Unit 7 - Hardie.

8. The Shield of Aeneas: the Cosmic Icon

In chapters 3 and 4 I examined two scenes from the *ecphrasis* of the Shield of Aeneas at the end of book eight of the *Aeneid*, those describing the Gallic assault on the Capitol and the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra at Actium, and demonstrated their indebtedness to a tradition of political iconography in which the victories of the city and its rulers are compared to the victories of the Olympian gods over Titans and Giants. Such comparisons invest the historical event with the universality which properly belongs to the divine assertion of cosmos against chaos. The last scene on the Shield, the triumph of Augustus, uses other traditional models to present a picture of the *triumphator* as the universal master of mankind. The universality of these specific episodes, demanded by the Virgilian view of history, is also the key to an understanding of the overall conception of the Shield of Aeneas.

I. CRITICISM OF THE SHIELD SINCE LESSING

The elaborately decorated shield which Aeneas receives from Venus obviously challenges comparison with Homer's monumental *ecphrasis* of the shield which Hephaestus makes for Achilles in book eighteen of the *Iliad*; the comparison is signposted in the text by Venus' appeal to the precedent of Thetis in her initial approach to Vulcan for arms for her son.[1] This comparison has formed the starting-point for many modern evaluations of the Virgilian Shield, chiefly of a disparaging nature from the time of Lessing's influential and damning criticism.[2] Lessing praised the Homeric Shield for its lively presentation of the numerous scenes, viewed as they emerge under the hands of Hephaestus, and castigated the Virgilian Shield

[1] *Aen.* 8.383 f. 'te filia Nerei, / te potuit lacrimis Tithonia flectere coniunx.' The *Aithiopis* may well have contained an *ecphrasis* of the decoration of the shield (or other piece of armour) of Memnon.

[2] G. E. Lessing, *Laokoon* (1766), ch. 18.

as a frigid succession of static scenes, viewed by Aeneas (and the reader) after the whole has been completed by Vulcan. In the *Iliad* Achilles stands in real need of a new set of arms after the death of Patroclus, whereas in the *Aeneid* the gift of divine armour to Aeneas does not supply a pressing lack. Lessing concludes that 'the shield of Aeneas is therefore a real interpolation, singly and solely intended to flatter the national pride of the Romans: a little foreign rivulet which the poet conducts into his stream in order to make it more lively'.[3]

Some attempts have been made to answer Lessing in his own terms,[4] but recent essays in the rehabilitation of the Virgilian Shield have abandoned the invidious comparison, and sought to explain the Shield of Aeneas on the basis of the themes and techniques which Virgil, writing the epic of Rome, does not share with Homer.[5]

Thematically, the Shield has been evaluated in its position as the last of the extended prophecies or revelations of the historical growth of Rome, which mark off the central books of the *Aeneid* from the narrower Homeric texture of the story of Aeneas. Seen thus, the decoration of the Shield has the obvious function of complementing the parade of Roman heroes in book six, and, with the catalogue of book seven, of completing a wide review of Rome and Italy from the earliest times to the present day. If we ask, as some have done, what it adds to the Speech of Anchises, we may consider the summary of its content given by Virgil (8.626 ff.):

> illic res Italas Romanorumque triumphos
> haud vatum ignarus venturique inscius aevi
> fecerat ignipotens, illic genus omne futurae
> stirpis ab Ascanio pugnataque in ordine bella.

In contrast to the predominantly prosopographical bias of book six, where Anchises is seen marshalling the individual souls of future Roman heroes, the emphasis here is on Roman conquest. This is suited both to the ornament of an instrument of war and to the narrative context of imminent struggle between the

[3] Trans. R. Phillimore.

[4] Notably by H. T. Plüss, *Vergil und die epische Kunst* (Leipzig, 1884), pp. 270 ff.

[5] The most influential of recent studies has been C. Becker, 'Der Schild des Aeneas', *WS* 77 (1964), 111–27; see also Wlosok, pp. 121 ff., with the bibliography at p. 122 n. 73.

Trojans and the Italians; this war is the implied beginning of the historical series of wars depicted on the Shield. It has also been argued that the divine authorship and delivery of the Shield function as an expression of the divine protection and sanctioning of Roman conquest.

In terms of narrative technique, the charge of static frigidity has been partially met by the discovery of allusive links, some more convincing than others, between three areas of Roman legend and history, namely the stories of Aeneas, of pre-Augustan Rome, and of Augustan Rome.[6] If this is true, then it can be argued that Homeric naturalism and liveliness here would be a distraction. The other criticisms also lose some of their force; that Virgil's theme is narrow compared with that of Homer is accepted as inevitable in the economy of a Roman epic (however much we may distrust Virgil's initial conception). That the Shield of Aeneas is less well integrated into its context than is the Shield of Achilles proves perhaps to be an advantage; Virgil thus makes clear the distance between his 'prophecy' of Augustus and the world of Aeneas; in the passages that frame the *ecphrasis* proper this distance is indeed emphasized, spatially in the secluded setting of the delivery of the arms (*in valle reducta*, 609), and psychologically in Aeneas' ignorance of the meaning of the pictures that delight his eyes (730).

The surrender of the comparison with Homer in favour of an interpretation in what are seen as purely Virgilian terms has led to the conclusion that the Shield of Aeneas is almost totally independent of the Homeric Shield, except in respect of the great length and variety of the *ecphrasis*.[7] This, if true, would be surprising given the depth and extensiveness of Virgil's imitation of his Homeric models elsewhere in the *Aeneid*; in the following sections I shall argue that the Shield of Achilles is the central model for the Shield of Aeneas, but that this imitation coexists with, rather than tending to disrupt, the kinds of modern interpretation outlined above. To appreciate this, it is

[6] See the comments of Binder and Gransden on the individual episodes.

[7] e.g. P. T. Eden, *A commentary on Virgil*, Aeneid *VIII* (*Mnemosyne* Suppl. 35, Leiden, 1975), p. 163: 'the idea of the Shield of Aeneas unquestionably derives from Homer's Shield of Achilles, but the subject-matter of the two has no detectable connection'; see also P. G. Walsh, introd. to C. J. Fordyce, *P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos libri VII–VIII* (Oxford, 1977), p. xxix, 'The contrast with the universal themes on Achilles' shield in the *Iliad* emphasizes yet again the differing purposes of Virgil's national epic.'

necessary to reconstruct ancient ways of interpreting the Homeric Shield, instead of attempting to map modern readings directly on to the Virgilian *ecphrasis*.[8] The central feature of ancient exegesis is its insistence that the great circle of the Shield of Achilles, with its abundance of scenes, is an image of the whole universe, an allegory of the cosmos. The Shield of Aeneas is also an image of the creation of a universe, but of a strictly Roman universe (though none the less comprehensive for that). There is in fact no contradiction between the universalist themes of Homer (as interpreted by antiquity) and the nationalist concerns of Virgil; the resolution is provided immediately by the Virgilian identification of *cosmos* and *imperium*, of which the Shield is the final and most vivid realization. This interpretation has the further advantage of explaining the function of the Shield within the overall structure of the poem, a problem only partially confronted by modern reassessment; as cosmic icon the Shield of Aeneas is the true climax and final encapsulation of the imperialist themes of the *Aeneid*, and is thus qualitatively different from the review of individual Roman heroes in book six (although the *encomium* of Augustus there does indeed foreshadow the universalizing of the Shield). The cosmic (or cosmogonic) reading of the Shield of Aeneas also helps to explain the principle behind the very partial selection of scenes from Roman history (although it does not entirely elucidate the much discussed group of scenes from early Roman history between the scene of Romulus and Remus and that of the Gauls on the Capitol). Finally, this interpretation also places due emphasis on the physical presence of the Shield as a massive circular object proudly taken up by Aeneas, rather than simply regarding it as a more or less neutral field for the representation of scenes extraneous to the central narrative of war in Latium.

[8] R. R. Schlunk, *The Homeric scholia and the* Aeneid (Ann Arbor, 1974), pp. 33–5, discusses Virgil's use of the ancient allegorizations of the Shield of Achilles, but stops short of detailed analysis.

II. THE ANCIENT TRADITION OF COMMENTARY ON THE SHIELD OF ACHILLES

(a) The Shield as natural philosophy: *imago mundi*

That the Homeric Shield of Achilles is in some sense an image of the universe is a view quite widely held; modern interpretations tend to present the Shield as a microcosm of society, offering for our inspection a wide-ranging sample of human activities on earth.[9] These detailed scenes are framed by schematic cosmic images: the first line of the *ecphrasis* (*Il.* 18.483) presents the tripartite universe of earth, heaven, and sea, followed by six lines detailing the contents of the heavens; the whole is rounded off by the image of Ocean-stream circling the rim of the Shield (607 f.).

In antiquity these indications formed the starting-point for one of the most extensive applications of physical allegory to Homer, whereby the whole of the Shield and the account of its making were revealed as the expression of a philosophically conceived cosmogony and cosmology. This allegorization is preserved at length in the *Homeric Problems* ascribed to Heraclitus[10] and in Eustathius.[11] I shall summarize the main points. The god of fire, Hephaestus, is an allegory of the demiurgic fire which creates the universe; the account of the making of the circular shield is an allegory of cosmogony, of the creation of the spherical universe.[12] The forging of the Shield takes place at night, a night which represents the chaos which preceded the separation of the elements. The four metals of which the Shield is made represent the four elements; what other reason could Homer have had for not making the Shield entirely of gold? Lines 483–9 of the Homeric *ecphrasis* need only to be

[9] Cf. e.g. O. P. Taplin, 'The Shield of Achilles within the *Iliad*', *G&R*[2] 27 (1980), 11 f.

[10] *All.* 43 ff. For a fuller discussion of the ancient allegorizations of the Shield of Achilles see my article '*Imago mundi*: cosmological and ideological aspects of the Shield of Achilles', forthcoming in *JHS*.

[11] Eust. 1154.41 ff., where the immediate authority is given as Demo. Standard discussions of the allegory: K. Reinhardt, *De Graecorum theologia capita duo* (diss. Berlin, 1910), pp. 61 ff.; H. J. Mette, *Sphairopoiia: Untersuchungen zur Kosmologie des Krates von Pergamon* (Munich, 1936), pp. 36 ff. (the testimonia for the allegorization are collected under fragment 23).

[12] H. J. Mette, op. cit., p. 40, excludes the cosmogonic aspect from the original allegorization, for no good reason.

taken at their face value to yield the three world-divisions of earth, sky, and sea,[13] followed by the heavenly bodies. The two cities, one at peace and one at war, are allegories of Empedocles' cosmological principles of *Philia* ('Love') and *Neikos* ('Strife'). The five layers of which the Shield is constructed represent the five zones into which the earth is divided.[14] Eustathius further records an allegorization of the *antux*, the rim, of the Shield as the circle of the zodiac; that it is said to be 'triple' alludes to the breadth of the zodiac; that it is called 'gleaming' refers to the fact that the bright sun moves within it;[15] the *telamōn* or shield-strap is allegorized in Eustathius as the axis which supports the universe. The diversity of the Homeric description has been rigidly reduced to a simple schema, while the suggestions of universality in the original text have been made the foundation for an interpretation of the Shield as a comprehensive symbol of the cosmos.[16] A scholion on Aratus, drawing on the same allegorization, describes the Shield of Achilles as a κόσμου μίμημα, 'an image of the cosmos'.[17] The allegory, transmitted anonymously, in all probability derives from the Pergamene scholar Crates of Mallos, active in the middle of the second century BC, or from his school, for Eustathius reports a Cratetean interpretation of the Shield of Agamemnon, described in the eleventh book of the *Iliad*, as a model of the universe, a μίμημα τοῦ κόσμου, 'an image of the cosmos'.[18] κόσμος is here to be understood of the celestial firmament rather than of the universe comprising both sky and earth; the ten bronze circles of Agamemnon's shield are

[13] In Demo's version the three world-divisions represent three of the elements, with the craftsman Hephaestus as the fourth, fire. This looks like a later variant, since it duplicates the four-element allegory of the four metals.

