COMMENTARY
When the Capitol is just out of sight, Hannibal desires to turn back to Rome and pitches camp at the river Tutia. He chides his men for fleeing the siege without wounds, and pictures them having to tell their patria Carthage that they fled lightning and thunder. Hannibal’s words restore his men’s spirits throughout the army, just as a pebble dropped in a pond causes rings that reach the shores.

Hannibal’s backward gaze at Rome (1–3) not only suggests his implacability, but also implies that his greatest moments of glory lie behind him; the capture of Rome, which should have been the crowning event of his career, failed, and he will never return to the heights he attained at Cannae.1 This gaze adumbrates the end of the epic, where at 17.213ff. Hannibal, sailing to Africa, keeps his eyes fixed on Italy; there, too, he prepares to turn back just after the land has vanished from sight (17.219–220; cf. 1–2 vix ... Tarpeia videri / culmina desierant).2 The scene thus anticipates Hannibal’s defeat; he is now driven from Rome, and soon to be driven from Italy. The anticipation of and preparation for the end of the war is the main theme of book 13; see Gen.intr. § 5.

Although Silius’ presentation of events verbally alludes to Livy’s,3 this entire scene is a marked addition.4 Livy, like Silius, describes at 26.11.8–12.2 Hannibal’s withdrawal to the Tutia, his pillaging of Feronia (see 83–91) and his subsequent march to Bruttium;5 he says nothing, however, of an intention to march back to Rome. The motif of looking back, here and in book 17 (see above), is taken from the beginning of Lucan’s Bellum Civile 3, in which Pompey gazes longingly at Italy from which he is sailing and where he will never return (see n.1–3).6 The identification of Hannibal with the figure of Pompey, which begins here and foreshadows his defeat at Zama, is continued in this and later books; it is very marked at the end of book 13, where the prophecy of Hannibal’s final years pointedly echoes Lucan’s account of Pompey’s demise in Bellum Civile 8. For Hannibal as Pompey, see n.92–93 and Intr. 850b–895.

At the same time, Hannibal tries to act the role of Lucan’s Caesar. Both the encampment at the river Tutia and Hannibal’s evocation of the goddess Carthago allude to Caesar’s

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1 This gaze at the past, rather than the future, is also present in Hannibal’s motivation for the war: by seeking to avenge Dido, he remains locked in the past and is thus doomed to failure (see Ganiban 2010). His misguided identification of his war with the Trojan war is similar; see Intr. 30–93.
2 culmina in 2 corresponds to montes at 17.219. Note that in book 17, Hannibal’s attempt to return is thwarted by Neptune, just as here it is the protection of the gods, symbolized by the Palladium, that dissuades Hannibal from turning back to Rome. The Palladium also anticipates the protective image of Cybele in book 17; see Intr. 30–93.
3 See n.1–3 segne iter emenso and also n.15–16a.
4 Verbal echoes of Livy seem to mark differences rather than correspondences; see Gen.intr. § 4.2.
5 Polybius (9.7) tells that Hannibal after his failed siege of Rome crossed the Anio again (where he was attacked by the Romans) and then marched south with such speed that he almost took Rhegium by surprise; there is no mention of the Tutia or Feronia.
6 The similarity between 17.218ff. and Luc. 3.1ff. has often been noted (see the bibliography in Intr. 850b–895 n.15), but the interplay of the present passage has been overlooked. The contrast between Hannibal, who looks back, and his men, whose gaze is fixed on the sea, is also taken from Lucan (17.211–212 omnis in altum Sidonius visus converterat undique miles; Luc. 3.3 omnis in Ionios spectabat navita fluctus); compare also at 13.82 Hannibal’s defeated attitude and the joy of his troops at their departure from Rome (see n.82–83a). Spaltenstein’s comment (ad 13,1) that the correspondence with 17.218ff. shows “comibien Sil. est mécanique dans la peinture de ce caractère indomptable” completely misses the point.
crossing of the Rubicon in Luc. 1.185ff.; there, the *dea Roma* appears to the Roman general to entreat him not to attack his own country.\(^7\) (The Lucanian) Caesar had been the model for Hannibal in the first half of the epic;\(^8\) in this context, we should compare the latter’s crossing of the Ebro, a move that is nowhere explicitly presented as the start of the war in the same way as Lucan does, but which does symbolize the same breach of *fides* and *foedera* as Caesar’s crossing.\(^9\) In effect, an allusion to *Bellum Civile* 1 here signifies that Hannibal is ready to start a second campaign against Rome.\(^10\)

His use of the evocation of his *patria* is flawed, however. In Lucan, Caesar is the attacker, urged by his *patria* not to press on; Hannibal’s *patria*, however, is here evoked to stop his men from fleeing. We should compare a third passage, which is also intertextual with Lucan’s scene. At *Punica* 4.408–409, the elder Scipio at the battle of the Trebia upholds a similar image of a supplicant Rome to his routing men. Both of Silius’ passages allude to Lucan;\(^11\) in both cases, however, our poet has subtly inverted the source scene by applying it to the losing party. As in Lucan, the *patria* whose image appears is doomed to fall; in his speech, Hannibal thus unwittingly marks the reversal of fortunes. He does not see that his days of taking up the role of attacker of Rome, the role of Caesar, are over; the parallel with Scipio signifies that it is now Carthage which is on the defence.

The motif of a second attempt on Rome is also played out through another literary model which featured in Hannibal’s first attempt and is here repeated. In his attack on the city, which throughout is also presented as an assault on the gods, Hannibal imitates one of the Seven against Thebes, the blasphemous Capaneus; the most relevant intertext is Statius’ account of his *aristeia* and death at *Theb. 10*.738ff.\(^12\) Jupiter’s thunderbolt at Sil. 12.622–626, which fused Hannibal’s weapons, was a warning to stop lest he end up like the Argive,

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\(^7\) See n.12b–14; for the correspondences between Tutia and Rubicon, see n.4–6.


\(^9\) Intertextuality underpins this association: i) the description of the crossing of the Ebro, which is depicted on Hannibal’s shield at 2.451 *abrupto transgressus foedere ripas*, alludes both to Lucan’s proem (1.4 *rupto foedere regni*; cf. Vessey 1974b: 28–29) and to Caesar’s words at the Rubicon at Luc. 1.226 *procul hinc iam foedera sunt*; ii) the Ebro is portrayed on the rim, Sil. 2.449 *extrema clipei ... in ora*, which seems to play on Caesar’s hesitation at the river *in extrema ... ripa* (Luc. 1.194); iii) in a broader perspective, Caesar’s chill and trembling at Roma’s words (Luc. 1.192–193) should be compared with Hannibal’s similar bodily reaction after his god-sent dream at the beginning of his campaign while still in Spain (Sil. 3.214–216). Conversely, Lucan appears to refer to Caesar’s ‘Hannibal-ness’ at his crossing of the Rubicon, which receives the epithet *puniceus* (1.214), which means ‘scarlet’ (playing both on the etymology of *Rubicum* and on the blood that will flow as a result of the crossing), but of course also ‘Punic’.

\(^10\) In general, the many connections with Lucan’s *Bellum Civile* signify that the war with Hannibal is an analogy to Roman civil war (cf. slightly differently Marks 2010a: 133 “a kind of civil war or, perhaps, a pre-play’’); see Intr. 850b–895 for a more elaborate discussion.

\(^11\) For the connection between Luc. 1.185ff. and Sil. 4.401ff., cf. Marks 2010a: 133; he notes various verbal echoes (Luc. 1.191 *quo fertis mea signa, viri*, Sil. 4.402 *quo signa referitis*, Luc. 1.188 *turrigero ... vertice*, Sil. 4.408 *turrigeros portantem vertice muros*; Luc. 1.199 *Vestalesque foci*, Sil. 4.411 *Vestalesque focos*); for the allusions to Lucan’s passage in our lines see nn.4–6, 8b–12a *quas ... in oras signa referis* and 12b–14, where the motif of the image of the *patria* is connected to the structure of the poem.

cremated by lightning. Now, at the beginning of the next book, Hannibal is Capaneus once more. His menacing looks again recall Capaneus’ assault on the walls of Thebes; the Carthaginian is clearly ready to face the supreme god for a second time. His troops still see the image of Jupiter’s wrath before them, just as the Argives witness Capaneus’ smouldering body; but where the Greeks are pressed back, the Carthaginians are reinvigorated by Hannibal’s words.

Lastly, Hannibal’s preparations to turn back to the city he had besieged before align him with the Greeks before Troy, who left the city only to return in secret. The end of Punica 12, when the Romans pour out of the city and visit the site of Hannibal’s camp, alludes to the beginning of Aeneid 2. The Romans have ‘read their Aeneid’, though; they initially suspect treachery (12.737), but it emerges that, unlike the Greeks, Hannibal has truly left. Here, in the next book, the tale seems to fall in line with its model after all, as the Carthaginians prepare to go back. But the story of a Sinon-like figure, Dasius, told now not to the besieged but to the besieger, persuades Hannibal that Rome cannot be taken, or, in other words, that he is not a reincarnated Agamemnon. The role of Dasius and Hannibal’s mistaken identification with the Greeks before Troy will be explored in Intr. 30–93.

Analysis of the presentation of 1–29

The book opens, as many do in the Punica, with a short setting in lines 1–3 with pluperfect and imperfect tenses (2 desierant, 3 parabat). Book 12 had ended with the joy of the Romans at Hannibal’s departure; here the ‘camera’ switches to the Carthaginian side. Hannibal, the main character of the first part of book 13, is first introduced implicitly by segne iter emenso and only at line 3 explicitly by dductor Agenoreus. His actions after his departure are described with a participle (emenso). This practice, of briefly summarizing an action of one party after those of another party have been treated (in this case, Hannibal’s slow march against the feasting among the Romans), is a favourite way for Silius to realize a transition between scenes (or books, as here); for such quasi-recapitulating settings, see An. 142–178.

Following the setting, the actions of Hannibal are narrated with present tenses. The use of this tense marks that the narrator evokes the images of his story before our mind’s eye, as if we are witnesses of the narrative as it unfolds, much in the way of a theatre play or film. In this case, however, it is immediately clear that the strides with which our narrator goes through his material are rather large for a true ‘eye-witness’ account; for he tells that ‘Hannibal pitches camp’ (4 castra locat), an event that would take up a lot of time. The

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13 Sil. 13.20 ~ Theb. 11.23, a parallel also noted by Venini and Marks; see n.19–20.
14 Sil. 12.744–749 ~ A. 2.27–30; see Gen.intr. § 5.1.
15 For the same practice, see books 2, 5, 6, 7, 12, 15 and 17; in these settings the poet uses imperfect tense, and occasionally pluperfects (books 5 and 17).
16 For the ‘camera’ and similar notions concerning the narrative practice, see Gen.intr. § 7.2.
17 A similar topic switch is found at 95–97, where the Roman commander Fulvius is paraphrased at 95 by victor and the following ablative absolute, and more explicitly presented by his proper name at 96.
18 This is the value of the present in what Adema calls the ‘directing mode’ of narrating (see Adema 2008: 150). The function of the setting in past tenses is to establish the narrative firmly in the past, even if its main events are narrated in present tenses.
narrative itself must first ‘slow down’, then; this is done through *hic* (7, probably ‘then’ rather than ‘here’, despite following a geographical description), which zooms in and marks the event in 4–6 as the general setting for Hannibal’s speech. And yet, the narrator is still summarizing, for we are told of the various targets of the general’s anger: *modo ... modo ... nunc*. The verb *increpitat* thus reflects an iterated action; the speech recorded at 8–17 seems to represent a series of such speeches held by Hannibal as he goes through his camp.20

After the speech another few lines in imperfect tense follow. The changing attitude of the soldiers to the speech is described in three steps: the initial *terror* (19) was overcome by the *vigor* (22) that still remained and finally the men were filled again with *fervor* (23). The movement is illustrated by an extensive simile (see n.24–29 for models and comments on word order), enforcing the message that one man may make a difference.21 As a whole, lines 19–29 form the background for Dasius’ speech which follows them, as is marked by the use of imperfect tense forms (19 *inerat*, 22 *durabat*, 23 *crescebat*); in this setting the expectation of another march on Rome is raised, and immediately confounded in the next line (30 *at contra*).22

In short, the structure of the passage may be described as a general setting which forms the background to Hannibal’s speech, and then another setting (the reaction of the soldiers) which forms the background to Dasius’ speech in 36ff. This overview makes clear that the latter’s words not only contrast with the renewed *fervor* of the Carthaginians, but also with the harangue of their general; Dasius’ cautioning tale counteracts Hannibal’s reinvigoration.

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19 The last addressee is ‘himself’ (*sese* 8), and the use of the singular in 8b–14 might suggest that Hannibal is indeed addressing himself; it emerges from *miles* (14), however, that at that point in his speech, at any rate, he is addressing his soldiers, and explicitly so at 16–18 (*expellite*). Since Hannibal mainly speaks of fear, which he had not felt himself during Jupiter’s storms (cf. 12.624 *non cedere certi*), the entire speech is presumably addressed at his men (*primores socium*). The invectives against himself and the gods (*iussa deorum*) are not presented *verbatim*.

20 Hannibal’s four questions (10 *quas ... in oras*, 11 *qui mucro ...*, quae lancea, 14 *quas abitus*) are expressed in slow, heavy lines; note the dominating spondees in 9, 12, 13 and 14.

21 See for the *topos* also n.707–709 *multum uno maiora viro*. The use of verbs in the simile is noteworthy. As in all similes, the present tense is predominant, the so-called ‘universal present’, since all similes present an image outside of time, universally valid; but the perfect *perrupit* (24) notes a condition to this universal image, i.e. an event in the immediate past of the image evoked by the simile (‘when a certain thing has just happened’). *donec* is followed by a conjunctive (29 *contingat*), which conveys this sense of iterativity or universality; cf. its similar use with a conjunctive in a simile at 12.461–462 (see for *donec* with conjunctive also n.885b–890a *altera servitia ... patietur*).

22 For *at*, see An. 30–93 with fn.50.
1–6

segne iter emenso vixdum Tarpeia videri
culmina desierant, torvos cum versus ad urbem
ductor Agenoreus vultus remeare parabat.
castra locat, nulla laedens ubi gramina ripa
Tutia deducit tenuem sine nomine rivum
et tacite Tuscis inglorius affluit undis.

1–3 To Hannibal, who was marching at a slow pace, the Tarpeian peak was hardly out of sight, when the Carthaginian general turned his grim face to the city and prepared to turn back.

The book’s opening lines are full of intra- and intertextual reminiscences. Hannibal’s gaze at Rome and desire to turn back seem to mark the immediate fulfilment of his threats at 12.729–730 respectans abit et castris avulsa moveri / signa iubet ductor remeaturumque minatur, “The general leaves while looking back and orders the standards to be pulled loose from the camp’s ground and threatens that he will return”. But this plan will be abandoned, and he will never see Rome again; this motif will return in book 17, when Hannibal, on his way to Carthage, tries and fails to turn back to Italy (17.218ff.; cf. Spaltenstein). Both passages allude to the opening of Lucan’s Bellum Civile 3, where Pompey, sailing from Italy, cannot wrest his eyes from his country. The backward gaze suggests that both Pompey and Hannibal live in the past, depending on past glory. For the interplay with book 17, see Intr. 1–29; for Hannibal as Pompey, see n.92–93 and Intr. 850b–895.

Another important intertext is Capaneus’ assault on Thebes in Stat. Theb. 10.827ff. Like Capaneus, Hannibal had attacked the gods themselves, and Jupiter’s thunderbolts had driven him from Rome, as they had killed Capaneus. Now, trying to turn back, Hannibal seeks to give a second try at being a Capaneus; cf. his torvos ... vultus with Theb. 10.840 ardua mox torvo metitur culmina visu (cf. also metitur ~ emenso, and iter at 842). See also n.23–25 (the parallel reactions of the Argives and Carthaginians). Earlier in the Punica, Capaneus served as a model for Flaminius; see Chaudhuri 2013.

vixdum ... videri .. desierant Litt. ‘had hardly ceased to be seen’. For desino with a passive infinitive (best translated as ‘no longer’ with a finite verb), see TLL 5.1.7238.36ff.

segne iter emenso A pointed contrast with the representation of affairs (by Scipio) at Liv. 26.41.15 iter omne ab urbe Roma trepida fuga emensus Hannibal; his slow withdrawal, also suggested by the many spondees, underpins Hannibal’s reluctance to leave Rome.

For the phrase, cf. e.g. iter emensi at Verg. A. 7.160 (the Trojans arrive in Latium) and 11.244 (the embassy to Diomedes, which is an important intertext for 30–81; see Intr. 30–93), and the heroic journeys at Ov. Fast. 1.544 (Hercules in Latium), Luc. 9.735 (Cato), Stat. Theb. 2.375 (Tydeus) and Sil. 9.185–186 (the Carthaginians rivalling Hercules). Hannibal’s journey here is anti-heroic, since he moves away from his epic goal.

segne, significantly the first word of the book, also suggests that Hannibal has lost the earlier vigour and speed with which he had won his battles; cf. (with Marks 2005: 29–30) 12.61 defessus and 12.111 lentus, and (with Fucecchi 1990b: 152) the slow spondees in 12.41–44. Tipping (2010b: 105 n.159) notes the metapoetic potentiality of segne (suggesting the slow movement of the poem as the initiative shifts from Hannibal to Rome / Scipio).
Tarpeia ... culmina The Capitol, the Tarpeian rock, more specifically as the seat of Jupiter, since for both Capitol and its god, Tarpeius is the common epithet in the Punica (cf. esp. 1.541, 4.47, 4.548, 5.635, 6.417, 6.713, 8.340, 10.360, 10.432, 12.517, 12.609, 12.743, 16.261, 17.226, 17.267, 17.654). The phrase thus picks up Hannibal’s assault on the gods. In lines 839–843, Tarpeia’s punishment for betraying the citadel is described; the same penalty is suggested for Hannibal at 872–873, implying that his crime against Jupiter was similar.

ductor Agenoreus I.e. ‘Tyrian’ (from its mythical king Agenor), hence ‘Carthaginian’. In the Punica, the Tyrian origin of Carthage is used to suggest a parallel with Thebes (founded by Agenor’s son Cadmus); compare the proem, in which Carthage is introduced as the gens Cadmea (1.6), and her Sidonii ... duces (1.10) and arces ... Agenoreas (1.14–15), with Statius’ prologue (Theb. 1.4 gentis ... dirae, 1.5. Sidonios, 1.6 Agenoreae, 1.6 Cadmum; cf. also Theb. 1.5 inexactabile pactum and Carthage’s breaking of the pactum with Rome at Sil. 1.5). Hannibal is often identifiable with participants in the civil war of Thebes, especially Eteocles (see e.g. n.874 ne metue); here he is (for the second time) Capaneus.

Note also that this phrase echoes the proem: cf. 1.14–15 reseravit Dardanus arces / ductor Agenoreas, Scipio’s future capture of Carthage; as Hannibal considers turning back to Rome, the echo reminds us of the eventual victory of Scipio, and of the futility of Hannibal’s design. The same phrase ductor Agenoreus is used of Hannibal at other significant points in the poem; cf. 3.631 (just after Jupiter’s prophecy of Rome’s future greatness), 12.282 (just after his first defeat) and 17.391 (at Zama, just after Jupiter has fixed his doom), and of Hasdrubal at 15.741 (just prior to his death). For Agenor, cf. 1.88, 6.387; for Agenoreus, cf. 6.303, 7.642, 8.670, 11.239, 12.167, 15.343, 16.692, 17.58, 17.196, 17.402, 17.421, 17.516; cf. also Agenoridae at 8.1 and 8.214.

4–6 He pitches camp where the Tutia, with no bank to mar the fields, leads its small stream down without a name and flows silently and without glory to the Tuscan waves.

Likewise, Livy tells that Hannibal after his failed siege retreated to the Tutia, six miles from Rome (26.11.8 ad Tutiam fluvium castra rettulit sex milia passuum ab urbe). These two passages are the only mentions of the name in Latin literature; Spaltenstein comments that sine nomine and inglorius (and surely also tenuem and tacite) reflect the silence of our sources (for Silius’ mention of other obscure places, cf. 8.508, 14.267, 15.294–295 with Blomgren 1938: 55 n.2). More pertinently, these same words reflect Hannibal’s position (who has lost the glorious possibility of taking Rome).

But the Tutia’s lack of glory also contrasts it with other rivers. Hannibal finds himself camped at a river, ready to march on Rome (again). This brings to mind his crossing of the Ebro. The Ebro can be said to be Hannibal’s Rubicon (see Intr. 1–29 with fn.9); the river here suggests the start of another attempt on Rome. The Tutia is much like the Rubicon; its small stream (deducit tenuem ... rivum) recalls Luc. 1.213–214 fonte cadit modico parvisque impellitur undis ... Rubicon. In his attempt to re-enact Caesar, Hannibal presents the dea Carthago at 12–13, by which Silius alludes to Roma appearing to Caesar at Luc. 1.186ff. But his use of the image is flawed (see n.12b–14), and his plan is aborted; while the Ebro and Rubicon became famous, the Tutia remains inglorius (cf. also the opposition at 8.452–453 of Tiniaeque inglorius humor and Rubico in the next line).

nulla laedens ... gramina ripa I.e. the Tutia is so shallow it has no banks to speak of. For the mss. reading laedens, Blass conjectured lambens, a verb which, unlike laedo, is
Notes to 1–29

more frequently used of water (TLL 7.2.900.55ff., Hor. Carm. 1.22.8 and below; for laedo cf. only, differently, V.Fl. 2.434 [Samothraciam] laedere fluctu ... hiems). The conjecture merits serious consideration because of possible intertexts: i) Stat. Theb. 4.51–52 quos pigra vado Langia tacenti lambit (cf. for the ablative ripa Plin. Nat. 3.5 oceanus ... terras ... flexuosae litorum anfractu lambit), and particularly ii) Claud. rapt. Pros. 2.103–104 fontes / roscida mobilibus lambebant graminia rivis (ripis A1 and C3, two mss. of Hall’s class α); Claudian’s lines seem to echo Silius’ (see similarly n.663–665). Still, laedens suits the context quite well: the smallness implied by nulla ... ripa is picked up by tenuem and tacite, while the harmless nature of the Tutia (not laedens), suggests that Hannibal is similarly ineffectual.

Tutia The modern counterpart of this river is an issue of debate; for the various candidates see Bassett 1964 (with bibl.), who supports its identification with the Acqua Traversa on the right bank of the Tiber, just north of Rome; this goes well with Hannibal’s subsequent spoiling of the sanctuary of Feronia (83–91), several miles upstream on the same bank. The name Tutia is masculine (cf. inglorius), like most river names.

Tuscis ... undis The Tiber, for which the epithet Tuscus (‘Etrurian’) was conventionally used (cf. 8.362, 17.14, OLD s.v. 2b); compare the willingness of Caesar’s men to pitch camp near Rome, like Hannibal here, at Luc. 1.381 castra super Tusci si ponere Thybridis undas. For the phrase, cf. Stat. Silv. 2.1.99 Tuscis ... in undis (also of the Tiber, see Van Dam ad loc.); cf. also 8.361–362 Tusci amnis, 17.14–15 Tusci Thybridis.

7–18
hic modo primores socium, modo iussa deorum, nunc sese increpitat: ‘dic o, cui Lydia caede creverunt stagna et concussa est Daunia tellus armorum tonitru, quas exanimatus in oras signa refers? qui mucro tuum, quae lancea tandem intravit pectus? si nunc exsisteret alma Carthago ante oculos turrita celsa figura, quas abitus, miles, causas illaese dedisses? “imbres, o patria, et mixtos cum grandine nimbos et tonitrus fugio.” procul hanc expellite gentis femineam Tyriae labem, nisi luce serena nescire ac liquida Mavortem agitare sub aethra.’

7–8a Here he scolds now the leaders of his men, now the commands of the gods, now himself.

Compare Hannibal’s words after being driven from Nola by Marcellus at 12.282–292 (in which he is also given the title ductor Agenoreus, see n.1–3), where he first rebukes himself for this labes (12.282–284, cf. here 17), then Jupiter (12.284–285) and lastly his men, who caused his flight (12.286–292). There, he is also ready to blame his men, although he himself had faltered as well (12.189–190).

iussa deorum A reference to Juno’s admonition to cease his attack on Rome at 12.701ff.; the plural deorum is not an inconsistency (Spaltenstein), since Juno acted on Jupiter’s warning (12.691ff.). Juno had saved him at Nola as well (12.201–202), but Hannibal is never grateful for these rescues. In this he resembles Turnus at Verg. A.
10.666ff. (666 ingratusque salutis); cf. the echoes in Hannibal’s reproach of Jupiter at 12.284–285 of Turnus’ at A. 10.668–669. Both of Juno’s rescues foreshadow her ultimate intervention at 17.522–617, when she removes Hannibal from the battle of Zama and from the epic, a scene that is also strongly modelled after A. 10.633ff.

At Verg. A. 6.461, Aeneas blames the iussa deum for his departure from Carthage; here, Hannibal similarly had to leave Rome to allow the epic to continue.

8b–12a Tell me, you by whose hand the Etruscan lake grew with bloodshed and the land of Daunus was shaken by the thunder of arms, to what shores do you, white with fear, move your standards? What sword, what lance has finally entered your breast?

Hannibal wants to shame his soldiers into taking courage; would men who were victorious so often now flee before thunder and lightning (see n.15–16a)? The general adduces his greatest victories, at lake Trasimene (Lydia stagna) and Cannae (Daunia tellus). The earlier victories are a frequent element in his motivational speeches; cf. 9.183–191, 12.79–82 and especially 17.295–329.

Littlewood (ad 7.101–102) suggests that the harsh alliterative sounds in these lines “may be an intentional simulation of Hannibal’s barbaric speech”.

Lydia ... stagna I.e. lake Trasimene. The epithet Lydius is used because the lake is in Etruria (9.189–190 Lydia ... ora; cf. 6.706 Thrasymenni ... Tusci, 7.378 and 10.590 Tusci stagna profundi), whose inhabitants in the ancient view were immigrants from Lydia (see n.828–830 Thyrhim ... fregit Lydia bella); the eponymous hero of the lake, Thrasymennus, was the son of the Lydian Tyrrhenus (5.7). For the same phrase and thought, cf. 11.139 Lydia Romano turbarit stagna cruore (cf. Verg. l.c. in the foll. n.); at 1.157–158, Lydia ... stagna is the Pactolus.

caece creverunt The lake grew larger as it was filled with bodies and blood. The words echo 6.110 crescentes Thrasymenni caedibus undas (cf. also 1.418 corporibus cumulatus creverat agger). The phrase is modelled after Verg. A. 11.393–394 Iliaco tumidum ... crescere Thybrim sanguine, said by Turnus who similarly calls to mind his earlier achievements in battle to counter the suggestion that he abandon the war. For Hannibal and Turnus, see Intr. 30–93.

Daunia tellus Apulia, the site of Cannae; the mythical king Daunus, father of Turnus and father-in-law of Diomedes (see 39 and 70), had reigned over Apulia, and later migrated to Latium, where he founded Ardea. Cf. for the connection between Daunus and Cannae 9.499 Daunia regna, 11.506, 12.43, 12.429; cf. also for Apulia in general line 59 Daunia tellus, 4.554 and 15.344. The epithet is used by Silius also for the whole of Italy; cf. 4.125, 14.3, 17.158 and 17.220 (there probably also with a nod to Cannae).

armorum tonitru Cf. Stat. Theb. 3.423, of Mars stirring war among the Argives. Thebes’ civil war is a frequent intertext for the Hannibalic war; see n.1–3 dactor Agenoreus. The word tonitru may also suggest that Hannibal, Salmoneus-like, imitated Jupiter (cf. 9.423, 12.685 and 12.699–700; see von Albrecht 1964: 37, Fucecchi 1990a: 33, Marks 2005: 195 n.84, Dorfbauer 2008: 89 with n.10); here, his men are themselves afraid of Jupiter’s real thunder (16).

quas ... in oras signa refers Hannibal’s counterpart to the words of the elder Scipio at 4.402 quo signa referitis?, where he tries to rally his men at the battle of the Trebia. Scipio’s speech marks the decline of Roman fortune, while Hannibal’s words here suggest that it is Carthage that is on the defensive. Both speeches allude to Luc. 1.191 quo fertis mea signa,
viri?, the words of *dea Roma* (cf. 12–13) to Caesar and his men. Silius has inverted the Lucanian model by using the phrase for the fleeing defender instead of the attacker (*referre* vs *ferre*). For the intertext, see Intr. 1–29 with fn.11.

**exanimatus** Lit. ‘lifeless’, i.e. from fear; the Carthaginians flee like the Trojans before Achilles (Verg. *A. 5.805*), a full inversion of the situation that Hannibal had hoped, viz. that Rome would be another Troy, with him playing the part of the Greeks (see Intr. 30–93). Cf. also 17.503 (the Carthaginians at Zama); 9.42 is slightly different (‘paralysed with grief’).

