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What's missing from Hannibal's shield?

Almost thirty years ago, D. Vessey (AJP 1975) interpreted Hannibal's shield for its importance within Silius' *Punica* and against the Vergilian narrative in *Aeneid* 1 and 4. Since then the scholarship on ecphrasis (D. Fowler JRS 1991; R. Thomas HSCP 1983) and on imitation in Flavian epic has been considerable (P. Hardie, *The Epic Successors of Virgil*, 1993 and M. Helzle, *Der Stil ist der Mensch*, 1996), but a rigorous examination of Silius' imitation of the shield of Aeneas from *Aeneid* 8 remains to be done.

Hannibal has been recognized as a 'reverse' Aeneas in the *Punica* (M. von Albrecht, *Silius Italicus* 1964), not least because of such epic replays as Hannibal's shield, which imitates Vergil's ecphrasis of Aeneas' shield. The differences are particularly striking: Hannibal's shield was made by humans, Aeneas' by gods; Hannibal's shield depicts the past, Aeneas' the future. One of the resulting differences is that Hannibal, who receives the shield, can also be featured on it, whereas Aeneas carries the shield, but it features Augustus. As Hannibal, the recipient of the shield, is portrayed as a 'reverse' Aeneas, so Hannibal, as the one featured on the shield, is similarly portrayed as a 'reverse' Augustus. Parallel reading of the descriptions of the shields produces interesting juxtapositions, but the omissions are the most noteworthy. Silius' ecphrasis is half the length of Vergil's. One can argue that Hannibal's siege of Saguntum is an abbreviated parallel to Augustus at the battle of Actium on Aeneas' shield, but Hannibal's shield has no obvious parallel for Augustus' triumph and the procession of conquered peoples, which is the culmination of Aeneas' shield and of Roman history to Vergil's time. Hannibal's shield is missing the prophetic element, including praise of the poet's ruler through a description of a triumph.

The parallel in the *Punica* for Augustus' triumph and the procession of conquered peoples is Scipio's triumphal procession into Rome. This scene is the culmination and end of Silius' epic, which encompasses the second Punic war from its beginnings until this triumph. Its parallel to the final scenes of Aeneas' shield is in keeping with the portrayal of Scipio, not Hannibal, as the true Aeneas figure of the *Punica*. Scipio's triumph makes him parallel to Augustus with his triumph. Moreover, as the scene of Augustus' triumph on Aeneas' shield recalls Jupiter's prophecy to Venus in *Aeneid* 1, so Scipio's triumph recalls Silius' scene of Jupiter's prophecy to Venus in *Punica* 3 (557-629, especially 584-629). In this prophecy Jupiter foretells the success of Scipio, but its culmination is the achievements of the Flavian dynasty, above all of Domitian. By echoing Jupiter's prophecy of Domitian in the scene of Scipio's triumph, Silius can allusively celebrate Domitian at the end of his epic. Both Scipio's triumph in *Punica* 17 and Jupiter's prophecy in *Punica* 3 also echo Anchises' prophecy of Augustus in *Aeneid* 6 (788-805). Scipio is the hero of the *Punica* and parallel to Aeneas, but Silius presents Domitian as the parallel to Augustus in the *Aeneid* and as the culmination of Roman history to Silius' time.

This paper will begin with a comparison of the passages with the shields of Hannibal and Aeneas, briefly considering other Vergilian ecphrases as intertexts for Hannibal's shield, especially the temple to Juno at Carthage from *Aeneid* 1, which also reflects the past and

was made by mortal hands. I will then recount the verbal echoes and explore the implications of the parallels for Augustus' triumph in *Punica* 3 and 17: Silius allows his audience to draw a parallel between the Roman hero Scipio and the emperor Domitian, as Vergil similarly allows a parallel between his hero and his ruler, Aeneas and Augustus.