[14] Again Demo reports a variant, that the five layers stand for the five circles of heaven; this is probably the result of contamination from the allegorization of the Shield of Agamemenon (see below).

[15] Eust. 1154.52 ff. Note the astronomical senses of ἄντυξ, LSJ s.v. II.3.

[16] Eust. 1155.2 uses another formulation to mark the universality of the Shield; it is a διάλεξις περὶ θείων καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων. 'Divine and human' is one of a series of pairs of 'polar opposites' used to denote 'the sum of things' in Greek.

[17] Schol. ad Arat. 26 (Maass p. 343.17).

[18] Eust. 828.42 ff. (οἱ περὶ τὸν Κράτητα). Schol. T ad *Il.* 11.40 attributes it to Crates himself; cf. Buffière, pp. 163 ff. What is the source of Philargyrius' comment on Virgil *Ecl.* 3.105 'alii clipeum Ajacis dicunt trium ulnarum, in quo expressa caeli forma fuerat' (Thilo and Hagen, iii.2, p. 69)? Is *Ajacis* an error for, or corruption of, *Achillis* or *Agamemnonis*?

interpreted as the ten circles of the heavens (the circles of Eudoxus, with the addition of the Milky Way and the Horizon);[19] the white tin bosses adorning the shield represent the stars of the heavens. The further development of this allegory in Eustathius is interesting in that it comes close to suggesting an application of such allegorical representations to a royal ideology:

> It is proper that the shield of the king bears an image of the heavens, for Homer had said previously that Agamemnon was 'like in his eyes and head to Olympian Zeus' (*Il.* 2.478).

The corresponding passage in the scholia[20] provides a list of places in the *Iliad* in which the figures of Agamemnon and Zeus are approximated; particularly interesting is the observation that both the Shield of Agamemnon and the aegis of Zeus bear the device of the Gorgon.[21] The implication is that Homer has deliberately provided Agamemnon with a shield that imitates the armament of the supreme god. At this point it is tempting to speculate on the possible relevance of this allegorization of Homer to Hellenistic royal ideology. Crates worked for the Attalid kings of Pergamum, who developed a particularly rich and extravagant imagery portraying the state and its ruler as divine agents of order, seen most notably in the Gigantomachy of the Great Altar of Zeus. Crates' name has often been suggested in the context of the authorship of the (lost) iconographical programme of this work, which manifestly combines themes from earlier myth and poetry with contemporary political propaganda (see above, pp. 136 ff.).

I shall argue that the Virgilian Shield displays precisely this blend of cosmic allegory and political ideology; for an explicit example in later epic of how the themes of the Shield of Achilles could be used in this way take the simile which Silius Italicus uses to illustrate Hannibal as he attempts to provoke Fabius (*Punica* 7.120 ff.):

> ut Thetidis proles Phrygiis Vulcania campis
> arma tulit, clipeo amplexus terramque polumque
> maternumque fretum totumque in imagine mundum.

[19] H. J. Mette, op. cit., p. 34.
[20] Schol. T ad *Il.* 11.36.
[21] Gorgon: *Il.* 11.36 f. (Shield of Agamemnon); 5.741 f. (aegis).

The cosmological content has a wider function in the context: Hannibal, in the confidence of an imminent capture of Rome, allows his imagined power to fill the world, (106 ff.):

> en, ubi nunc Gracchi atque ubi nunc sunt fulmina gentis
> Scipiadae? pulsi Ausonia non ante paventem
> dimisere fugam, quam terror ad ultima mundi
> Oceanumque tulit.

Even the *fulmina gentis*[22] (an image which endows Roman heroes with divine omnipotence) are powerless against the universal might of Hannibal. A natural-philosophical view of the universe is here directed to serve the ends of a political or military universalist ideology; the *imago mundi* on the shield, to use the phrase which Silius takes from Ovid's summary of the images on the Shield of Achilles,[23] has become an emblem of the pretensions of a national leader with claims to world-wide empire.

(b) The Shield as history: Agallis of Cercyra

Homer is the poet of all the Greeks, but this did not prevent individual city-states from seeking to take him for their own, as the large number of birthplaces claimed for him is witness. Nationalist ends might also be served by selective textual scholarship and historical interpretation; the use supposedly made of the Catalogue of Ships by the Athenians to support a claim to Salamis is well known.[24] The scenes of human society on the Shield of Achilles operate at a level of detail that easily tempts the ascription of a specific place and time to anonymous events, and the ancient commentary tradition does indeed preserve an exhaustive interpretation of the Shield as a monument to the history of Attica.

This interpretation is found in the scholia and Eustathius,[25] and is ascribed to Agallis of Cercyra, a contemporary of Aristophanes of Byzantium.[26] She seems to have made something

[22] On this image see Skutsch, pp. 145–50.
[23] *Met.* 13.110.
[24] Arist. *Rh.* 1375[b] 29 f.; Plut. *Sol.* 10.
[25] The D and T scholia and Eustathius are conveniently set out together by H. Erbse, *Scholia graeca in Homeri Iliadem* (*Scholia vetera*) iv. (Berlin, 1975), pp. 528 ff.
[26] Wentzel, *RE* 1.718.

of a speciality of nationalistic exegesis of Homer; in the only other report of her work she is said to have made Nausicaa into the inventor of ball games,[27] 'as a favour to her fellow countrywoman'. According to Agallis, the two cities on the Shield of Achilles are Athens and Eleusis; in the first, Athens, we see scenes of marriage, because the origin of that institution is to be sought in Athens,[28] and of a murder trial, in allusion to the first such trial, of Ares for the murder of Halirrothius, on the Areopagus. The war that takes place round the second city, Eleusis, represents the war between the Athenians and the Eleusinians with their ally Eumolpus. Ares and Athena are present as allies of the Athenians (*Il.* 18.516), the one in gratitude for his acquittal on the Areopagus, the other in her role as protector of the city whose eponymous goddess she is. The gods represented on the Shield of Aeneas are also carefully selected for their relevance to Rome. Agallis goes on to explain how the scenes of agriculture and dancing on the Shield of Achilles also refer to Attic inventions and institutions; for example, the king who presides over the scene of harvesting (556) is Triptolemus, who first sowed seed.[29] Eustathius sums up the whole interpretation in rhetorical terms, as 'encomiastic themes' in praise of Athens.[30]

Particularly interesting in the context of the Virgilian Shield is the way in which Agallis links these themes of legendary history to the explicitly cosmological scenes that open the Homeric Shield.[31] This correlation between cosmology and history is expressed somewhat differently in the reports of the T and D scholia; I give firstly the version of the T scholia:

> Hephaestus represented the primitive origins [*archaiogonia*] of Attica on the shield: the earth, because they are autochthonous; the heavens, on whose model they constituted their state; the sea, by which lie two cities, Eleusis and Athens.

[27] Ath. 14 D.

[28] Cf. Clearchus fr. 73 Wehrli.

[29] This interpretation was also supported by an additional line in the text after 551, *καρπὸν Ἐλευσινίης Δημήτερος ἀγλαοδώρου*.

[30] Eust. 1157.2.

[31] Compare the legend that Rhodes was claimed by Helios after he had been excluded from the original divine drawing of lots for areas of the universe, Pind. *Ol.* 7.54 ff.; Men. Rh. 357.21 ff. (adduced as an example of city-foundation). For a later example of the combination of cosmogony and *ktisis* see Heitsch 24, 'Mercurius mundi et Hermupolis magnae conditor', with J. Bidez, *RPh* NS 27 (1903), 81–5.

The tripartite universe is more than just a setting for Attic history; earth and heaven are each tied to the state by more intimate links than those of geography, earth as the immediate origin of the Attic race (Agallis says that the Shield is made by Hephaestus in honour of his son, the autochthonous king Erichthonius), heaven as the model on which the Athenian constitution is framed. The reference here appears to be to a tradition, preserved in a fragment of Aristotle's *Athenian Republic*, according to which the numbers of the tribes, phratries, and families correspond to the main divisions of the year.[32] The idea that the city or state is constructed as an image of the universe or heavens is widespread in many cultures, at root an expression of a fundamental conviction that nature and society mirror each other;[33] it is also a basic component of an expansionist view of the state, where, however, the qualitative identity of city and cosmos is transformed into the quantitative equivalence of empire and universe. The last of the three divisions, the sea, is according to the T scholia relevant to Attica only as the setting for the littoral States of Eleusis and Athens; but Eustathius adds an interpretation which does bring this part of the universe into a more intimate connection with the city, as the stage for Athenian thalassocracy.[34]

The version in the D scholia stresses the temporal implication of the order of the scenes on the Shield:

> The two cities are Athens and Eleusis, Athens first because she was the first city when the universe was created, and after making the elements the god makes the walls of the city.

Here Athens is privileged in the cosmic perspective as the first city to be built after the creation of the physical universe; she acquires dignity from her proximity to the origins of things (in much the same way as the type of 'cosmic setting' discussed at pp. 66–9 above is used to lend dignity), and there is also the implication that the making of the elements and the building

[32] Arist. fr. 385 Rose; the four tribes correspond to the four seasons, the twelve phratries to the twelve months, the thirty families in each phratry to the thirty days of each month; discussed in P. Lévêque and P. Vidal-Naquet, *Clisthène l'athénien* (Paris, 1964), p. 145.

[33] M. Eliade, *The myth of the eternal return* (London, 1955), pp. 6 ff.; L. Mumford, *The city in history* (London, 1961), pp. 31, 49, 69.

[34] Eust. 1157.1.

of the walls of Athens are parts of one and the same creative process.

The interpretation of the Shield of Achilles ascribed to Agallis shows how an apparently generalized picture of all manner of human life could be tied down to specific places and events in history; it also points towards an integration of this historical reading of the Shield with the kind of cosmological interpretation discussed in the previous section. The Virgilian Shield of Aeneas presents striking analogies to both parts of Agallis' interpretation. That the Shield of Aeneas is a Roman *archaiogonia* is obvious. Unlike Athens, however, Rome could not claim to be the first city built in the world, nor could her inhabitants pretend to autochthony, so that the easy links between cosmogony and city-foundation exploited by Agallis were not available; the devices which Virgil used to associate city and cosmos in the Shield of Aeneas are more complex.

III. THE VIRGILIAN SHIELD

(a) *Laudes urbis* and the creation of a universe

The scenes on the Shield of Aeneas described in detail in lines 630–728 of book eight of the *Aeneid* are to be understood as merely a selection from the multiplicity of images wrought by Vulcan on its surface, and summarized in the lines that introduce the *ecphrasis* (625–9):

> clipei non enarrabile textum.
> illic res Italas Romanorumque triumphos
> haud vatum ignarus venturique inscius aevi
> fecerat ignipotens, illic genus omne futurae
> stirpis ab Ascanio pugnataque in ordine bella.

A number of themes are here adumbrated, which receive varying degrees of emphasis in the scenes actually described; a general comparison of this summary with the *ecphrasis* proper is a preliminary to an understanding of how the principle of selection behind the latter provides a framework for the cosmic allegory.