**qui mucro ... quae lancea** Being wounded would be a legitimate reason to retreat; since the soldiers are uninjured (14 *illaese*), they cannot justify leaving Rome. Hannibal himself was hit by Jupiter’s lightning (12.622–626), but unlike at Saguntum (where after a double thunder a *lancea belli* pierced Hannibal’s thigh, 1.539), his body was not harmed.

12b–14 If now mother Carthage would stand before your eyes, a tall figure crowned with towers, what excuse would you, uninjured, give for your departure?

The motif of presenting the image of the *patria* was also used by the elder Scipio at 4.409–410 *ipsam turrigero portantem vertex muros / credite summissas Romam nunc tendere palmas*, “Believe that Rome herself, carrying the walls upon her turreted crown, now extends her arms in supplication”. Both passages are inspired by the appearance of *dea Roma* to Caesar at Luc. 1.186–189 (see further Intr. 1–29):

> ingens visa duci patriae trepidantis imago<br> > clara per obscuram voltu maestissima noctem<br> > turrigero canos effundens vertex crines<br> > caesarie lacera nudisque adstare lacertis<br> > “clearly to the leader through the murky night appeared<br> > a mighty image of his country in distress, grief in her face,<br> > her white hair streaming from her tower-crowned head,<br> > with tresses torn and shoulders bare she stood before him”

Silius (notably with *less* actual divine presence than Lucan) has his generals only invoke the image of their country, and in both cases not as the attacker (like Caesar), but to stop the men from running. A personified city also appears in two other significant passages: i) the sight of the Saguntine embassy evokes the image of supplicant Saguntum herself at 1.630–631 *praesens adstare Sagunti / ante oculos visa est extrema precantis imago* and ii) after the visit of the Capuan embassy, Fulvius envisages the *imago* of a ruined Capua, 11.115–116 *Capuae pereuntis imago / iam tum erat ante oculos*. Verbal echoes of Lucan are found in all these passages; 1.630–631 and 11.115–116 have *adstare* and *visa ... -ntis imago* (also 11.116 *ante oculos*); 4.409–410 has *turrigero ... vertex*; our passage has synonyms for many words (*exsisteret ~ adstare; alma ~ patriae; figura ~ imago; turrita ~ turrigero*).

The Lucanian motif is arguably used as a structural device; in the first half of the epic the reader is first presented with the image of Saguntum, the substitute of Rome (see Intr. 256–298) and then *Roma* herself, and in the second half we first find Capua, the substitute of Carthage (see n.99–103 *altera Carthago*) and then *Carthago* herself. All these cities, like *Roma* in Lucan, are defeated (although Silius’ *Roma* re-emerges). Hannibal’s imagery is thus ill-chosen; for its use signifies that his city is now on the losing side.

Ripoll (2000: 158–159) compares the similar evocation of a personified *patria* at Cic. *Cat*. 1.27 *et enim, si mecum patria, ... si cuncta Italia, si omnis res publica loquatur*, “M.
Notes to 1–29

*Tulli, quid agis?*, and the appearance of the *Latiae telluris imago* to Claudius Nero at 15.546ff. to exhort him to march against Hasdrubal; he notes that in both Cicero and Silius, the *patria* calls for a direct confrontation with the enemy.

For another such image, of the first Punic war, cf. 6.302 *Africa tendebat palmas*.


**ante oculos** ‘Before your mind’s eye’; see n.394.


**miles** Presumably used collectively; see n.36–38a *miles*. Hannibal addresses the whole army, not himself (who is not a *miles*, but a *ductor*), despite line 8 *sese increpitat*.

**illaese** See n.8b–12a *qui mucro ... quae lancea*. For the opposite thought, cf. 5.115 (Flaminius’ battle speech): shall Hannibal be allowed to reach Rome *illaesus*?

15–16a “I run from rain, my country, and clouds with hail, and thunder.”

In 12.610–611 Jupiter arrayed his weapons: *et ventos simul et nubes et grandinis iras / fulminaque et tonitrus et nimbos conciet atros*. Hannibal makes the thunderstorms a cause for ridicule (cf. 12.677–678 *ventis hiemique fugaces terga damus?*); if his army had stood up against so many adversaries, would it now flee before a mere storm? For a similar contrast between battling men and the elements of nature, cf. 3.506–508, where Hannibal compares the victory at Saguntum with the army’s flight before *nivosis montibus* and *rupibus* (i.e. the Alps); in those mountains the army had also experienced *mixtos cum grandine nimbos* (3.490), and then, too, Hannibal had not been filled with *terror* himself (3.504, cf. here 18) and rekindled his men’s *vigor* (3.505, cf. here 22). Hannibal thus reminds his men not only of their victories, but also of their other feat, crossing the Alps.

For the diction, cf. the same storm at Liv. 26.11.2 *imber ingens grandine mixtus*; cf. also Pac. *trag*. 414 (Ribbeck) *grando mixta imbri largifico* (also 412 *nimbum* and 413 *tonitru*).

16b–18 Remove far this womanish stain on the Tyrian race, that we would only know how to wage war under an unclouded sun and a clear sky.

**expellite ... labem** The disgrace is illustrated by 17b–18. Compare Hannibal’s speech after the rout at Nola, when he calls the defeat also a stain to be removed at 12.282–283 *quando hanc quantoque cruore / hostili labem eluerim?* (for this speech, see also n.7–8a). The motif is important in the *Punica*; the whole war was started to blot out the disgrace of the previous war (1.61–62 *avet Aegates abolere, parentum dedecus*; 1.107–108 *dedecus id patriae nostra depellere dextra*; cf. 13.750 *utinam amissum reparet decus* with n.). The Romans similarly care about their honour; cf. 7.710–711 *labem hanc pellamus* (Fabius),
9.369 *letō dedecus arcet* (Romans at Cannae) and 13.99 *dedecus hoc defende manu* (Fulvius, see n.). Cf. further also 12.403–404 *pelleret Hostus si tantam labem*.

Scipio’s parallel speech at 4.402–412 ends with the comparable outcry *hoc arcete nefas*. 

**gentis ... Tyriae** Delz rightly defends the mss. reading *gentis* (conjectured: *gentes*, *genti*); the passages cited in *TLL 7.2.771.80ff.* show that a subjective genitive is common with *labes*.

*Tyriae* refers to the Levantine birth of Carthage’s founders; see n.1–3 *ductor Agenoreus*. 

**femineam** Used here, as often, in the sense ‘weak’, ‘shameful’, ‘cowardly’; cf. 313, 354, 1.259, 1.445, 9.263, 15.468; cf. also 15.761. A problem for Hannibal is that he and his people are throughout associated with women, notably Dido (cf. 1.445) and Juno, who had instigated his retreat from Rome; see for a gender approach Keith 2010 and Augoustakis 2010c: 101.

**Mavortem** Silius uses the archaic form *Mavors* fairly frequently (35 times, against Mars 136). The god of war is in the majority of cases used metonymically for ‘war’, ‘battle’, ‘fighting spirit’ or sim. Whenever the actual god is meant, *Mavors* is preferred (always in nominative case, except 13.670, the *campus Mavortis*), and exclusively so (except for the accusative *Martem*) when he features as a character (4.417–479, 9.290, 9.438–555); additionally, the name *Gradivus* always refers to the god as god (1.433, 9.457, 9.486, 9.527, 9.553, 11.399, 12.329, 12.716). In book 13, cf. for the metonymical use of *Mars* lines 155, 213, 456, 463, 508, 670 and 772, and of *Mavors* 37 and 484; line 379 is ambiguous. By his choice of verbs and attributes (which suggests an animatic subject), the poet often plays with his personification of warfare; cf. e.g. 37 *staret sine sanguine Mavors*, 5.609–610 *propiorque insurgere Mavors coeperat*, 14.131–132 *pedibusque evadere letum eripuit rapidus Mavors*.

**19–23**

terror adhuc inerat superum ac redolentia in armis
fulmina et ante oculos irati pugna Tonantis.
parendi tamen et cuicumque incumbere iusso
durabat vigor, ac sensim diffusus ad auris
signa reportandi crescebat in agmine fervor.

**19–20** *Still terror of the gods was in their hearts and the smell of thunderbolts lingered on their weapons and before their mind’s eye was the battle with angered Jupiter.*

These lines refer to Jupiter’s thunderbolts (12.609–622), which harassed the Carthaginian ranks (12.615–116) and liquefied Hannibal’s weapons (cf. *redolentia in armis fulmina*); cf. 12.619 *irati ... Iovis*. The battle plays on the death of Capaneus, also hit by Jupiter’s bolt, in Statius’ *Thebaid*; there, in the aftermath, the Argives see his smouldering body (*Theb. 11.23–25*; cf. Marks 2005: 195 n.84 with bibl.):

omnibus ante oculos irae Iovis, omnibus ardent
arma metu galeaeque tonant, visusque paventes
ipse sequi et profugis opponere Iuppiter ignes.

“All have the wrath of Jove before their eyes, for all fear makes their armour burn and their helmets thunder. Jupiter himself seems to pursue them in their terror and block their escape with his fires.” (transl. Shackleton Bailey)
The Argives are then pressed back; contrastingly, Hannibal reinvigorates his men, as he tries to be Capaneus once more (see n.1–3).

**Tonantis** Also at Stat. *Theb.* 11.11, Sil. 12.666 and 12.722. Jupiter’s common epithet (used as substantive first by Ovid and standardized in the Neronian age) is apt here; cf. also 1.133, 3.649, 4.548, 5.635, 6.84, 6.713, 8.219, 8.651, 10.54, 11.85, 11.293, 11.319, 12.48, 12.280, 12.517, 15.253, 16.144, 16.273 and 17.654. The word ends the line in all hexametric poetry.

**21–23** *Yet the strength to obey and to set themselves to whatever order remained, and, having gradually spread to their ears, the fervour to carry the standards back grew in the army.*

The *vigor* (strength of will) of Hannibal’s army is also an important topic of book 12. After the sojourn in Capua (book 11), their strength had been sapped: 12.15–18 *sed non ille vigor* (i.e. with which they had been victorious before) *tunc inerat.* At the siege of Rome, Hannibal similarly tries to reinvigorate his troops: 12.678 *remeet, quaeso, mens illa vigorque* (with which they started another war). There, as here, he manages to rally them despite their fear. Compare also 3.505 *revocatque vigorem* (see n.15–16a). Mere *vigor* is not enough, however; Hannibal must admit defeat against the gods when besieging Rome, and later because he is thwarted by his political enemies (16.11ff.).

**incumbere ... vigor** Constructions with an infinitive depending on a noun or adjective are very frequent; cf. in book 13 lines 17–18 *labem ... nescire ... agitare*, 120 *docilisque accedere*, 126–127 *felix ... duxisse*, 155 *praeventium ... capital committere*, 171 *levior ... perdere*, 196 *mirabilis ... querere ... moliri ... credere* (but see n. ad loc.), 213–214 *contentus ... exercere*, 220 *audere ... ferre indociles*, 404–406 *mactare ... mos ... abdere*, 493 *tempus abire ... imponere*, 501–502 *conquirere ... servare ... sollertia*, 519–520 *causa ... iuvisse*, 613 *tempus cognoscere*, 719 *appellare ... ardor*, 720 *amor ... cognoscere*, 729–730 *dulce ... vidisse*, 783 *levius ... subire*. See also Clement 1899, *LHSz* 2.350–351, *KS* 2.1.683–687 and 2.1.742–744. Here, the noun *vigor* governs first a gerund constituent (*parendi*) and then an infinitive (*incumbere*); for another such shift in syntactical construction, see nn.159–161 *indignatus* and 348–350 *ibenite arceri ... relinquire.*

**sensim diffusus** The simile of disturbed water is here prepared; see n.24–29. For the phrase, see also n.616–619a *fusa sensim per pectora* and the intertexts cited there.

**ad auris** The phrase is often rejected outright, and several conjectures have been made. Yet there may be said something in defence of the mss. reading; after all, in an age without electronic voice amplification, speeches or orders were often repeated by the ranks for those further from the centre, hence *sensim diffusus ad auris.* Spaltenstein objects that it has hardly any sense with *fervor* (“on attendrait alors ‘ordres’ sim.”), but the words which reached the ears carried also the exhortation. Of the proposed alternatives, *ad oras* (Blass) too precisely anticipates the simile of 24–29 (28 *oris*) and has little meaning in the context of an army, while with *ad auras* (Soubiran, printed by Miniconi-Devallet) the *fervor*, being distributed ‘to the air’, has too little physical connection with the troops; *ad omnes* (Watt, printed by Delz) would then be preferable.
24–29
sic ubi perrupit stagnantem calculus undam,
exiguos format per prima volumina gyros,
mox tremulum vibrans motu gliscente liquorem
multiplicat crebros sinuati gurgitis orbes,
donec postremo laxatis circulus oris
contingat geminas patulo curvamine ripas.

24–29 So, when a pebble has broken a still pool, it forms small circles with the first ripples,
but soon, disturbing the shivering liquid with increasing movement, it multiplies the many
rings in the curving water, until at last a circle with extended edges touches both shores
with its wide curve.

This simile plays against one in 7.254–259 (also six lines), of Fabius calming his troops,
preventing battle rather than encouraging it. The Roman general is compared to Neptune
soothing the sea (itself an inversion of the comparison at Verg. A. 1.148ff. between that god
and a statesman). stagnantem ... undam (24) contrasts with 7.254 turbatis ... undis, and
sensim diffusus ... fervor (22–23) with 7.258 sensim infusa ... pace. The simile here is a
compelling illustration of the power of one man to reach and influence so many others (cf.
16.19–22); still, if we compare Fabius’ Neptune and Hannibal’s calculus, the latter falls
short. For the same intertext, see also n.82–83a his fractus.

Silius often uses the image of water (seas, rivers, surges) for armies, especially
Hannibal’s troops; along the same lines, Hannibal’s opponents are compared to helmsmen
(Fabius is a competent one at 1.687–689, Flaminius incompetent at 4.713–717; cf. also
Hanno’s watchfulness at 2.289–291). For the imagery, see Manolaraki 2010: 307ff.

The simile of the pebble seems to be unique in epic poetry. Spaltenstein rightly
compares the similar image at Sen. Nat. 1.2.2 cum in piscinam lapis missus est, videmus in
multos orbes aquam discedere et fieri primum angustissimum orbem, deinde laxiorem, ac
deinde alios maiores, donec evanescat impetus et in planitiem immotarum aquarum
solvatur. Silius’ likely debt to this passage is indicated both by verbal parallels and the
comparable sentence structure, which starts with a perfect clause, after which the various
stages of the rings are described, which ends with a donec clause. Note that the tenor of
Silius’ last clause is opposite to Seneca’s; whereas the philosopher observes that the rings
eventually die out, the poet uses the simile to illustrate the reach of Hannibal’s inspirational
speech.

The word order often reflects the image. The disturbing calculus has divided
stagnantem ... undam. Paradoxically, the small circles span the entire line 25 (exiguos ...
gyros), while the largest one is presented by two juxtaposed words (29 patulo curvamine);
the latter connects not only in the image but also by its position the geminas ... ripas. The
clash of ictus and word accent in 26 may reflect the water’s turmoil (tremulum ...
liquorem); the slow spondees in 28 may serve to illustrate the large rings of water, laxatis ...
oris. The final words of the lines also suggest the reduplication of rings; liquorem (26)
picks up undam (24), orbes (27) looks back to gyros (25) and ripas (29) interacts with oris
(28), ‘edges’, but with a hint of its other meaning, ‘shores’.

Littlewood (2011: xciv n.347) observes that Shakespeare uses the same metaphor of
water rings at Henry VI, Part 1, Act 1, Scene 2, line 135, “Glory is like a circle in the
water...”. Since the playwright focuses (like Seneca, see above) on fading out rather than reach, it seems unlikely that Silius’ passage stood model, however.

This is the first of three similes in book 13; see also 200–205 and 240–243.

**volumina gyros** Cf. Vergil’s snake description at *A. 5.85* *septem ingens gyros, septena volumina traxit*; see *ad 644* *ingenti traxit curvata volumina gyro.*

**sinuati** Either ‘billowing’ (a vertical sinus; cf. 2.172, 9.227) or ‘concentric’ (a horizontal sinus; so Duff; cf. ‘curving’ at 6.226, 15.173 and *Ov. Met. 14.51* *gurges curvos sinuatus in arcus*).

**geminas ... ripas** While *stagnantem ... undam (24)* suggests a pond or pool, this phrase might rather remind of a river (cf. *Stat. Theb. 5.516*, of both banks). In a river, ripples would not last, however; Silius’ phrase may be explained by noting that from the perspective of a person standing on one side of the pond (e.g. the one who casts the pebble), the opposite side is ‘the other shore’; the rings thus reach both the closest and the farthest shores.

**circulus** The diminutive picks up *calculus* in 24; the disruption by the small pebble has resulted in a circle.
30–93 The story of the Palladium

Dasius of Arpi, a defector to the Carthaginians, tells Hannibal how the Palladium, stolen from Troy by his ancestor Diomedes, came to Rome. Diomedes and Ulysses had taken the Palladium on Calchas’ advice. As Diomedes was building his city in southern Italy, Minerva appeared to him and told him to bring her image to Aeneas instead. Diomedes complied and called on the Trojans for reconciliation. The image of Minerva punished the Gauls when they sacked Rome in 390 BC. Dismayed by this story (as he realizes that the presence of the Palladium means that attacking Rome is futile), Hannibal leaves; he plunders the sanctuary of Feronia and departs to the land of the Bruttians.

According to most ancient views, the Palladium, usually thought of as an image of Pallas Athena (42 armisonae ... simulacrum ... divae), had fallen out of the sky (49 caeleste) to become a talisman for the safety of Troy. Opinions varied, however, on its fate after the fall of Troy. Since at least the last years of the Republic, the general view among the Romans seems to have been that it was kept in their temple of Vesta. There was more uncertainty regarding the manner of its arrival in Rome; Ovid sums up nicely both this uncertainty and the Roman claim to the image at Fast. 6.433–435 seu gener Adrasti, seu furtis aptus Ulkses, seu pius Aeneas, eripuisse ferunt; auctor in incerto, res est Romana. “It is said that either the son-in-law of Adrastus, or Ulysses, able of furtiveness, or pious Aeneas took it away; who it was is uncertain, but the thing is Roman.” The version in which Aeneas brought it to Italy is given by Dionysus of Halicarnassus, who quotes as his earliest source Arktinos, the supposed author of the Aethiopis and the Iliou persis. Diomedes is named as its conveyor to the Trojans in Italy by two sources. Solinus (2.14) quotes Cassius Hemina, a 2nd c. BC annalist, who tells that Aeneas received it from Diomedes during a dedication ceremony. Servius (ad A. 2.166, 3.407, 5.704) cites Varro (De familiis Trojanis) with a slightly different version, in which Diomedes gave the image

1 The passage is analysed in an excellent article by Ripoll (2001b), who observes a good many of the allusions to Vergil and Homer that will be discussed below; see also Fucecchi 2005, which builds upon Ripoll’s work.

2 For its function as a talisman, see 45–46 with n.; for its heavenly origin, see n.47–50 caeleste.

3 Many cities other than Rome claimed they had the ‘true’ Palladium; see RE 18.2A.174–185. Among these were both Lavinia (where Aeneas here receives the Palladium) and Apulian Luceria, close to Arpi, which displayed Diomedes’ weapons and arms in the temple of Athena; cf. Strab. 6.1.14 and [Arist.] Mir. 109.

4 Cf. Cic. Scaur. 48, Phil. 11.24, Plin. 7.141; cf. also Dion.Hal. 1.69.4, 2.66.5. Livy’s less explicit mention of an imperii pignus (5.52.7, 26.27.14) in the shrine of Vesta echoes Cicero’s words on the Palladium (cf. Ogilvie ad 5.52.7 signo).

5 For the many different accounts of the Palladium’s peregrination, see also Frazer ad loc. I have followed Littlewood’s text; gener Adrasti is loosely used for Diomedes, son of Tydeus, Adrastus’ son-in-law (see Littlewood ad loc.). For Silius’ imitation of Ovid, see n.75–77 nunc age quod superest.

6 Dion.Hal. 1.68.2. Vergil (possibly sensitive to the conflicting variants) is silent on the fate of the statue, but it is not among the things that Hector entrusts to Aeneas at A. 2.296–297 (Vesta’s image may replace it; see fn.4).

7 After the Trojan war, Diomedes found himself unwelcome at Argos and migrated to Italy, where he secured a victory for king Daunus and gained his daughter’s hand and the right to found the city of Arpi (Argyripa).

8 nec omissum sit Aenean aestate ab Ilio capto secunda Italics litoribus adpulsum, ut Hemina tradit, sociis non amplius sescentis, in agro Laurenti possuisse castra; ubi durum simulacrum quod secum ex Sicilia adveterat, dedicat Veneri matri quae Frutis dicitur, a Diomede Palladium suscepit... Some have pointed out, however, that the full story cannot be attributed to Hemina with certainty, since it is not entirely clear what is covered by ut Hemina tradit (see Assenmaker 2007: 385 with n.19 for bibliography).
to one Nautes, since Aeneas was performing a sacrifice at that moment, which is the aetiology of the priesthood of Minerva in the gens Nautilus.\textsuperscript{9} Since there were probably more accounts of Diomedes’ wanderings in circulation in Silius’ time,\textsuperscript{10} we cannot establish Silius’ main source, if he had any.\textsuperscript{11} What is clear, however, is that the legend is Silius’ starting point for a grand remodelling of passages from Virgil, to present Diomedes partly in the role Aeneas has in the Aeneid, as we will see.

It has been shown in Gen.intr. § 5.1 that the structure of Punica 11–13 is very similar to that of Aeneid 1–4. Hannibal’s stay at Capua in 11 and its fall in 13 correspond to Aeneas’ stay with Dido and the latter’s death in Aeneid 1 and 4, respectively. Similarly, the elements in Aeneid 2 (the fall of Troy) and Aeneid 3 (the wanderings of Aeneas) are found in Punica 12, but in reverse order—first Hannibal’s wandering in Italy and then his siege of ‘new Troy’ (Rome). This reverse order is here continued; for the story of Dasius, narrated at the end of Hannibal’s re-enactment of Aeneid 2–3, in part alludes to Simon’s tale at its beginning.

The first part of Dasius’ story shares several elements with Simon’s tale, including verbal echoes: i) its setting is the end of the long Trojan war, when the Greeks are tired (n.36–38a); the Greeks act on Calchas’ warning (n.41–44); Diomedes and Ulysses go to the Trojan citadel, slay the guardians and take the Palladium (n.47–50). It should be noted, however, that the tales differ both in structure and order, and in their trustworthiness. Simon claims that after the theft of the Palladium, Calchas urged his countrymen that, to conquer Troy, they had to return home to bring back the favour of the gods (\textit{A} 2.178 \textit{numen reducant}); Dasius tells instead that Calchas rather urged to steal the Palladium in order to conquer Troy and bring back Helen (44 \textit{Leda rediturum nomen}); the warning is now prior to (and leading to) the theft instead of after (and caused by) it. Simon lied; is Dasius false as well? The prophecy which connects the Palladium with the fall of Troy is well known from other sources (see n.36–38a Calchas). The second part of the story, about the wandering Palladium, is also in accordance with what many Romans themselves believed. Furthermore, it is nowhere suggested that Dasius (unlike Simon) had anything to gain by lying to Hannibal. It seems most probable that this is not a trait of Simon that Dasius is supposed to have inherited.\textsuperscript{12}

But Silius goes beyond the model of Simon. We are told that Diomedes had narrated his story to his father-in-law Daunus \textit{inter pocula} (38–40); the banquet setting evokes Odysseus at the Phaeacian court, or rather Aeneas at Dido’s.\textsuperscript{13} Dasius'/Diomedes’ embedded narrative

\textsuperscript{9} Servius also mentions another version, in which the image came to Rome only after the Mithridatic war.

\textsuperscript{10} See Ripoll (2001b: 356 with n.13), who cites Hor. \textit{Ars} 146 and Juv. 1.53 for such ‘Diomedeis’.

\textsuperscript{11} Ripoll favours Varro, although it is unclear why. Both Hemina and Varro note that Aeneas was performing religious duties, but Hemina’s version (a dedication) is closer to Silius’ (65 \textit{armaque Laurenti figebat ... luco}) and also agrees in location (\textit{in agro Laurenti}); if we must choose, Hemina seems preferable here (but see fn.8).

\textsuperscript{12} Schaffenrath (2010b: 124) suggests that Dasius’ being introduced with the oxymoron \textit{Argyripae prauum decus} (13.30) disqualifies his credibility as narrator, and that Hannibal gives up on attacking Rome rather easily. But when Hannibal is convinced by Dasius that the Palladium protects Rome, he believes what most Romans believed too. Indeed, if Dasius’ story is true whereas Simon's is not, this is entirely in keeping with Silius’ usual poetics of inversion: to have a traitorous Greek who now after the assault of ‘new Troy’ tells the truth to a non-Trojan, which results in the (second) attack being called off rather than pressed—four inversions in one passage.

\textsuperscript{13} The parallels are mentioned, but not explored, by Spaltenstein (\textit{ad} 13.38) and Ripoll (2001b: 366 n.54).
is essentially a mini-*Aeneid* 2–3,\(^{14}\) or even a mini-*Aeneid*, spanning from the fall of Troy to just after the victory of Aeneas (64 *Phryx* ... *victor*). Silius presents Diomedes here as an alternative Aeneas,\(^{15}\) performing a role that Vergil reserves for his hero.

In the second part (51–63), the motif of wandering is established with an allusion to *Aeneid* 3.\(^{16}\) Diomedes is building his city and a temple for the Palladium when Minerva appears to him in his sleep; similarly, Aeneas was founding Pergamea on Crete when the Penates spoke to him as he slept (*A. 3.147ff.*). In both cases, the deity corrects the hero, telling that this is the wrong city and instructs him where the images are destined to go instead.\(^{17}\) Diomedes was a step ahead of Aeneas, since he founded Argyripa in the *Oenotris* ... *finibus*, the promised land of the Trojans and the *penates*;\(^{18}\) he thus partially usurps the role of Vergil’s hero.

The vision of Minerva and Diomedes’ visit to Aeneas, in which he calls for a *foedus* (77), plays not only on *Aeneid* 3, but also on *Aeneid* 8, where the god Tiber appears to Aeneas to advise him to ally himself to Euander.\(^{19}\) Here, too, verbal echoes abound.\(^{20}\) In both cases the hero ‘visits’ the future of Rome; Aeneas its actual location, Diomedes its ancestor Lavinia. The role of the ‘trembling Arcadians’ (see n.68b–70) is played by the Trojans, who are afraid at the sight of Diomedes; Silius alludes to the Greeks in the underworld who fear Aeneas’ armed appearance (n.66–68a, Ripoll 2001b: 364), thus again putting Diomedes in Aeneas’ position.

The Trojans fear in fact a repetition of the Trojan war—in other words, of the *Iliad*. Diomedes dispels their fears by telling them to lay down *memores irasque metusque*, where *memores* picks up the collective memory of the characters and the reader of Homer’s epic. It also emphasizes the last major Vergilian intertext, the Latin embassy to Diomedes in

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\(^{14}\) And as such a counterpart to the one in *Punica* 12, in which Hannibal was the main character, for the resulting parallels and contrasts between Hannibal and Diomedes, see below.

\(^{15}\) Rather than an anti-Aeneas, like Hannibal.

\(^{16}\) See also Fucecchi 2005: 27–29. This set of allusions is among the few that were not identified by Ripoll.

\(^{17}\) Verbal reminiscences: *A. 3.147* sommis habebat ~ 56 medios inter sommos; 3.148 effigies sacrae divum *Phrygique Penates* ~ 53–54 *Phrygium* ... *numen et Iliaicos* ... *penates* (and *effigiem sacram* is also Simon’s phrase for the Palladium in *A. 2.167*, further identifying the *penates* with the Palladium); 3.159–160 *tu moenia magnis / magna par* and 3.161–162 *non haec tibi litora suasit Delius ~ 58–59 non haec ... *signa par* (with the rejection of *Cretae* in *A. 3.162* and here *Garganus* and *Daunia tellus* in 59); probably also 3.169–170 *haec ... dicta parenti / ... refer* (i.e. tell) ~ 62 *vita castumque refer penetræ parentum* (i.e. bring); and lastly the reaction of the hero at *A. 3.172 talibus attonitus visis ~ here 63 his trepidus monitis*. Furthermore, the destiny of the Palladium is shown to be similar to and tied to that of the Trojans; cf. 59–60 *non Garganus nec Daunia tellus / debentur nobis* with the *fatum* of Ascanius, as foretold at *Verg. A. 4.275–276 cui regnum Italicæ Romanæque tellus / debentur*. For other reminiscences of *Aeneid* 3, see nn.35, 38b–40 *memori ... condita mente*, 54–57 *ingens ... templum ... in arce*. Other ‘wrong cities’ for Aeneas are Carthage (n.54–57 *ingens ... templum ... in arce*) and Aeneadae in Thrace (n.60b–61 *prima locant ... moenia*).


\(^{19}\) Ripoll 2001b: 365.

