic of Letters: an intellectual authority, just like Buxtorff the Elder, whose funeral monument he also copied out in the same church. During Trommius' entire journey, he took special interest in the birth houses and funeral monuments of famous scholars, including those of fiercely anti-Protestants such as Spondaeus, as we have seen. Erasmus had been Europe's greatest scholar, and the humanist from Rotterdam was in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic explicitly claimed as part of a Dutch legacy. Since Trommius did not claim Erasmus as a fellow-countryman, it appears that a learned identity trumped Trommius's political identity. It cannot be ruled out that some patriotism motivated Trommius to praise Erasmus, but he failed to make that explicit.[55] He also neglected to mention the Dutch connection in remembering a second major scholarly figure, or rather two figures.

Remembering the Scaligers

In 1593, Leiden University managed to appoint Joseph Justus Scaliger, the most famous scholar of his time, as an 'ornament to the university'. Scaliger made a bad start: he dedicated a long epistolary treatise to his friend, the nobleman Janus Dousa, in which he set out his own family history – or at least the history which his famous father, the philosopher-physician and author of an influential treatise on the theory of poetry, Julius Caesar Scaliger, had instilled in him as a child. Joseph must have known that the story of his noble descent was highly problematic, and his Catholic enemies latched on the treatise to start a campaign of mockery, which lasted until after Scaliger's own death and which came to incorporate much more than Scaliger's proud but fabricated family history. Leiden colleagues came to Scaliger's defense. Holland successfully managed to capitalize on Scaliger's numerous accomplishments as a scholar. Like Amerbach had administered Erasmus's library, so Leiden University in the person of librarian – and former student of Scaliger – Daniel Heinsius guarded the books and manuscripts that Scaliger bequeathed to the university.

Joseph Scaliger was born in Agen, where his father Julius Caesar practiced as a physician, and picked a fight with Erasmus (much to the regret of Joseph, as he later admitted, for Joseph admired Erasmus). The father was buried in Agen. By the time Trommius visited

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55 For the particular interest in Erasmus's legacy by travelers from the Low Countries, see Felici, 'The Erasmusstiftung and Europe', 44-45. Yet, most beneficiaries of the Legatum Erasmianum were Germans, Swiss and French; Ibidem, 34.
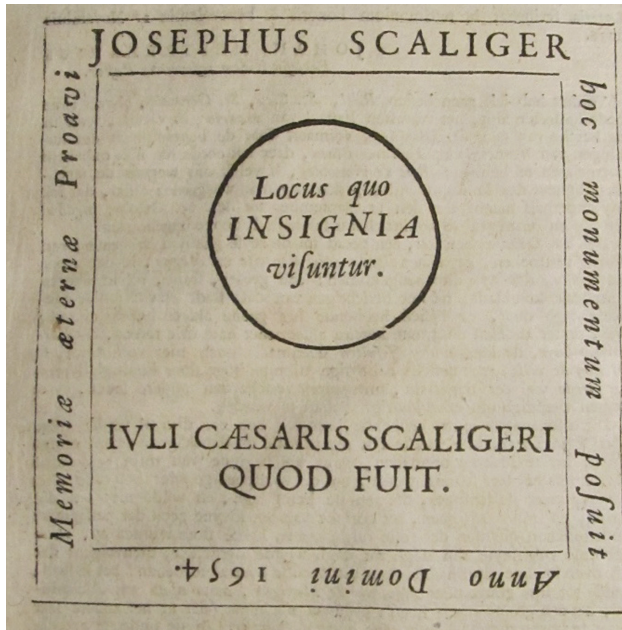
Agen, Joseph Scaliger's posthumous status had continued to grow: his philological methods and his chronological studies had proved essential for the development of historical criticism – a feat recognized by friend and foe. On 6 June 1656, Trommius arrived in Agen, where he and his fellow-travelers immediately asked the priests to open the Augustinian church, so that they could see Julius Caesar Scaliger's grave.