Central to the summary is the theme of war (*triumphos*, 626; *bella*, 629), which also dominates the *ecphrasis* proper (with the

exception of only a few scenes). War is apt both for the Shield as martial instrument and for the circumstances of its delivery to Aeneas; in the wider perspective war is of course the means by which Rome expands to become the world-power. At this point it is instructive to consider a passage in Heraclitus' interpretation of the Homeric Shield, in which he argues that Homer is writing philosophically, since if he had intended the Shield simply as a literary fiction (*muthikōs*) he would have constructed the whole out of matter appropriate (*harmozousan*) to Achilles, namely themes of war.[35] Virgil's concentration on martial subject-matter may be understood as a gesture of conformity to the demands of literary decorum; but Virgilian military history is simultaneously an account of 'the greatest works of Providence' that Heraclitus professes to discover on the Shield of Achilles.[36]

In the summary the Shield of Aeneas is presented as a chronologically consistent survey of these struggles (*in ordine*, 629),[37] and chronological order is strictly adhered to in the following scenes. There is nothing surprising in this; history is, after all, usually presented according to the temporal order of events as they happened. On the other hand an *ecphrasis* need not follow chronological order; compare the parade of heroes in book six of the *Aeneid*, where the introduction of the Julian house at line 788 breaks the chronological order of future Roman history. But chronological order *is* essential to create an impression of growth and expansion on both the historical and the cosmic levels.[38]

The Shield, according to the summary, displays the history of both Italy and Rome (626); in the Augustan scenes at the end of the *ecphrasis* Virgil performs a rather delicate balancing act in order to keep both entities in play, first in the description of Augustus going into battle at Actium (678 f.):

> hinc Augustus agens Italos in proelia Caesar
> cum patribus populoque, penatibus et magnis dis.

[35] *All.* 48.3 f.

[36] Ibid. 48.5 Ὅμηρος ἰδίᾳ τινὶ φιλοσοφίᾳ δημιουργῶν τὸν κόσμον εὐθὺς τὰ μέγιστα τῆς προνοίας ἔργα μετὰ τὴν ἀδιευκρίνητον καὶ κεχυμένην ὕλην ἐχάλκευσεν.

[37] Chronological order is also implied in the preceding phrase 'genus omne futurae / stirpis ab Ascanio'.

[38] Chronological order in cosmogony: Heraclit. *All.* 48.6, with Buffière ad loc.

The first line presents the *princeps* as the leader of all Italy, whereas the second focuses on the Roman train, human (*senatus populusque Romanus*) and divine. This same tact is found in the second mention of Augustus, on his triumphal return from the east (714 f.):

> at Caesar, triplici invectus *Romana* triumpho
> moenia, dis *Italis* votum immortale sacrabat.

But this should not obscure the fact that the *ecphrasis* (like the whole of book eight) is essentially concerned with Roman, not Italian, history, and with the growth of the city of Rome to become the world-power. The theme of the city of Rome also provides some thread of continuity for the problematical opening scenes of the Shield, culminating in the decisive proof of the divine guarantee of Rome's existence in the miraculous repulse of the Gauls from the Capitol.[39] Thus, after the opening scene of the infants Romulus and Remus, founders of the city, we see the rape of the Sabine women and its consequences, an act vital for the perpetuation of the inhabitants of the new city. The following scene of the punishment of Mettus contains an implicit allusion to the consequent destruction of the city of Alba Longa by Rome; it is a recurrent theme of the *Aeneid* that the greatness of Rome is ensured only by the destruction of other potentially powerful cities. Next, from the story of the expulsion of Tarquin, are selected those episodes which concentrate on the successful preservation of the city itself from attack, a theme which reaches its climax in the account of Manlius and the Gauls. The birth, preservation, and eventual unlimited expansion of Rome, not the history of Italy, form the real subject of the Shield.

The last component of the summary of the Shield is the race of Ascanius (628 f.). This of course covers the whole Roman race,[40] but it should be noted that it includes more than is described in the scenes that follow, in particular the generations of Alba Longa, founded by Ascanius.[41] The mention of the line of Ascanius further puts us in mind of the role of Venus (to whom Ascanius is especially dear in the *Aeneid*)[42] as mother of

[39] See Binder, pp. 150 ff., for this aspect of the scene.

[40] Note *Aeneadae*, 648.

[41] *Aen.* 8.48.

[42] 1.678, 4.163 ('Dardaniusque nepos Veneris'), 10.132.

the Roman race; the role of Mars as father of the Romans, as progenitor of Romulus and Remus, is alluded to by contrast in the line that follows, 630, the first line of the *ecphrasis* proper. I shall later advert to the function in the overall structure of the Shield of the several references to gods as parents and protectors of Rome.

The omission of any detailed account of the history of the civilized, city-born, Trojan settlers in Italy, or of the kings of Alba Longa, allows for the greatest possible contrast between the first scene on the Shield, that of Romulus and Remus with the she-wolf, and the last scene, that of the universal triumph of Augustus, and hence of the universal domination of the city of Rome. These two scenes form the extreme limits of the Roman cosmogony.[43]

The function of the she-wolf scene as a symbol of the extremely lowly origin of the Roman empire is well recognized.[44] The picture of the infant twins is humble and pastoral; their foster-mother is not even human.[45] One detail points beyond the realistic representation of human infancy to a more radical idea of creation (633 f.):

> illam tereti cervice reflexa
> mulcere alternos et *corpora fingere lingua.*

The wolf is depicted as 'licking into shape' the two babes, as the she-bear traditionally did to her cubs,[46] a curious and

[43] Cf. the comment of C. Becker on the last scene, *WS* 77 (1964), 124, 'Stand am Anfang der Beschreibung das Aufwachsen von Romulus und Remus auf kleinem, bescheidenem Raum, so wird hier mit allem Glanz vorgeführt, wie die ganze Erde Rom untertan ist.' The two extremes in another panegyric of Rome, Claud. *Cons. Stil.* 3 138 ff. Cf. Gernentz, pp. 32 ff., 'de novae et antiquae urbis comparatione'.

[44] e.g. Binder, p. 151, '[das] Bild der Wölfin in der Höhle des Mars, welche die Niedrigkeit und Winzigkeit der Anfänge Roms symbolisiert'. Cf. Ov. *Fast.* 3.179 f. (Mars speaks of Rome in the time of Romulus) 'parva fuit, si prima velis elementa referre, / Roma, sed in parva spes tamen huius erat'.

[45] The use of *matrem* in line 632 (despite a few parallels for the use of the word to mean 'wet-nurse') and the verbal echoes of the omen of the sow and the piglets (8.42 ff., 81 ff.) combine to suggest a scene of literal maternity.

[46] Cf. Pliny *HN* 8.54.126; Ael. *NA* 2.19; lionesses and foxes are also said to do the same, Pliny *HN* 10.83.176. There are a few instances of *fingere* where some sense like 'caress' or 'wipe' seems to be required (*TLL* vi.772.41 ff.), but even if it could be argued that something of this sort was the primary meaning here, the context would force on the reader a secondary, allusive, sense of 'shape'. Virgil's conception may be a development of Fabius Pictor's description of the she-wolf licking off the mud that covered the infants (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.79).

unparalleled transference that the commentators make little of. It is the same bit of natural history that Virgil used to illustrate the creative process by which he brought his amorphous first sketches into articulated order, according to the *Life* of Donatus (22): 'carmen se ursae modo parere dicens et lambendo demum effingere'.[47] Into the picture of the literal birth of Romulus and Remus, and hence, figuratively, of the 'birth' of Rome, is introduced the more abstract notion of the creative giving of shape to a formless *prima materia*; the sequence of cosmogony followed by the foundation of a city that we saw in Agallis' interpretation of the Homeric Shield thus collapses together, so that the notion of the first shaping of matter, primarily a concept of natural philosophy, is introduced into a scene implying *ktisis*, a concept of historical aetiology. This simultaneous coexistence of the cosmological and the historical is the distinguishing feature of the Shield of Aeneas.

The importance of the she-wolf scene is further marked by the elision of any reference to the actual founding of Rome by Romulus; the licking into shape of the twins is followed immediately by the first mention of Rome in the *ecphrasis*: 'nec procul hinc Romam' (635). Within the Shield the existence of the city follows almost as a direct result of the scene of birth and of the bestowal of form.[48]

The description of the Shield falls into two major sections, with the division coming after line 670. The first part is concerned with the creation and preservation of the city of Rome itself within its walls, while the second depicts the extension of the power of the city to fill the *oikumenē*, under the aegis of Augustus; there is no intermediate section tracing the gradual growth of empire between 390 and 31 BC, and almost exactly half of the history of Rome up to the Battle of Actium is unrepresented (the mention of Catiline and Cato provides only a partial exception to this, since they are not shown in their historical existence on earth). The effect is to concentrate entirely on the success of Augustus in achieving world domination, at the expense of the very real contributions of earlier

[47] The story is also reported by Gell. *NA* 17.10.2. Cf. Shakesp. *3 Henry VI* 3.2.161, 'Like to a chaos, or an unlick'd bear-whelp'.

[48] Cf. Serv. ad *Aen.* 8.635 '*nec procul hinc Romam* congrue, iuxta proprios conditores'.

centuries;[49] the omission of the Punic Wars is especially striking, but understandable in view of the later presentation of those struggles as the crucial stage in Rome's accession to world power,[50] which might detract unduly from the glory of Augustus. Nevertheless there is a marked correlation between the miraculous preservation of the Roman citadel from the Gauls in 390 BC and the divinely favoured achievement of Roman world empire at the Battle of Actium, a correlation analysed at pp. 124 f. above in terms of the Gigantomachic allegory underlying the two episodes, where it was also argued that the sequence of divinely aided victory over the Gauls followed by religious celebration, itself a repetition of the sequence earlier in book eight of Gigantomachic struggle between Hercules and Cacus followed by religious celebration, is repeated in the sequence of Gigantomachic Battle of Actium followed by celebrations in Rome. Gigantomachy is in essence a cosmogonic myth, but its emphasis may fall on one of two aspects, corresponding to two senses of the word *kosmos*: firstly, on the assertion of moral and theological order against the anarchy of evil; and, secondly, on the spatial extension of the resulting order to fill the universe. The Virgilian account of Actium and its aftermath corresponds to the second of these emphases, the episode of the Gauls to the first; it is this duality at the heart of the Gigantomachic myth that allows the preservation of the Capitol, the centre of Rome, to stand as a prefiguration of the Battle of Actium, the successful conquest of the periphery.[51]

The scenes which immediately follow the attack of the Gauls, of religious celebration in Rome and punishment and reward in the Underworld, also act as a transition to the picture of the Augustan cosmos in its aspect of physical extension. This is best analysed with the aid of the concept of 'theological space'

[49] For another simple contrast between the smallness of early Rome and the greatness of Augustan Rome see Ov. *Fast.* 2.133 ff., where the war against Tatius and Cures is contrasted with Augustus' sphere of influence: cf. *Aen.* 8.638.

[50] See above, pp. 168 f., for the treatment of the Punic Wars in Lucretius.

[51] The repulse of the Gauls and the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra are also linked in that both are preludes to acts of refoundation: Camillus and Augustus both claimed to be second 'founders' of Rome, repeating the work of Romulus. The chronological division of the Shield, almost exactly at the half-way point in Roman history, might just point to a scheme of 'Great Years': see the (unproven) speculation of J. Hubaux, 'Du Songe de Scipion à la vision d'Énée', in *Hommages à Léon Herrmann* (coll. *Latomus* 44, Brussels, 1960), pp. 436–45.

developed in chapter 6, according to which localized events (such as the history of Dido) may be universalized by reference to the divine forces that control the extra-human universe. Thus the preservation of Rome from the Gauls is seen to accord with the universal divine order of things; the guarantee of Rome's existence comes from the heavens (*lapsa ancilia caelo*, 664), and is itself met by the proper observation of religious ceremony on the part of a grateful city (663–6). The full extension of the vertical axis of theological space is then immediately provided by the scene of the Underworld, which has since book six become fully Romanized; the place of the mythical Greek sinners and saints is taken by the Romans Catiline and Cato. Thus the whole vertical axis, from heaven to hell, is occupied by a dispensation favourable to a suitably pious and grateful Rome.

The inclusion of Hades on the Shield of Aeneas is also an outbidding of the universal pretensions of the Homeric Shield of Achilles, on which Hephaestus first fashions the three cosmic divisions of earth, heaven, and sea. The mention of Hades introduces the fourth world-division, not found on the Homeric Shield. It remains to show that the other three world-divisions are also present on the Virgilian Shield. Earlier on I discussed the principle of *chronological continuity* as a necessary condition for a cosmogonic allegory; an allegory of this sort should also display the quality of *comprehensiveness*,[52] that feature, in fact, which modern critics (with the notable exception of Heinze,[53] whose hints I here develop) often grant to the Homeric Shield while denying to the Virgilian.