\(^{20}\) Diomedes’ *altam quietem* (56) picks up Aeneas’ *sopor altus* (*A. 8.27*) and *seram ... quietem* (8.30). Aeneas, who preserves *aeterna Pergama* (8.37), is here building *Lavinia Pergama* (64), Troy in its Italian reincarnation. Tiber says that Aeneas has been expected on the *solo Laurenti arvisque Latinis* (8.38), where Diomedes is referred to (60 in *Laurentibus arvis*). Tiber mentions the Arcadians and concludes at 8.56 *hos castris adhibe socios et foedera / victor*. Just as Minerva urges with the same combination of anaphora and imperative *hic ... refer* (62); cf. also Diomedes’ phraseology in 76–77 *iungamus ... foederis*. Cf. perhaps also 8.18 *Laomedontius heros* and here 55 *Laomedontae ... Minervae*. For the clear echoes of the visit to Euander, see n.68b–70.

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Aeneid 11. The Latins sought the aid of Diomedes, who had settled in southern Italy, but they were rebuffed; Diomedes did not wish to fight the Trojans again. Vergil’s passage similarly plays on remembrance of the Iliad and an expectation of its repetition by Turnus, who views himself as successor of the Greeks (on which more below). Diomedes comes to Aeneas during the founding of Lavinia, just as the Latin embassy arrived when he himself was building Arpi (see n.64–65)—but the allusion to Aeneas’ visit to Euander suggests that Diomedes is successful in his diplomacy, whereas the Latin embassy was not. In the Aeneid the Argive hero had advised the Latins to conclude a peace treaty with Aeneas; here he goes one step further by listening to his own advice and seeks a foedus with Aeneas (77). The punishment which the Greeks endured and which Diomedes describes in great detail at A. 11.255–278 as the cause of his war weariness, along with his resultant repentance, is here referred to only briefly (52 aeger delicti, 77 veniamque precatus). Instead, the tribulations of Vergil’s Diomedes are the model for the punishment of the Gauls at 79–81, who (like him) were not allowed to return home after sacking the city of the Palladium.22

Silius remains faithful to the psychology, but not the image, of Diomedes in the Iliad and the Aeneid. Ripoll (2001b: 364) observes two elements that are carried over from Diomedes’ aristeia in Iliad 5. Firstly, Diomedes sees the goddess Minerva in her true form (57 nec celata deam); she grants him this ability at Il. 5.127–128, a motif that both Vergil and Silius exploit.23 Secondly, already in Homer, Diomedes is willing to set aside his differences with the other party; the pact that he proposes ultimately goes back to his pact of friendship with Glaucus (Il. 6.232–233).24 In Silius’ presentation, Diomedes is just as great as Aeneas, whereas he is played down in Vergil;25 Dasius’ description of the theft is also less damning than Sinon’s (see n.47–50). The abovementioned allusions show that Silius has evidently cast his Diomedes as an Aeneas-figure: he wandered after the fall of Troy to Italy as an exile, the city he built first was the wrong city to house the sacred objects of Troy, for which he was corrected by a dream vision, and he travelled up the Tiber for an alliance. Most importantly, he brings the Palladium to Rome, complementing Aeneas who had done the same for the penates. This passage is not just a nice example of poetic invention based on intertextuality,26 the story casts him as a benefactor of Rome (quite possibly with political connotations, see below), rather than a model for Hannibal.

Diomedes is a significant figure in the Punica, and especially so for Hannibal. The Carthaginian general sees himself as the successor of the Greeks before Troy,27 just as

21 Cf. Diomedes about himself at Verg. A. 11.280 nec memini laetorve (Spaltenstein, Ripoll 2001b: 361) and 283 experto.
22 A. 11.269 patriis ... redditus aris ~ 81 patrias ... ad aras; see further n. ad loc. For more reminiscences of Diomedes’ speech in the Aeneid, see n.62 and n.72–74.
23 Vergil’s Venus shows Aeneas the gods destroying Troy (A. 2.604–618), thus dissuading him from attempting to defend it; Silius’ Juno contrastingly shows Hannibal the gods defending Rome (new Troy) at 12.707–724, thus dissuading him from attempting to assault it. The full inversion casts Hannibal as an anti-Aeneas; likewise Diomedes, with another vision of a correcting god, is here an alternative Aeneas.
24 For other echoes of the Iliad, see nn.38b–40 fortissimus heros and 72–74.
26 Silius seems to draw attention to his role as creator; see n.75–77a nunc age quod superest.
27 Ripoll 2001a: 94. Silius also presents the Punic war as comparable to (and sometimes greater than) the Trojan war; cf. 3.229–230 (for which see n.876–881 una ... puppe), 3.569 and 4.525ff. Cf. also Hannibal’s soldiers from
Turnus does in the *Aeneid.* This is most clear at Cannae, the ‘fields of Diomedes’, a name which Hannibal judges to be ominous for the Romans. Indeed, the sea god Proteus foretells that ‘the ghosts of Aetolia shall fight the Trojans once more’, clearly rendering Cannae a re-enactment of Aeneas’ rivalry with Diomedes in the *Iliad.* The battlefield is the *Daunia tellus* (see nn.8b–12a and 58–60a), the land of Daunus, who is both father-in-law of Diomedes and father of Turnus, with whom Hannibal can also align himself as the opponent of Aeneas’ kin; Diomedes’ connection with Daunus and thus with both Cannae and Turnus is here emphasized at 39 *socero ... Dauno* and 70 *Dauni gener.* Similarly, the connection between Hannibal and the Greeks is underpinned by the situation of the latter at the beginning of the story—unsuccessful in their siege of Troy, much like Hannibal’s experience in *Punica* 12.

Dasius’ story proves Hannibal’s identification with Diomedes false, however. His model made peace with Aeneas, thus removing part of Hannibal’s mythological justification and analogy for his own war. By returning the Palladium, Diomedes restored *de facto* the eternity of Troy and took away Hannibal’s hopes of conquering its reincarnation, Rome. Why, then, is Hannibal not prepared to follow Diomedes’ original example by also stealing the Palladium? The answer lies in the last lines; the fate of the Gauls (another model for Hannibal, see n.79–81), echoing that of Diomedes, is a deterrent to any would-be violator of the Palladium’s charge.

This is not the first tale of Roman history that is narrated to Hannibal; compare Cilnius’ narration about Fabius’ ancestors (7.40–65) and Cinna’s story of Cloelia’s bravery against the foreign foe Porsenna (10.478–502); all three stories attest to Rome’s indestructibility. This is the first time, however, that Hannibal takes the lesson to heart (82 *his fractus*); or does he? His plundering of the temple of Feronia suggests the same violation of sanctity as Diomedes’ handling of the Palladium; Hannibal implicitly dooms himself with his actions after all.

Hannibal leaves both Rome and his identification with the Homeric Greeks behind; his withdrawal proves not to be a feint (see Intr. 1–29). The presence of the Palladium and his failure to steal it doom him to be the epic’s loser. The holy image that drives him away from Rome also provides an intratextual link with the last book of the *Punica*; there (17.1–47), the Romans bring the image of Cybele into their city, in response to the Sibylline Tyde, a colony of Diomedes (3.366–367). For Hannibal playing the part of Achilles, cf. e.g. 7.120–121 (with Littlewood *ad loc.*) and see Klaassen 2010: 102.

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28 See esp. Anderson 1957: 22. Cf. e.g. Verg. *A.* 9.742 (Turnus claims to be another Achilles) and the Sibyl’s prophecy at *A.* 6.88–94.
29 See esp. Anderson 1957: 22. Cf. e.g. Verg. *A.* 9.742 (Turnus claims to be another Achilles) and the Sibyl’s prophecy at *A.* 6.88–94.
30 See esp. Anderson 1957: 22. Cf. e.g. Verg. *A.* 9.742 (Turnus claims to be another Achilles) and the Sibyl’s prophecy at *A.* 6.88–94.
31 Compare 37 *ad muros staret sine sanguine Mavors* and 12.41 *stabat Cannarum Graia ad munimina victor.*
34 See n.90–91; for Hannibal’s impiety, see also Tipping 2010b: 68. For another contrast between Diomedes and Hannibal, see n.83b–85.
prophecy that thus a foreign enemy would leave Ausonian soil (17.1). The story of the Palladium is thus an important anticipation of the end of the epic.35

**A socio-political reading of Dasius’ story**

The story may also be connected to contemporary Roman politics; the Palladium was an important image for propaganda. Aeneas carrying the Palladium (thus guaranteeing the safety of his new city) is found on a coin of Caesar (Crawford 458/1), who thus emphasized his ancestry and implicitly claimed his importance as protector of Rome.36 After the Julio-Claudian house, emperors could no longer claim a direct lineage from Aeneas; the Palladium, having become a symbol of imperial protection, reappears on coins to justify their rule.37

Domitian was no exception in this respect.38 In fact, the relevance of Minerva’s image was increased because of his reported devotion to the goddess.39 At Silvae 1.1.37, Statius presents the emperor upholding a statue of Minerva, which plausibly suggested the Palladium to the poet’s readers;40 this interpretation seems to be supported by Statius’ designation of the deity as Tritonia virgo (cf. here line 57)—the epithet may well be connected with the cult role that is symbolised by the Palladium.41

In two ways, Dasius’ story seems connected to Domitian’s rule. In the first place, the fact that it is here Minerva who urges Diomedes to bring the Palladium to Rome is significant; the favoured deity of the emperor takes care of Rome’s future. In the second place, it is not Aeneas, the ancestor of the Julio-Claudian house, but the Greek outsider Diomedes who provides the protection—an outsider who, as we have seen, plays a role that is very similar to Aeneas’ in Vergil’s epic, who there prefigures the emperor.42 The origin of the Flavians may also be of relevance to the connection. They were of Sabine descent, a people who were believed to have roots in Sparta.43 It seems significant that the Greek side

35 Cf. Fucecchi 2005: 29, Augoustakis 2010c: 106 n.31. Another connection between Hannibal’s departures from Rome and from Italy was observed in Intr. 1–29, namely the shared intertext of Luc. 3.1ff., Pompey’s departure from Italy. Hannibal’s modelling after Pompey is here picked up again; see for a full discussion n.92–93.

36 For the Palladium in the propaganda of Sulla and Caesar, see Assenmaker 2007.

37 The only Julio-Claudian emperor to have issued coins depicting the Palladium seems to have been Nero; cf. RIC 370 and 522. The new trend was taken up in earnest by Galba; see Gatti 1980–1981, RE 18.2A.200.42ff., RIC 245, 258, 270, 306, 307, 355, 375, 456 (Galba), 131 (Vesp.), 212 (Titus). Cf. also the observation of Scott (1936: 186) that the Palladium “seems to have served the Flavians as a symbol of the transmission of the power and eternity of Rome.”

38 Cf. RIC 80, and as Caesar under Vespasian RIC 1087; also RIC 848 (Julia daughter of Titus).

39 Cf. Mart. 9.3.10, Suet. Dom. 15.3 Minervam, quam superstite coelebat, Dio C. 67.1.2.

40 Geyssen 1996: 45, 92 and 141.

41 Vergil also uses it when her role as goddess behind the Palladium is concerned; see n.54–57 Tritonia virgo.

42 For the more positive attitude towards the Homeric Greeks in Roman literature under the Flavians, see Ripoll 2001a: 99–100 and 2001b: 367–368.

43 According to one tradition, Spartan colonists settled among the Sabines after founding the temple of Feronia; cf. Dion.Hal. 2.49.5, Strab. 5.4.12, Plut. Rom. 16.1, Num. 1.3. Cato and Cn. Gellius named the Lacedaemonian Sabus as the ancestor of the Sabines (Serv. ad Verg. A. 8.638). Cf. also Ovid’s use of the epithet Oebalius (after the Spartan king Oebalus) for the Sabines at Fast. 1.260 and 3.230. Silius hints at this tradition when referring to the Sabine (= Spartan) lineage of Valerius Publicola (2.8 ingentis Volesi Spartana propago) and of Claudius Nero (8.412 Therapnaeo a sanguine Clausi). Hannibal’s plunder of Feronia may also be read in this light. A reference to the Spartan origin of the sanctuary may lie hidden in 85, which alludes to Vergil’s description of Tarentum at G. 4.126 (see n.83b–85); in the preceding line, Tarentum is called the Oebaliiæ ... arcis, i.e. the ‘other’ Spartan
of the Trojan war in which Diomedes participated is explicitly associated with Sparta. By implication, Diomedes’ *foedus* with Aeneas, that is, between the two sides in the Trojan war, is repeated in the merging of Sabines (Spartans) and Romans (Trojans); Vergil uses the same image of Latins and Trojans at A. 12.821–828. Diomedes may thus be seen as a figure of reconciliation, a role that the Flavians could also lay claim to after the civil war of 68. It was a fundamental and recurrent aspect of Rome’s history that previously warring peoples united to the advantage of all; the emperor, stemming from an Italian race but protected by Trojan Minerva, symbolizes this and brings unity after civil war.

In this context it seems useful to consider briefly the role of Minerva in the *Punica*. She first appears in Proteus’ retelling of the story of Paris’ judgment at 7.437–473. This tale ends with the destruction of Troy in the Trojan war (7.472–473, the *Iliad*) and Aeneas’ journey to Italy (7.474–475, the *Aeneid*), followed by a prophecy of the future Roman defeat at Cannae and their ultimate victory in Africa. The order of Proteus’ story suggests a parallelism between the fall of Troy and the defeat at Cannae on the one hand, and Aeneas’ foundation of new, lasting Troy (i.e. Rome) and Scipio’s victory on the other. That is to say, the *Punica* first replays the *Iliad* in books 8–10 at Cannae (defeat of the Trojans / Romans) and then the *Aeneid* from book 11 onwards (victory of the Trojans / Romans). The changing role of Minerva in the epic reflects her different roles in the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid* (first an enemy of the Trojans, later a protectress of Rome). During the battle of Cannae, she aids Hannibal, as she had aided Diomedes in *Iliad* 5—at this point in the epic, Diomedes is here still an important role model for Hannibal, as has been discussed above. After book 10, an ‘Aeneidic’ part of the *Punica* begins, in which Minerva has a new role in support of Rome, and in which, as a counterbalance to Paris’ ill-judged choice, Scipio makes a new choice which is more felicitous to ‘new Troy’ (Rome)—at 15.18–130, he chooses Virtus (Minerva) over Voluptas (Venus). As has been argued in Gen.intr. § 6, these two opposing choices of Paris and Scipio, for Venus and Minerva respectively, may well reflect the patron deities of the two successive imperial dynasties, the Julio-Claudians and the Flavians.

colony. The plunder of the Spartan/Sabine shrine of Feronia signifies that Hannibal, failing to take on the Trojan roots of Rome, desecrates its Sabine part instead; but in doing so, he pollutes the Spartan legacy with which he had sought to identify himself.

44 Silius has adapted Vergil’s *Argolicis ... telis* (A. 2.177) and *Argis* (2.178) to *Therapnaeis ... armis* (43) and *Amyclas* (44), both references to Sparta. For the epithet *Therapnaeus*, see fn.43 above.

45 Lavinia and Hersilia, symbols of these two fusions of peoples, are juxtaposed by Silius at lines 809–815.

46 See Rossi (2004: 192–194), who discusses the prominence of the theme in the works of Vergil and Livy.

47 See for this structure and the allusions which support it Gen.intr. § 4.3.2 (on Troy) and 5.1 (on *Aeneid* 1–4 as a parallel for *Punica* 11–13). Note that this sequence of *Iliad* – *Aeneid* is but one of several co-existing structuring principles of the *Punica*; see further Gen.intr. § 5.

48 This new, supportive role is already anticipated at 9.530–532. The fact that Minerva’s supporting role in securing the Palladium for Rome as mentioned in book 13 is (much) anterior to her aid to Hannibal in book 9 is irrelevant; what matters is not historical order, but narrative order.

49 For Proteus’ narrative of Paris’ judgment and the parallels with Scipio’s choice between Voluptas and Virtus, see Littlewood 2011: 165–166.
Introduction to 30–93

Analysis of the presentation of 30–93

With the first words, *at contra*, the reader’s attention is moved from Hannibal and his soldiers to Dasius; the phrase indicates that his speech will counter the one by Hannibal at 8–18. It was observed in An. 1–29 that the movement of the first part of the book is in two phases: first a setting (1–6, with past tenses) which forms the background to the speech of Hannibal at 8–18 (introduced by the present *increpitat*), and then a new setting (19–29, again with imperfects) which is the backdrop of the speech of Dasius (36 *ait*)—while most soldiers are reinvigorated by Hannibal’s words, Dasius speaks against his plans. *at contra* thus puts the speech both against the first speech by Hannibal and against the renewed enthusiasm of the troops.

Dasius’ speech, an embedded narrative, starts off immediately without introductory remarks. As a whole, it may be divided into three roughly equal parts (36–50 the capture of the Palladium, 51–63 Minerva’s appearance to Diomedes, 64–78 Diomedes’ visit to Aeneas), and is concluded with three lines on the role of the Palladium during the Gallic incursion. Each of the three parts begins with a temporal setting with past tenses (36–37 *cum*, 51 *postquam*, 64–65 *iam* combined with imperfect tenses), each contains a speech (indirect at 41–46, direct at 58–62 and 71–77a) and is then concluded by a significant action by Diomedes, the main character of the story. Each also corresponds, to a certain extent, to a specific model passage in Vergil (see Intr. 30–93 above).

Lines 36–37 establish the general timeframe of the first part of the story (the last year of the Trojan war). At line 38, the main events seem to begin, with the participle *sollicitis* zooming in to provide the immediate background for Calchas’ words, but then Dasius interrupts his story with a parenthesis (cf. 30); this interruption explains (*nam*) why Hannibal ought to listen to Dasius: his ancestor Diomedes is produced as authority.

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50 For this frequent function of *at*, see Kroon 1995: 348–350. The particle is particularly used when the reader’s expectation is frustrated (Kroon 1995: 351), which also applies here: the intended march on Rome is abandoned.

51 Dasius’ introduction by means of a lengthy parenthesis (30b–34) in imperfect tenses (background information by the narrator to explain—*nam*—the oxymoron *pravum decus*) is itself interrupted by another parenthesis (32b) in perfect tense (a comment by the narrator; for the difference between background information and comment, see Gen.intr. § 7.2). The story itself is picked up again at 35 with *is*, which summarizes the previous lines: ‘now this man...’. At 225, *is* has the same function; it shares this function with *hic*, for which see fn.67 below.

52 For the text structural uses of *iam* with imperfect tense forms, see Kroon / Risselada 2004. *iam* is often found at the beginning of a new episode, in which a situation or action is described which had started before the narrator turns to it, because it overlaps temporally with the preceding episode. This is the case here at 62 as well: the activities of Diomedes and Aeneas in Italy overlap in time; by the time Diomedes reaches Latium and the narrator turns to Aeneas, the latter is already a *victor* and is already founding his city—that is, the events of the *Aeneid* are already over. That Silius has ‘skipped’ (narrating) the *Aeneid* nicely illustrates how he presents Diomedes as an alternative Aeneas; see Intr. 30–93 above. A second common narrative strategy with *iam + imperfect* is found at 54 *iam templum ... surgebat*; the function of *iam* is here twofold. Firstly, it signals that time has been condensed; in lines 51–53, we were told that Diomedes prepared to appease the Trojan gods; at 54, his temple to house the Palladium is already rising high. Secondly, *iam* underlines that Diomedes thought he had almost fulfilled his goal (the temple was nearly ready), when Minerva appeared to tell him otherwise. The frustration of his (and perhaps the reader’s) expectation contributes to the creation of dramatic tension.

53 Calchas’ speech at 41–46 is indirect in imitation of Verg. A. 2.176–179; see n.41–44.

54 Its lengthiness (*longo ... bello*) is suggested by the many spondees; cf. esp. 36 *longo miles ait*, with diaereseis. Note further the alliteration *muros ... Mavors* and *staret sine sanguine*.

55 Both *saep* (indicating the all-knowingness of the narrator) and *fortissimus* (an evaluation) stress that Dasius as narrator briefly steps out of his story to comment upon it. *nam* is thus an explanation on the so-called level of the
story is picked up again by *sed* (‘but anyway’, ‘well’)\(^{56}\) and a repetition of the subject, *Calchas*. After the lengthy reported speech, *tum* (47) marks the next phase in the first narrative: Diomedes’ reaction to Calchas’ words. It is worth noting that Ulysses, the companion in crime, does not share the syntactic function of subject with Diommedes, but is ‘added’ in an ablative absolute (*adiuncto* ... *Ithaco*); the focus is fully on Diomedes, the illustrious ancestor of Dasius.\(^{57}\) The narrative pace quickens,\(^{58}\) as the consecutive steps are told briefly in a summarizing manner: Diomedes goes to Troy (*evadit*) and brings back (*reportat*) the Palladium; the intermediate blasphemy of killing the temple guards is reduced to a participle (*amolitus*).\(^{59}\) The last clause (50b) is not part of the narrative, but a comment by the narrator Dasius; the results of Diomedes’ act were bad for Hannibal. By this phrase at the end of the first part of his story Dasius anticipates its relevance to Hannibal; *male* is explained by the rest of the narrative, as *nam* (51) indicates. The clause acts as the hinge point of the story.\(^{60}\)

The second part of the embedded narrative begins with the general outline or ‘abstract’ (51–53; Diomedes sought to appease the gods of Troy). At 54–55, we find the orientation for the actual story (the narrator tells that the reconciliatory temple was already rising high, *iam ... surgebat*)\(^{61}\) and then, ‘zooming in’ temporally, the story proper begins with an inverted *cum*-clause: it was already night (56 *medios inter somnos altamque quietem*), when Minerva appeared to Diomedes. Minerva’s speech is the narrative climax of this part.\(^{62}\) Just as in the first part, after the speech the narrative pace increases since *capessit* describes Diomedes’ entire journey from Apulia to Latium: the resolution of the second part of the narrative.\(^{63}\)

The transition from part two to three is made by the geographical references *Saturnia regna* and *Lavinia Pergama*. The third part opens with a re-orientation, which relates the narrative to the history of the *Aeneid*: Aeneas (*Phryx*) has defeated the Rutulians and is already (*iam*) building his own city. The next lines relate this part to the preceding one and mark the beginning of the third story proper; Diomedes has been travelling to Latium (63) and when he now arrives (*ubi ... perventum*), the Trojans tremble.\(^{64}\) The past tenses at 64–68 (*condebat*, *figebat*, *intremuere*) suggest that the actions of the Trojans are only the speech act: rather than making a connection between two elements in the narrative (as *nam* in 51 does), it provides a reason for the utterance (the act of speaking) itself. See Kroon 1995: 146–147. The parenthesis is rich in alliteration; cf. *poscenti ... pocula*, *socero saepe*, *Dauno ... Diomedes*, *memori ... mente*.

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\(^{56}\) For this use of *sed*, see *OLD* s.v. 2h, *KS* 2.2.76 (sed 5), Kroon 1995: 279 with n.79.

\(^{57}\) The word order does express their comradeship; *meus* is juxtaposed to *adiuncto*, and *Tydides* to *Ithaco*.

\(^{58}\) This is also suggested by the metre; the forceful warning of Calchas is emphasized by the spondaic rhythm of the lines (esp. 43–44), while 47–50 are much more dactylic in nature.

\(^{59}\) This both increases the tempo of the narration and suggests that Dasius downplays the impiety of the act by skimming over it; see n.47–50.

\(^{60}\) See n.47–50 *nostris ... male ... fatis*.

\(^{61}\) For this phrase, see fn.52 above.

\(^{62}\) Minerva’s message is emphasized by the anaphora *non ... non* (58–59) and the heavy spondees at 59–60 (esp. *Garganus* in the middle of the line and *debetur nobis* at the beginning of the next).

\(^{63}\) The fact that even after Minerva’s speech he does not need to be marked again as topic (although *trepidus* gives a clear clue to the identity of the subject) shows that Diomedes is firmly established as Main Topic.

\(^{64}\) *verum* (66) contrasts the peace that Aeneas hoped for when he dedicates his weapons (65) with the war that seems a reality at Diomedes’ arrival (67 *castraque Tydides possuit fulgentia*; the scene is focalized by the Trojans, who only see the glittering weapons); it may additionally contrast *victor* and *intremuere*. 

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53
background to Diomedes’ peace overtures, which are narrated in present tenses. As at 47, Diomedes’ action is introduced with tum; the use of the same particle suggests that as Diomedes stole the Palladium, so he now returns it. His speech and subsequent showing of the Palladium (ostentat) are the focus of the third part.

Minerva, the last word of 78, forms the link with the final lines (79 haec); between these lines the distinction between image and goddess is blurred. The lines are linked thematically rather than chronologically with the preceding narrative; the perfect tenses (80 corripuit, 81 dimisit) show that the story about Diomedes (of which the main events were narrated in present tenses) is at its end; the narrator concludes it with a short report of a later event.

The main narrative then focuses on Hannibal again, who reacts first emotionally to the speech (his fractus) and then with deeds: he moves away from Rome and plunders the sanctuary of Feronia. The narrative is presented in present tenses, but moves too quickly to be a ‘live report’ (83 iubet, 83 itur, 91 polluit atque armat, 92 placent). The information we are given about Feronia in present tenses (84–89) is relevant to the narrative, perhaps reflecting Hannibal’s motives for going there, the sanctuary is wealthy, guarded only by fear (solo servante pavore), and Hannibal (therefore) plunders it. The metre supports the flow of the narrative. Hannibal’s downcast command to move away in spondees (82) is followed by swift dactyls from abitu (83; note esp. the bucolic diaeresis iubet. itur in agros). After the lengthy, spondaic description of the age-old wealth of the temple (cf. e.g. the heavy words intactas longaevis, congestis, immensum), the narrative is picked up again with more dactyls and the short, elliptical description of the plunder itself (90 hac ... rapina). In the last two lines, tunc marks the final decision of Hannibal to move away from Latium altogether. Lines 93 and 94 are both based on Livy (see n.92–93); the shared intertext facilitates the transition between the two passages.

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65 The deponent orsus at 70 is probably to be taken as the equivalent of a present tense form.
66 Ripoll (2001b: 362–363) observes the rhetorical structure of the speech, distinguishing a pattern of captatio benevolentiae (71), confirmatio (72–74) and peroratio (75–77). The call for peace is adorned with rhyme (71 irasque metusque), while Diomedes’ justification is conspicuous for its alliteration (Simoentaque ... sanguine sudatum Scaeaeque) and the strong chiasitic antithesis in 74 haud nostrum est: egere dei duraeque sorores. At 74, est seems odd between sudatum and egere, but the meaning is probably that Diomedes should not be held responsible now (by Aeneas) for the deeds of the past.
67 The use of hic here, at 82 and at 91 is very similar: at the opening of a new part in the narrative, it encapsulates all information in the previous section; that is, the referent is identified ‘exactly as it has been predicated’, so that a new narrative step can be made. See Kroon (forthc.), who describes it in terms of “reculer pour mieux sauter”, i.e. “consolidation in order to make a new jump forwards”.
69 In other words, these presents are probably not ‘universally valid’ but valid in the time of the story. Indeed, Feronia was presumably no longer as wealthy after Hannibal’s plunder.
70 hac includes the object of its noun rapina (“the plunder of this”); see KS 2.1.64–66.
71 For this practice of overlapping intertexts, cf. An. 650–704 (both beginning and end).
at contra Argyripae pravum decus (inclita namque semina ab Oenea dctoris stirpe trahebat Aetoli – Dasio fuit haud ignobile nomen – laetus opum, sed clauda fides seseque calenti addiderat Poeno Latiae diffisus habenae) – is volvens veterum memorata antiqua parentum

30a But against their intent spoke the wicked glory of Argyripa.

The clause, in the translation presented as a finished sentence, is picked up again at 35 after the parenthesis with background information through summarizing is (‘now that man...’).

Argyripae The older name of the Apulian city of Arpi; Argyrip(p)a (from Ἄργος Ἰππίον) was according to legend founded by the Argive Diomedes, son of Tydeus when he settled in Italy after the Trojan war (Lyc. 594ff., Diod.Sic. 25.19.1, Strab. 5.1.9, 6.3.9, Plin. Nat. 3.104, Auson. Epit. 6.1ff.; cf. for the name also Plb. 3.88.6, 3.118.3). The same city name is found at Verg. A. 11.246 (the embassy to Diomedes); for this intertext of 51ff., see Intr. 30–93.

pravum decus An oxymoron; decus refers to Dasius’ famous descent from the city’s founder, while pravum signifies that he defiled this fame because of his defection to Hannibal. For decus of persons, see n.514b–515 decus; for a similar oxymoron, see n.858–860 gloria culpae.

30b–34 For he drew his famous roots from the Oenean line of the Aetolian leader—Dasius had no ignoble ancestry—a wealthy man, but his loyalty was swaying and he had joined himself to Hannibal in his success, putting no faith in Roman command.