> The fathers were not only very willing to do so, letting us into the church instantly, but also brought us the skull that they guarded, which we also took into our hands. We looked at it as a dead relic of the living brain that once was inside. The slab covering the grave was a great, blue tombstone, in this middle of which was cut in large letters the following inscription: JULII CÆSARIS SCALIGERI QUOD FUIT
>
> Yet, just as this inscription was cut into that stone there, likewise the same man's cousin, who was now still among the living, had recently ordered to erect a very conspicuous monument in honor of his grandfather on the wall of the Choir, not far from the altar, which I copied out on the spot, and which I present here for the curious reader (fig. 2).

Mister d'Escailles explained the identity of his alleged forefathers of the Della Scala family and produced a copy of Onofrio Panvinio's *Veronese Antiquities*, with further information about the Scaligeri and their funeral monuments.[56] Of course, these painted portraits proved little about the learned Scaligers' connection to the famous medieval rulers of

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56 Trommius, 'Bevindingen', 18b-19a. The cousin will have pointed out to Trommius the passage in Panvinio, *Antiquitatum Veronensium libri VIII*, 168-169, that gives the epitaphs of Cangrande della Scala (1291-1329), Mastino II della Scala (1308-1350), and Cansignorio della Scala (1340-1375), as well as engravings of their famous funeral monuments: the *Arche Scaligere*, still a tourist attraction just outside the church of Santa Maria

Verona, but Trommius ignores the well-known scepticisms about the noble descent of Julius Caesar and Joseph Scaliger.

Conclusion

Trommius traced *lieux de savoir*: he visited the graves of Erasmus and the elder Scaliger and copied out their epitaphs. He even held the elder Scaliger's skull in his hands, the frame of one of the sixteenth century's most famous 'brains'. Significantly, he designates it as 'a dead relic' (*een doode reliquie*): evidently, Julius Caesar Scaliger (who died as a Catholic) was something of a scholarly saint for the Reformed Trommius. He fails to mention Erasmus's or Joseph Scaliger's connection to the Dutch Republic. Nowhere does he make any reference to, or comparisons with, the religious situation in his native Groningen, or does he display patriotic pride.

Trommius's visits of the houses of Erasmus and Scaliger calls to mind Harald Hendrix's study of literary memory embodied in writers' houses. We know that Petrarch's houses were cultivated in the nineteenth century.[57] Hendrix also demonstrated, however, how much the grave and houses of Petrarch were *lieux de mémoire* already in the early modern period: in Petrarch's home in Arquà (Padua), dating from the 1370s, 'the poet's chair and library case in what is believed to be the Italian humanist's study, were placed there only in the 1530s, when the building was first turned into a tourist attraction'.[58]

What Trommius sought out, and what people visiting the house of Petrarch in the 1530s visited, were the relics of *recentiores*. There might be a difference, though, in that Petrarch was remembered for his poetry rather than for his learning, although it remains problematic to separate 'literary' memory from 'learned' memory. We would have to learn far more about instances of early modern literary and learned memories, to see if these diverge. The important point, however, is that even the purely 'literary' memory of Petrarch was transnational, as is clear from the case of Constantijn Huygens, who visited Petrarch's *lieux de mémoire*, and whose admiration for 'this philosopher and poet' (note the combination of learning and literature) inspired him to write new poems for himself.[59]

The story about Agen also confirms the importance which at least the cousin of Scaliger attached to his alleged noble descent: he guarded the paintings of his so-called ancestors and backed the information up with a recently published antiquarian history. Trommius, who must have known of the problems involved in this pedigree, makes no mention of these problems whatsoever. He actually copied out the funeral monument drawn up by Joseph Scaliger (fig. 2). The fact that this is the only image in his memoirs underscores the importance he attached to it, perhaps because father and son appeared united in this slab.

Antica. Arnoud Hellemans Hooft visited the 'arche' in November 1649, see Hooft, *Een naekt beeld*, 93: 'Wij sagen de drie graven seer hoogh op pilaeren van de Schaligeri'.