Two divisions of the quadripartite universe are explicitly and schematically described on the Shield of Aeneas: the Underworld, as we have seen, which is immediately followed by the picture of the sea (671–4). The sea is introduced to set the scene for the Battle of Actium, but the leisurely four-verse sentence in which it is described gives it a status independent of this introductory function.[54] Thus, bridging the central divide of the *ecphrasis*, we have two scenes in which major world-divisions

[52] Cf. Heraclitus' introduction to his allegory of the Shield of Achilles, *All.* 43.1 [Homer] *τὴν τῶν ὅλων περιήθροισε γένεσιν.*

[53] Heinze, p. 443 n. 2, 'Homer hatte ein abgeschlossenes Weltbild gegeben, das will Virgil in anderer Weise tun.'

[54] It corresponds to both *θάλασσα* and *Ὠκεανός* in Homer.

are presented in schematic form, without being totally abstracted from the Roman subject-matter (the sea is still the setting for Actium, and the particulars of the Underworld are Roman); this relaxation of the pressing concentration on Roman history acts as an interlude between the scenes from the first half of Roman history and those of the recent past. But it is the peculiar characteristic of the Shield that for the most part it strives for a yet closer synthesis of the cosmological and the historical; the rest of the map of the cosmos must be extracted from the scenes before and after the pictures of Underworld and Sea.

The division of Earth is obviously the setting for the scenes of early Roman history, but the reader is hardly encouraged to think in this way, until the introduction of the Sea at line 671 forces him to construct a schematic division of the Shield. With the words *haec inter* we are asked to envisage the image of the Sea as placed between the Underworld and the preceding scenes, which thus define themselves as 'scenes on Earth'. But for the cosmological allegory to work properly, the final message of the Shield must be that the city of Rome controls the *totality* of all four world-divisions; only then will the identification of *imperium* and *cosmos* be complete. It is, fittingly, the final, Augustan, scenes that achieve this end. Here Virgil found much of his work already done for him by the propaganda which elevated the Battle of Actium into the decisive battle by which the *princeps* achieved supremacy on both land and sea.[55] Mastery of the sea is implied on the Shield by the depiction of Augustus' naval victory in an image of the sea which clearly alludes to the cosmological images of Sea and Ocean on the Homeric Shield.[56] The claim to mastery over land as a result of Actium was more fraudulent in reality, and Virgil avoids a direct expression of it; it is implied, however, that Actium results in the defeat of the nations of the furthest east who follow in Antony's train (686 ff.), and this form of ethnographical universalism is picked up in yet bolder terms in the final scene of Augustus' triumph. What Virgil implies, but does not state in so many words, in his placing of Actium on the Shield may

[55] See chapter 7.

[56] Cf. Eustathius' (Agallis'?) suggestion that the sea was included on the Homeric Shield in allusion to Athenian thalassocracy.

be gathered from the words of Apollo to Augustus immediately before the victory in Propertius' Actium elegy, a poem which is closely dependent on the description on the Virgilian Shield (Prop. 4.6.37–9):

> mox ait 'o Longa mundi servator ab Alba,
> Auguste, Hectoreis cognite maior avis,
> *vince mari: iam terra tua est.*

In chapter 7 we saw that the claim to cosmic empire includes the claim to control the world-division of the heavens, but that, in the interests of plausibility, this claim had normally to be presented either figuratively, or in terms of the close co-operation of the divine powers of the heavens with the human empire on earth, or else, prospectively, in terms of apotheosis or catasterism. On the Shield, where historical reality is particularly exposed, the participation of the heavens or sky in Roman empire is developed chiefly through the theme of divine co-operation with the aims of the city. The connection between heaven and earth is established physically in the fall to earth of the *ancilia* in the scene of religious celebration following the rescue of the Capitol from the Gauls (664); the link between earth and heaven is also suggested in the picture of Augustus sailing into battle (680–1):

> stans celsa in puppi, geminas cui tempora flammas
> laeta vomunt patriumque aperitur vertice sidus.

The flames that shoot from the head of Augustus are met favourably by the appearance of the star of the deified Julius.[57] But the importance of the heavens in the establishment of Roman empire is expressed most emphatically in the description of the battle itself, which quickly turns into a theomachy. Comparison with the Homeric theomachy in book twenty of the *Iliad* is revealing: Homer's gods come to earth to fight (note especially *Il.* 20.47). It is on earth, too, that the gods engaged on the temporally remote destruction of Troy are seen in book two of the *Aeneid*, but the location of the conflict of the gods, relative to the human battle, on the Shield is left unspecified. For six lines they fight it out among themselves; the impression

[57] Contrast the Typhoean flames that shoot from the helmet of Turnus (7.785 f.), which will naturally call down not the influence of a benign star, but the thunderbolt of Jupiter.

is that they battle on a plane parallel to, but distinct from, that of the mortal combatants. Virgil appears deliberately to separate earth and heaven in a way that Homer does not.[58]

In the final scene of the Shield (714–28) the themes of the city of Rome and of the world-empire that it controls are brought together in the celebration of Augustus' triple triumph. In the first six lines (714–19) we see the city (*Romana . . . moenia*, 714 f.; *urbem*, 716) entirely given over to joyous religious thanksgiving; in the last nine lines (720–8) we see the master of the world surveying the peoples and places that he has conquered. Here the Roman cosmos is presented under the more limited aspect of the *oikumenē*, through the peoples who inhabit it, and the rivers which they drink.[59] The conquered races correspond to no historical triumph of Augustus, but are selected to represent all parts of the *oikumenē*, by a device common in the Augustan poets.[60] The procession unfolds before the *princeps* sitting at the threshold of the temple of Apollo on the Palatine (720 f.):

> ipse sedens niveo candentis limine Phoebi
> dona recognoscit populorum.

Caesar appears before the temple of the god who guaranteed the victory at Actium; the *princeps* is the representative of Apollo on earth.[61] As in the case of the gold-and-ivory Gauls in an earlier scene, our understanding of line 720 is enhanced if we visualize the physical appearance of the Palatine temple: Augustus sits below the pediment which carried the chariot of the

[58] For a later parallel compare Veronese's 'Allegory of the Battle of Lepanto'; in the lower half of the painting is depicted the sea-battle, in the upper half, above a layer of cloud, the corresponding events in heaven, the intercession of saints with the Virgin. The connection between the two planes is symbolized by the dramatic burst of light under the Virgin and by the angels throwing down flaming arrows through the storm-clouds (illustrated in J. Martineau and C. Hope (eds.), *The genius of Venice 1500–1600* (London, 1983), p. 239.

[59] The Rhine and the Araxes similarly mark the limits of a Roman cosmos in an epigram of Crinagoras, 28 Gow/Page (*Anth. Plan.* 61), there, as here (see below), combined with the topos of the coextension of Roman empire with the sun's course. Cf. also Gernentz, pp. 108 ff. (furthest peoples and rivers).

[60] Christ, pp. 29 ff. For the points of the compass: Binder, pp. 269 f.; p. 270, 'Die Völkerreihen bei den augusteischen Dichtern verherrlichen den Kaiser als Kosmokrator.' For a monumental expression of the idea see *Serv. Dan.* ad *Aen.* 8.721 'porticum enim Augustus fecerat in qua simulacra omnium gentium conlocaverat: quae porticus appellabatur "ad nationes" '.

[61] So Wlosok, pp. 134 f.

sun.[62] The glittering epithets of the temple and of its god, *niveo* and *candentis*, point to the brilliant white marble of the new building,[63] but contain a further allusion to the light of the sun, frequently identified with Phoebus by the Augustan poets (even if the syncretism of Apollo and Sol had not yet reached the level of cult).[64] The combination of allusion to sun-god, sitting in review,[65] with a catalogue of peoples points to the common Roman *topos* of universal empire as comprising all the lands that the sun beholds in his daily passage from east to west, a *topos* at least as old as the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (4.33.44).[66] Of the many Augustan examples we may take one from Horace, who addresses Augustus thus (*Carm.* 4.14.5 f.):

> o, qua sol habitabilis
> illustrat oras, maxime principum.

[62] Prop. 2.31.11 'in quo Solis erat supra fastigia currus'; see J. Gagé, *Apollon romain* (Paris, 1955), pp. 540 f.

[63] Shining temples as panegyrical topos: Gernentz, p. 61 (note esp. Men. Rh. 445.6 f., a temple of Apollo).

[64] See Wlosok, p. 135 n. 132. In *candentis Phoebi* there is a pun on φοῖβος, 'shining'. Compare Lucr. 6.1197, a line whose ending may be echoed in *Aen.* 8.720, 'candenti lumine solis [=Phoebi!]'; other examples of *candens* used of sun/Phoebus, *TLL* iii.234.53 ff. The line may also contain a hint of the apotheosis of Augustus: compare *Ecl.* 5.56 f. 'candidus insuetum miratur limen Olympi / sub pedibusque videt nubes et sidera Daphnis', lines which also influence the language of *Aen.* 7.100 f. 'omnia sub pedibus, qua sol utrumque recurrens / aspicit Oceanum, vertique regique videbunt', which in turn links up with the description of Augustus in front of the Palatine temple (see below). There is also a reminiscence of *Ecl.* 5.56 f. at *Aen.* 6.255 f. 'primi sub *limina* solis et ortus / *sub pedibus* mugire solum'. In general on the syncretism of Apollo and Sol (widespread in learned circles by Virgil's time) see Pease on Cic. *Nat. D.* 2.27.68; P. Boyancé, 'L'Apollon solaire', in *Mélanges offerts à J. Carcopino* (Paris, 1966), pp. 149–70; see also ch. 7 n. 53. On the question of the equation in the Latin poets see J. E. Fontenrose, 'Apollo and Sol in the Latin poets of the first century BC', *TAPhA* 70 (1939), 439–55; id., 'Apollo and the Sun-god in Ovid', *AJPh* 61 (1940), 429–44. At *Aen.* 11.912 ff. the intervention of Phoebus/Sol is modelled on that of Phoebus Apollo at *Il.* 21.544 ff., pointing to the identification of Apollo and Sol: see Knauer, pp. 289 f.

[65] On the panegyrical comparison of the ruler to the sun see Christ, pp. 135 ff.; E. Doblhofer, *Die Augustuspanegyrik des Horaz in formalhistorischer Sicht* (Heidelberg, 1966), pp. 17 ff., 86 ff.; O. Weinreich, *Menekrates Zeus und Salmoneus* (Tübinger Beitr. z. Altertumsw. 18, Stuttgart, 1933), p. 15; Housman on Manilius 4.764, 765; S. Weinstock, *Divus Julius* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 381 ff.; F. Sauter, *Der römische Kaiserkult bei Martial und Statius* (Tübinger Beitr. z. Altertumswiss. 21, Stuttgart and Berlin, 1934), pp. 137 ff.

[66] Cf. Bömer on Ov. *Fast.* 5.557; Gernentz, pp. 118 ff.; with this may be linked the other notion, that Rome, or its presiding deity, looks around on a world totally subjected to its rule, e.g. Ov. *Fast.* 1.85 f. (with Bömer ad loc.). See also J. H. Oliver, 'The ruling power: a study of the Roman empire in the second century after Christ through the Roman Oration of Aelius Aristides', *TAPhS* NS 43 (1953), pp. 909 f.; Christ, pp. 53 ff.

The formulation is similar to one in the *Aeneid* itself, in the prophecy that Latinus receives concerning the future of the Roman race (7.100 f.):

> omnia sub pedibus, qua sol utrumque recurrens
> aspicit Oceanum, vertique regique videbunt.