Livy mentions three persons with the name Dasius. At 21.48.9, a Dasius of Brundisium betrays the town of Clastidium to the Romans. At 24.45.1–2, Livy mentions a certain Dasius Altinius of Arpi, who betrays his city to the Carthaginians after the battle of Cannae; the same man prepares another coup at 24.45.3, this time in favour of the Romans. The third Dasius figures at 26.38.6–10 (after the Roman capture of Capua) as a pro-Carthaginian leader of Salapia, a town close to Arpi. Silius’ Dasius is probably based on the second (who is from the right city, although he had switched his allegiance to the Romans again at the time of Hannibal’s march on Rome), or he may be a fusion of all three; see also Nesselrath 1986: 219 n.37. Either way, this figure is well fit to play the role of traitor Sinon (see Intr. 30–93).

Dasius was descended from Diomedes, the son of Tydeus and grandson of Oeneus. This descent is also attested by Appian (Hann. 31); some think the correspondence in our passage proves that Silius used an annalistic source which Appian also consulted (RE 2.1217.47ff. and 3A.88.1–2 suggest Valerius Antias; see further Nicol 1936: 47, 116). It is not impossible, however, that Appian used Silius instead, and that Silius invented the connection with Diomedes (Spaltenstein); the name of Dasius and his traitorous role were provided by Livy, his hometown Arpi was a fitting connection with the mythological hero, whose fate was tied up with the Palladium, the subject of Dasius’ tale. For other correspondences between Silius and Appian, see Gen.intr. § 4.2 fn.34.
Oenea Oeneus was the father of Tydeus, and thus the grandfather of Diomedes. For the adjective Oeneus (‘of Oeneus’, here ‘descendant of Oeneus’), cf. 3.367 (also of Diomedes; Duff’s assumption of a town Oene is unnecessary), 15.308 and Stat. Theb. 2.469 (both Oeneus himself); cf. also Theb. 5.661 Oeneus heros (Tydeus). The patronymic Oenides is much more common, especially for Melia and Tydeus; for Diomedes, cf. Ov. Fast. 4.76, [Verg.] Cat. 9.6, Ilias 466, Stat. Ach. 2.86. With stirpe, cf. Stat. Theb. 1.463–464 magni de stirpe creatum Oeneos (of Tydeus).


Dasio haud ignobile nomen Cf. the similar phrase nobile nomen at 1.274, 2.177, 16.329, 17.303, 17.451 (the first two both connect the tale in question with the mythological age, as here) and Mart. 14.101.1; our phrase (with litotes) is not attested outside of the Punica.

For the construction, cf. e.g. 14.149–150 miles Tyrrenus – Asilo nomen erat; for the diction, cf. 11.58 Pacuvio fuit haud obscurum crimine nomen (another defector to Hannibal).

laetus opum Cf. only V.Fl. 3.659 (same sedes), of Meleager, another Oenides (see on Oenea above). Spaltenstein adduces similar turns of phrase like dives opum (Verg. G. 2.468, A. 1.14, 2.22, Ov. Fast. 3.570, Sil. 8.523, 12.28; apart from Ovid’s passage, however, all of these are of places, not persons); cf. also fractus opum at line 876. The line structure is based upon Vergil’s description of Drances at A. 11.338–339 largus opum et linguae melior, sed frigida bello / dextera (with a similar shift of subject after sed, here to clauda fides).

For laetus with the genitive, cf. also 7.338, 8.546, 14.279, 15.569 and 17.307.

clauda fides Lit. ‘crippled loyalty’, thus ‘loyalty with no steady course’, a unique phrase. Spaltenstein compares 2.392–393 aegra ... fides and (with Ruperti) Cic. Fin. 3.9.30 mancam ... virtutem. The phrase may be inspired by Livy’s words on Dasius, both 24.45.2 tamquam cum fortuna fidem stare oporteret and 24.45.12 ambiguae fidei; Silius’ words refer to his defection to Hannibal, while Livy stresses his opportunism of aiding the winning side of the moment.

calenti Not ‘fiery’ (Duff), although such an epithet could well apply to Hannibal. Caleb can have the sense ‘be favourable’ (OLD 1c, which compares English ‘while the iron is hot’; cf. Pl. Poen. 914 nisi dum calet hoc agitur, Luc. 7.734 dum fortuna calet), which here, boldly used of a person, would translate into ‘when Hannibal was successful’; or alternatively ‘be in favour’ (cf. Juv. 6.149 calet with Courtney’s n., and modern slang ‘hot’, i.e. in the news; cf. Cic. Planc. 55, Cael. Fam. 8.1.2, TLL 3.149.12ff.). Dasius is a born opportunist.

Latiae diffisus habenae The ‘reins’ of ruling or command are a common metaphor in the Punica; cf. 1.144, 2.292, 6.611, 7.222, 7.384, 10.282, 11.50, 17.175 and the simile of Varro as an incompetent charioteer at 8.278–283. Latia habena is here ‘the Roman command in the war’; Dasius did not think the Romans would win after Cannae, so he stepped out early.

For diffisus (as usual with a dative, see TLL 5.1.1101.67ff.), cf. 5.557, 11.6 faciles laesis diffidere rebus (other defectors after Cannae).
This man, recounting the ancient tradition of his forefathers, says...

The line is a reminiscence of Verg. A. 3.102 tum genitor veterum volvens monimenta virorum, where Anchises recalls the history of his ancestors to determine the destiny of the Trojans. After the siege of Rome, which is best compared to Aeneid 2 (see Gen.intr. § 5.1), this is a suitable reference to the wanderings of Aeneas at the beginning of a tale about those of Diomedes, which will in turn influence Hannibal’s wanderings after the siege.

veterum ... antiqua parentum is a metapoetic reference to Vergil: Dasius’ tale is inspired by the work of Silius’ predecessor. But his tale is not simply an imitation, but an alteration; now Diomedes is cast in the role of the wandering hero, in some sort of ‘alternative Aeneid’ (see Intr. 30–93). Perhaps Silius hints at his subtle alteration with volvens, ‘recounting’ but also ‘reworking’. See for other metapoetic signposts nn.38b–40 memori ... condita mente, 71 memoriaes irasque metusque, 75–76a nunc age, quod superest and melioribus ... auspiciis, and Gen.intr. § 4.4.

‘longo miles’ ait ‘quateret cum Teucria bello
Pergama et ad muros staret sine sanguine Mavors,
sollicitis Calchas (nam sic fortissimus heros
poscenti socero saepe inter pocula Dauno
narratam memori Diomedes condita mente) –

sed Calchas Danais, nisi clausum ex sedibus arcis
armisonae current simulacrum avellere divae,
non unquam affirmat Therapnaeis Ilion armis
cessurum, aut Ledae rediturum nomen Amyclas.
quippe deis visum, ne cui perrumpere detur
effigies ea quas unquam possederit urbes.

36–38a ‘When the warriors shook Trojan Pergama with a long war and warfare came to a standstill without bloodshed, Calchas told the troubled Greeks...

Dasius’ tale starts like Sinon’s; cf. Verg. A. 2.108–109 Danai ... cupiere ... longo fessi discedere bello, “the Greeks longed to [...] depart, weary with the long war” (the Trojan war is again dubbed longo ... bello at A. 9.511).

miles Silius uses the word almost always in a collective sense; cf. in this book lines 255, 314, 636 and as vocative 14.

longo ... quateret ... bello For this use of quatio, cf. A. 9.608 quattit oppida bello.

Teucra ... Pergama The reference to the citadel of Troy, the symbol of its defence, is not without reason; for that is where the Palladium was kept (cf. 41 ex sedibus arcis, Verg. A. 2.166 summae ... arcis, Dion.Hal. 1.69.1). Aeneas’ new city is called Lavinia Pergama at 64; the repetition seems to imply that the Palladium can only be kept in a city with a Pergama.

staret ‘halted’, ‘came to a standstill’; cf. OLD s.v. 7b “(of a battle) ‘to be stationary’, i.e. without advantage to either side”. For a similar use, cf. 14.338 stabatque ingens ad moenia bellum, and of Hannibal and his men 1.441 iam capto stamus in hoste, 12.41 stabet Cannarum Graia ad munimina victor / nequiquam, 12.69, 12.105. For the identification of Hannibal’s failures in book 12 with the Greek troubles at Troy, see Intr. 30–93.
**Mavors** See n.16b–18 Mavortem.

**Calchas** The seer of the Greeks at Troy. The prophecy regarding the Palladium (and others about the fall of Troy) is in most accounts given to the Greeks by Helenus (Apollod. *Epit.* 5.10 with Frazer *ad loc.*, Conon *Narr.* 34, Ov. *Met.* 13.335–338, Serv. *ad Aen.* 2.166; cf. more implicitly Soph. *Phil.* 604ff., 1337ff., Procl. *Chrest.* 2, Q.Smyrn. 10.375–390); he is here replaced by Calchas to match that seer’s prominence in the tale of Sinon (see Intr. 30–93).

38b–40 ... (for so did the most valiant hero Diomedes often tell his father-in-law Daunus upon his bidding as they shared drinks, the tales stored in his unforgetting mind) ...


**socero ... Dauno** Diomedes had married the daughter of Daunus, the king of Apulia; cf. Ov. *Fast.* 4.76, *Met.* 14.458–459, 14.510–511. See also line 70 *Dauni gener*. For the importance of Diomedes’ connection with Daunus for Hannibal, see Intr. 30–93.

**memori ... condita mente** Another reminiscence of *Aeneid* 3 (see n.35); cf. *A.* 3.388 *signa tibi dicam, tu condita mente teneto*. The adjective *memori* marks Diomedes’ memory of the theft of the Palladium, and more importantly Silius’ memory of Sinon’s tale, in which the theft was recounted, in *Aeneid* 2. For *memori ... mente* (always ablative), cf. Lucr. 2.582, 3.858, Cic. *Planc.* 80, *Div.* 2.63, Hor. *S.* 2.6.31, Ov. *Met.* 7.521, Man. 2.842, 3.618.

41–44 ... well, Calchas asserted to the Greeks that if they would not take care to remove the image of the goddess with ringing armour from its seat of the temple where it was hidden, Ilion would never fall to Spartan arms, nor would Leda’s daughter return to Amyclae.

These lines imitate Sinon’s description of Calchas’ prophecy after the theft of the Palladium at Verg. *A.* 2.176–178 *canit ... Calchas nec posse Argolicis excindit Pergamana telis / omina ni repetant Argis numenque reducant*; cf. here Therapnaeis Ilion armis cessurum (similar structure and word order) and *nisi ... simulacrum avellere*. Silius’ *nomen* (44) may play on Vergil’s *numen*.

**armisonae** Cf. Verg. *A.* 3.544, V.Fl. 1.74, Stat. *Theb.* 1.535 and Sil. 15.39; in all but the last passage, the epithet bears on Minerva, as here (in 15.39, it is associated with the way of Virtus, who may be identified with Minerva; see Littlewood 2011: 165–166). Cf. also Ov. *Fast.* 6.421 *armiferae signum caeleste Minervae* (of the Palladium); see n.51–53.

**avellere** Cf. Verg. *A.* 2.165; see n.47–50.

**Therapnaeis ... Amyclæ** Therapne, an ancient site just south of Sparta, was an important cult place in the bronze age; the remains of the Menelaion (a 8th century shrine to Menelaus) and a Mycenaean palace can still be found there. Nearby Amyclæ was the birthplace of Helen and one of the villages that later constituted iron age Sparta. Both names are used in the sense ‘ Spartan’ or ‘Laconian”; the reference is here mainly to Menelaus.

45–46 For, as he said, the gods had decreed that no one would ever be allowed to invade those cities that this image occupied.

The Palladium was considered a talisman for the safety and prosperity of the city in which it stood; cf. Ov. Fast. 6.427 aetheriam servate deam, servabitis urbem, Dion.Hal. 1.69.1, and for the Palladium in Rome itself cf. 9.530–531 nostro [sc. Minervae] cum pignore regnet Roma, Cic. Scaur. 47 quasi pignus nostrae salutis atque imperii, Liv. 5.52.7, 26.27.13, Flor. 1.2.2.

In these lines the AcI of 43–44 is continued; supply esse to visum.

effigies Also Vergil’s word for the Palladium; cf. A. 2.167.

umquam possederit I.e. any city that would ever house the Palladium would be protected by it as long as it remained in it (and lose its protection once it is removed, which is the point of the theft by Diomedes and Ulysses); in other words, umquam relates to the enduring quality of the Palladium as protection for its current host, not to its enduring protection in general.

47–50

tum meus adiuncto monstratam evadit in arcem
Tydides Ithaco et dextra amolitus in ipso
custodes aditu templi caeleste reportat
Palladium ac nostris aperit male Pergama fatis.

47–50 Then my ancestor Diomedes, Tydeus’ son, with the man of Ithaca as his companion, goes up to the citadel as had been indicated to him and after having removed with force the guardians of the temple on its very doorstep he brings back the heavenly Palladium and opens up Troy’s citadel in a way that is bad for our fate.

As at 41–44, Silius recasts parts of Sinon’s tale; cf. Verg. A. 2.163ff.:

impius ex quo

Tydides sed enim scelerumque inventor Ulixes
fatale adgressi sacrato avellere templo
Palladium caesis summae custodibus arcis
corripuere sacram effigiem manibusque cruentis
virgineas ausi divae contingere vittas

“But from the time that the ungodly son of Tydeus and Ulysses, the author of crime, dared to tear the fateful Palladium from its hallowed shrine, slew the guards of the citadel-height, and, snatching up the sacred image, ventured with bloody hands to touch the fillets of the maiden goddess ...”

Dasius’ description of the theft of the Palladium closely follows Sinon’s (cf. also avellere at 42 and effigies at 46), but the emphasis is different. While Sinon tries to put the Greeks in the worst possible light, Dasius is more neutral; negative impius and scelerumque inventor are replaced by neutral meus. Similarly, adgressi sacrato ... templo resonates in monstratam evadit in arcem without the charged sacrato or the suggestive adgressi. The murder of the guardians is expressed by euphemistic amoliri rather than caedere, and the Palladium itself is not named fatale (or sacram effigiem) but more neutrally caeleste (like meus referring solely to origin, without ethical connotations). Finally, Sinon in the climax of his story elaborates on the men’s blasphemy to touch the goddess’ image with bloodied hands
(A. 2.167–168), whereas Dasius summarizes the deed with the neutral reportat. Sinon claimed that the theft was bad for the fortunes of the Greeks, since it took away Minerva’s favour; in Dasius’ account, the results are bad for Hannibal (see n. nostris ... male ... fatis below).

meus Diomedes is Dasius’ ancestor (see n.30b–34); for this use of meus, see OLD s.v. 2b. Ithaco Ulysses; for the epithet, see n.800b–803 Ithacum.
amolitus The mss. read molitus (‘force away’, OLD s.v. 8), but the old conjecture amolitus seems better; with its sense ‘dispose of’, ‘get rid of’ (cf. TLL 1.1965.77ff. “i.q. submovere loco, non tollere aut perdere”), it is the euphemistic equivalent of Sinon’s plain caesis.
in ipso ... aditu The only element that could be held against the two Greeks—to have killed men on the threshold of the temple. For the phrase, cf. line 543–544 in ipso ... introitu.
ciaeleste The Palladium had reportedly fallen from the sky; cf. Ov. Fast. 6.421 signum caeleste Minervae and 6.427 aetheriam ... deam and further (with RE 18.2A.172.28ff.) e.g. Lyc. 363, Apollod. 3.12.3, Cic. Phil. 11.24, Scaur. 48 de caelo lapsum.
nostris ... male ... fatis The line’s difficulty arises primarily from mala, the mss. reading, for which a few late mss. have male, and the unclear syntactic dependence of nostris ... fatis. Duff translates “[he] threw open Troy to our conquering fortunes, with evil result”, clearly interpreting nostris as an identification of Dasius with the Greek cause (cf. Spaltenstein). His reading of fatis (dependant on aperit) as “conquering fortunes” is unconvincing; “doom” would be a more natural interpretation of the word. Moreover, nostris is surely to be taken in the same way as meus earlier in the sentence; ‘our’ refers to the Carthaginians and Dasius himself who had joined their cause. It should thus logically be taken with mala/male. It seems plausible that mala/male is what is clarified by the next section (51 nam). If a calamity for the Greeks is intended, we would expect a description of their troubles at Troy (cf. A. 2.172ff.) or their fatal home voyage, in which many perished because of the theft of the Palladium (cf. A. 11.255ff.); neither is found (52 aeger delicti hardly qualifies). Lines 51ff. tell how the Palladium came to Rome, which is not harmful to the Greeks, but far more so to Hannibal. Since Troy is hardly mala for Hannibal, but the results of its conquest are, the reading male should be preferred. The remark is essential for the structure of the story; with male, Dasius joins the first and second part of his narration and anticipates its relevance to Hannibal.

51–57

nam postquam Oenotris fundavit finibus urbem, aeger delicti Phrygium placare colendo numen et Iliacos parat exorare penates. ingens iam templum celsa surgebat in arce, Laomedonteae sedes ingrata Minervae, cum medios inter somnos altamque quietem nec celata deam et minitans Tritonia virgo:

51–53 For when he has founded a city in the Oenotrian land, he is troubled by his crime and prepares to placate the Phrygian goddess with worship and to win over the Trojan penates.
The next passage evokes Aeneas’ vision of the *penates* in *Aeneid* 3; see Intr. 30–93 with fn.17. Besides Vergil, Silius was inspired at least by Ovid’s rendering in *Fast.* 6.419ff. (6.421 *armiferae signum caeleste Minervae ~ Sil.* 13.42 *armisonae simulacrum ... divae* and 13.49 *caeleste*; cf. also 6.429 *summa tenet Ilus in arce ~ Sil.* 13.54 *celsa ... in arce; see also n.75–76a *nunc age quod superest* and Met. 13.337 *Phrygiae signum penetrale Minervae* (with 52–53 *Phrygium ... numen* and 63 *penetrale*).

**Oenotris ... finibus** Diomedes founded Arpi in southern Italy; see n.30 *Argyripae.* The *Oenotri* were according to Vergil the first inhabitants of Italy (cf. *A.* 1.152 = 3.165 *Oenotri coluere viri*); it is in their land that Aeneas is to found a new city. By building his city on Oenotrian soil and housing the Palladium and Troy’s household gods, Diomedes is playing the role that Aeneas should play, and is corrected by Minerva for that (see also n.64–65).

For the Oenotri (and derived adjectives), cf. 1.2, 2.57, 8.46, 8.220, 9.743, 12.587, 12.650, 13.713, 15.522, 16.685, 17.433; elsewhere only Verg. *l.c.* (with *A.* 7.85), V.Fl. 1.589, Plin. *Nat.* 3.71.1 and 3.85.1. The name carries overtones of antiquity, and marks Italy as the promised land of Aeneas. It is no coincidence that at 1.2 it counterbalances *Aeneadum* (1.1–3 *gloria ... / Aeneadum, patiturque ferox Oenotria iura / Carthago*); already in the proem, the conflict between Carthage and Rome is presented as the result of the failed relation between Dido and Aeneas.

**aeger delicti** For the rare use of *aeger* with a genitive denoting the cause (cf. the ablative at 3.214, 12.691, 17.170), *TLL* 1.940.78ff. cites 3.72 *aegra timoris Roma*, Luc. 7.240 *aeger ... morae*, Flor. 2.5.9, Aug. *Civ.* 1.19. Silius uses the genitive often in innovative ways; see n.821–822 *inclita leti*.

**Phrygium ... numen** The *numen* inherent in the Palladium, i.e. Minerva, who by virtue of the image acted as Troy’s patron deity (cf. 55 *Laomedontea ... Minervae*). As Fucecchi (2005: 9–10) notes, the use of *Phrygium* may call attention to the connection with the ‘other’ Phrygian *numen*, Cybele, whose image is brought to Rome at 17.1–47; the phrase would thus emphasize that the present passage, in which Hannibal is deterred from Rome through the power of the Phrygian Palladium, anticipates the scene in book 17, where the Carthaginian is driven from Italy when the Romans import the image of Phrygian Cybele (cf. 17.1 *hostis ut Ausoniis decederet adventa terris*); see Intr. 30–93, Gen.intr. § 5.2.3.

**penates** The *Iliacos ... penates* are possibly synonymous with *Phrygium ... numen* (Spaltenstein) since Minerva had been the guardian of Troy; this may also be suggested by the similar structure of *Phrygium placare ... numen* and *Iliacos ... exorare penates*. According to Vergil, it was Aeneas who took the Trojan *penates* (the Palladium is not mentioned) to Italy; cf. e.g. *A.* 1.68, 1.378, 2.293; Silius follows this story at 1.43–44 and 7.474–475. We must assume either that Silius has here briefly diverted from Vergil’s rendering to cast Diomedes more fully in the role of an alternative Aeneas (see n. *Oenotris ... finibus* and Intr. 30–93), or that (if the penates are not to be equated with the Palladium and Silius follows Vergil in that Aeneas carries them) the Argive hero seeks to appease the Trojan *penates* in their absence.

54–57 *An enormous temple was already rising on the high citadel, a seat unwelcome to Trojan Minerva, when during sleep and deep rest the Tritonian maiden, without concealing her divinity and with threatening words, says...*

**ingens ... templum ... in arce** Cf. the temple that Dido is building for Juno at Verg. *A.*
Notes to 30–93

1.446–447 *hic templum Junoni ingens* Sidonia Dido / condebat (with *surgebant* at 1.448); see Intr. 30–93 fn.17. The line is possibly a reminiscence of the temple at Castrum Minervae, the first sight that Aeneas and his men have of Italy; cf. *A. 3.531 templumque apparet in arce Minervae*. The line ending may also pick up Ovid’s line on the place where the Palladium was kept in Troy: *Fast. 6.429 inclusam summa tenet Ilus in arce*.

*surgebant* Possibly ‘stood high’, ‘reared’ (*OLD s.v. 7, Prop. 2.31.9*), but it is more probable that the temple was still under construction (‘was being erected’, *OLD s.v. 6a*); cf. 110 *surgebat vinea* and 659–660 *tumulus ... surgit*, and Dido’s temple (see the prev.n.).

Laomedontaeae ‘Trojan’, after king Laomedon, the father of Priam; for *Laomedonteus*, cf. 1.543, 7.437, 8.172, 17.4, Verg. *G*. 1.502, *A*. 4.542, Ov. *Met*. 11.196, V.Fl. 2.474, Mart. 8.6.5; Silius is the only poet not to use this epithet as a reference to Laomedon himself and/or his treachery (except possibly at 8.172). Cf. also *Laomedontius* at *A. 7.105* and 8.18 (also simply ‘Trojan’; for the last passage, see Intr. 30–93 with fn.20), and *Laomedontiades* at Verg. *A. 3.248*, 8.158, 8.162, Sil. 10.629, Juv. 6.326.

*ingrata* This anticipates Minerva’s rejection of the temple at 58–62.


*nec celata deam* A reference to the habitude of gods to appear to mortals disguised; cf. esp. (with Spaltenstein) Verg. *A. 2.591 confessa deam*, of Venus, who appears to Aeneas with the same intent—to correct him (see Intr. 30–93 with fn.23). For the use of *dea* (‘godhood’), cf. *A. 1.405 et vera incessu patuit dea*, 12.634 *fallis dea* and with similar constructions Ov. *Fast. 6.507 dissimulata deam* (also at Stat. *Silv*. 1.2.14), and V.Fl. 7.211 *mutata deam*; for *deus* cf. *7.194 haud ultra latuit deus* and *Ov. Met.* 12.601 *fassusque deum*. For the construction, see also 120 *exuta feram*.

*Tritonia virgo* I.e. Minerva. Sinon also calls her *Tritonia* when he tells of the ominous signs after the theft of the Palladium (*A. 2.171 nec dubiis ea signa dedit Tritonia monstros*), and thus at a similar stage of the story as here. Cf. also *Tritonia Pallas* at *A. 5.704*, in connection to Nautes, whose family took care of the Palladium (see Serv. *ad loc.* and *ad Aen*. 2.166). The name refers to the legend that the goddess was born at the Libyan lake Tritonis (3.322–324, 9.297 *Pallas Libycis Tritonidos edita lymphis*, Mela 1.36; see *RE* 7A.1.245.6ff. for Greek sources; Lucan at 9.350–354 tells instead that she first saw the earth there). It is this connection with Africa that explains her protection of Hannibal at Cannae (9.437–485; cf. the juxtaposition of *Tritonia Poeno* at 9.439, and *Tritonia virgo* at 9.479 just before her return to heaven); even so, she supports Rome, where her image is placed (9.530–531 *nostro cum pignore regnet Roma, et Palladio sedes hac urbe locarim*). For Minerva’s role, see Intr. 30–93.


58–63

“non haec, Tydide, tantae pro laudis honore digna paras; non Garganus nec Daunia tellus debentur nobis. quaere in Laurentibus arvis
qui nunc prima locant melioris moenia Troiae.
huc vittas castumque refer penetrale parentum.”
quis trepidus monitis Saturnia regna capessit.

58–60a “Not these things, son of Tydeus, that you prepare are worthy of the honour of such a glorious item; not the Garganus or Daunus’ land is destined to me.

The references to Garganus and the Daunia tellus should remind Dasius’ addressee Hannibal of Cannae (which he also names Daunia tellus at 9, see n.). At 9.212–213 Hannibal had told his men that while being at Garganus Daunique ... ora, in reality they were standing at the walls of Rome; here, his misconception comes to light. Minerva’s protection at Cannae was only temporary, and her favour is not with the land of Diomedes, the place of Hannibal’s greatest victory, but with Rome. Hannibal’s identification with Diomedes means that fate (cf. debentur) and the gods are against him.

**tantae pro laudis honore** Diomedes is denied the honour (honore) of housing the renowned Palladium (laus). Duff seems to think that she refuses to be worshipped at this temple (‘not adequate to do honour to such great glory, i.e. as mine’), but line 62 makes clear that her instruction relates to the objects that Diomedes took from Troy. For laus of a famous object, cf. Stat. Theb. 2.295 *vultus hac laude colebas* (of the necklace of Harmonia) and probably Aetna 569.

**non ... debentur** Not ‘no fitting place’ (Duff), but ‘not fated’; it is destiny that the Palladium should reside in Rome. Cf. with similar topographical names and line structure Verg. *A. 4*.275–276 *cui regnum Italiae Romanaque tellus / debentur* (of Ascanius).

Garganus A mountain in Apulia, protruding into the Adriatic sea. It is close to ancient Arpi; cf. Diomedes’ foundation of the city in the *Gargani ... Iapygis agris* (Verg. *A. 11*.247). It is also near Cannae (8.629, 9.34) and thus stands for the battlefield itself (9.212, 9.483 *Gargani ... arva*, 17.600).

60b–61 *Seek out in the land of Laurentum the people who now place the first foundations of a better Troy.*

Another intertext is added to the story: Aeneas’ vision of the god Tiber and his visit to Euander in *Aeneid 8*; see Intr. 30–93 with fn.20 and n.68b–70 below.

**Laurentibus arvis** The country of Latinus, king of Laurentum, where Aeneas arrived and built his own city Lavinia. For the phrase, cf. Verg. *A. 7*.661–662, 9.100, 12.24 and Stat. *Silv*. 4.2.2 *qui magnum Aenean Laurentibus intulit arvis* (i.e. Vergil); cf. also *A. 8*.38 *solo Laurenti arvisque Latinis*.

**prima locant ... moenia prima** is dominant; the meaning is ‘the first parts of the walls’, viz. the foundations. Cf. Aeneas’ misguided founding activities in Thrace at *A. 3*.17 moenia prima loco.

The Loeb edition replaces locant with locat, presumably as a more explicit reference to Aeneas (71 Anchisiade). Silius’ plural, however, is adopted from *A. 8*.51–53, where Tiber urges Aeneas to seek an alliance with the Arcades ... qui ... posuere ... urbem; cf. Vergil’s qui ... hos (8.56) with Silius’ qui ... huc (62).

**melioris ... Troiae** Literally Lavinium (nunc ... locant), but Rome is intended; cf. V.Fl. 2.573 *genus Aeneadum et Troiae melioris honores*, also of the future Rome. melior means ‘with a better future’ (cf. Buthrotum, the city of Helenus and Andromache: *A. 3*.497–499
Notes to 30–93

_Troiamque ..., melioribus ... auspiciis; see n.71–74_. The phrase implies that this new host of the Palladium will not fall, and that Hannibal’s efforts are fruitless.

62 There you must bring the fillets and chaste guardian of their ancestors.

_vittas castumque ... penetrale_ Cf. Verg. _A._ 2.296–297, where Aeneas is entrusted with _vittas Vestamque potentem / aeternumque ... ignem_, from the _adytis ... penetralibus_, to bring to Italy and the new Troy. Silius has replaced the image of Vesta (for which see Austin _ad loc._) with the Palladium, which was also kept by the Vestal virgins. The phrase also echoes Diomedes’ defilement of the Palladium and its _virgineas ... vittas_ (A. 2.168; cf. Spaltenstein, Ripoll 2001b: 360 n.25). _castum_ picks up _virgineas_, referring to Minerva’s chastity, which was also demanded of the Vestals, but is also ‘holy’ (see n.441b–444 _castae ... imago Sybillae_).