57 Hendrix, 'Petrarch, 1804-1904'.

58 Hendrix, 'Italian Humanists at Home', 25. See also Hendrix, 'The Early Modern Invention of Literary Tourism.

59 Ypes, *Petrarca in de Nederlandse letterkunde*, 127.

Striking throughout the travelogue is the consistently friendly contact with Jesuits and priests, who are all too willing to show the protestant travelers around. The amicable atmosphere might have been superficial politeness, but for Trommius and his friends it at least worked. The cultural memory, objectified in libraries, monuments and houses, is not yet turned into history: what the ladies of Erasmus's library, the priests in Agen and the cousin of Scaliger tell and show Trommius is part of living memory. I side with Jan Assmann against Maurice Halbwachs's distinction of memory and history, in that

> a close connection to groups and their identity exists which is similar to that found in the case of everyday memory. We can refer to the structure of knowledge in this case as the 'concretion of identity.' With this we mean that a group bases its consciousness of unity and specificity upon this knowledge and derives formative and normative impulses from it, which allows the group to reproduce its identity. In this sense, objectivized culture has the structure of memory.[60]

This is exactly what happens in the case of Trommius and his friends. The Grand Tour or educational journey marks the rite de passage from adolescence to manhood. In searching out the memories of learned icons, Trommius and his friends inscribe themselves as future scholars in a living tradition of learning, in which they consciously ignore the controversial positions which Erasmus and both Scaligers occupied. He celebrated the freedom to philosophize and praised the people who shared with the world the fruits of their labors.

One could argue that Trommius paid so much attention to Erasmus and Scaliger because they both had a Dutch connection. However, nowhere does Trommius make explicit the 'Dutch' connection, let alone that he relates that to a 'Dutch' identity of his own. This lack of patriotic framing is not self-evident: Alan Moss has given examples of Dutch travelers who tried to make sense of the confrontation with 'otherness' by drawing comparisons with political domestic experiences in recent times.[61] Although religious identity in this process often proved more important than some kind of a 'national-political' identity, Trommius does the exact opposite: he celebrates the individual virtues of Erasmus and Scaliger, he does not frame them in a patriotic or confessional narrative of collectivized memory of struggle. In other words, Trommius does not appropriate the scholarly heroes for the agendas of *regnum* or *sacerdotium*, but seeks out *studium*. Hence, the remembering of Spondaeus is not so much a positivist act of tolerance or transconfessionalism, but of acknowledgement of scholarly vigor.

Erasmus and Scaliger were towering figures in the Republic of Letters: controversial to many, but intellectually ranked among the most important minds of the sixteenth century by friend and foe. The Catholicism of Erasmus and (his one-time adversary) Scaliger the Elder, did not stand in the way of Protestant veneration. In this case, at least, scholarly virtue trumped confessional qualms. To what extent the 'internationalism' of Erasmus and the Scaligers was more important for Trommius than their Dutch connections, remains to be seen; he never claimed them as fellow-countrymen, but neither did he praise them in terms of 'Europe' or the 'Republic of Letters', and there are no signs of a particular cosmopolitan identity. The internationalism lies rather in the practices of traveling, visiting and remembering

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60 Assmann, 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity', 128.
61 Moss, 'Comparing Ruins', 219-220; see also 223 and 227.

across borders. The memory of Trommius, then, was 'glocal'.[62] Whether his account was at all accurate, is of little concern: if his descriptions of Erasmus and Scaliger were merely meant to answer social expectations (it is known that travelogues were often after-the-fact (re)constructions of established narratives, prepared often by written guides or social traditions) – then they *a fortiori* point towards the acknowledgement of scholarly virtues.

The most important conclusion we can draw from the discovery of Trommius's diary is that the learned world of the seventeenth century saw embodied in sixteenth-century scholars the virtues of a scholarly ideal with which they identified themselves across religious and political boundaries, thus preventing a parochialism which was unhelpful for international communication. It is time to acknowledge that we can move beyond studying religious toleration and start analyzing what that toleration was meant to facilitate: to engage in a world of scholarship.

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62 Hendrix, 'Petrarch, 1804-1904', 117.

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