Augustus' ceremonial impersonation of the *topos* may link up with other ancient versions of the ruler cult; I quote from an account of Egyptian practice:

> the Egyptian Pharaohs enjoyed elaborate triumphal ceremonies at the pylon gateways of their temple palaces in which they appeared in a golden loggia, or 'Window of Appearances', as a Sun-god, reviewed the presentation of their spoils, enjoyed games of celebration, and recorded their victories by sculptures on the towered pylons of the 'Horizon of Heaven'.[67]

The solar allusion in the last scene of the Shield also forms the climax to an opposition of light and dark that reaches over the whole *ecphrasis*. The dazzling scene in front of the Palatine temple provides the strongest contrast with the darkness of the cave of Mars at the beginning (a contrast only heightened by the physical proximity of the Lupercal to the site of the temple). Dark and light further emphasize the division between the Augustan scenes and the earlier ones. The scenes from the first half of Roman history culminate in the Gauls glimmering in the dark night; the following scenes, symbolizing the divine protection of Rome, end in the gloom of the Underworld. By contrast both Augustan scenes are set in the full glare of day: the sea at Actium is ablaze with light and fire (*fervere*, *effulgere*, 677; *flammas*, 680; *sidus*, 681; *fulgent*, 684); the hectic dazzle of the flames of war gives way to the white brilliance of the triumph, itself contrasted with the murky hiding-place of the defeated Egyptians (713). The bright light of the Palatine temple shines out after the *princeps*'s entry into Rome (*invectus*, 714), and is thus also an example of the panegyrical topos of the fair weather and brightness that accompanies the *adventus* of the

[67] E. B. Smith, *Architectural symbolism of imperial Rome and the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1956), p. 22.

great man.[68] In both scenes the central figure of Octavian is particularly associated with fire and light.[69]

(b) The two cities

A prominent feature of the Homeric Shield of Achilles is the description of two cities, one at peace and one at war; in the ancient allegorizing tradition these two cities are interpreted as the Empedoclean principles of Love and Strife. The Shield of Aeneas portrays just one city, Rome, and the main themes, as the opening summary makes clear (626–9), are those of war. But a closer examination of the Shield of Aeneas shows that the contrast of war and peace, central to Augustan ideology and also one of the prescribed divisions in the panegyric of a city,[70] is pivotal to the structure of the *ecphrasis*; like the Homeric Shield, the Virgilian also portrays two cities, Rome at war and Rome at peace.[71]

Peace is the inevitable consequence of the achievement of world-empire, by virtue of the simple fact that there is no one left to fight, and in Augustan ideology the themes of universal rule and the *pax Augusta* ('pax terra marique parta') go hand in hand.[72] Within the *Aeneid* the most explicit association of Roman world-empire with universal peace is found at the end

[68] See R. G. M. Nisbet, 'Some problems of text and interpretation in Horace *Odes* 3.14 (*Herculis ritu*)', *Papers of the Liverpool Latin Seminar, Fourth Volume, 1983* (Liverpool, 1984), p. 115.

[69] For the general scheme of a pair of carefully balanced scenes, one of agitated battle and the other of calm procession, compare the Delphic temple of Apollo: the west pediment displayed scenes of Gigantomachy (including Apollo in his role of archer), with the chariot of Zeus at the centre; on the east pediment a chariot bearing Apollo, Artemis, and Leto appeared between male and female figures in procession (Apollo's triumphal epiphany in Delphi, or to the Hyperboreans?); cf. C. Picard and P. de la Coste-Messelière, *Fouilles de Delphes* iv.3 (Paris, 1931), pp. 16 ff., with figs. 7 and 8; M. Robertson, *A history of Greek art* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 161.

[70] Men. Rh. 364.17 f.

[71] War and peace: see above, p. 70 n. 89. The Virgilian Shield seems to resolve itself largely into a series of dichotomies; this itself may be understood as the result of reflection on the Homeric Shield: cf. W. Schadewaldt, *Von Homers Welt und Werk: Aufsätze und Auslegungen zur homerischen Frage*[3] (Stuttgart, 1959), p. 363, 'Was Homer so hinstellt, sind die *Grundformen* der Welt und des Lebens. Sie sind geordnet nach dem Prinzip des *Gegensatzes*.'

[72] Binder, pp. 274 ff. For an abbreviated summary of the Augustan themes on the Shield see Ov. *Fast.* 1.711 f. 'frondibus Actiacis comptos redimita capillos, / Pax, ades et toto mitis in orbe mane' (Actium, Pax, universal rule).

of the Speech of Jupiter in book one (286 ff.).[73] The final scene on the Shield, which shows representatives of the conquered *oikumenē* within the walls of Rome, is at the same time an image of the city at peace, even if modern anti-militaristic feeling finds it hard to sympathize with such an image. Further scenes of the more positive aspects of the *pax Augusta* are ruled out by the requirements of decorum in the ornament of an instrument of war; this restriction to a view of peace as triumph also accords with my remarks at pp. 135 f. above concerning Virgil's selection from the ideological strategies available to the ancient world.

The war–peace contrast on the Shield is further articulated through the choice and treatment of the gods active on Rome's behalf. The contrast between the Battle of Actium and the ensuing victory celebrations is summed up in the two aspects of the presiding deity Apollo: at Actium he is the avenging god with the lethal bow (704), while in Rome he is the god of the new age of peace that is dawning (as in the fourth *Eclogue*). Here again an awareness of the monuments may be of importance: the *Actius Apollo* of line 704 is possibly meant to evoke the cult statue of the archer-god Apollo Leucadius, with whom Actian Apollo tends to be confused in the poets;[74] the cult statue of Apollo Palatinus, on the other hand, showed the god in his peaceful role as citharode. Here again, as Wlosok has pointed out,[75] Propertius' Actium elegy makes crudely explicit what in Virgil is only hinted at; in the first part of the poem Apollo appears as the avenger, *vindex* (Prop. 4.6.31–6):

> non ille attulerat crinis in colla solutos
> aut testudineae carmen inerme lyrae,
> sed quali aspexit Pelopeum Agamemnona vultu,
> egessitque avidis Dorica castra rogis,
> aut qualis flexos solvit Pythona per orbes
> serpentem, imbelles quem timuere lyrae.

With the battle won, and the *aition* of the temple of Apollo explained in terms of the god's miraculous archery, the poem

[73] Cf. Wlosok, pp. 60 ff.

[74] Cf. J. Gagé, *MEFR* 53 (1936), 46 ff.; on Apollo Leucadius see P. R. Franke, 'Apollo Leucadius und Octavianus?', *Chiron* 6 (1976), 159–63.

[75] Wlosok, p. 136 n. 139.

abruptly turns to symposiastic celebration of the newly won peace, and the god too must change his costume (69 f.):

> bella satis cecini: citharam iam poscit Apollo
> victor et ad placidos exuit arma choros.[76]

In the Augustan scenes of the Shield Apollo takes over as the presiding deity from Mars, who hitherto has naturally been the guiding spirit of Roman bellicosity. Mars appears in the first line of the *ecphrasis*; it is in his cave that his children, Romulus and Remus, are suckled by the she-wolf. He is also present at Actium, metonymically in line 676, and emphatically in his own person at the height of the battle at line 700, immediately preceding the decisive intervention of Apollo.[77] It is doubly fitting that Mars should have an important place at the battle, for as well as being god of war he is one of the divine ancestors of the Roman race; the other important divine racial parent is Venus, who delivers the Shield to her son Aeneas, as we are reminded at the very end (*dona parentis*, 729). We should of course expect that both Mars and Venus would be intimately associated with a representation of the birth and growth of Rome. They are also, as divinities respectively of war and love, representative of opposite principles, and had been allegorized as symbols of Empedoclean Strife and Love by the ancient exegetes of the disgraceful Song of Demodocus in book eight of the *Odyssey*.[78] Now Empedoclean allegory is also central to the ancient discussions of the two cities on the Homeric Shield, and some complicated process of meditation on all these elements in the tradition seems to have formed the matrix from which emerged the opening scene of Romulus and Remus on the Virgilian Shield (630–4):

[76] Compare Tib. 2.5.79 'sed tu iam mitis, Apollo' (also a poem centred on the Palatine temple, and having strong links with *Aeneid* 8); Nisbet/Hubbard ii, p. 165; Tarrant on Sen. *Ag.* 326 ff. This dual character of Apollo appears in Callimachus' allegory of the attributes of the bow and the Graces of the Delian statue of Apollo, *Aet.* fr. 114 Pfeiffer; Macrob. *Sat.* 1.17.16, Apollo (sun) as both healing and pestilential. Other gods are similarly bipolar (cf. Bömer on Ov. *Fast.* 1.554): Dionysus characterized as a god of both war and peace: Hor. *Carm.* 2.19.27 f. (with Nisbet/Hubbard ad loc.); note in particular Plut. *Demetr.* 2.3 for an attempt by a human ruler to imitate Dionysus in this double aspect (cf. the relation of Augustus to Apollo). Mercury as god of war and peace: Ov. *Fast.* 5.665 f.

[77] Mars is also present by association in the mention of the Salii and Luperci at line 663.

[78] Heraclitus *All.* 69; Buffière, pp. 168 ff.

> fecerat et viridi fetam Mavortis in antro
> procubuisse lupam, geminos huic ubera circum
> ludere pendentis pueros et lambere matrem
> impavidos, illam tereti cervice reflexa
> mulcere alternos et corpora fingere lingua.

These lines contain a number of verbal echoes of the Lucretian picture of Mars in the lap of Venus, most strikingly in the use of the phrase *tereti cervice*, used by Lucretius of the reclining Mars (1.35):

> atque ita suspiciens tereti cervice reposta.[79]

In Virgil Mars, god of war, presides over the infancy of the twins, but the peacefulness of the scene of (foster-)motherhood is reinforced by the use of language found earlier, in the *Georgics*, in a programmatic description of country life as the alternative to travel and war (*Geo.* 2.523 f., a passage which itself echoes the Lucretian tableau of Mars and Venus):

> interea dulces *pendent circum* oscula nati,
> casta pudicitiam servat domus, *ubera* vaccae
> lactea demittunt.

Both war and peace attend the foundation of Rome, although as yet both are present only potentially. It is the actualization of war which dominates the first seven hundred or so years of Rome's history, as it is the actualization of peace which will determine her future course.

Finally, the choice of antonomastic titles for Vulcan reflects the same division between violence and peacefulness. The usual title for Vulcan in book eight, both in the scenes with Venus and in the description of the Shield, is *ignipotens*. At line 724, however, in the middle of the parade of conquered nations, he is called *Mulciber* (which in Virgil occurs only here), a title emphasizing the less violent, milder aspect of Vulcan, in con-

[79] Earlier than both is Cic. *Aratea* fr. 9.5 Soubiran '[Draco] obstipum caput, a tereti cervice reflexum, / obtutum in cauda Maioris figere dicas'. On the basis of these correspondences and of Servius' remark, ad *Aen.* 8.631, 'sane totus hic locus Ennianus est', many have deduced that 'tereti cervice' is Ennian (cf. Wigodsky, pp. 123 f.); we should at least ask whether *teres* is a likely epithet for the neck of a wolf, except, as here, when that wolf is part of a polished work of art. Other echoes of the Lucretian passage: *Aen.* 8.631, pro*cubuisse*: Lucr. 1.38, re*cubantem*; *Aen.* 8.632, *pendentis*: Lucr. 1.37, *pendet*.

trast to the dangerous connotations of *ignipotens* (used for the last time in the final scene of the description of Actium, the flight of the doomed Cleopatra).[80]

(c) The Shield as climax of the *Aeneid*

As cosmic emblem the Shield of Aeneas is fitly placed at the end of the central, prospective and prophetic, books of the *Aeneid*, followed immediately in book nine by a return to the legendary epic subject-matter of war in Latium. Its recapitulatory and climactic nature becomes clear when it is considered in the light of the themes discussed in earlier chapters of this book. Most obviously, the Shield provides the final term of that progress from total dispossession to total possession of the world that in chapter 7 was charted through an analysis of 'universal expressions'. The Homeric Shield of Achilles contains one of the most frequently imitated presentations of the tripartite universe of earth, sky, and sea; Virgil, in his Shield, presents the universe in its most complete, quadripartite, anatomy, but in a form that closely integrates the schematic sketch of the universe with the events and inhabitants that occupy the several divisions of it. Even this feature is probably not an entirely new gloss on the Homeric Shield, for later Greek imitators of that *ecphrasis* also take the opening lines as a preliminary summary of the totality of scenes, divided according to their location in the universe.[81] The Virgilian universe is one that is pervaded by Roman power or by powers favourable to Rome; the nationalist assimilation of the grandest cosmic symbol in ancient literature marks the *ne plus ultra* of the historical development of Rome. For the idea of Roman power as filling all four divisions of the universe one may compare the prayer to Octavian at the opening of the first *Georgic*, where the fantasy of the future apotheosis of the ruler is played out in a leisurely enumeration of the four divisions of the universe, earth, sea, sky, and Hades, as potential provinces for his divinity. Only

[80] For the sense of *Mulciber* cf. *CIL* 5.4295 'Volk(ano) miti sive Mulcibero' (and Mielentz, *RE* 16.494). The most likely etymology is that given in Paul. *Fest.* p. 144 Mueller 'a molliendo . . . ferro dictus. mulcere enim mollire'; cf. *mollior* of the Euphrates, 726 (we may recall that in 1.66 the power of *fluctus mulcere* is ascribed to Aeolus; see above, pp. 208 f., on the relation of 8.726 to storm imagery elsewhere in the *Aeneid*).