Minerva’s image is similar to the _penates_ (see n.51–53 _penates_), which were sometimes called the _dei penetrales_ (OLD _penetralis_ 2b, _TLL_ 10.1.1.1061.20–27); the neuter adjective is here used as a substantive, as at 1.668 _sacra domumque feren et avi penetralia Turni_. Of the Palladium, cf. especially Ov. _Met._ 13.337 _signum penetrale Minervae_ and Stat. _Silv._ 5.3.179 _Diomedei .. penetralia furti_.

_parentum_ ‘ancestors’, notably not those of Diomedes (the subject of _refer_), but of the Trojans. The word should probably suggest that the Trojans had a better claim to the Palladium than Diomedes, since it was their heirloom.

63 Worried by these warnings, he makes for Saturnus’ realm.

_Saturnia regna_ I.e. Latium, so called because Saturn found refuge there after he had been driven away by Jupiter, and ruled over the populace (the ‘Golden Age’); cf. e.g. Verg. _A._ 8.319ff., Ov. _Fast._ 1.235ff. In _Aeneid_ 11, Diomedes urges the people of Latium to make peace with Aeneas, calling them _fortunatae gentes, Saturnia regna_ (11.252), until then untouched by war. For the phrase, cf. also Verg. _Ecl._ 4.6, 6.41, _Sil._ 3.184, 17.380.

64–70

_iam Phryx condebat Lavinia Pergama victor_
_armaque Laurenti figebat Troia luco._

65
_verum ubi Tyrrheni perventum ad fluminis undas_
_castraque Tydides posuit fulgentia ripa,_
_Priamidae intremuere metu. tum pignora pacis_
_prataetends dextra ramum canentis olivae_
_sic orsus Dauni gener inter murmura Teucrum:_

64–65 The Trojan, being victorious, was already founding the Pergama of Lavinium and mounting Trojan arms in the Laurentian grove.

In these lines we find twice a juxtaposition of ‘Trojan’ and ‘Latin’ (_Phryx ~ Lavinia, Laurenti ~ Troia_); Troy is built anew in Latium (Spaltenstein compares _A._ 4.344, 7.322, 10.58 _rediciva Pergama_). The connecting element is _Pergama_: the citadel of Aeneas’ city Lavinium recalls that of Troy, which emphasizes that this is the rightful place for the Palladium (see n.36–38a _Teucra ... Pergama_). Line 65 is nearly a ‘golden line’; the juxtaposition of adjectives with the ‘wrong’ substantive (_arma Laurenti, Troia luco_) suggests, like _Lavinia Pergama_, the mingling of Trojans and Latins.
The story is set just after the end of the *Aeneid*; Aeneas is *victor* over the Rutulians, of which the name *Lavinia* (referring to his wife, the price of the war) also testifies (cf. Ripoll 2001b: 360). In Sil. 1.42ff., Juno fired Hannibal’s heart by foretelling his many victories over the Romans, a recompense for Aeneas’ success in the ‘previous epic’: 1.44 *sceptraque fundarit victor Lavinia Teurcis.* Hannibal now learns that the tale did not end there; Aeneas received the Palladium after the war, and his own victories can therefore never be total.

But *condebat ... victor* is foremost an allusion to Diomedes’ own city-building activities in the *Aeneid*; just as he here comes to Aeneas when the latter is building his city, the embassy from the Latins reaches Diomedes himself as he founds Arpi after a victory (*A. 11.247 victor Gargani condebat lapygis agris*; cf. Spaltenstein, Ripoll 2001b: 361). In the *Aeneid*, Diomedes is already able to build his city when Aeneas cannot yet do so; in the *Punica*, it turns out that Diomedes is thus acting the wrong part and that the Trojan city is the fated one; see n.51–53 *Oenotris ... finibus.*

**Phryx** A common designation in the *Aeneid* and elsewhere for ‘Trojan’; in the *Punica*, cf. of Aeneas and/or his men 1.91, 8.134, 8.163, 8.358, 9.73, 12.706, 14.45, of the Trojan war 7.120 and 15.280, and more generally ‘Phrygian’ 7.437, 7.465 (both of the judgment of Paris), 8.503, 11.430 and 17.3. Silius sometimes also refers to the Romans as Phrygians, being heirs of Troy; cf. 1.106, 1.514, 2.352, 8.240, 13.748 (see n. ad loc.).

**Lavinia** For the epithet, cf. Verg. *A. 1.2–3 Laviniaque ... litora* (but a variant is *Lavinaque*; cf. Prop. 2.34.64 *Lavinis*), 4.236 *arva*, Luc. 9.991 *sedes*, Sil. 1.44 *sceptra* and 10.438 *regna.*

**arma ... figebat Troia** At the beginning of the *Aeneid*, Venus compares the troubles of Aeneas with the peace enjoyed by his countryman Antenor, who has founded Patavium and *armaque fixit / Troia* (*A. 1.248–249*); after the *Aeneid*, Aeneas has also attained this peace, which the dedication of his weapons symbolizes, the symbolic end of his military life. The coming of Diomedes seems to disrupt this new-found peace (cf. *Saturnia regna*, the land without war) with his *castra ... fulgentia*; but the Trojan fears are idle.

**Laurenti ... luco** By dedicating his arms in a grove, Aeneas anticipates the gesture of the other father of the Romans, Romulus, who after his first victory (cf. *victor*) hung the weapons of his enemy, the *spolia opima*, on a sacred oak on the Capitoline hill (Liv. 1.10.5–7).

This may be the same *lucus* that Latinus visited for the oracles of his father Faunus (Spaltenstein; cf. *A. 7.82–83 lucosque sub alta ... Albunea*); there, the future greatness of the descendants of Aeneas was foretold (*A. 7.96–101*). Aeneas’ dedication of Trojan weapons in this grove would be another reminder of the glory of ‘new Troy’ at the expense of Hannibal.

66–68a But when they arrived at the waves of the Tyrrhenian stream and Tydeus’ son pitched his glittering camp on its bank, the heirs of Priam trembled with fear.

For the allusion to *Aeneid* 8, see n.68b–70. Ripoll (2001b: 364) observes the reversal of roles in the underworld scene in *Aeneid* 6, where the shades of the Greeks tremble at the sight of Aeneas in arms: *A. 6.489–491 at Danaum proceres Agamemnoniaque phalanges / ut videre virum fulgentiaque arma per umbras, / ingenti trepidare metu.* Silius imitates both the sentence structure (with a setting in two lines marked by *ut / ubi* and a perfect tense, and then the main clause in a hemistich) and the diction (besides *fulgentia* and *metu* also *trepidare ~ intremuere*). For the similarity of Diomedes to Aeneas, see Intr. 30–93.
Tyrrheni ... fluminis The Tiber; cf. 6 Tuscis undis (with n.). For Tyrrhenus of the Tiber, cf. only Verg. A. 7.240 Thybrim and 7.663 Tyrrheno ..., in flumine.

dastra ... fulgentia As Duff notes “He brought with him soldiers whose weapons glittered”. For the phrase, cf. Hor. Carm. 1.7.18–19 fulgentia signis castra.

Priamidæ ‘sons of Priam’; these Trojans are heir to the realm of Priam, but they now fear that they are also heir to the war that Priam fought with Diomedes.

68b–70 Then, holding out in his right hand the token of peace, a branch of white olive, the son-in-law of Daunus spoke these words amidst the murmurings of the Trojans.

As Spaltenstein notes, these lines allude to Aeneas’ visit to Euander. Like the Trojans here, the Arcadians are afraid at the coming of Aeneas’ ships (A. 8.109 terrentur visu subito; cf. 68 intremuere metu); but Aeneas holds out an olive branch, the sign of peace (A. 8.116 paciferaeque manu ramum praetendit olivae). Diomedes also speaks from his ship (A. 8.115 puppi ... ab alta; 78 de puppe). His call to shake hands in alliance (76 dextras iungamus inermes) reflects a similar gesture between Aeneas and Pallas (A. 8.124 dextramque amplexus) and Euander (A. 8.467 iungunt dextras).

pignora pacis The phrase is otherwise used of persons; cf. Verg. A. 11.363 pacis solum inviolabile pignus (of Lavinia), of a hostage Ov. Met. 8.48, 12.365, Liv. 2.13.9, 9.15.7, 36.40.2, 40.15.8, Sil. 10.494 (of Cloelia, as at Liv. 2.13.9), and of children [Sen.] Oct. 279 and 938.

canentis olivae The olive tree has white flowers; its leaves are silvery green. canentis may refer to either, but presumably the latter. Cf. for the same epithet (in the same sedes) Ov. Met. 6.81 and Stat. Theb. 3.466; cf. also Juv. 14.144 densa montem qui canet oliva. Cf. with albus also Ov. Her. 11.67 r amisque albentis olivae and of the olives themselves (our ‘green’ olive) Cels. 4.27, Petr. 31.9, Plin. Nat. 23.73 and 74; with pallens cf. Verg. Ecl. 5.16 and Ciris 148.

Dauni gener Diomedes; see n.38b–40 socero ... Dauno.

inter murmura Teucrum Duff strangely translates “while the Trojans muttered in displeasure”; surely their murmurings were rather of amazement at the sight of their old enemy coming in peace, or perhaps of fear (cf. 78 trepidi). The phrase may well allude to the reaction in Latium to Diomedes’ words (as reported by their envoys; see Intr. 30–93); cf. Verg. A. 11.296–297 Ausonidum turbata fremor ceu ... murmur. The Latins, like the Trojans, are insecure (A. 11.300 trepida ora).

71–78 “pone, Anchisiade, memores irasque metusque. quicquid ad Idaeos Xanthum Simoentaque nobis sanguine sudatum Scaeaeque ad limina portae, haud nostrum est: egere dei duraeque sorores. nunc age, quod superest cur non melioribus aevi 75 ducibus auspiciis? dextras iungamus inermes. foederis en haec testis erit.” veniamque precatus Trojanam ostentat trepidis de puppe Minervam.

71 Son of Anchises, lay down your anger and fear from memory.

The next lines have Diomedes’ speech in Aeneid 11 as their intertext; see Intr. 30–93.

memores irasque metusque The poet plays with the shared memories of his character and the reader of the Iliad, which Vergil also did (see Intr. 30–93 with fn.21). Diomedes does not wish a reproduction of the Iliad, just as much as Juno does wish one in the Aeneid (cf. A. 1.4 saevae memorem lunonis ob iram). In the Punica, Juno imbues Hannibal with her hatred for yet another reproduction of the great war; Diomedes’ peace overture makes clear, however, that Hannibal cannot rely on him as a model for his own war.

irasque metusque covers both parties of the peace treaty: “do not use aggression against me, and fear no aggression from my part”. For the same combination of wrath and fear, cf. Luc. 10.443 iraeque metusque, Sil. 13.173, 14.103.

72–74 Whatever we performed with blood and sweat at the Idaean Xanthus and Simoeis and by the Scaean gate, it is not our work: the gods and the harsh sisters drove us.

Compare Diomedes’ words at Aeneid 11.288 quidquid apud durae cessatum est moenia Troiae. The reminiscence is interwoven with echoes of Aeneid 3, of Buthrotum, the other ‘new Troy’; cf. the mention of the Trojan rivers Xanthus and Simois and the Scaean gate with A. 3.302 falsi Simoentis ad undam and 3.350–351 arentem Xanthi cognomine rivum / agnosco, Scaeaque amplector limina portae. Other allusions to Buthrotum are found at 61 melioris ... Troiae and 75–76 melioribus ... auspicii (cf. A. 3.497–499 Troiamque ..., melioribus ... auspicii). Diomedes’ offering of the Palladium shows that Aeneas’ city is far more a ‘new Troy’ than Buthrotum, even if the latter carries the old names.

For Diomedes’ claim at 74 haud nostrum est: egere dei duraeque sorores, Miniconi-Devallet compare Hom. II. 3.164 οὔ τί μοι αἰτίη ἐσσί, θεοί νῦ μοι αἴτιοι εἰσιν, where Priam frees Helen of guilt for the Trojan war. Priam’s words seem more magnanimous, however, than Diomedes’, now that Troy has been destroyed. The claim emphasizes that the fall of Troy had been willed by the gods and fate; Rome, however, is to prosper. With haud nostrum est, Diomedes urges Aeneas not to hold him personally responsible and to be open to his overtures of friendship.

Idaeos The epithet, referring to mount Ida near Troy, covers both Xanthum and Simoenta. Diomedes uses the same adjective at A. 11.285. In the Punica, cf. 1.126, 3.207, 12.155, 17.22.

sanguine sudatum sanguine et sudore is the Latin equivalent of our ‘with blood, sweat and tears’, of great toil; cf. for the expression (with Otto s.v. sudor) Enn. trag. 18 (Vahlen) (quoted at Cic. Off. 1.18.61), Liv. 2.48.2, 7.38.6, Cic. Agr. 2.16, 2.69, V.Max. 7.6.1, Sen. Ep. 67.12, Plin. Ep. 2.7.1; cf. also Lucr. 5.1129 in cassum defessi sanguine sudent.

Scaeaque ad limina portae In the Aeneid, the phrase limen portae is mostly used for the gates of Troy (2.242 ipso in limine portae, 2.752 obscuraque limina portae, 2.803 limina portarum, 3.351 cited above; cf. also 9.687 portae ... in limine, of the besieged Trojan camp, the ‘re-enacted’ Troy). For the same phrase (and often similar Vergilian line ending) cf. lines 207 and 725 (with nn.), 7.49, 12.172–173, Phaed. 14.12, V.Fl. 1.676 patriaeque amplecti limina portae, Stat. Theb. 3.53, 8.56, 10.652, 11.339, 11.665, 12.558, Ach. 1.726, Silv. 4.4.63–64.

duraeque sorores The Parcae, ‘fate’; cf. the same phrase at 1.281, Sen. Her.F. 182 and Stat. Silv. 2.3.75. They are commonly described by the epithet durus and other words meaning ‘cruel’, ‘hateful’.
75–76a Now come, why do we not spend what remains of our life under happier auspices?

**nunc age quod superest** Cf. the same line opening at Lucr. 1.921, which introduces his justification of his philosophy’s poetic mould. *nunc age* is a didactic phrase (Lucretius 15 instances, Manilius 4); Vergil uses it to mark certain didactic passages (G. 4.149, A. 6.756; cf. Calp. Ecl. 5.95), but also (since it is a marker of explicit authorial structuring) for the second half of his epic (A. 7.37), as do Silius (11.1) and Statius (Thrb. 7.628); cf. invocations of the Muses at key moments at Ciris 98, Stat. Theb. 9.315 and 10.628, or without the Muses at Hor. Ep. 1.14.31, S. 2.3.224 and Stat. Silv. 1.1.8. While the phrase is also found a few times as a simple exhortative, as here (Ov. Met. 12.490, Calp. Ecl. 3.22, 3.92, V.Fl. 7.467, 8.74, Stat. Theb. 10.904), the close correspondence with Lucretius’ line suggests that Silius hints at his own poetic creation (like Lucretius), in which he casts Diomedes as an alternative Aeneas (see Intr. 30–93) and more generally at his own “Weiterdichtung” (for the term see Santini 1991) of the *Iliad* and Aeneid in telling the fate of the new Troy under *melioribus auspiciis*.

For *quod superest ... aevi*, cf. the same phrase in Ov. Fast. 6.416, just prior to Ovid’s narration of the history of the Palladium. For other echoes of Ovid’s rendering in Fast. 6.419ff., cf. 42 *armisonae* and 49 *caeleste* (6.421 *armiferae signum caeleste Minervae*), 54 *in arce* (6.429 *summa tenet Ilus in arce*), and of his version in the Metamorphoses cf. 52–53 *Phrygium ... numen* and 63 *penetrale* (Met. 13.337 *Phrygiae signum penetrale Minervae*).

**melioribus ... auspiciis** See n.72–74 for the echo of Aeneid 3, in the context of the new Troy built in Buthrotum. It may be possible to read *melioribus ... auspiciis* metapoetically: ‘in an epic in which (a new) Troy does not fall, and the Greeks are not its enemies’, viz. in the *Aeneid*, and in the Punica, unlike the *Iliad*. Cf. also 74 *haud nostrum est*: ‘in the *Iliad* Diomedes and Aeneas were enemies, but not in my epic’.

For the ‘better auspices’ of Aeneas in Italy, cf. also Hor. Carm. 4.6.23–24 potiore ...

76b Let us join hands without weapons.

Diomedes’ call to join hands recalls Aeneas’ alliance with Euander; see n.68b–70. The gesture and phrase are used for *xenia*, guest friendship; cf. Verg. A. 3.83 *iungimus hospitio dextras*, Ov. Met. 6.447–448, Liv. 23.9.3; cf. also Stat. Theb. 6.290, of a (false) reconciliation.

*inermes* (‘without a weapon’, hence ‘in peace’) seems a reminiscence of Aeneas’ failed attempt at peace at A. 12.311 *pius Aeneas dextram tendebat inermem*.

77a Look, she will be the witness of our treaty.

The image of Minerva is here identified with the goddess herself (see also n.79–81). Gods were commonly called upon as witnesses of a *foedus* (cf. e.g. Ov. Met. 7.46–47, Liv. 21.10.3, 44.15.5), since they could act as avengers if the treaty was broken; cf. e.g. Verg. A. 12.496 *loveum et laesi testatus foederis aras* (cf. Sil. 6.692–693, 17.86–87), Liv. 6.29.2, 8.6.1, 8.7.5, 10.39.16, 26.8.5, 28.44.7, Sen. Pho. 282. This divine backing is an important motif both in Livy’s third decade and in the Punica, as Hannibal had broken the treaties with Rome sworn before the gods (cf. Sil. 1.9 *iuratumque lovi foedus*, 2.273–274 *movet inimicus foedesque fidesque / et testes superi iurataque pacta parentum*, 11.161; see Intr. 705–761 on Hamilcar’s praise).
77b–78 And asking for forgiveness he shows from the stern the Trojan Minerva to the trembling men.


Troianam ... Minervam The phrase may have been taken from Luc. 1.598 (same sedes), also of the Palladium. Cf. also Ov. Met. 13.337 Phrygiae signum penetrat Minervae.

de puppe This is the only indication that Diomedes had come by ship, in imitation of Aeneas himself; see n.68b–70.

79–81

haec ausos Celtas irrumpere moenia Romae

corripuit leto neque tot de milibus unum

ingentis populi patrias dimisit ad aras.’

79–81 This goddess carried off with death the Celts who had dared to penetrate the walls of Rome and of that great multitude she sent none out of so many thousands back to the shrines of his people.

Dasius’ last comment, that the Palladium was responsible for stopping the Gallic siege of Rome in 390 BC, is a final blow to Hannibal’s plans. The Senones (led by Brennus) had been the only enemy in history who had posed a threat to Rome similar to his own; they had even taken the walls, something that Hannibal as yet has failed to do. The Gauls therefore often serve as models for the Carthaginians in the Punica. Hannibal’s ally Crixus portrays himself as the heir of Brennus (4.150–153, 4.279–281); the disastrous battle of the Allia in 390 is remembered at lake Trasimene (6.555–556; cf. 1.547) and Cannae (8.642, 8.647); Hannibal incites his troops before Rome by reminding them of the Gallic incursion (12.583–584). Cf. also the epithet infandi for the Senones at 4.160 and 6.555, and the etymology of the river Sena at 8.452 and 15.552, not coincidentally mentioned at the battle of the Metaurus.

But the eventual Roman victory over the Gauls (foreshadowing that over Hannibal) is also alluded to throughout the epic; cf. the spoils in the senate house (1.624–626) and in particular the figure of Camillus, who is presented as a model by Fabius (7.557ff.) and appears to Scipio in the underworld (13.722); Scipio’s victory makes him equal to Camillus in merit (17.652). When Hannibal here learns that the Palladium has repelled the Gauls, whose role he replays, he therefore understands he cannot take the city.

ausos ... corripuit Cf. Sinon’s narration of the theft of the Palladium at Verg. A. 2.167–168 corripuere sacram effigiem manibusque cruentis / virgineas ausi divae contingere vittas; Silius suggests that the attack on Rome is a defilement of the Palladium; in revenge, Minerva similarly ‘snatches away’ those who would harm her charge. corripere in this sense usually has ‘death’ as its subject (TLL 4.1044.9ff.; cf. e.g. Curt. 6.618 morte correptus); a somewhat comparable instance is Sen. Pha. 665 domus sorores una corripuit duas.

The participle ausos may also evoke passages describing the attack of the Giants or Titans on Olympus; cf. Ov. Met. 5.348 aetheras ausum sperare Typhoea sedes, Fast. 3.439 ausos caelum adfectare Gigantas, Sen. Her.F. 79 Titanas ausos rumpere imperium Iovis. For the frequent association of assaulting Rome with Gigantomachy in the Punica, see n.591–594; cf. also the Gaul Crixus as a Giant at 4.275–276.
moenia Romae Cf. Verg. A. 1.7 altae moenia Romae and (of Caesar’s similar conquest of Rome) Luc. 3.90, 3.98 and 3.298; the phrase is very frequent in Silius, in most cases of Hannibal’s campaign against the city.

neque tot de milibus unum Cf. Livy, who in his account of the defeat of the Gauls at the hand of Camillus writes that no man remained to tell the tale (5.49.6 ne nuntius quidem cladis relictus; Spaltenstein). For the phrase, cf. Ov. Met. 1.325–326 superesse virum de tot modo milibus unum (Deuclaison), 13.241 de tot Graiorum milibus unum (Ulysses), Stat. Theb. 6.734 tot juvenum de milibus unum; cf. also Sil. 10.521–522 qui tot mihi milibus unus / maior laetitiae causa es. These parallels show that the genitive ingentis populi (cf. Graiorum, juvenum and probably virum) is to be taken with milibus rather than aras.

patrias ... ad aras I.e. ‘home’. The mention of aras suggests that the Gauls had polluted the sanctity of Rome or of the Palladium and as a consequence cannot return to their own shrines, just as many Greeks were killed during their home journey after the sack of Troy, as is narrated by Diomedes at A. 11.255–277; compare Diomedes himself, who suffered the divine wrath as he tried to return home (A. 11.269 patriis ut redditus aris; cf. also 11.270 optatum coniugium with 83 optato ... abitu here).

82–93

his fractus ductor convelli signa maniplis
optato laetis abitu iubet. itur in agros,
dives ubi ante omnes colitur Feronia luco
et sacer umectat Flavinia rura Capenas.
fama est intactas longaevi ab origine fani
crevisse in medium congéstis undique donis
immensum per tempus opes lustrisque relictum
innumeris aurum solo servante pavore.
hac avidas mentes ac barbara corda rapina
polluit atque arnat contemptu pectora divum.
avia tunc longinquæ placent, quæ sulcat aratro
ad freta porrectis Trinacria Bruttius arvis.

82–83a Defeated by this news, the general orders that the standards be plucked up, and the maniples were glad of the desired departure.

Silius draws a sharp contrast between Hannibal’s eagerness to return to Rome and his men’s eagerness to leave (fractus against optato laetis abitu). A similar contrast between the general and his troops is found in 17.211ff., for which see Intr. 1–29 fn.6.

his fractus Cf. 7.253 his dictis fractus furor, where Fabius calms his men; the simile which there follows is here counterbalanced by the simile of 24–29 (see n.). The movement is thus completely opposite; in book 7, Fabius calms his men with his words and their fury is broken; here, Hannibal rouses his men, but after the words of Dasius, his own fury is broken (or at least shown to be in vain).

convelli signa The words echo 3.220 edicit convellere signa, the start of Hannibal’s march on Italy and Rome. Here a new campaign begins, but it is not a second attempt on Rome, as Hannibal had wished (see Intr. 1–29), but a disappointing retreat to southern Italy, and ultimately Africa. At 8.240 Hannibal is said to pull up his standards (vellantur) to begin
the battle of Cannae; at 12.729 they are pulled up in retreat from Rome (avelli, 12.733 revelli).

For the expression, cf. with vellere 5.66 and 5.89–90, Verg. G. 4.108, A. 11.19, Ov. Am. 3.15.16, Liv. 3.50.11; convellere Cic. Div. 1.77, Liv. 3.7.3, 3.54.10, 5.37.4, 7.39.16, 22.3.11, 25.21.1, V.Max. 1.6.6, 3.2.20, Suet. Claud. 13.2; evellere Cic. Div. 2.67; revellere Luc. 7.77.

83b–85 They go to the country where before all others rich Feronia is honoured in her grove, and holy Capenas waters the fields of Flavina.

Feronia was an ancient Italian deity, presumably agricultural in origin (Latte 1960: 189), who had a sanctuary (the lucus Feroniae) near Capena, at the foot of mount Soracte, northeast of Rome (cf. Strab. 5.2.9). For its wealth (84 dives ... ante omnes), see n.86–89. For its location, see Taylor 1920.

In diction, syntax, metre and sound, line 85 et sacer umectat Flavinia rura Capenas resembles Verg. G. 4.126 qua niger umectat flaventia culta Galaeus. The echo from one of Vergil’s great descriptions of the beautiful countryside draws attention to Hannibal’s pillaging and destruction, just as in book 7, where as Littlewood (2011: xxxviii–xliv) has shown, Hannibal is laying waste to the Italy of the Georgics. The epithet sacer underpins his impiety. By destroying the countryside, Hannibal shows his difference from Diomedes, who had changed his ways since the Iliad in favour of pastoral peace and praises the Latins because they work the land without war (A. 11.252; see Littlewood ad Sil. 7.484). The same motif (contrast between pastorality / agriculture and warfare) plays again at 314–347, where Pan prevents the Romans from destroying the (agricultural) wealth of Capua; see Intr. 299–347.

Now if Feronia, with its intertextual resonances (see also n.86–89 for an echo of Helvius Cinna), is a poetic site, we might read 83 itur in agros metapoetically. The verb is ambiguous (Hannibal both goes to and ‘attacks’ the countryside), and could well be an echo of Vergil’s itur in antiquam silvam (A. 6.179), whose metapoetic significance has been demonstrated by Hinds (1998: 11–13). Here, itur in agros emphasizes that Hannibal ventures into (and against) the territory of the Georgics. His barbarous plunder (90 rapina) corresponds amusingly to Silius’ ‘theft’ from Vergil and Cinna (perhaps an erudite nod to Vergil’s alleged response to his detractors that it is easier to steal Hercules’ club than to steal a line from Homer).

ante omnes This goes with colitur rather than dives (so also Spaltenstein); cf. Ov. Fast. 3.79 ante omnes Martem coluere priores, Sil. 12.332–333 ante omnes altaria fument / centum festa Iovi, and 13.429–430 ater operto / ante omnes taurus regi. Silius uses the phrase 17 times, whereas it is rare in other poetry and is found mostly with prose writers (Livy 18 times, Plin. Nat. 13).

Feronia luco Cf. Verg. A. 7.800 viridi gaudens Feronia luco. The juxtaposition plays on the general name of the sanctuary, the lucus Feroniae (Liv. 26.11.8, 27.4.15, Plin. Nat. 3.51; Cato Orig. fr. 1.26 [Jordan] attests the older name lucus Capenatis).

Flavinia This is Latinius’ conjecture for the mss. fluvialia; cf. (with Delz) Verg. A. 7.696–697 hi Soractis habent arces Flaviniaque arva / et Cimini cum monte lacum lucosque Capenos. It refers to the town Flavina (8.490; the name Flavinium in RE 6.2414.67ff. seems to be erroneously construed on the basis of the adjective). The river Capenas rose nearby;
Taylor (1920: 33) explains “the Capenas, which from its name may be supposed to have passed near the town [Capena], is probably to be identified with the Fosso di San Martino (or Gramiccia) which flows past Civitucola and rises in a spring just below the church of S. Abbondio...”. The reference to nearby Flavina and the name of the river are included to counterbalance Vergil’s flaventia ... Galaesus (see above), rather than to pinpoint the exact location of the sanctuary (as Nissen 1883–1902: 2.1.369–370 and others think).

86–89 Tradition has it that from the beginning of this ancient sanctuary its wealth has grown undisturbed as during time immeasurable gifts from all around were heaped up and that the gold was left alone during innumerable years with fear as its sole guard.

Hannibal was attracted by the rumoured wealth of Feronia; cf. Liv. 26.11.8–9 [Hannibal] inde ad lucum Feroniae pergit ire, templum ea tempestate inclutum divitias. Capenates aliique <qui> accolae eius erant primitias frugum eo donaque alia pro copia portantes multo auro argentoque id exornatum habebant. “Thence he proceeded to the grove of Feronia, a shrine which at that time was noted for its wealth. The people of Capena and others who lived near it used to carry thither first-fruits and gifts in addition according to their means, and had kept it richly adorned with gold and silver.”

The length of the period in which Feronia’s wealth had been accumulated is reflected by the hyperbaton intactas ... opes, which spans three lines; similar to the growing wealth, the sentence keeps growing with more and more adjuncts until we finally reach opes.

Silius draws with a so-called ‘alexandrian footnote’ (fama est) attention to his sources, which is here not only Livy’s account, but also a poetic model. Our passage is a rather close imitation, in the same number of lines, of a passage by Helvius Cinna (fr. 6.1–4 Hollis) from his Propempticon Pollionis:

nec tam donorum ingenteis mirabere acervos
innumerabilibus congestos undique saeclis,
iam inde a Belidis natalique urbis ab anno
Cecropis atque alta Tyriorum ab origine Cadmi.