[81] e.g. Philostr. Jun. *Imag.* 10.5 ff.

Hades is rejected as a suitable kingdom; on the Shield the Underworld is successfully absorbed into a Roman cosmos through the use of the figures of Cato and Catiline.

The narrative structure of the Homeric Shield is an outstanding example of the 'cosmic setting', as discussed in chapter 2. The key feature of this structure, of which the Song of Silenus in the sixth *Eclogue* and the Speech of Anchises in book six of the *Aeneid* provide large-scale examples, is the sequential presentation of, firstly, the general outline of the cosmos and its workings (or genesis), and, secondly, localized scenes of particular historical events. Viewed from this angle, the peculiarity of the Shield of Aeneas is that the cosmic setting and the detailed subject (the history of Rome) have merged into one; furthermore, the cosmic quality of the *ecphrasis* only becomes apparent as we read through, and is not unambiguously presented at the outset (though I suspect that the learned reader of antiquity, with his knowledge of the Homeric Shield and the exegetical tradition attached to it, would have started with an expectation that this too would prove to be a cosmic Shield). Both these features, the simultaneous presentation of cosmic setting and history and the inversion by which the cosmic aspect of the whole emerges most clearly at the end rather than at the beginning, are to be traced to the ideological equation of *cosmos* and *imperium*; the separate presentation of an account of the universe, apart from the sketch of Roman history, is otiose when the history of the city itself is viewed as cosmogony. In this version history also in a sense precedes cosmology, for the full realization of the Roman *cosmos* depends on the antecedent endeavours of generations of men.

In chapters 3 and 4 we examined the myth of Gigantomachy in its function as mediator between, on the one hand, an abstract or natural-philosophical account of the assertion of cosmos against chaos and, on the other hand, historical images of foundation and the defeat of the barbarian outsider. It is thus no surprise that on the cosmic Shield of Aeneas Gigantomachic allusion should be especially heavily concentrated; in particular, the Battle of Actium is viewed as the last repetition of Gigantomachy and finally constitutive of a Roman cosmos complete in all its members, which the forces of chaos will henceforth be powerless to assault. The presence of this myth is

the factor chiefly responsible for the curiously unreal quality of the narrative of the battle, a quality which points to a tension at the heart of the *ecphrasis*, especially acute in the later scenes: the Shield is the final working out of an abstract ideology, which pulls its texture towards the elemental, the hyperbolical, the schematic; at the same time the Shield is the most immediate depiction of actual Roman history, concerned with the concrete detail, the temporal and spatial particular. The medium of the *ecphrasis*, a description of a work of toreutic, is well suited to express this combination of the real and the unreal, oscillating between the evocation of the vivid but frozen scenes of a static work of art (occasionally pointing beyond the imaginary Shield to real visual monuments, the sculptures of the Palatine temple and the triumphal images of rivers at the end), and the living realism of the full epic narrative manner.

(d) *Urbs–orbis*

As the final and most detailed prophetic revelation of Roman history in the *Aeneid* the Shield of Aeneas answers and expands on the far more vatic utterances of the first major prophecy of the poem, the Speech of Jupiter in book one (257–96), which also charts the rise of the race of Ascanius and the expansion of Roman power through military conquest to fill the universe, and also ends with a vision of a completely new era of peace.[82] At the centre of Jupiter's prophecy is the foundation of Rome, immediately followed by the most unqualified statement of Rome's universal empire in the whole poem (276 ff.):

> Romulus excipiet gentem et Mavortia condet
> moenia Romanosque suo de nomine dicet.
> his ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono:
> imperium sine fine dedi.

As Binder has pointed out,[83] this association of Romulus' wall-building with universal Roman empire is found again in the Speech of Anchises in book six (781 ff.):

> en huius, nate, auspiciis illa incluta Roma
> imperium terris, animos aequabit Olympo,

[82] Cf. Wlosok, pp. 137 ff.
[83] p. 154.

> septemque una sibi muro circumdabit arces,
> felix prole virum.

There follows immediately the simile comparing Rome to Cybele, the mother of the gods; she may also be a symbol of the terrestrial globe, notably so allegorized by Lucretius in book two of the *De Rerum Natura* (600 ff.).[84]

The Roman imperial sense that the city reaches out to the limits of the universe is only partially adequate to the real historical growth of the empire; the extravagance of such formulations points to a far more widespread mythical or mystical equation of the city with the universe, which has no essential link with empirical reality. In many societies the human city is planned as an imitation of the wider cosmos; the *limitatio* of the Roman *gromatici* reproduced the co-ordinates of the heavens in the earthly locale.[85] Thus the process of Roman military expansion could be understood as a somehow inevitable spatial identification of the urban model with its cosmic archetype. This literal universalism was reinforced by philosophical speculation, above all by the Stoic notion of the city of the universe, readily available to the Roman imperialist as a mystifying pretext.[86]

As we have seen, the association of city and empire is basic to the whole conception of the Shield of Aeneas; the two come together physically in the last scene, in which Augustus returns within the walls of Rome in triumph (*Aen.* 8.714 f.), there to survey the procession of peoples who represent the *oikumenē* subject to the Roman empire. Thus the walls of Rome figuratively enclose the Roman empire. Hitherto I have operated with the pair of terms *cosmos* and *imperium*; when the empire is regarded as the extension of the walled city, the complementary pair of terms *urbs* and *orbis* comes naturally to mind. The punning assonance was made the basis of a serious etymology by the Roman philologist;[87] the jingle was already exploited in a

[84] See also L. S. Mazzolani, *L'idea di città nel mondo romano* (Milan and Naples, 1967), p. 85.
[85] See W. Müller, *Die heilige Stadt: Roma quadrata, himmlisches Jerusalem und die Mythe vom Weltnabel* (Stuttgart, 1961); also above, n. 33.
[86] See J. Bidez, 'La Cité du monde et la cité du soleil', *BAB* (1932), 244–94. All these themes are discussed extensively in L. S. Mazzolani, op. cit.
[87] Varro *Ling.* 5.143. On *urbs–orbis* see Gernentz, p. 36 n. 1; Christ, pp. 81 ff.; J. Vogt, 'Orbis Romanus' in *Orbis: ausgewählte Schriften zur Geschichte des Altertums* (Freiburg,

political context by Cicero,[88] and received more concise formulations in the Augustan poets. With the passage quoted above from the Speech of Anchises may be compared the following line from Propertius (3.11.57):

septem urbs alta iugis, toto quae praesidet orbi.

The interpretation of the Shield of Aeneas offered above might be summed up in the apophthegmatic words of Ovid (*Fasti* 2.683 f.):

gentibus est aliis tellus data limite certo:
Romanae spatium est urbis et orbis idem.[89]

To the final scene on the Shield, representing the conquered peoples of the world in procession in Rome, might be applied as a motto words used in a less serious spirit by Ovid (*Ars Am.* 1.174):

ingens orbis in urbe fuit.[90]

IV. THE SHIELD AS PHYSICAL OBJECT

Concentration on the individual scenes of the *ecphrasis* and on the general programme that may lie behind them has tended to distract attention from the object of the Shield itself. An exception to this has been the attempt to link the fictional Shield of Aeneas with the real *clupeus virtutis* presented to Augustus in January 27 BC, and in particular to correlate the selection of scenes in the *ecphrasis* with a scheme of the four imperial virtues in recognition of which the *clupeus* was pre-

Basle, Vienna, 1960), pp. 159 ff.; E. Bréguet, '*Urbi et orbi*: un cliché et un thème', in J. Bibauw (ed.), *Hommages à Marcel Renard* (coll. *Latomus* 101, Brussels, 1969), pp. 140–52.

[88] *Cat.* 1.4.9 'qui de huius urbis atque adeo de orbis terrarum exitio cogitent'; ibid. 4.6.11; *Fam.* 4.1.2.

[89] See Bömer ad loc.

[90] The phrase *orbis in urbe* perhaps became proverbial: see Sid. Apoll. *Carm.* 7.556 f., with the remarks of E. Bréguet, art. cit., pp. 150 ff. This way of thinking is not dead: compare the comment of George VI in his own coronation broadcast, 'I felt this morning that the whole Empire was in very truth gathered within the walls of Westminster Abbey' (quoted in E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds.), *The invention of tradition* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 149). Note also Ov. *Pont.* 2.1.21 ff. (of Tiberius' Pannonian triumph) 'didici nuper visenda coisse / innumeras gentes ad ducis ora sui: / quaeque capit vastis immensum moenibus orbem, / hospitiis Romam vix habuisse locum'.

sented to the *princeps*;[91] but this schematization, rightly, has not gained universal consent. More immediately relevant are the *ancilia*, whose original fell from the sky in the reign of Numa and became one of the traditional *pignora imperii*.[92] These objects are in fact represented on the Shield of Aeneas (664), and, as in the case of the works of art in the Palatine temple of Apollo to which the Shield refers and which in turn help to further the interpretation of the Shield, so we may use the *ancilia* to interpret the Shield which Venus brings to Aeneas from the sky.[93] Aeneas understands Venus' delivery of the armour forged by Vulcan as a guarantee of his victory over Turnus (8.537 ff.); the Augustan reader, enjoying Virgil's hindsight, might take the Shield as a guarantee of the world-empire which it represents.

But again it is the Homeric Shield that is most relevant. We saw above that the *circular* form of that Shield was seized upon by the Hellenistic allegorizers as proof that Homer knew the universe to be spherical, and visual representations also emphasize that the circular form of the Homeric Shield is an image of the cosmos. We are made aware of the massive circular form of the Shield of Aeneas in the description of its forging (8.448 f.):

septenosque orbibus orbis
impediunt.

For the Augustan reader the very shape of the Shield of Aeneas would suggest the symbolism of empire; the *orbis* of the Shield becomes an emblem of the *orbis terrarum*.[94]

The sphere is an ambiguous symbol, for it can refer either to the spherical earth or to the spherical universe; as a symbol of power it can thus stand either for control of the *oikumenē* or for a more ambitious claim to cosmic might. It is often difficult to judge in a particular instance which sphere is intended, and the distinction is perhaps not always to be drawn too strictly;

[91] D. L. Drew, *The allegory of the* Aeneid (Oxford, 1927), pp. 26 ff.

[92] See Binder, pp. 198 ff. The analogy with the *ancile* was drawn by R. Hurd, *Q. Horatii Flacci Epistolae ad Pisones et Augustum*[6] ii (1776), p. 82, 'This idea . . . of the sacred shield, the guard and glory of Rome, and on which depended the fame and fortune of his country, the poet . . . transfers to the shield which guarded their great progenitor, while he was laying the first foundations of the Roman empire.'

[93] 8.535 f. 'Volcaniaque arma *per auras* / laturam auxilio'.

[94] Virgil is in fact the first to use *orbis*, whether with or without qualification, to denote a round shield; absolutely, *Aen.* 10.783.

imperial panegyric thrives on cloudy gestures.[95] In Rome the sphere had long before been adopted as an emblem of Roman control of the *orbis terrarum*;[96] it is first found on coins of the 70s BC, but becomes especially frequent as an expression of the imperialist ambitions first of Julius Caesar, and then of his adoptive son and successor. Two examples from Augustan visual imagery may be adduced to show how the simple form of the sphere could be incorporated in a more complex symbolism; it becomes clear that there is a common vocabulary on which both the visual monuments and the Virgilian Shield of Aeneas draw. Firstly, one of the silver cups from Boscoreale (Plate 5),[97] with, on one side, reliefs of a seated Augustus holding a globe in his right hand, between standing figures of Venus and Mars; Venus advances, holding a small figure of Victoria in her right hand, which she is about to place on the globe held by Augustus. Behind Venus stand allegorical figures; behind Mars appear personifications of countries subject to Rome. This allegorical scene is balanced on the other side of the cup by a more realistic scene of Augustus receiving the homage of a varied group of conquered barbarians, men, women, and children.

My second example is the sphere which once crowned the obelisk which formed the gnomon of the colossal horologium of Augustus in the Campus Martius (Plate 6).[98] This vast calendar served as an assertion of the *princeps*'s direction of time itself, as he guides the history of the world safely to an era of peace, symbolized by the Ara Pacis, which stood to the east of the horologium, and to which the shadow cast by the obelisk pointed directly on the evening of the birthday of Augustus.

[95] On the problem of deciding between earth and universe in interpreting Roman spheres see T. Hölscher, *Victoria Romana* (Mainz, 1967), pp. 41 ff.; on the exploitation of the verbal ambiguity of *mundus* see Christ, pp. 18 ff.; ambiguity of *orbis*: J.Vogt, op. cit. (above, n. 87), p. 158.

[96] In general see O. J. Brendel, *Symbolism of the sphere: a contribution to the history of earlier Greek philosophy* (Leiden, 1977) (trans. of 'Die Symbolik der Kugel', *MDAI(R)* 51 (1936), 1–95); on the use of the globe as a symbol of power see A. Schlachter, *Der Globus: seine Entstehung und Verwendung in der Antike* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1927), pp. 64 ff.; P. E. Schramm, *Sphaira, Globus, Reichsapfel* (Stuttgart, 1958); T.Hölscher, op. cit., pp. 41 ff.; S. Weinstock, *Divus Julius* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 42 ff.

[97] A. H. de Villefosse, *MMAI* 5 (1899), 134 ff.; T.Hölscher, op. cit., p. 181.

[98] E. Buchner, 'Solarium Augusti und Ara Pacis' *MDAI(R)* 83 (1976), 319–65; 327 for the probable identification of this sphere as one of those in the Palazzo dei Conservatori.

The sphere, itself topped by a sharp pyramid, is an emblem of universal empire; it is supported by the obelisk, the first one to be set up in Rome; the extant inscription declares that it was brought from Egypt after the defeat of Cleopatra and dedicated in Rome to the sun. The emblem of empire is raised up on an offering that commemorates the decisive victory by which that empire and the new era of peace were established.[99]

V. THE SHOULDERING OF THE SHIELD (*AENEID* 8.729–731)

> talia per clipeum Volcani, dona parentis,
> miratur rerumque ignarus imagine gaudet
> attollens umero famamque et fata nepotum.

In the last line of book eight of the *Aeneid* the hero raises the great disk of the Shield, with its scenes of Roman history, on to his shoulder; the portentous significance of this action is enhanced by the choice of language, which picks up and reinforces the underlying cosmic symbolism of the Shield. The description of the Shield ends, as it began, with a brief summary of the detailed scenes in the words 'famamque et fata nepotum'. But what in the introductory lines (626–9) was already concrete (wars, the line of Ascanius) is now replaced by abstraction and generalization. This can be understood as an instance of *variatio*, or as the more succinct summary naturally picking up the more informative introduction. But the phrase may be pressed a little further,[100] for we have been told elsewhere in the poem what its three elements, *fama*, *fata*, and *nepotes*, amount to in real terms, most fully in the programmatic dialogue between Venus and Jupiter in book one:

fama. 1.287 '[Caesar] imperium Oceano, *famam* qui terminet astris'. That is to say, Rome will vicariously, through its renown, extend its empire to the outmost heavens.[101]

[99] On the symbolism of the horologium see E. Buchner, art. cit., 347.

[100] The pair *fama* and *fata* also occurs at 7.79. On the word-play on the root *fa-* see G. J. M. Bartelink, *Etymologisering bij Vergilius* (Amsterdam, 1965), pp. 105 f.

[101] Cf. also 1.379 'fama super aethera notus'; 12.234 f. 'ille quidem ad superos . . . / succedet fama'; 7.99 'nomen in astra ferant'. In Homer κλέος conventionally reaches to heaven (see appendix to chapter 6).

fata. 1.235 ff. (Venus speaks) 'hinc fore ductores . . . / qui mare, qui terras omnis dicione tenerent / . . . / hoc equidem occasum Troiae tristisque ruinas / solabar *fatis* contraria *fata* rependens'. In his speech Jupiter confirms that Venus' universalizing interpretation of *fata* (of what he, Jupiter, pronounces, *fatur*) is the correct one (261 f.).[102]

nepotes. The idea that world-rule will fall to the lot of Aeneas' descendants is central to the speeches of Venus and Jupiter in book one; the word itself occurs prominently, for example, in 6.757, in Anchises' introduction to his prosopographical sketch of the rise of Rome to world-empire.[103]

Such is the universal extension of the future power and influence of Rome as expressed in the words of fame and fate. But the word-craftsman Virgil is inventing a physical object, the Shield; it is this embodiment of Rome's future empire that Aeneas lifts on his shoulders. What is the exact significance of this action?[104] Note firstly that it is not strictly speaking the logical outcome of the scene, although it has all the appearance of being the natural thing for Aeneas to do. Up to this point Aeneas' reactions to the divine armour have run quite closely parallel to those of Achilles in *Iliad* 19. Compare *Aeneid* 8.617 ff.:

> ille deae donis et tanto laetus[105] honore
> expleri nequit atque oculos per singula volvit,
> miraturque interque manus et bracchia versat.

with *Iliad* 19.15 ff.:

> αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεὺς
> ὡς εἶδ', ὡς μιν μᾶλλον ἔδυ χόλος, ἐν δέ οἱ ὄσσε
> δεινὸν ὑπὸ βλεφάρων ὡς εἰ σέλας ἐξεφάανθεν·
> τέρπετο δ' ἐν χείρεσσιν ἔχων θεοῦ ἀγλαὰ δῶρα.
> αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ φρεσὶν ἧσι τετάρπετο δαίδαλα λεύσσων.

[102] Anchises' speech in book six details Aeneas' *fata* (759), which are seen to culminate in world-empire 'beyond the stars' (795). Cf. also 12.795 '[Aeneas] fatisque ad sidera tolli'.

[103] Heavenly destiny of *nepotes*: 3.158 'venturos tollemus in astra nepotes'; 7.99 ff. 'nomen in astra ferant, quorumque a stirpe nepotes / omnia sub pedibus . . . / . . . videbunt'; 6.786 f. (Cybele simile of Rome) 'centum complexa nepotes, / omnis caelicolas, omnis supera alta tenentis'.

[104] Line 731 provoked criticism in antiquity: *Serv. Dan.* ad loc. 'hunc versum notant critici quasi superfluo et humiliter additum nec convenientem gravitati eius: namque est magis neotericus'.

[105] *Laetus* is picked up at line 730 'imagine gaudet'.

But when Achilles saw the arms a new surge of anger came over him and his eyes shone out fearfully under the eyelids, like fire; he rejoiced to hold the splendid gifts of the god in his hands. But when he had filled his heart with joy looking at the craftsmanship.[106]

At this point Achilles turns to other matters, and the arms are for the time being forgotten. Virgil could equally have ended his scene at line 730, 'miratur rerumque ignarus imagine gaudet'.

Knauer[107] points to line 11 of *Iliad* 19 as the immediate model for the last line of *Aeneid* 8:

> καλὰ μάλ', οἷ' οὔ πώ τις ἀνὴρ ὤμοισι φόρησεν.

Very fine [weapons], the like of which no man yet wore on his shoulders.

But this is in the speech with which Thetis accompanies her delivery of the armour, and Achilles does not immediately take up his arms; this is postponed until line 364, at which point a fully-developed arming scene begins.[108] This has no exact counterpart in the *Aeneid*; when Aeneas arrives back in Latium he appears, a fearsome revelation, already fully armed (10.260 ff.); detailed description of the actual sequence of arming would only detract from this. The only formal 'arming of Aeneas' occurs at 12.430 ff., and that is a very brief affair (the major arming scene in the *Aeneid* is reserved for Turnus, 12.87 ff.). Thus we are left with two alternatives for a purely naturalistic explanation of Aeneas' shouldering of the Shield at the end of book eight: (*a*) it represents a vestigial arming scene. But why is only the Shield mentioned, and why should Virgil refer to arming now, when Aeneas is far from the scene of

[106] The intensification of Achilles' χόλος by the sight of the arms is alien to the Virgilian scene; the fearful aspect of the Homeric hero is translated into the fearful aspect of the Virgilian arms: cf. *Il.* 19.16 f. ἐν δέ οἱ ὄσσε / δεινὸν ὑπὸ βλεφάρων ὡς εἰ σέλας ἐξεφάανθεν with *Aen.* 8.620 ff. 'terribilem cristis galeam . . . /. . . loricam ex aere rigentem, / sanguineam, ingentem, qualis cum caerula nubes / solis inardescit radiis longeque refulget'.

[107] Knauer, p. 261 n. 2. Knauer (and Heinze, p. 203) also refers to *Il.* 10.149 ἀμφ' ὤμοισι σάκος θέτο. The situation there is quite different: the informal preparation of the warrior at night, a vestigial arming which is quite inappropriate for Aeneas with his new panoply, also has a specificness which Virgil is anxious to avoid.

[108] Here it is the sword which he hangs from his shoulders (372), *not* the shield (εἵλετο 374).

combat?[109] (*b*) Aeneas picks up the Shield because it has to be carried away with him on his travels. But this reduces the Shield to the status of a piece of lumber. The conclusion must be that the purpose of line 731 is to be sought outside the context of the immediate narrative, that it hints at a symbolic lifting of the Shield. Indeed the abstract quality of the words 'famamque et fata nepotum' suggests that this is more than a literal shouldering.

Previous scholars have suggested that the words *attollens umero* contain allusions to two other instances of shouldering in the *Aeneid*: to the burden carried by the giant Atlas on his shoulder,[110] and to Aeneas' pious shouldering of his father in the escape from the sack of Troy.[111] Atlas appears in several guises in the *Aeneid*; the important passages for the present purpose are those in which he is depicted as upholding the sky:[112]

> Atlas
> axem umero torquet stellis ardentibus aptum.
> (4.481 f. = 6.796 f.)
>
> maximus Atlas
> . . . aetherios umero qui sustinet orbis.[113]
> (8.136 f.)
>
> Atlas . . . caeli qui sidera tollit.
> (8.141)

Note the use of the singular *umero* in the first two examples, as

[109] It may be objected that in *Aeneid* 12 the arming of Turnus and Aeneas also takes place unnecessarily, on the day before the duel; but as a prelude to the battle scenes which fill the book this is poetically effective, if not realistic.