“You will not marvel so much at the huge piles of offerings, heaped up from every source over countless centuries, continuously from the sons of Belus, from the natal years of Cecrops’ city and from Cadmus, far-distant ancestor of the Thebans.” (tr. Hollis)

Hollis (who also notes Silius’ imitation) suggests that Cinna here describes the oracle of Delphi with its hoard of wealth; based on nec tam and Silius’ pavore, he argues that in the missing sequel Cinna’s Pollio would marvel at the oracle itself “and its atmosphere of religious awe”. Silius’ imitation emphasizes that Hannibal by contrast only had an eye for the riches of the temple, without the necessary religio (cf. 91 contemptu ... divum). For the theme of religious fear, see also n.90–91.

Compare also Silius’ description of the temple of Hercules at Gades at 3.17–19 vulgatum, nec cassa fides, ab origine fani / impositas durare trabes solasque per aevum / condentum novisse manus, “Men said—and it was no idle tale—that the timber, of which the temple was built at first, never decayed, and for ages never felt the handiwork of any others than the first builders.” There, Hannibal showed misplaced piety (his donis, 3.15, being spoils from Saguntum, would hardly have pleased Hercules, its patron deity); here, he falls to complete irreverence.
longaevi Also used of things at Stat. Theb. 10.864 pontis (“ancient bridge”), Silv. 1.2.126 nivibus (“long-lasting snows”), 3.1.19 opus (“a work built to last”).


solo servante pavore Cf. Verg. A. 2.715 religione patrum multos servata per annos (of the cypress near Troy) and 7.60 multosque metu servata per annos (of the laurel of Laurentum). pavor is ‘religious fear’, i.e. of divine vengeance if the gold would be stolen.

90–91 With the plundering of this sanctuary he taints their greedy minds and their barbarian hearts and arms their minds with contempt of the gods.

Livy tells a different story at 26.11.9; Hannibal’s soldiers did spoil the temple, but full of fear for the goddess’ wrath (religione inducti) left lumps of aes rude to appease her. Silius strongly emphasizes Hannibal’s impiety, or rather his battle against the Roman gods; cf. 1.58 nullus divum pudor, and in the preceding book 12.516–517 (where he sacrifices Capua for the chance to remove Jupiter), and 12.712–724 (the gods’ defence of Rome against Hannibal). Just after the story of the Palladium, the choice of verb—polluit—is notable. The Greeks were punished for their defilement of the Palladium and Troy in general (cf. n.79–81 ausos ... corripuit and A. 11.255ff.); it may be implied that the Carthaginians’ desecration of a temple (in lieu of Rome) diminishes their chances of returning home safely.

armat contemptu pectora divum Hannibal contrasts with the faithful Decius of Capua, whom is said to possess armatumque fide pectus (11.206); for a similar intratextual contrast with Decius see n.874b–875. Like Vergil’s Mezentius or Statius’ Capaneus, Hannibal is a contemptor deorum (see Intr. 1–29 for the correspondences in his behaviour with Capaneus); here, he tries to inspire his men to be the same. Hannibal’s defiance of the gods remains great, despite the story of the Palladium he has just heard, including its final lines on the divine punishment of the Gauls.

For armare of the mind, cf. also 1.188 armata dolis mens (of Hannibal) and 4.249 armat contemptu mentem necis (Crixus); see further TLL 2.619.46ff.

92–93 Then he decides upon places far off and remote, which the Bruttian cleaves with his plough on fields that stretch towards the Sicilian straits.

At 9.213–214 Hannibal notes that although Rome lies far from Cannae (licet avia longe / urbs agat), its fate will be determined on that battlefield. Now that he is at Rome, however, he moves far away again. This is not the only time that Hannibal goes to the land of the Bruttians (modern Calabria); he also does so at the opening of book 16, after the death of his brother Hasdrubal. He is there compared to a bull driven from his stall which prepares for battle far removed (16.5–6 avia ... certamina), as if for another Cannae or another siege of Rome.

The passage from book 16 and our lines should be considered together, since they have a common intertext. The simile of the retreating bull, ultimately based upon Verg. G. 3.224ff. (cf. for the bulls also A. 12.715–722; see further Fucecchi 1990b: 155–157 with n.10–12), alludes to Luc. 2.600–607, where the same comparison is made for Pompey as he withdraws to southern Italy (Fucecchi 1990b: 157–158). The same passage plays in our lines as well; Pompey’s decision to give up Rome and move south is phrased in similar
terms: Luc. 2.598–599 placuitque referri / signa (cf. also 2.605 placuere tori, and Statius’ bull simile for Polynices at Theb. 2.323ff., which closely follows Lucan’s). There the decision also follows a motivational speech by Pompey (2.531–595; cf. here 8–17), and there, too, the soldiers are averse to fighting (2.596–597; cf. here 83 optato laetis abitu). The opening of Punica 13 evokes Pompey’s departure from Italy at Luc. 3.1ff., even as Hannibal in his delusion still models himself after Caesar (see Intr. 1–29); these two passages together form the beginning of Hannibal’s transformation into a Pompey figure, still great in name but to be defeated at Pharsalus / Zama. Book 13 closes with a preview of Hannibal after Zama, in which he evokes Pompey after Pharsalus (see Intr. 850b–895); it is thus framed by the beginning and end of Hannibal’s evolvement into Pompey.

For the phraseology of 93 ad freta ... Bruttius arvis and 94 Rhegina ad litora tendit, cf. (with Spaltenstein) Livy’s rendering at 26.12.2 in Bruttium agrum ad fretum ac Regium ... contendit.

sulcat aratro I.e. ‘inhabits’; the same metaphor is present at Verg. A. 3.13 terra procul vastis colitur Mavortia campis (Thraces arant) (Spaltenstein; cf. also Stat. Theb. 5.53 Thraces arant contra); note the parallel ablatives vastis ... campis ~ porrectis ... arvis. Thrace is the first land that Aeneas visits after the fall of Troy, just as Hannibal here first goes to the land of the Bruttians after his failed siege of new Troy.

avia ... longinqua Spaltenstein adduces Liv. 26.12.12, where the Capuans complain that Hannibal moves far away so as not to have to witness Capua’s fall; but since Capua has not yet been mentioned, it is more plausible that Hannibal’s destination is far away from Rome.

freta ... Trinacria Sicily is the ‘Three-corner-country’, Trinacria; the freta are not merely the seas surrounding it (Duff), but the straits of Sicily at Regium, where Hannibal was headed (94; cf. OLD fretum 2a). For the epithet Trinacrius (i.e. ‘Sicilian’), cf. e.g. Catul. 68.53, Verg. A. 1.196 and in the Punica 3.257, 4.494, 14.11, 14.55, 14.110, 14.290, 14.614 and 15.423.
94–141 The siege of Capua and the omen of the white hind

While Hannibal moves to southern Italy, the Roman commander Fulvius returns to the siege of Capua. He reminds his troops that it brings shame that Capua still stands after all her crimes. Siege equipment is prepared, and Fulvius gives the order to attack, when suddenly a favourable omen for the Romans occurs. A white deer comes running out of the city, frightened of a pack of wolves that had entered Capua in the night. This animal had witnessed the city’s foundation, has become a pet and is cherished as a semi-divine creature by the citizens. The Romans capture the hind and sacrifice it to Diana, after which the assault begins.

Silius’ description of the fall of Capua begins in about the same way as Livy’s (see n.92–93 for the verbal echoes of Liv. 26.2.2), with first the mention of Hannibal’s departure to the area near Rhegium (modern-day Reggio di Calabria), and then the statement that Fulvius’ arrival meant bad news for the inhabitants of Capua. From there, however, Silius diverges from the accounts of Livy and other historiographers, the main distinction being that the latter describe a protracted siege, while the poet features a more epically fitting assault.1 This does not mean that we find no more Livy in the episode; Silius has incorporated various elements from his narration of the siege, for which see especially Intr. 142–178, 256–298 and 348–380.

Capua, besieged and falling victim to the Romans, is a significant city in the *Punica*. The fact that it falls is already significant, after Hannibal’s failed siege of Rome at the end of the previous book. Capua, the self-appointed successor of Rome (cf. 264–266), now meets the end it had envisaged for its rival. It is *altera Carthago*, both to Hannibal and the Romans;2 its fall foreshadows, like that of Syracuse in the next book, that of Carthage itself.3 Carthage has thus now replaced Rome as the city towards whose doom the epic moves forward. Just as Hannibal’s campaign towards Rome began at the walls of Saguntum (Rome’s representative) in books 1 and 2, so the Roman campaign towards Carthage starts here at Capua. Both structurally and ideologically, Capua counterbalances Saguntum. Silius’ descriptions of both sieges are interwoven in many ways. One of these ways is the shared intertextuality with Lucan’s narration of the siege of Massilia, which is most prominent in the present passage.

In Lucan’s *Bellum Civile*, Massilia falls to Caesar’s army because it is unwilling to break its ties of loyalty to the Republic; Lucan compares its fate, and the heroics of its inhabitants, to that of the Saguntines. Silius in turn bases his Saguntum, staunch defender of *fides*, on Lucan’s Massilia.4 Both cities are the first victim of war in the respective epics; both stand

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1 Livy (26.12) tells that Hannibal’s abandonment of Capua disheartened its citizens; when a secret attempt to send a letter to Hannibal had failed and the Romans had severely punished the messengers, the Capuans lost all hope. Appian (*Hann*. 43) ascribes the fall of the city to its lack of supplies, without hope of replenishing them. Polybius describes the siege but not the surrender of Capua.

2 Cf. 11.425 and 13.100; see n.99–103. The phrase may hint at its title of *altera Roma* in Cic. *Agr*. 2.86; Cicero plays on Capua’s potential threat as rival to Rome, aligning the city at 2.87 with Corinth and, notably, Carthage. Capua is *altera Carthago* in the sense that it wants to replace Rome. See also Cowan 2007: 25–26. Capua’s rivalry is also suggested in the hind, which is in some respects equivalent to Rome’s *lupa*; see below.

3 Cf. Küppers 1986: 184. For Capua as the representative and substitute of Carthage, see Intr. 256–298.

4 Luc. 3.349–350 *nec pavit hic populus pro libertate subire / obsessum Poeno gessit quae Marte Saguntum*, “and this people is not afraid to endure for the sake of freedom the ordeal of Saguntum besieged by Punic warfare”; the
in the path of their conquerors towards gaining dominance over Rome, imposing a delay upon their victory. The siege in both cases lasted much longer than Caesar / Hannibal had hoped for. Now that in the Punic war the scales have turned and a new campaign towards another city (Carthage) has begun, Lucan’s Massilia features again as a model for Capua, the allied city that falls first. Silius’ description of the siege engines and the ring of soldiers used for the assault clearly echo Lucan’s lines. The flight of Capua’s numinous hind counterbalances that of Saguntum’s genius, a snake, at 2.584–590, while the death of this sacred deer corresponds, to an extent, to the felling of the sacred grove of Massilia (Luc. 3.399–452). But the similarities end there; the rest of the allusion is one of contrast. Unlike Saguntum / Massilia, Capua falls almost directly; it forms no delay at all to the Romans. Being the ally, but also representative of Carthage, it represents not fides, but perfidia. The mass suicide at 256–298 which responds to that in Saguntum, which the Massilians took as their model (see fn.4 above), is not presented as heroic self-sacrifice (preferred to betrayal of loyalty), but as deserved punishment of exactly such betrayal; this will be elaborated in Intr. 256–298.

Massilia and Saguntum are not the only models for Capua; the capture of Troy and the siege of the Trojan camp in Aeneid 9 always loom behind. In this passage the groundwork is laid for the more numerous reminiscences in the subsequent scenes.

The white hind of Capua

The flight and sacrifice of the deer is clearly the focal point of this preliminary passage to the siege of Capua. The passage is important not only for its rich literary connotations but also because the death of the animal, the embodiment of the city, is highly relevant to the interpretation of the entire Capuan episode.

It is possible that Silius did not just invent this hind. A Capuan uncia from between 216–211 BC displays Hercules on one side, and on its reverse a hind suckling a boy; the image of collective suicide at 3.351–355 is developed into a full scene at Sil. 2.614–680. Cf. further e.g. Luc. 3.301–303 Phocais ... ausa est servare inuventus / ... fidem, “the Phocaean warriors ... ventured ... to preserve loyalty” and Sil. 1.330–333 iuventus ... dignam Ausonia mortut putat esse Sagunto / servata cecidisse fide, “the warriors thought that for Saguntum to fall with loyalty preserved was a death worthy of Italy”. For Silius’ interplay with Lucan, by which he presents the Hannibalic war as a civil war, see Intr. 850b–895.

For the theme of mora, cf. Luc. 3.391–392 raptisque a Caesare cunctis / vincitur una mora, “when Caesar seized all else at once it alone took time to be defeated” and Sil. 1.478–479 en, qui res Libycas inceptaque tanta retardet, Romani Murrus belli mora, “behold the man who delays the Punic war, this great enterprise: Murrus the check on the war against Rome”. The play on Murrus (~ murus, barrier) and mora is hard to translate.

The hind in a founding legend

Other main models:
Troy and Aeneid 9

See nn.104–110 agger and 138–141 spissa vallata corona.

7 Cf. Luc. 3.399 longo ... aeo – Sil. 13.129. Silius inverts Lucan’s scene in various details. In Bellum Civile 3, the felling of the sacred grove is a sacrilegious act; Caesar’s men tremble to take the axe, whereas the besieged Massilians cheer, since this sacrilege will surely be punished. In Punica 13, Fulvius’ sacrifice of the deer (‘appropriating’ its sanctity for the Roman cause) neutralizes any sacrilege; his men cheerfully chase it (135 laeto), whereas the besieged Capuans tremble (142 pavitant).

5 For the theme of mora, see An. 94–141 below. That the siege of Capua took nearly two years is nowhere apparent in the text. See for Aeneid 9 nn.99–103 turribus altis, 111–114, 130–134 incursu saevorum ... luporum and 138–141 spissa vallata corona; these verbal echoes identify Capua with the Trojan defenders and the Romans with the Rutulian attackers. For a possible hint to Troy, see n.104–110 gravida armato ... dorso.

9 See for Aeneid 9 nn.99–103 turribus altis, 111–114, 130–134 incursu saevorum ... luporum and 138–141 spissa vallata corona; these verbal echoes identify Capua with the Trojan defenders and the Romans with the Rutulian attackers. For a possible hint to Troy, see n.104–110 gravida armato ... dorso.


11 HNI 501 = Sambon No. 1045; cf. also HNI 508 = Sambon No. 1046 (head: Telephus, wearing a Phrygian cap; reverse: a hind suckling Telephus).
The hind as embodiment of Capua

The white fawn of Sertorius

Coin refers to the myth of Telephus, son of Hercules, who was nursed by a deer. Heurgon (1942: 325) argues that this may hint at a local founding legend, in which Telephus, father of the Etruscans who migrated to Italy from Asia Minor, was claimed as κτίστης of Capua. The mintage would be a reaction to Roman coins from earlier in the third century BC, which featured Hercules and the she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus; the similar founding legend would (as is entirely appropriate for a powerful city that had defected to Hannibal) present Capua as a worthy rival to Rome. Whether Heurgon’s theory is correct is hard to say, but it certainly agrees with Silius’ presentation of the city.

Our poet did not, in any case, strictly follow the legend. The two main inventions are that in our text, it is not the deer that nourishes the founder, but the other way around, and that this legendary animal still lives at the time of the second Punic war. These two elements—that it witnessed Capua’s foundation and shares its lifespan—suggest that it represents Capua as its embodiment, its “âme extérieure” or external soul (Heurgon 1942: 323); in addition, it is its numen or guardian deity, who now forsakes the city. The flight and death of this totemic animal therefore anticipate Capua’s own doom, just as much as the fall of Capua anticipates that of Carthage. Its role is similar to that of its Roman counterparts, the ficus Ruminalis and the talismans (pignora) of Rome, among which the ancilia of the Sali ans and the Palladium. The fact that not a hundred lines earlier, Hannibal had to admit failure since he could not take Rome because of the Palladium, whereas now the Romans themselves successfully negate the power of Capua by removing (slaying) its talisman seems highly significant, both of Capua’s role of substitute for Rome, and of the fact that the tides of war have turned.

The hind, a pet with religious significance which represents the well-being of its owner, has much in common with the pet of the Roman rebel general Sertorius (a white fawn), as described by Gellius, Plutarch and others; Sertorius’ fawn similarly came to symbolize the favour of the gods towards its master. The similarities with Plutarch’s and Gellius’

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12 The myth of Hercules and his son Telephus suckled by a doe is also a theme in Etruscan art, and the subject of a fresco in Herculaneum, now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Napels.
13 Crawford 20/1.
14 See above, fn.2. Cowan (2007: 9 n.51) observes, as another argument in favour of the theory, that the name of the bard of Capua, Teuthras (11.288, 433, 482), matches that of the king in Mysia who made Telephus his heir.
15 Part of the explanation for this is that Capua was, in Roman literary tradition, founded by Trojans; Capys could therefore never have been suckled by a hind at the site. Silius’ rendering also creates an analogy with Vergil’s narration of a tame deer nourished by men, for which see below.
16 The figure of Taurea in the next scene serves in much the same way as representative of Capua: his flight from the duel with Claudius also anticipates the fall of Capua, and the city’s capitulation is accompanied by his suicide. See Intr. 142–178 and Intr. 348–380.
17 Heurgon 1942: 323, Franchet d’Espèrey 1977: 166. Heurgon (ibid. n.7) notes that the Ruminal is highly comparable for its “solidarité vitale” between city and tree. The Ruminal, which had sheltered Remus and Romulus during their infancy, was still alive in the imperial age. During Silius’ lifetime (58 AD), it withered, which was taken as a bad omen, until it revived (Tac. Ann. 13.58); see McCulloch 1980, who interprets Tacitus’ mention of the tree’s withering and revival as an anticipation of first Nero’s tyranny and the civil war and then Vespasian’s subsequent restoration of the state. For the concept of ‘external soul’, see Frazer (1913, vol. II), who for classical mythology (p.103) adduces Meleager’s piece of wood and the locks of Nisus and Pterelaus, on which their respective lives depended.
18 The juxtaposition of Palladium and hind is also emphasized by Cowan (2007: 11).
descriptions of this fawn suggest that they and Silius were drawing upon a common source.\textsuperscript{20} The relevance of Sertorius’ fawn as a model shows best in Gellius’ description of the animal’s flight, since it coincides almost verbatim with Silius’: Gell. 15.22.6 *cum incursio esset hostium nuntiata, festinatione ac tumultu consternata in fugam se prorupit* ~ 130–134 *subito incursu saevorum agitata luporum ... extulerat sese portis pavidaque petebat consternata fuga ... campos*. The correspondences extend to the masters of the deer; Sertorius the rebel is a suitable model for the traitorous ally Capua. The city’s likeness to a Roman rebel evokes an image of civil war, which is strengthened by the poetic models, as we will see.

For the omen itself, Silius may have thought of a similar passage in Livy’s account of the battle of Sentinum (10.27.8–9), where the Roman army stood arranged against the Samnite-Gallic forces, poised for battle just as they are here at Capua, when suddenly a fleeing deer and a wolf chasing it entered the scene.\textsuperscript{21} The deer ran to the Gauls, was captured and sacrificed; the wolf ran to the Roman side and was allowed free passage. The Romans interpreted the outcome of events (of course) as a favourable omen; the deer’s end presages the doom of the enemy and the wolf’s safe escape foretells the Roman victory.

Silius’ hind is best known, however, not for its similarities to the animals above, but for the intertextuality with Vergil’s stag at *A. 7.479–522*. This domesticated deer had been raised by the Latin Tyrrhus and his family, but was shot by Ascanius in a hunt. Although Ascanius was unwitting of the deer’s being a pet, the incident brought down the fury of the peasants upon the Trojans, starting the war with the Italian peoples. Silius’ debt to his predecessor is quite obvious. His opening phrase *cerva fuit* (115) picks up Vergil’s *cervus erat* (*A. 7.483*; but see n.115–116 *cerva fuit*), starting a string of verbal echoes.\textsuperscript{22} Silius is not alone in imitating this passage from the *Aeneid*; most of Vergil’s successors respond in some way to his tame deer. In Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* 10.109–142, Cyparissus, Apollo’s favourite, accidentally shoots his own pet stag, which he was wont to cherish, adorn and even ride; the grief-stricken boy is turned into a cypress by the god to be the epitome of

\textsuperscript{20} Konrad *ad Plut. Sert.* 11.3–4 considers Sallust’s *Histories* to be the source of both Plutarch and Gellius; Silius may well have drawn on his account, too. In Plutarch’s biography of Sertorius, we find the same the order of events as here: a peasant caught the young doe in the wild and was struck by its unusual colour (11.2 *τῇ καυνότητι τῆς χρός λευκή γὰρ ήν πάσα ~ here 115 *raro ... spectata colore*); he presented it to Sertorius as a gift (11.2 δόρον, Gell. 15.22.4 *dono ~ 117 donum*), who tamed it so that it came at his calls (11.3 *φιλάνθρωπον ἀκούειν καὶ καλούντος άκούειν ~ 119 *sensusque hominis donarat*), until eventually Sertorius gave it a religious significance by declaring it to be a gift of Artemis, which his followers believed (11.3; cf. 124–125 *familamque Dianae credebant*); the return of the doe after a long disappearance was considered a sign of the gods’ favour (20.3), just as in Silius it is a bad omen when the hind runs away.

\textsuperscript{21} See Cowan 2007: 6–7. Another correspondence is that the animals run across the fields (*per campos*) between the two armies; Capua’s hind flees to the fields (134 *ad ... campos*) adjacent to the city, thus between Capua and the Romans. For an interpretation of the wolves in Silius’ narrative, see n.130–134 *incursu saevorum ... luporum*.\textsuperscript{22} Both first comment on the animal’s appearance (*A. 7.483 forma praestanti et cornibus ingens*, Sil. 115 *raro terris spectata colore*; for the construction see n.115–116). The deer is reared by humans (*A. 7.484–485 Tyrrhidae pueri quem ... / nutribant Tyrrhusque pater*; Sil. 117–119 *hanc ... Capys ... / nutrierat*), is sensitive to human speech (*A. 4.478 adsuetae imperii*; Sil. 119 *sensus hominis donarat alendo*), eats from its master’s table (*A. 7.490 mensae adsuetus eril*; Sil. 120 *dociles accedere mensis*), allows itself to be petted (*A. 7.490 manum patiens*; Sil. 121 *blanda attactu gaudebat erili*); its pelt is combed and washed (*A. 7.489 pectebatque ferum puroque in fonte lavabat*; Sil. 122–123 *aurato matres adsuetae pectine mitem comere et umenti flavio revocare colorem*). Some Vergilian words return in a different context, such as *erili* (121) and *adsuetae* (122). Finally, the wolves which frighten the hind away from Capua correspond to Ascanius’ hounds.
mourning. Valerius Flaccus, adding an exotic element, stages not a deer, but a tame lion
(3.20–26), belonging to Cybele, which is hunted by king Cyzicus; this calls down the
goddess’ wrath upon him, who fills his city with confusion and causes the Argonauts, who
had been Cyzicus’ guests, to return in the night unwitting of their whereabouts; the citizens,
thinking they are invaded, begin a tragic battle. In Thebaid 7.564–607, Statius produces not
one, but two tame tigers, formerly draught animals for the chariot of Bacchus that had now
retired near Thebes, where they were cared for by the god’s followers; when the
omnipresent Fury drives them mad, they kill some of the Argives, until the animals are
slain by one of them, which in turn provokes an act of revenge by Bacchus’ worshippers—
the battle before Thebes commences.

Silius’ hind is even more domesticated than most of the other animals discussed above,
with the possible exception of Ovid’s stag. It has lost its feral nature and is no longer shy
(120 exuta feram; cf. Met. 10.117–118 metu vacuus naturalique pavore deposito), whereas
Vergil’s stag essentially still is a wild animal (7.489 ferum). The same disparity emerges
from the difference in nuance between manum patiens (7.490) and Silius’ blanda attacu
gadebat erili (121); the hind’s pleasure in its master’s touch, rather than mere tolerance of
it (a more independent attitude) proves its tameness. But this was to be expected: an animal
personifying the external soul of a city (see above) can no longer be wild, but must be
‘civilized’.

In all these poetic models (excluding the Metamorphoses), the death of the tame animal
heralds war. In the Aeneid and the Thebaid, this war comprises the second half of the epic.
Likewise, the death of Silius’ hind marks a new part in the epic, albeit not the beginning of
war, but of a new phase of it: the Roman campaign towards Carthage. Book 13 is a turning
point; from now on, the initiative lies with the Romans, and the omen of the white hind and
its sacrifice show that their first efforts, the siege of Capua, are favoured by the gods.

But the correspondences are not merely verbal, or structural. Cowan (2007: 4) rightly
notes the troubling connotations that enter our reading of Silius’ text through the Vergilian
intertext (or, for that matter, the Valerian and Statian intertexts) with its “infernal, invasive,
necrocentric elements”, and the destruction of beauty that the deaths of both deer entail. The
image of civil war pervades all these epic battles that are provoked by the death of an
animal: Vergil’s war between Trojans and Latins (both, in a sense, proto-Romans), Valerius’
battle of host and guest, the fraternal struggle in Statius, and Silius’ conflict between Rome

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23 Heinze (1903: 190–192) suggests that the story of the deer in the Aeneid is Vergil’s adaptation of a Hellenistic
narration of this myth of Cyparissus, which was a popular story in the first century BC, as is shown by several
paintings in Pompeii (Franchet d’Espérey 1977: 162–163); Ovid, recognizing Vergil’s source, imitated (and
emulated) his text to recreate the original myth. The pastoral setting of the myth, which emerges also in Vergil’s
narration, led to another imitation in one of Calpurnius Siculus’ Eclogae (6.32–33).
24 These five passages, including Silius’, are compared by Franchet d’Espérey (1977), who distinguishes five
themes: i) the intervention of a Fury; ii) the domesticated animal; iii) the killing of a sacred animal and the
resulting divine vengeance; iv) the guardian animal; and v) the hunt. She attributes the second and fourth themes
to Silius, although something could be said in favour of the third and fifth as well (cf. 124 numen ... famulamque
Dianae; 135 exceptam laeto iuvem certamine); the first one, that of the Fury, is introduced at 13.291.
25 Both Silius and Ovid describe the relationship between the deer and its master as gratus (118 grato parvae
mollitius amore; Met. 10.121 gratus erat, Cyparisse, tibi).
26 Similarly in Valerius’ Argonautica, both the death of host Cyzicus and his realm in the Bosporus are arguably a
transition, both geographically and epically, from the familiar Greek world to the hostile, mythical east.
and Capua, fellow Trojans, symptomatic of a war that is analogous to civil strife throughout the *Punica*. The troubling nature of the passage shows especially when we adduce yet another two dead deer: the one Agamemnon boastfully killed, incurring the wrath of Artemis, and the one that the goddess substituted on the sacrificial altar for Iphigenia. If this sacrifice at the outset of the Trojan war is an intertext, Silius’ imitation suggests a strange, internecine replay of that war: new Troy (Rome) battling another Troy (Capua).

We should be careful not to push our reading of these undercurrents too far, however. In the *Punica*, as opposed to the other Roman epics, the moral position of one party (Capua) is clearly weaker than that of the other (Rome), of which we are reminded right at the beginning of the episode by Fulvius (99–103); the conquest of Capua is to be “a divinely sanctioned victory of Fides.” Rather than narrating the beginning of civil war, Silius here suggests a possible conclusion of such a war (which the victory over Capua anticipates), in which the victors carry the favour of the gods and hold the moral high ground, unlike in Lucan. In Vergil, the hunt of the stag can be considered emblematic of the shattering of Georgic Italy; by contrast, Silius’ hind has no remaining bonds with nature or the countryside, fully civilized and ‘urban’ as it is. Its death may represent the assertion of power by the strong over the weak (Cowan 2007: 4), but if so, it is that of strong Roman *virtus* over weak, depraved *voluptas*, which Capua, and probably the deer, personifies. The Trojan heritage of both cities should be linked with Capua’s defection to Carthage; although Hannibal envisaged Rome in the role of Troy in this replay of the Trojan war, it turns out that it is Capua, and by extension the city which it represents, Carthage, that will fall. Lastly, Jupiter himself will see to it that the Romans will not destroy Capua (that is, carry the civil war aspect too far) by sending Pan to soften their hearts (see Intr. 299–347); the gods ensure that Rome retains the moral high ground.

Finally, I would like to address Franchet d’Espèrey’s assessment “Il n’y a aucun lien entre Silius et Valérius” (1977: 158). This conclusion is understandable, given that Silius’ allusive technique is in this case expressed best in terms of inversion. Valerius’ lion (like...
Vergil’s stag is killed when it is returning home (V.Fl. 3.24; A. 7.492), whereas Silius’
hind meets its doom while fleeing from its home (133). While the death of the lion, servant
of Cybele (cf. V.Fl. 3.23 dominam) provokes divine retribution, the death of the deer, the
famulam Dianae (124) does not; indeed, it is suggested rather that it is Capua which has
lost divine favour when its guardian deity (124 numen) flees the city. The interaction
between hunter and goddess is also opposite; Cyzicus’ trophy, the lion’s head, brings shame
upon Cybele (V.Fl. 3.26 divaeque pudendum), whereas Fulvius with his offering that is
‘most welcome to Diana’ (135 gratissima sacra) appropriates the enemy’s deity and gains,
rather than loses, divine favour.36 The last ‘inverted parallel’ is another example of word
play. Cybele uses the return of the Argonauts to “enmesh the city in cruel error” (V.Fl. 3.31
saevis erroribus implicet urbem); in Silius, it is the ‘hunter’ Fulvius who “fills the city with
cruel terror” (113 saevis urbem terroribus implet). Fulvius is in full command of the
situation, whereas Cyzicus, led astray by Cybele, decidedly is not. By inverting every
negative element in Valerius’ narrative of divine wrath, Silius has thus created an entirely
positive image of divine favour.37

Analysis of the presentation of 94–141
In the transition to the new episode, which narrates the siege of Capua, the poet summarizes
the previous events for both of the warring parties by means of two recapitulating settings
containing the ‘previous history’.38 The first, dum Libys haud laetus Rhegina ad litora
tendit (94), refers to the preceding part of book 13, at the end of which Hannibal,
disillusioned about his chances to take Rome, left for southern Italy.39 The second, the
ablative absolute at 95, summarizes the last part of book 12, in which Hannibal was
prevented from attacking Rome; this summary ties in with the latest action of the Romans;
the new discourse topic is introduced first in his relation to Hannibal (victor) and then with
his proper name Fulvius (both in the first position of their respective lines). Silius’ fondness
of using recapitulating clauses in the transition to a new episode shows in the fact that the
third and last part of the book (the Nekyia) also begins with a dum clause, in which the
Capuan episode itself is summarized (381 dum Capua infaustam luit haud sine sanguine
culpam). For more on Silius’ use of this type of clause, see An. 142–178.

These introductory settings are part of the ‘orientation’ for the entire Capuan episode
(95–98), that is, the opening of the story which sets the time and place, introduces its main
participants, and presents the situation at the start of the story—here the bad tidings which
Fulvius’ arrival implied for the besieged.40 Such an orientation is typically narrated in
imperfect tenses (or pluperfect, when the previous history is described as the background to

36 Just as on the eve of the Trojan war, Artemis’ wrath turned into favour; see above. Cowan (2007: 11) compares
the ritual of evocatio, by which a guardian deity was persuaded to change allegiance (although he applies it to the
deer rather than Diana); see also n.130–134.
37 pace Cowan (2007: 12), who thinks that “the narrative expectation of divine vengeance is still created”, but
disappointed.
38 For the term ‘recapitulating setting’, see An. 142–178.
39 This line shares Liv. 26.12.2 as a model with lines 92–93. For such use of shared intertexts to ease the transition
between two passages, see also An. 650–704.
40 For ‘orientation’, ‘complication’ etc. (the narrative subcategories of Labov), see Gen.intr. § 7.2.
the narrative; cf. e.g. 213–217); cf. 97 movebat. The story proper then begins (as marked by tum at 98) with the commander’s motivational speech in 98–103 which lists Capua’s crimes. Directly after the speech, another orientation begins, now for the Roman assault on the city (a major subplot of the episode, which receives its own opening): the poet describes the construction of the siege works, again in imperfect tenses (104–110). The development of the narrative action begins at 111; the transition from ‘orientation’ to the so-called ‘complication’ (i.e. the story proper with consecutive narrative events building towards a climax, the ‘peak’) is signalled by at, the postquam-clause which summarizes the preceding description, and the shift to present tenses (dat... imperat... implet). Fulvius gives the signal to attack and fills the city with terror. At this point, we might expect a ‘peak’: a scenic description of this terror, or of the assault itself; the narrative suddenly takes an unexpected turn, however, with the occurrence of an omen. The description of this omen (the flight and death of the white hind) is an embedded narrative with its own narrative structure, which will be discussed below. When this embedded narrative has been concluded, the narrator resumes the narrative from 113 and relates the beginning of the assault at 138–141. At that point, the subplot of the Roman assault of Capua is interrupted again, now by the story of Taurea and Claudius, for which see An. 142–178.

Now that the narrative structure has been established, it is useful to review which elements Silius has chosen to highlight. The three actions of Fulvius which further the narrative in this passage (his speech, the signal to attack and the sacrifice of the deer) are the main events, as the present tense forms suggest. All that happens in between is narrated in imperfect tenses, in what are traditionally called background passages. The poet varies his mode of narration between ‘showing the action’ in its chronology (e.g. the sequence of events at 135–141), describing a process or situation (the construction of the siege engines at 104–110) or providing the reader with background information (the history of the deer at 117–129).

This variation is useful for condensing time. The lack of temporal indicators in this scene, despite the fact that the narrated events must cover at least a few days of ‘real time’, is striking. This is especially true for the construction of the siege equipment at 104–110, but the use of a description there, rather than a narrative of consecutive events, serves to divert our attention from the time needed for the construction; for a description has no internal temporal dynamics, i.e. there is no suggestion of the passage of time. The reader gets the impression that all these events, from Fulvius’ arrival to the assault on Capua, happen on the same day. This extends to the entire episode; in Silius’ rendering, the fall of Capua takes place in a day (the assault of 138–255) and a night (256–298). Its surrender at the next dawn (299–305) is immediately followed (again without temporal markers to

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41 The severity of this speech shows in the harsh P’s, T’s and C’s with which Fulvius spits out Capua’s crimes.
42 The ‘unexpectedness’ is reflected by the anacoluthon in 111–114; see below.
43 Although no present tense is found in the main clause of 98, it follows from est in the sub clause that the ellapsed verbum dicendi in the main clause would have been a present as well (e.g. ait).
44 This is not to say that these passages are less vital to the story; the poet’s description of the hind, for instance, is necessary for understanding the significance of its sacrifice by Fulvius.
45 That the construction works still took some effort may be conveyed by the spondaic rhythm of those lines.
46 At 135, the capture of the deer (which would possibly also take some time) is summarized by exceptam (135), which makes the hunt look easy and brief, and represents the Romans full of speed and efficiency.
suggested otherwise) by the sack of the city (351–360) and the punishment of Capua’s leaders (367–380). This impression of speed is significant, since it contrasts the Roman recapture of Capua with Hannibal’s earlier slow progress before Saguntum in books 1 and 2, and his ineffectual besiegement of the Greek cities of Campania in book 12. The success of the Romans is thus primarily to their own merit as swift conquerors, unlike in Livy, where it is emphasized (26.12) that Hannibal’s obvious abandonment of the city, which had a severe impact on the public morale, led to Capua’s surrender.

The narrative structure of the omen and the description of the deer is worth a closer look. Its announcement at 114 (cum subito dextrum offulsit conatibus omen) is only loosely attached to the rest of the sentence (111–113); the anacoluthon may convey the ‘surprise’ of the narrator himself at the sudden turn of events. The sentence structure is striking in two ways, firstly because both main clause and the inverted *cum* clause contain ‘foreground tenses’, and, more surprisingly, because the tense changes from present tense in the main clause (dat, imperat, implet) to perfect tense in the inverted *cum* clause (offulsit), which is almost unequalled. The reason is that suddenly, and indeed mid-sentence, a new (embedded) narrative begins. Line 114 serves as the ‘abstract’ for this narrative: a short outline of the story that will follow. For this introduction (or: announcement) of the new story, the narrator uses his own time as orientation point (as is common for abstracts), hence the use of the perfect.

Following the abstract in 114, the narrative of the omen does not begin immediately. The action is first ‘frozen’ as the narrator introduces the hind as a primary participant in this embedded narrative (115–116, cerva fuit), and provides background information about the hind’s history (117–125), a section which is connected to the introduction of the deer in 115–116 through *hanc* (117). This section covers a long time span, from the founding of Capua to the second Punic war. The pluperfect forms (119 nutrierat, donarat) relate the earliest events. With the (purposely) vague particle *inde* (120) the time gap between Capys’ time and that of Hannibal is bridged, so that the description of the deer’s domesticated behaviour (described in imperfect forms) is valid for all following centuries, up to and including the time of the siege. Time is being condensed between the previous history and
the time of the story, as is also marked by *iam* (124) and the repetition of *cerva* in the same line, now to add a last important point of information: it had come to be the *numen* of Capua. The entire section of 117–125 is then summarized with *haec* (126), in a sentence which recapitulates the essential point in the previous section: the hind had reached the same age as the city, which together with its status as *numen* suggests that it symbolizes Capua. The narrator then returns to his narrative through the transitional phrase in 129b *sed iam longo nox venerat aevo*, which functions as an abstract for the narrative in the following lines; as the narrative had been frozen for nearly fifteen lines, we find a new abstract to signal that it is being resumed. The orientation for this short narrative is formed by lines 130–134, in which the situation and events which had immediately preceded are given in pluperfect and imperfect tense forms—the incursion of the wolves and the flight of the hind.\(^2\) When the narrative action begins in 135, the narrator reinstates Fulvius as the main discourse topic through *ductor* (135) and his proper name (137), and picks up his narrative mode of ‘live’ report again with the use of present tenses. The hind’s capture being summarized in a participle (*exceptam*) gives full focus to the sacrifice (136 *mactat*) and Fulvius’ prayer (137 *orat*). These events are the climax and end of the embedded narrative, after which (with *inde*) the plot of the assault on Capua is resumed in 138–141.\(^3\)

The multilayered structure of this embedded narrative shows best in the alternation of pluperfects and imperfects; in the two sections featuring these tenses, the first on the hind’s history (117–129a), the second on its flight from the city (129b–134), the same tenses refer to different time spans. While the pluperfects in 119 deal with events preceding the story by centuries, the pluperfects in the last section (132 *intrarant*, 133 *extulerant*) relate events that happened only hours or even minutes before the flight that is actually seen by the Romans (133 *petebat*), and their chronology to the imperfects in the previous section is irrelevant. The background description of Calenus at 219–233 has a structure as intricate as this one (see An. 179–255); by contrast, in Vergil’s *Aeneid* a similar temporally multilayered description (in which imperfect and pluperfect forms refer to different moments in history in each part) is very rare.\(^4\)

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\(^2\) The metre supports the narrative here; while lines 126–129, on the hind’s long life, are predominantly spondaic, the description of its flight (esp. 133b–134) is more dactylic in nature. Lines 130–134 feature a marked alliteration of S (*subito incursu saevorum*) and P (*prodigium ... primos ... portis pavidaque petebat ... positos ... campos*).

\(^3\) The diction in 138–141 suggests that Capua is hemmed in like an animal during a hunt, drawing attention to the function of the embedded narrative as a foreshadowing of the fall of the city; see n.138–141.

\(^4\) I have found only two comparable passages: *A. 6* 166–176 and 12.766–773. The latter passage describes the tree trunk in which Aeneas’ spear had stuck; while the first part of the description covers the history of the tree, the second narrates how the Trojans had cut it down before the battle; in the third and last part, the most recent events are told: the tree trunk had been hit by the spear and is now holding it. In that passage the subdivision into sections is even more clear, since the imperfect in the first section (describing the function of the tree) is no longer valid in the later sections (when it had been cut down), and anterior to the pluperfects in those sections. Similar observations can be made for the first of these two passages. I am grateful to dr. Suzanne Adema for allowing me to use her data on tense usage in the *Aeneid*.
94–97

dum Libys haud laetus Rhegina ad litora tendit,
Victor summoto patris a finibus hoste
Fulvius infaustam Campana ad moenia clausis
portabat famam miserisque extrema movebat.

94–97 While the Carthaginian departed without joy to the shores of Rhegium, victorious Fulvius, having driven off the enemy from his country, came to the walls of Capua bringing ominous tidings for the besieged and prepared the final blow against the wretches.

Silius here engages with the opening of Livy’s account of the siege of Capua; see Intr. 94–141. For the verbal echoes of Liv. 26.12.2 in line 94, see n.92–93.

summoto ... hoste Cf. Liv. 26.10.9 *summotique hostes sunt*, of a skirmish with Hannibal’s cavalry at the gates of Rome, which was the only actual clash between the two armies, since thunderstorms prevented the main bodies from doing battle (Liv. 26.11, Sil. 12.605ff.).

Fulvius In 212 BC, consul Quintus Fulvius Flaccus together with his colleague Appius Claudius Pulcher had begun the siege of Capua, which had been interrupted twice by an Carthaginian counterattack. With his *imperium* prorogued as proconsul in 211, Fulvius followed Hannibal to Rome as the latter attempted to draw the Romans away from Capua after the second attack, while Claudius continued the siege. Livy portrays Fulvius as a severe man, uncompromising in his punishment of the Capuans after their city has fallen (see Intr. 348–380). Silius construes his severity as justness (see Intr. 348–380, 367 *meritos*, 368 *iusta*) and his aggressive and high-handed demeanour as a penchant for action (cf. *alacer* at 112, 138 and 376, and his short *aristeia* at 184–212). Earlier in the *Punica*, he rebuffed the demands of the Capuan emissaries, foreseeing the fall of Capua (11.114–120), and came to Rome’s rescue *magni turribus* (12.570) to lead its defence (12.600ff.).

infaustam ... famam Viz. that Hannibal has been unsuccessful and has left for southern Italy, leaving Capua to be taken by the Romans (cf. Liv. 26.12.4 [*Campani intellexerunt relictos se desertosque et spem Capuae retinendae deploratam apud Poenos esse*]).

miseris See n.99–103 *turribus altis*.

extrema movebat Cf. the similar expression *bellum movere* (OLD *moveo* 17b).

98–103

tum prensans passim cuicumque est nomen in armis:
‘dedecus hoc defende manu. cur perfida et urbi
altera Carthago nostrae post foedera rupta
et missum ad portas Poenum, post iura petitata
consulis alterni stat adhuc et turribus altis
Hannibalem ac Libycas expectat lenta cohortes?’

98 Then grasping all around every man who has a reputation in arms, he says...

Other instances of distinguished soldiers being singled out by their commander in motivational speeches are 5.165ff, 9.246ff. and 17.292ff. (Spaltenstein), although in the present passage these soldiers are not actually addressed in the speech itself.

99–103 Repel this disgrace with might. Why does this treacherous town, a second Carthage to our City, still remain standing after having broken our treaties and having sent the Punic
to our gates, after having demanded the right of alternating consulship and is now waiting at leisure on the ramparts for Hannibal and the Libyan cohorts?

Fulvius’ use of shame as a means of inciting the troops counterbalances Hannibal’s reproach to his men for fleeing from mere thunder and lightning at 8–18 (for other instances of this motif in the Punica, see n.16b–18). The clarification of dedecus follows immediately: although Capua is a second perfidious Carthage, with a resounding tricolon of crimes, it is allowed not only to remain standing but even to wait at ease (lenta 103) for Hannibal’s troops to relieve it (the futility of this hope has been anticipated at 97–98 infaustam ... famam).

The three crimes which Fulvius lists serve to further associate Capua with Carthage. The first charge, foedera rupta, like perfida suggests Punica fides; the phrase is otherwise used of Hannibal’s attack on Saguntum in violation of the treaty with Rome (1.296 abrupto ... foedere, 1.648–649, 2.297, 2.451, 11.559). The second charge, that Capua sent Hannibal to conquer the city, is technically not true—Hannibal’s march on Rome as a diversion was his own idea, just as at the beginning of the war he attacked Saguntum not by order of the Carthaginian senate, but on his own initiative—but for the sake of cogency it is presented as such, and it can be said that Hannibal acted as the champion of both Carthage and Capua; cf. 13.267 qui quaterent muros Tarpeiaque moenia misi, from the lips of the Capuan senator Virrius (Spaltenstein) and 11.63 ulorem (Hannibal as the avenger of Capua, just as he is the avenger of Dido, cf. A. 4.625). The last charge is that the Capuans had been brazen enough to demand a share in the consulship (see n. iura petita consulis alterni below); this is the culmination of Capua’s crimes because it represents a bid to usurp Rome’s power, similar to Carthage’s challenging of Rome’s status as the caput mundi (cf. 1.7–8 quaesitumque diu, qua tandem poneret arce terrarum Fortuna caput, “it was long uncertain on which citadel Fortune would finally place the leadership of the world”). The same arguments return in Virrius’ final speech (264–269), which alludes to Dido’s last words, further establishing the connection between Capua and Carthage; see Intr. 256–298.

dedecus For Capua’s shame-inducing impunity, cf. e.g. Verg. A. 11.789, where Arruns calls it dedecus that Camilla, a woman, has been unbeaten by the Trojans all this time.

altera Carthago Capua has been called thus before in a more positive way by Hannibal himself at 11.424–425 altera iam patria atque aequo sub honore vocatur / altera Carthago Capua. The identification is significant; the fall of Capua anticipates that of Carthage.

iura petita consulis alterni At 11.55ff., the Capuans sent an embassy under Virrius to Rome to demand a share in the Roman consulship (11.60 alternatos sociato consule fasces). The exact nature of the demand is not entirely clear; while both alternatos and alterni seem to imply that every other year Capua should produce the consuls, other phrases suggest that every year one of the consuls should be a Capuan (cf. 11.60 sociato consule, 13.268–269 alter ... consul, Liv. 23.6.6 postulantes ut alter consul Campanus fieret, Cic. Agr. 2.95 alterum Capua consulem postularunt). Spaltenstein suggests that alterni could be an alternative for alterius, but the use of alternus in the sense of alter would be almost unparalleled (TLL 1.1756.70–71 only cites Ter. Maur. 1389 unum et alternum). The natural sense ‘alternating’ could be retained here, if alternus refers to the supreme command alternating daily between the two consuls. It is possible that the word has significance on an intertextual level; perhaps alternus (instead of alterius) is used here at the beginning of the
siege to evoke the alternating rule of Eteocles and Polynices in Thebes (cf. Stat. *Theb.* 1.1 *alternaque regna ... decertata*, 1.138 *alterni ... sub legibus anni*) in anticipation of the recurrent civil war theme of the Capuan episode; see the Appendix fn.7.

Livy (23.6.8) dismissed the story of the Capuan embassy on the basis that it was too similar to earlier demands by the Latins, and would have been mentioned by Coelius and other writers otherwise; the possibilities it allowed for portraying Roman righteousness and Capua’s similarity to Carthage (as a rival to Roman supremacy) may have suggested its inclusion in the *Punica* to Silius.

*turribus altis* This is not ‘pittoresque’ (Spaltenstein), but means ‘on the ramparts’, as at *Verg. A.* 9.470–471, 10.121 (both of Aeneas’ camp in Latium), Stat. *Silv.* 5.2.122. The Vergilian intertext of the Trojan camp is significant. At the beginning of *Aeneid* 10, the situation is dire for the Trojan defenders, which is epitomized in three lines (10.118–122):

interea Rutuli portis circum omnibus instant
sternere caede viros et moenia cingere flammis.
at legio Aeneadum vallis obsessa tenetur
nec spes ulla fugae. miseri stant turribus altis
nequiquam et rara muros cinxere corona.

“Meanwhile, around every gate the Rutulians press on, to slaughter the foe with the sword and to gird the ramparts with flame. But the army of the Aeneadae is held pent up inside the palisades, and there is no hope of escape. Forlorn and helpless they stand on the high towers, and girdle the wall with a scanty ring”.

Then, suddenly, Aeneas appears and relieves the camp. Here, the situation is quite opposite. The Capuans wait on the *turribus altis* for Hannibal to re-enact the role of Aeneas and lift the siege; but when he does not come, they find themselves in the role of the wretched Trojans (*miseris 97*), but now without any hope of rescue. Indeed, the intertext re-emerges at the end of the assault of Capua: 249 *nec spes obsessis* and 253 *instant Italii*; shortly after, Virrius tells his fellow senators that any hope for Hannibal’s intervention is in vain (262 *a Poeno nullam docet esse salutem*)—Hannibal will not live up to the comparison with Aeneas. The intertextual ring composition (with the allusion to *Aeneid* 10 framing the Roman assault on Capua) emphasizes the correspondences and the crucial difference between Capua and its Trojan counterpart. For the same intertext, see also nn.138–141 *spissa vallata corona*, 206–209 *portae limina circum* and 348–350 *at legio Aeneadum*.

104–110

*miscebat dictis facta et nunc robore celsas
educi turres, quis vinceret ardua muri,*

cogebat, nunc coniunctas adstringere nodis
instabat ferroque trabes, quo frangeret altos
portarum postes quateretque morantia claustra.
hic latera intestus stellatis axibus agger,
hic gravida armato surgebat vinea dorso.

104–110 *He suited the action to his word and now ordered that high wooden towers be erected with which to overcome the height of the wall, then made haste with connecting*
beams with joints of iron, with which to break the tall gates and batter the impeding bars. Here arose an earthen mound, its sides covered with crossed planks, here a mantlet, its back loaded with armed men.

In Silius’ account Capua is to be taken by assault, rather than by a long term siege. Fulvius gives order for various kinds of siege equipment to be built; the poet successively mentions siege towers (celsas ... turres 104–105), a battering ram (coniunctas ... trabes 106–107), a ramp (agger 109) and at 110 vineae, mobile penthouses used as shelter against projectiles.

The preparations for the assault are presented in two pairs; the siege engines are marked by anaphora of nunc and two similar subordinate clauses, the supporting works (the agger and the accompanying vinea) by anaphora of hic. The impression of a list is avoided through the use of enjambment.

ardua muri The phrase resembles the more common ardua montis (e.g. 3.497, 13.610, 15.493, 15.505, Verg. A. 8.221, 11.513, Ov. Met. 8.692, Stat. Theb. 10.120); the closest parallel to this usage is Luc. 6.138 ardua valli. The towers will top the height of the walls, allowing the Romans to move their soldiers onto the ramparts.

quateret morantia claustra An echo of 7.130; see n.130–134 incursu saevorum ...

agger The Romans used two kinds of agger in their sieges. The first is an encircling mound (if palisaded also called vallum; cf. OLD s.v. 1a) to contain the inhabitants within the city and blockade all (food) supplies. If necessary, a second earthwork was made around the first one serving as protection for the besiegers against external relief forces, which was done at Capua as well (Liv. 25.22.16 Capuam iam duplici fossa valloque cinctam, “Capua, now surrounded by two trenches and a double earthwork”, and 26.5–6; cf. also App. Hann. 37). But this is not the kind of agger that Silius has in mind here, since building an encircling mound now would be rather late in this stage of the siege, and the defensive strategy it entails is hardly compatible with the aggressive conduct of the Roman commander (see n.94–97 Fulvius). It is, therefore, the second type which is intended here: a ramp leading to the enemy city providing a smoother surface for the movement of siege towers and/or battering rams (RE 6.2242.4–8). This ramp was reinforced by cross-laid wood on the flanks (stellatis axibus 109), allowing a narrower dam (and thus less work) than would otherwise be necessary with the use of earth only (RE 6.2242.36–39). That this ‘aggressive’ type of agger is meant is also suggested by an allusion to the agger in Lucan’s description of the siege of Massilia (3.455 stellatis axibus agger erigitur; cf. Brouwers 1982: 73, Spaltenstein), which is explicitly used for the movement of siege towers (456–457 geminasque aequantis moenia turris accipit, “and on it [were] placed twin towers, level with the city-walls”); cf. also Luc. 3.394–398 ut ... structa laterum compage ligatam / artet humum, pressus ne cedat turribus agger (cf. ligatam and here intextus), “to bind and compress the earth by constructing a vertical frame at the sides [...] to prevent it giving way beneath the towers’ weight”. The echo of Lucan is significant; see Intr. 94–141.

gravida armato ... dorso The mantlet is ‘laden with armed back’, i.e. armed soldiers hide behind its protective front. The use of gravidus is comparable to that in several descriptions of the Trojan horse; cf. Enn. Alex. 72–73 gravidus armatis equus, Verg. A. 2.238 feta armis and 6.516 armatum peditem gravis attulit alvo; the relevance of the
parallel is further suggested by the personifying word *dorso* (cf. *alvo*). The association with Troy, ominous of Capua’s doom, is picked up again at 351–360 (see Intr. 348–380).

*vinea* A mobile penthouse or mantlet; these sheltering roofs were used by sappers or those working on the *agger* to protect themselves against projectiles from the besieged city.

111–114

at postquam properata satis quae commonet usus,
dat signum atque alacer scalis transcendere muros
imperat ac saevis urbem terroribus implet,
cum subito dextrum offulsit conatibus omen.

111–114 *But after all the preparations which need demands have been adequately made, he gives the signal and eagerly orders to scale the walls with ladders and fills the city with wild terror, when suddenly a propitious omen shone upon their efforts.*

When the preparations have been made, Fulvius orders the attack. Notably, in the rest of the episode no reference at all is made to the siege equipment described in 104–110 (even more striking because we are told these things were ‘needed’ for the siege, *quae commonet usus* 111). The reason is not that siege equipment has no place in epic; there is not only a precedent in Lucan’s historical epic (cf. n.104–110 *agger* above), but it is also a feature of the *Aeneid* (see Rossi 2004: 180–187, who discusses the correspondences with Roman historiography). Of the instruments of ‘modern’ siege warfare, only the ladders will play a role in the siege of Capua, possibly because these are the only exponents of modern military praxis which feature in *Aeneid* 9 (*112 scalis transcendere muros ~ A. 9.507 scalis ascendere muros*); for the rather explicit parallels which are drawn between the siege of Aeneas’ Trojan camp and Capua, see Intr. 94–141, 142–178 and 179–255.

For the remarkable structure of this sentence, with an inverted *cum*-clause containing a perfect tense form which follows a main clause with a present tense, see An. 94–141. It does not seem necessary to replace *cum* with *tum* (Dausqueius); the anacoluthon reflects the unexpectedness of the following, as if the narrator is surprised himself. Full attention is thus drawn to the omen of the deer.

*quae commonet usus* The interpretation must probably be ‘what is needed’ (Spaltenstein “besoin(s)”), i.e. for this particular siege, rather than ‘what military experience dictated’ (so Duff and Miniconi-Devallet); compare for *usus* as ‘need’ in this context the similar ‘necessary war supplies’ at 11.607 *quae belli posceret usus*, Liv. 26.43.7 *quae belli usus poscunt suppeditentur*, 34.6.12, 36.26.5; cf. also Lucr. 6.9 *ad victum quae flagitat usus*, “all that need demands for living”.

*saevis urbem terroribus implet* The phrase is intertextual not only with Verg. *A. 11.448 magnisque urbem terroribus implet* (Aeneas’ attack on the city of Latinus), but also with V.Fl. 3.31 *saevis erroribus implicit urbem*; for the various allusions to the opening of *Argonautica* 3, see Intr. 94–141.

*cum subito ... offulsit ... omen* Two wondrous events in the *Aeneid* should be compared. For *offulsit*, cf. (the only other poetic instance) Verg. *A. 9.110 hic primum nova lux oculis offulsit*, “then first there flashed upon the eyes a strange light”, which introduces the arrival of the ships-turned-into-goddesses, a sight as unexpected (and supernatural) as the deer. The other passage is *A. 2.680 cum subitum dictuque oritur mirabile monstrum* (the
omen of the flames on Ascanius’ head); Silius has followed the structure of Vergil’s line with the noun *omen* at the end. The hope and divine assistance apparent in the two intertexts well suit our lines; the imminent fall of Capua is a turning point in the fortunes of war for the Romans. Incidentally, the relevance of the last passage is greater if we include the line which precedes it: the description of the cries of Aeneas’ family which fill his house (*A. 2.679 gemitu tectum omne replebat*) returns in that of Sylvia’s wailing stag (*A. 7.502 imploranti similis tectum omne replebat*), which is the main model for Silius’ white hind (see Intr. 94–141). In Troy, the despair is replaced with hope; at Capua, the portent fills the Romans with hope, but the besieged (whom the hind represents) with fear (cf. 142 *pavitant*). For a third omen, see n.115–116 *candore.*

115–123
cerva fuit raro terris spectata colore,
quae candore nivem, candore anteiret olores.
hanc agreste Capys donum, cum moenia sulco
signaret, grato parvae mollitus amore
nutrierat sensusque hominis donarat alendo.
inde exuta feram docilisque accedere mensis
120
atque ultero blanda attactu gaudebat erili.
aurato matres adsuetae pectine mitem
comere et u menti fluvio revocare colorem.

115–116 *There was a hind of a colour rarely seen on earth, which in whiteness outmatched snow, outmatched swans.*

The white hind is modelled after several tame animals in earlier epic, such as the stags of Vergil’s Tyrrhus and Ovid’s Cyparissus, the lion of Valerius’ Cybele and the two tigers of Statius’ Bacchus. For these and other models (such as the white deer of Sertorius), see Intr. 94–141. Silius’ hind is distinct from the other animals in epic for two reasons: i) it is feminine and ii) it is white. That the deer is a *cerva* rather than a *cervus* (as in Vergil and Ovid) should be linked to its being the personification of the city of Capua. Since the city name is feminine, it comes as no surprise that Capua’s *genius* is feminine as well (by analogy with the *lupa*, or the *dea Roma*). Its colour may be explained from its quality as an ominous animal and sacrifice (see *candore* below), but its true white skin may also point to the animal’s purity, which can be understood symbolically: Capua’s last piece of purity and innocence pass away with it. For this aspect, see n.130–134 *incursu saevorum ... luporum.* The deer’s sex and colour thus give it two functions, existing side by side: the deer embodies Capua’s being, which is slain by the Romans, and it embodies Capua’s virtuousness, which flees the city out of fear of ‘wolves’. A third function is that of guardian deity (124 *numen*); its flight thus also represents the gods’ desertion of Capua (see n.130–134).