[110] R. W. Cruttwell, *Virgil's mind at work: an analysis of the symbolism of the* Aeneid (Oxford, 1946), ch. 6; P. McGushin, 'Virgil and the spirit of endurance', *AJPh* 85 (1964), 240 f.; Binder, pp. 60 ff.; K. W. Gransden, *Virgil* Aeneid *Book VIII* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 17 f., and comm. on 136–7 (Gransden is aware of the round shield as analogous to the sphere of the universe borne by Atlas); in general on the equation of Aeneas and Atlas by Virgil see G. K. Galinsky, *The Herakles theme* (Oxford, 1972), p. 133.

[111] G. E. Duckworth, *AJPh* 75 (1954), 12; P. McGushin, art. cit., 239.

[112] His sky-bearing is also mentioned at 4.247, but there Atlas is the mountain, not the giant.

[113] Cf. the *orbes* of the Shield of Aeneas in this same book, 8.448.

in 8.731.[114] This in itself is not proof of an association, but other connections between Atlas and Aeneas may be made:

1. We are told earlier in book eight that Atlas is in fact an ancestor of Aeneas (134 ff., the passage which also contains two of the three references to Atlas' celestial burden).

2. An approximation of Aeneas to the figure of Atlas is suggested in book four; the everlasting endurance of the mountain Atlas (246 ff.) may be compared to the Stoic resistance of Aeneas (441 ff.).[115]

3. An indirect link may be made through the figure of Hercules.[116] In 8.552 f., as Aeneas sets out to receive the arms, he is given a horse:

> quem fulva leonis
> pellis obit totum praefulgens unguibus aureis.[117]

This looks very like a Herculean attribute, especially given the explicit and implicit comparisons of Aeneas to Hercules earlier in the book. In 2.722 it is a lion skin that Aeneas puts on his back to provide a cushion for his father. This may also be Herculean. If then in 8.731 the Atlas allegory is present, it is fitting that Aeneas also acts out the role of Hercules, who had literally taken on his shoulders the burden of Atlas.

4. An indirect connection of Roman empire with the figure of Atlas is made in the Speech of Anchises, where Atlas marks the geographical limit of Augustan power (6.796 f.), but he may, by association, also be taken as a symbol of that power. Note the echo of line 790 'progenies magnum caeli ventura sub axem' in lines 796 f. 'ubi caelifer Atlas / axem umero torquet'.

McGushin and Binder both stress the notion of endurance implied in this comparison of Aeneas to Atlas at the end of book eight.[118] The endurance of Atlas is certainly proverbial,

[114] The Homeric parallels all have the plural ὦμοισι . In general, however, Virgil appears to use *umero* and *umeris* interchangeably.

[115] See above, pp. 280–2.

[116] See Binder, p. 62.

[117] There is another lion skin at 5.351 f., but here apparently without further significance, unless one wishes to link the recipient of the skin, Salius, with the Salii (cf. *Serv. Dan.* ad *Aen.* 8.285), who in 8.285 ff. are represented as active in the cult of Hercules.

[118] Binder, p. 62, 'Mit dem Betreten römischen Bodens beginnt die eigentliche "atlantische" Aufgabe des Aeneas: er erhält von seiner Mutter Venus den göttlichen

but it is not easy to see why Aeneas' labours should only *now* become 'Atlantean' in this sense (the more so if the suggested interpretation of the description of Atlas in book four is correct). McGushin does place some emphasis on the fact that it is the heavens that Atlas holds up:[119] 'Just as the burden Aeneas assumes is the glory and destiny of his race, so the reward that awaits his acceptance of and endurance in sustaining that burden is described as a place among the stars.' But it is a bold leap from groaning under the weight of the stars to inclusion among them by catasterism, and while this kind of associative suggestion is not entirely alien to Virgil, this particular instance accords uneasily with the fact that Atlas was, after all, notorious for his inability to escape from his earthly ordeal.[120]

Instead of concentrating exclusively on the experience of 'Atlantean labours', we should do well to hold before our eyes the pictorial image of Atlas supporting the great sphere of the heavens, and compare it with the figure of Aeneas as he raises up the great disk of the Shield, the emblem of the Roman cosmos. The full significance of Aeneas' action is brought into relief by a consideration of the cosmic function of Atlas. The Titan holds up the heavens away from earth, and thus guarantees the continued stability of the universe against a return to the primeval confusion of the divisions of the universe. This mythological role is transformed into a philosophical allegory of cosmic cohesion in an interpretation (probably pre-Socratic in origin) of Atlas as a figure of the axis which runs through and supports the universe;[121] this allegorization is exploited by Virgil himself in his descriptions of Atlas.[122] In this version of Atlas the emphasis is not on an all-too-human suffering, but on a cosmic role analogous to that of the supreme deity, who protects the universe and makes it revolve.[123] In lifting the

Schild, damit er den Inhalt der fata verwirklichen könne. Indem er diesen Schild aufnimmt, lädt er Rom und seine Geschichte auf seine Schultern.'

[119] Art. cit., 241.

[120] The link between sky-bearing and journey to the sky could only be plausibly made through the intermediary of Hercules: see Ov. *Her.* 9.17; Sen. *Her. F.* 69 f.

[121] E. Tièche, 'Atlas als Personifikation der Weltachse', *MH* 2 (1945), 65–86.

[122] See my article 'Atlas and *axis*', *CQ* NS 33 (1983), 220–8; also P. Boyancé, 'Virgile et Atlas', in *Mélanges offerts à W. Seston* (Paris, 1974), pp. 49–58.

[123] The language used of Atlas-axis and Jupiter in these roles tends to coincide: see Hardie, art. cit., p. 222 n. 15. The essential point was seen by J. W. Mackail, *CR* 32 (1918), 105, 'Aeneas, the antitype of Atlas, is also the type of Augustus; not the "weary Titan", so much as the unwearied strength of a divine power incarnate.'

Shield Aeneas thus becomes the guarantor of the future emergence of the order of the Roman universe.[124]

It is finally worth noting that in a version of the cosmic allegorization of the Shield of Achilles ascribed to Demo, but probably drawing on earlier exegesis, a figure of the world-axis is discovered in the strap, the *telamōn*, by which the shield was borne on the shoulder (*Il.* 18.480):

> The silver strap which is attached to the shield at the edges and by which it is supported is an image of the axis which supports the universe, attached, as it were, to the highest point of the aether and running through the centre of the earth and terminating down in the south, and which allows the heavens, which it holds up, to turn about it. (Eust. 1154.55 ff.)[125]

The word *telamōn* is etymologically cognate with Atlas; Vitruvius says that the Latin architectural term for colossal male figures used as bearing-pillars is *telamōnes*, corresponding to the Greek *Atlantes*.[126] It would seem very possible that Virgil might have had access to some discussion in which the two axis allegories, of *telamōn* and *Atlas*, were juxtaposed. In the *Aeneid* it is the hero himself who takes on the function of the world-axis.

APPENDIX: THE BURDENS OF THE SHIELD AND OF ANCHISES

> haec fatus latos umeros subiectaque colla
> veste super fulvique insternor pelle leonis,
> succedoque oneri.
>
> (*Aen.* 2.721–3)

At the end of book two of the *Aeneid* the pious Aeneas takes the burden of his aged father on his shoulders; at the end of book eight he figuratively raises his descendants (*nepotes*, 731) on to his shoulder. I

[124] The image of Atlas supporting the universe is suggested elsewhere in imperial panegyric, for example in Ov. *Fast.* 1.615 f. 'auspicibusque deis tanti cognominis heres / omine suscipiat, quo pater, orbis onus'; for other passages see Christ, pp. 134 f. (Ovid to Claudian). Cf. also Hor. *Epist.* 2.1.1 'cum tot sustineas et tanta negotia solus'; *sustinere* in an Atlantean context, *Aen.* 8.137.

[125] See also 829.12.

[126] Vitr. *De Arch.* 6.7.6.

wish here to consider a parallel from the Augustan visual arts for this kind of correspondence, which is not rare in the *Aeneid*.

In the two exedrae to the north and south of the Forum of Augustus (dedicated in 2 BC) were displayed statues of, respectively, the Julii and of 'summi viri'.[127] In the central niche to the north was a statue of Aeneas carrying Anchises; in the central niche to the south was a statue of Romulus carrying the *spolia opima*. It has been plausibly suggested that these statues are the models, directly or indirectly, for a pair of paintings from Pompeii showing these two subjects (Plate 7);[128] both Aeneas and Romulus are shown in full armour, and the close similarity between the two figures makes it apparent that the spectator is intended to discern an analogy between the shouldering of Anchises by Aeneas and of the *spolia* by Romulus. The parallelism is expressed verbally by Ovid in his description of the two statues in the Forum of Augustus (*Fasti* 5.563 ff.):

> hinc videt Aenean oneratum pondere caro
> et tot Iuleae nobilitatis avos:
> hinc videt Iliaden humeris ducis arma ferentem,
> claraque dispositis acta subesse viris.

[127] On the programme of the Forum of Augustus see P. Zanker, *Forum Augustum: das Bildprogramm* (Monumenta artis antiquae 2, Tübingen, n.d.).

[128] V. Spinazzola, *Pompeii alla luce degli scavi nuovi di Via dell'Abbondanza (anni 1910-1923)* i (Rome, 1953), pp. 151 f., pls. 183 f.; J. Gagé, *MEFR* 47 (1930), 140 ff.; K. Schefold, *Die Wände Pompejis* (Berlin, 1957), p. 289.

Epilogue: Roman Retrospective and Prospective

COSMIC pretensions are a recurrent feature of Roman imperial ideology; in conclusion we may once more let the focus move from Virgil to the wider scene, in an attempt to place the *Aeneid* in a historical context and to raise questions about its influence on the later tradition. We are dealing with political myth; Virgil's strong mythopoeic faculty cannot have been unpersuasive.[1]

The idea of universal Roman empire over the *oikumenē* was sown by Greek writers of the second century BC and grew steadily in the succeeding century; the increasing use of the globe as a political symbol is visual evidence of this. Cicero subscribes to this universalism: Roman domination of the *orbis terrarum* is a perfectly natural idea to him,[2] and he takes seriously the pretensions of Pompey to be a world-conqueror on the scale of Alexander, for example in the third *Catilinarian* (11.26): 'unoque tempore in hac republica duos civis exstitisse, quorum alter fines vestri imperi non terrae sed caeli regionibus terminaret.'[3] Roman power cannot be gauged by purely terrestrial measures. Cicero's idea of a power that extends to the limits of the world is complemented by his conviction that there is an inner congruence between the workings of the cosmos and the proper functioning of the Roman state, a notion that underpins the discussions in the *Republic*. Like the universe, the properly constituted state might even be eternal.[4] 'Cicero sees

[1] A useful collection of relevant material in L. S. Mazzolani, *L'idea di città nel mondo romano* (Milan/Naples, 1967).

[2] Orbis terrarum in Cicero: e.g. Phil. 4.6.14; Mur. 10.22. In general see P. A. Brunt, 'Laus imperii', in P. D. A. Garnsey and C. R. Whitaker (eds.), *Imperialism in the ancient world* (Cambridge, 1978), pp. 159-91, esp. pp. 168 ff. Note Brunt's belief 'that the imperial ideals of the Augustan age were much the same as those of the late Republic'.

[3] Cf. Pompey's own claim in the inscription reported in Diod. Sic. 40.4 *καὶ τὰ ὅρια τῆς ἡγεμονίας τοῖς ὅροις τῆς γῆς προσβιβάσας*. Cicero's precise meaning is unclear; it is probably related to the idea of conquest as wide as the paths of the sun (cf. *Cat.* 4.10.21); see O. Weippert, *Alexander-imitatio und römische Politik in republikanischer Zeit* (Augsburg, 1972), pp. 90 f.

[4] Cic. *Rep.* 3.23.34.