*spectata* is to be connected (by enallage) with *colo re*; a similar construction is found in the Vergilian model (*A. 7.483 forma praestanti et cornibus ingens*; see Intr. 94–141 fn.22), where the nominative adjective also governs the ablative with which it semantically belongs.

*cerva fuit* This recalls Vergil’s *cervus erat* (7.483) and Ovid’s *ingens cervus erat* (10.110). Leaving metrical considerations aside, the tense difference can be explained by the different role of the phrase in Silius’ narrative. Both an imperfect and a perfect can be
used to introduce a character into the story world. A perfect is used to present something as ‘past’ in relation to the moment of narration; in the case of Silius’ *fuit*, it signifies that ‘there used to be a hind’ in Capua. An imperfect, on the other hand, presents events in relation to other events in the story world; if Silius had written *erat*, the verb would have to be interpreted as contemporaneous with *offulsit* and would suggest that the embedded narrative announced in 114 begins immediately. Before turning to the narrative of the omen, however, Silius first wishes to give his readers some background information about the hind, so that the significance of its flight and death may be appreciated. The use of the perfect *fuit* (which is not connected temporally to *offulsit*, but only to the narrator’s own present) precludes the interpretation that the narrative begins immediately and instead suggests to the reader that first some necessary background information is offered; in the next lines the narrator takes us back to the foundation of Capua and the centuries which followed, before returning to his narrative in 129b. For the difference between the use of the imperfect and the perfect in the introduction of new elements into the story world, see the discussion in Adema 2008: 105–107.

candore In many cases, animals regarded as a favourable omen were white (cf. Radke 1936: 31–33); cf. e.g. the four snow-white horses on the shore of southern Italy that prefigure Aeneas’ ultimate victory at *A. 3*. 537–538, and (more relevant here) the white sow which marks the site of his future city at *A. 8.81–83 ecce autem subitum ... monstrum, / candida per silvam cum fetu concolor albo / procubuit viridique in litore conspicitur sus*. The allusion to Vergil’s sow (also apparent from the correspondence between 114 and *A. 8.81*) is continued at 135–137, where Fulvius’ offering of the deer to Diana picks up Aeneas’ sacrifice of the sow to Juno (see n.). White is the colour of purity (André 1949: 36–37, 260–261); a white animal is well suited to be a sacrifice, given that it was essential that the animal was as sound and unblemished as possible. Eden *ad A. 8.84* also points to “the general tendency (but not fixed rule) to suit the sex of the victim to that of the divinity, and white or shining victims were chosen for gods of the upper world whom one wished to encourage, black for those of the underworld whom one wished to discourage” (cf. Wissowa 1902: 348, Radke 1936: 23–30, André 1949: 338). As in Vergil, the white colour suits the animal’s quality both of omen and of sacrifice to Diana Tifatina (135–137; for Diana, see n.124–125 *famulamque Dianae*). Furthermore, not only does the sex of the hind match Diana’s, but like Juno, she had to be appeased as well, as the region that her cult was located in was hostile to Rome. In the *Aeneid*, Juno cannot be reconciled; apparently, Diana Tifatina can.

*quae candore nivem, candore anteiret olores* Cf. Verg. *A. 12.84* *qui candore nives anteirent, cursibus auras*, “they excelled the snow in whiteness and the gales in speed” (of the horses of Turnus), which itself is a reminiscence of Hom. *Il. 10.437 λευκότεροι χιόνος, θείειν δ’ ἀνέμοισιν ὁμοίοι*, “whiter than snow, and in speed like the winds” (of Rhesus’ horses). Beside snow, swans were also proverbially white; cf. Otto *cyclus* 1. For a similar combination of snow and swans, cf. Aus. *Par. 5.5–6* *qui clarior esset olore et non calcata qui nive candidior*, “[her soul] which was whiter than a swan and brighter than untrodden snow”.

**117–119** *Capys had nourished this animal, a gift of the wild when he was marking the walls with a plough, mollified by a pleasant affection for the small creature, and by rearing it had given it a human’s consciousness.*

For the intricate interplay with Vergil’s description of Tyrhhus’ stag, see Intr. 94–141 fn.22.
agreste ... donum Spaltenstein assumes that the phrase implies that the hind was given to Capys by peasants; for this we may adduce the analogy with Sertorius’ fawn (see Intr. 94–141), which was a peasant’s present. It is more natural, however, to interpret it as a ‘gift of the wild’, Nature’s present; Capys may have found it in the forest. TLL 1.1417.78–79 cites as parallel Stat. Theb. 9.830 agrestes ... dammas; cf. also Hom. II. 21.486 ἄγροτέρας τ’ ἐλάφους; both phrases mean “wild deer”, “deer living in the wild”.

Capys Although Capua probably got its name from the Etruscans (Heurgon 1942: 150–153), according to legend popular in Roman poetry the city was founded by Trojans led by Capys (cf. Verg. A. 10.145 et Capys: hinc nomen Campanae ducitur urbi, “and Capys, from whom comes the name of the Campanian city”; Luc. 2.393 moenia Dardaniī ... Campana coloni, “the Campanian walls of the Dardanian settler”; Stat. Silv. 3.5.77 quae Capys advectis implevit moenia Teucris, “the walls that Capys filled with Teucrian migrants”); Silius follows this tradition, cf. e.g. 128 Troianis condita tecta, 326–327 tecta ... Troia. It is not entirely clear which Trojan Capys is meant, as there are (at least) two. The first is the son of Assaracus and grandfather of Aeneas, mentioned as eponymous hero of Capua in Dion.Hal. 1.73.3, where Remus (there son of Aeneas) is said to have named the town after his great-grandfather; at Sil. 11.295–297, this Capys is mentioned as founder by the bard Teuthras. The other candidate, given by Vergil, was Aeneas’ companion and cousin (so Coelius Antipater ap. Serv. ad loc.) as its founder. Spaltenstein may be correct in suggesting (n.11,178) that Silius made the two characters converge.

moenia sulco signaret I.e. when he was founding the city of Capua; cf. for the same use Verg. A. 5.755 urbem designat aratro (with Servius’ n. ad loc.), Ov. Fast. 4.819 moenia signat aratro and 4.825 designat moenia sulco (see Frazer’s n. ad 4.819 for a full discussion of the rite). Varro (L. 5.143) ascribes an Etruscan origin to this way to found a city. A white bull and cow would draw with a plough, the sulcus primigenius (RE 22.2.1974.30–31), the outline of the city that was to be founded. The driver and his helper ensured that all clods would fall to the inside of the area encircled by the furrow. This area, the pomerium, was considered sacred and was to ward off malign forces from the new town by this religious or magical rite; the sites of the gates were not ploughed, since otherwise, as Frazer observes, “they would inevitably have been profaned by the passage through the gates of unclean, but necessary things, including dead bodies carried out to burial”.

For the idea that Capys found the deer when he was founding his city, compare also the laurel that Latinus found and planted as he was building his citadel, Verg. A. 7.61 quam pater inventam, primas cum condere arces.

grato parvae mollitus amore The phrase plays on parallel lines in Vergil and Valerius Flaccus (for these intertexts, see Intr. 94–141; the parallelism between the three phrases was already recognized by Smolenaars (1991: 60)). Valerius’ Cyzicus is deceived by his desire for a great prey, the lion (3.22 ingenti praedae deceptus amore), just as Vergil’s Ascanius is ‘fired by longing for chiefest honour’ in the hunt (A. 7.496 eximiae laudis succensus amore); Silius gives it a twist and transposes the amor from the hunter to the animal’s master (and not, as Duff thinks, to the hind itself), ‘mollified by a pleasant affection for the small creature’; he also substitutes Vergil’s eximiae and especially Valerius’ ingenti by their opposite, parvae. Both in Valerius and Silius, the participle is significant; deceptus adumbrates the confusion in the subsequent battle, when Cyzicus mistakes his friends for
his enemies, while here, similarly, mollitus hints at Capua’s flaw of effeminacy and an excess of luxury. This is further suggested by the use of a golden comb to tend to the hind’s fur (122–123); cf. Cowan 2007: 10.

120–121 Subsequently it laid down its feral nature and learned to come to the table and even enjoyed the tender stroke of its master.

exuta feram Litt. ‘it laid down the wild animal’, hence ‘its nature as a wild animal’; cf. for this use 57 nec celata deam (‘godhood’; see n.54–57). Silius often uses exuo with traits or characteristics (‘lay down’, ‘lose’); cf. 849 exuta ... virginitate, 6.125 nec virtutem ...ullam, 7.493–494 monita et Fabium ... mente, 7.744 astus, 11.422–423 patrias ... artes, 15.566–567 fidem. For similar instances of the past participle with an acc. of respect (or, alternatively, for a deponent exuor), cf. 5.15 castumque exuta pudorem, “casting off maiden shame” and 6.100 exutus senium “forgetful of his years” (cf. also Stat. Theb. 6.352 omnis exuta comas, “stripped of all its foliage”); Blomgren (1938: 45) lists a number of similar constructions with other participles.

docilis Supply erat; for adjectives governing an infinitive, see n.21–23 incumbere ... vigor.

blanda attactu gaudebat erili A reminiscence of Verg. G. 3.185–186 tum magis atque magis blandis gaudere magistri et plaudi sonitum cervicis amare, “then more and more to delight in his trainer’s caressing praise, and to love the sound of patting his neck” (part of a passage on domesticating horses), of which the words of the first part and the sense of the second one have been adopted.

122–123 The matrons were accustomed to comb the tame deer with a golden comb and to restore its colour in a wet stream.

matronae The fact that women care for the hind is probably an allusion to Silvia’s care of the stag in Verg. A. 7.487–489, who also combs and washes the animal (7.489 pectebatque ferum puroque in fonte lavabat).

124–134

numen erat iam cerva loci, famulamque Dianae credebant, ac tura deum de more dabantur. 125

haec aevi vitaque tenax felixque senectam mille indefessos viridem duxisse per annos saeclorum numero Troianis condita tecta acubat; sed iam longo nox venerat aeo. nam subito incursu saevorum viridem duxisse per annos saeclorum numero Troianis condita tecta acubat; sed iam longo nox venerat aevo. nam subito incursu saevorum viridem duxisse per annos saeclorum numero Troianis condita tecta acubat; sed iam longo nox venerat aevo.

124–125 The hind was now the numen of the place, and people believed it to be the servant of Diana, and incense was presented to it as if to the gods.

Line 124 recalls Verg. A. 5.95–96 incertus geniumne loci famulumne parentis / esse putet, “knowing not whether to deem it the genius of the place or the attendant spirit of his sire”, on Aeneas’ uncertainty how to regard the serpent he sees at his father’s grave. The
same Vergilian snake is the model for the serpentine genius of Saguntum (Sil. 2.584–591), of which this hind is the Capuan counterpart (see Intr. 94–141).

famulamque Dianae It is not strange that the Campanians connected the animal with Diana; not only are deer commonly associated with Diana, but in the vicinity of Capua there was a sanctuary to Diana Tifatina in the woodlands at the western end of mons Tifata. A fresco in a chapel of the Pagus Dianae Tifatinae (where the cult was located) depicted a deer at the goddess’s side (RE 5.327.59–65, Beloch 1890: 365–366). In classical times this sanctuary probably was the most important temple of Campania; for the neighbouring city of Capua, Diana Tifatina might therefore be considered the guardian deity, who was to be appeased (see n.115–116 candore). In addition, there is possibly a parallel with Vergil’s stag, if it is significant that that animal was hunted “gerade im Haine der Diana Nemorensis” (Roscher s.v. Diana p.1006–1007). For the temple to Diana Tifatina, see Beloch 1890: 361–367, Heurgon 1942: 299–329; for Tifata, see also n.219 Tifata.

famulam is ‘servant’ only in a broad sense; it is to be rendered as ‘sacred to’ or ‘follower of’; cf. 6.288 famulum ... sororum Naiadum (the serpent of Bagrada) and, in connection with Diana, Verg. A. 11.557–558 (Camilla) and Ov. Met. 8.272 (the Calydonian boar).

126–129 This animal, clinging to old age and life and fortunate to have lived to a green old age during a thousand unwearied years, equalled in number of centuries the city founded by the Trojans; but now the end had come to its long life.

The fact that the lifespan of the deer equals that of Capua, its presence at the city’s foundation and its status of numen all make it the totemic animal of the Capua. Its flight and subsequent capture and death thus foreshadow the city’s doom.

aevi vitaeque tenax Spaltenstein compares the similar dual construction in Verg. A. 4.188 ficti pravique tenax, “clinging to the false and wrong”.

felixque ... duxisse For felix with an infinitive, cf. (with a different sense) 11.441, Verg. G. 1.284, A. 9.772–773 (TLL 6.1.445.8ff. and 449.83ff.). See also n.21–23 incumbere ... vigor.

senectam ... viridem Cf. Verg. A. 6.304 cruda deo viridisque senectus, “a god’s old age is hardy and green” (on Charon). For the same sentiment, cf. Stat. Silv. 3.1.174 teque nihil laesum viridi renovabo senecta, “I shall renew you scatheless in a green old age”.

mille ... per annos Unusual as the hind’s age might appear to a modern reader, a Roman would not be as surprised, for a deer’s life span was proverbial (cf. Otto cervus 1, Plin. Nat. 8.118). Silius makes full use of this view to link the deer with Capua’s founder and thus, as he explicitly states that that founder was a Trojan (Troianis condita tecta 128), with the age of the Aeneid. Heurgon (1942: 324) remarks that mille ... per annos would imply a founding date far earlier than any Roman historian would accept: “... une date très reculée, antérieure même à la guerre de Troie, date à laquelle n’auraient souscrit ni Caton, partisan de la chronologie brève, qui ne lui accordait que 260 ans d’existence, ni Velleius Paterculus et les tenants de la chronologie longue, qui ne la faisaient pas remonter au delà de 800.” However, such historical minutiae were of no concern to Silius, as he was more interested in following the poetic tradition regarding the Trojan foundation of Capua (see n.115–116). By linking the deer to Capua’s founder, some part of that mythological era still lives on in Punica. The direct connection which Capua’s hind forms to Capys, a character in the Aeneid, makes it comparable to the shade of the ancient Sibyl of Cumae (494–894) and to Anna, Dido’s sister, who plays a part in book 8 as a goddess. Silius thus ensures that
his epic is not only formally the sequel to the *Aeneid*, but features in part the same characters as well. For the poet’s use of ‘Weiterdichten’ (continuing the story of his predecessor), see Santini 1990.

**indefessos ... annos** Semi-divine (cf. on *senectam ... viridem* above), the deer is not weakened by its advanced age, unlike mortals; cf. for the diction Ov. *Met.* 7.163 *fessusque senilibus annis*, 9.440, 13.66, Sen. *Her.F.* 1250 *annisque fessis*, *Pha.* 267.

**nox** I.e. ‘death’ (the long dark of the underworld, *OLD s.v.* 1g), just as *dies* can be ‘life’. The analogy with Capua can also be pressed; during the following night the city’s elite will commit suicide (256–298), and like the deer, Capua will fall at daylight. Cowan (2007: 10 n.56) notes the poignant juxtaposition of *nox* and *longo ... aevo* (a play on *longaevus*): “This great expanse of time ends as if it were a single day”.

**130–134** *For startled by a sudden incursion of savage wolves, which had entered the city under the darkness of night (a terrible portent in war), at first light it had ran from the gates and in timid flight was skittishly making for the fields adjacent to the walls.*

Apart from the obvious symbolism of the embodiment of Capua being driven out and killed, another important theme here is that of tutelary deities (cf. 124 *numen*) abandoning their charge when it is doomed to go down; for cities, cf. 2.365 *iam damnata cessit Carthagine Mavors*, “Mars has departed from an already doomed Carthage”, Aesch. *Th.* 217–218, Hdt. 8.41.3 (Athens), Verg. *A.* 2.351–352 (Troy), Hor. *Carm.* 2.125–26 (Africa) and in a Flavian context Joseph. *BJ* 6.5.3 and Tac. *Hist.* 5.13.1 (Jerusalem; cf. Cowan 2007: 11); for persons, cf. Hom. *Il.* 22.212–213 (Apollo leaves Hector), Eur. *Hipp.* 1437–1439 (Artemis leaves Hippolytos) and Plut. *Ant.* 75.3–4 (Bacchus deserts Mark Antony). See also the notes by Austin, Nisbet-Hubbard and Pelling to the *l.c.* in Verg., Hor. and Plut., respectively; they compare the Roman ritual of *evocatio*, whereby the general would persuade the enemy tutelary deity to change allegiance (see Ogilvie *ad* Liv. 5.21; Versnel 1976: 380–383). Silius’ hind is obviously not deserting Capua in favour of the Romans here, but Fulvius’ subsequent appropriation of the favour of Diana at 135–137 may, to an extent, be interpreted as a form of *evocatio*.

**incursu saevorum .... luporum** The implausibility of wolves entering a besieged city is irrelevant; the symbolism is expressive. Since the poet plays so much upon the analogy between the hind and Capua, the question arises whom the wolves represent (for a similar discussion, with a fuller survey of the (symbolic) wolves in the *Punica*, see Cowan 2007: 7–8). A few points can be made in favour of a Carthaginian interpretation: i) In *Punica* 7, Hannibal is twice the subject of a wolf simile; at 7.126–130, he is a pack of wolves besetting the fold of shepherd Fabius (in which Hannibal resembles Turnus, who receives the same simile at *A.* 9.59–64), while at 7.717–722 he has caught Minucius like a wolf snatching a lamb, only to lose it when the same shepherd comes to the rescue. ii) Hannibal’s entry of Capua in book 11 may parallel the present situation. The hind is analogous to Decius, the last upright citizen of Capua (11.158), who reminded his fellow citizens of their pacts with Rome; Hannibal ordered him to be chained and brought to Carthage to await punishment (incidentally, at the occasion Hannibal is compared to another deadly predator of livestock, 11.243–246). Likewise here the embodiment of Capua (see n.126–129) is dispelled from it. As stated in n.115–116, the deer’s whiteness may point to its purity; in this interpretation, the deer could not bear the stain of treachery that had tainted Capua after its defection to Carthage.
More cogent arguments suggest that the wolves symbolize the Romans, however: i) The wolf is their totemic animal; cf. the analogous omen reported by Livy (10.27.8–9, see Intr. 94–141), in which the slain doe represents (the defeat of) the Gauls and the escaping wolf the victorious Romans. ii) The wolves in book 7 are “rattling with their teeth at the unyielding barriers”, 7.130 morsuque quattre restantia claustra, which is here picked up by the Roman siege engines, used to “batter the impeding bars”, 108 quaeteretque morantia claustra: unlike Hannibal, the Romans are able to penetrate the enemy defences, which is symbolized by the wolves’ successful incursion into the city. iii) The incursus of wolves corresponds to the incursio hostium which is the occasion of the flight of Sertorius’ doe in Gell. 15.22.6 (see Intr. 94–141); those hostes are Pompey’s Roman troops. iv) Although Turnus is a wolf in Aeneid 9, he has turned into a hunted stag at A. 12.742–757 when he flees from Aeneas; this transformation is, as Putnam (1970: 418) notes, anticipated by the correspondence between Tyrhhus’ stag (7.483 forma praestanti) and Turnus (7.783 praestanti corpore). Here, Silius alludes to Turnus’ flight with pavidaque petebat consternata fuga ... campos, a rather faithful imitation of A. 12.742 amens diversa fuga petit aequora Turnus (immediately before the stag simile). For Hannibal, a similar shift of metaphor since Punica 7 is likely. As the death of our hind symbolizes the fall of Capua, which in turn adumbrates the fall of Carthage, an attractive possibility is that Silius is here thinking of, and anticipating, the words of Horace’s Hannibal when the war was lost: cervi, luporum praeda rapacium (Carm. 4.4.50), “we are like stags, the prey of savage wolves”.

Compare also the portents in Livy of wolves running through the streets of Rome, for which see n.173–178 adversaque evasit ... porta.

primos ad luminis ortus Cf. A. 6.255 primi sub lumina solis et ortus, “just before the rays and dawning of the early sun”. The line immediately precedes Aeneas’ descent into the underworld; similarly here, the deer will go (in a far more final way) to the nether realm.

135–137
exceptam laeto iuvenum certamine ductor
mactat, diva, tibi (tibi enim haec gratissima sacra)
Fulvius atque ‘adsis,’ orat ‘Latonia, coeptis.’

135–137 When it has been caught in delightful competition by the soldiers, general Fulvius sacrifices it, goddess, to you (for to you this is a most welcome offering) and prays ‘May you, daughter of Latona, aid our enterprise’.

It appears that the favourable portent which was announced at 114 dextrum ... omen could be any of three events: i) the flight of the deer from Capua (132–134), ii) the capture of the animal (135) and iii) the sacrifice, by which it is killed (136–137). Of these, the deer’s capture can presumably be ruled out as an omen, even though the success of the hunt might be taken as a favourable portent (cf. laeto); the fact that this event is summarized in a participle (drawing full attention to the more important action, the sacrifice) makes this improbable, however. As for the sacrifice itself, that fact that it is brought about by human agency does not mean that it cannot be an omen (cf. Liv. 10.27.8, where the Romans claimed the escape of the wolf as an omen, although they themselves had let the beast pass through: lupus data inter ordines via, “for the wolf a passage was opened between the ranks”; see for this intertext Intr. 94–141). In favour of i), the parallel passage in Punica 2
may be adduced, where the flight of a snake from the tomb of Zacynthus (the eponym of Saguntum) convinces the Saguntines that their doom is sealed. A closer consideration of the tenses may be useful. After the introduction of the portent in 114, it is to be expected that the first action described in present or perfect tenses (representing the storyline itself, rather than background information) portrays the nature of the omen. The deer’s flight is presented in imperfect tenses, as the setting of the subsequent narrative; by contrast, the sacrifice, in present tenses, is highlighted as an action on the main storyline. While the flight of the animal would in itself already constitute an omen, Fulvius makes the most of the portent by sacrificing the deer to Diana; its death anticipates the fall of Capua. Perhaps the best option is to read the omen as the combination of flight and sacrifice. Note that the incursion of the wolves into Capua (130) should be taken as a separate, negative omen for the Capuans (131–132 miserabile bello prodigium) and the deer’s flight and sacrifice as another, positive omen for the Romans (114 dextrum ... omen); that last part is the only thing that can be considered as a visible portent (offulsit 114) at the moment the Romans were about to storm the city.

laeto Either ‘delightful’ (so Duff) or ‘propitious’ (cf. of portents 4.115, 16.127 and 17.55).

mactat, diva, tibi That the deer is sacrificed to Diana might be unexpected after its introduction as famulam Dianae (124). It does not seem necessary to take credebant (125) as an indication that the Capuans were wrong in this assumption (pace Cowan 2007: 11–12). Diana Tifatina was primarily worshipped as huntress (RE 5.327.44, Heurgon 1942: 300–301, 312–313; cf. CIL X 3796 incola Tifatæ, venatibus incluta virgo, “Tifata’s inhabitant, maiden renowned in the hunt”); it is this aspect, also, that the hunting metaphor in 138–141 plays upon. Consequently a deer, normally game, would be a fitting sacrifice to this goddess (tibi enim haec gratissima sacra 136), even if, or perhaps especially if, it was (already) sacred to her (cf. Franchet d’Espèrey 1977: 166). Since her cult was the most important in Campania, it is natural that Fulvius makes an offering to her, given that if she favours the Roman enterprise, Capua is bound to fall.

The sudden apostrophe is common in narrations of sacrifices; cf. the main intertext Verg. A. 8.84–85 [sus] quam pius Aeneas tibi enim, tibi maxuma Iuno / mactat sacra ferens, “good Aeneas offered [the sow] in sacrifice to you, indeed to you, most mighty Juno” (see n.115–116 candore), and also A. 3.118–119 meritos aris mactavit honores / taurum Neptuno, taurum tibi, pulcher Apollo, “on the altars [he] slew the sacrifices due, a bull to Neptune, a bull to you, fair Apollo”, A. 6.18–19 tibi Phoebe sacravit / remigium alarum, “he dedicated to thee, Phoebus, the oarage of his wings”, A. 6.250–251 Aeneas ... ferit sterilemque tibi, Proserpina, vaccam. “Aeneas slays ... to you, Proserpina, a barren heifer”, and Ov. Met. 4.755–756 mactatur vacca Minervae / alipedi vitulus, taurus tibi, summe deorum, “to Minerva he slays a cow, a young bullock to the winged god, and a bull to thee, thou greatest of the gods”. Eden ad A. 8.84–85, quoting Norden who derives these formulae from the style of Greek ex voto dedications (Norden ad Verg. A. 6.18–19), remarks that “the natural invocation by the dedicator is echoed in an apostrophe by the poet in the context of the narrative”. In the Punica, cf. also 10.527, 10.547–548 and 13.136; other passages include Verg. A. 10.541–542, 11.7–8, Ov. Fast. 1.579–580 and 2.681–682.

adsis, Latonia, coeptis This echoes Verg. A. 10.461 te precor, Alcide, coeptis ingentibus adsis, “I beseech you, Alcides, aid my great enterprise” (Pallas’ prayer to

Notes to 94–141

138–141
indc alacer fidensque dea circumdata clausis
arma movet, quaeque obliquo curvautur in orbem
moenia flexa sinu, spissa vallata corona
alligat et telis in morem indaginis ambit.

138–141 *Then eager and trusting in the goddess he moves the army that surrounds the besieged and the walls which curve in an oblique angle to form a bend, fenced with a thick ring of soldiers, he envelops and surrounds with weapons in the way of a hunting ring.*

The Romans concentrate their forces at bends in the city walls. By doing so, they gain local ascendancy; for at straight sections of the walls, there are as many defenders as there are attackers, but at these bends, the Romans are able to attack from the front and the side. Fulvius’ trust in Diana, goddess of the hunt, is translated to his strategy; after the chase and capture of the deer (136), the assault on the city itself is now depicted in a hunting metaphor. The ring of soldiers with which Fulvius envelops the walls is likened to the ring of huntsmen (*indaginis*) which prevents the game from escaping (cf. also *alligat*, ‘snares’). Capua, trapped, is soon to suffer the same fate as its totemic animal.

**alacer** For the commander’s aggressiveness, see n.94–97 *Fulvius*.

**spissa vallata corona** The phrase combines a Vergilian and Lucanian intertext. The first is the siege of the Trojan camp in *Aeneid* 9: *quaerunt pars aditum et scalis ascendere muros, qua rara est acies interlucetque corona / non tam spissa viris* (9.507–509), “some seek an entrance, and try to scale the walls with ladders, where the line is thin and light gleams through a less dense ring of men”, of which the first part was alluded to in 112 *scalis transcendere muros* (cf. for similar phrases *A*. 10.122 *raro muros cinxere corona*, 11.475–476 *muros varia cinxere corona / matronae puerique*). In this passage, the Rutulians try to gain local ascendancy, too, by attacking spots where defenders are sparse (*non tam spissa*). The second intertext is Luc. 3.373–374 *moenia clausa / conspicit et densa iuvenum vallata corona*, “[Caesar] sees the city-walls barred and fenced by a thick ring of soldiers”. The inhabitants of Massilia defy Caesar, after which he orders the construction of siege equipment (which Silius alludes to in 104–110; see n., and Intr. 94–141 for the significance of Massilia as an anti-model for Capua). It is possible that in our lines, the *spissa ... corona* is also made up of defenders, as in the models above. Since *alligat* could use *corona* as an accompanying ablative (which goes well with the image suggested by *indaginis*), it is more plausible, however, that Silius has inverted the image, making the walls themselves hemmed in by the attacking forces. This interpretation is supported by the similar use of *corona* and *vallare* for the besiegers in a third intertext: Fabius’ entrapment of Hannibal in *Punica* 7, who complains at 308–309 *cernis ut, armata circumfundare corona, / et vallet clausos collectus miles in orbem.*
142–178 The duel between Taurea and Claudius

As the Romans assault Capua, suddenly a man on horseback, Taurea, emerges from the city. Riding towards the Roman troops, he shouts a challenge to their most renowned soldier, Claudius, to meet him in single combat. Claudius obtains permission from his commander Fulvius and accepts the challenge. After a short skirmish with javelins, Taurea flees back to Capua, with Claudius on his heels, who chases him through the streets of Capua and escapes at the other side of the city.

After the sacrifice of the hind, Silius interrupts his narration of the assault for another adumbration of Capua’s doom. Its champion, Taurea, is routed in combat with his Roman adversary. Like the hind, Taurea serves as the embodiment of his city, and his fate mirrors and frames that of Capua; at 369–380, the poet describes his suicide when the city had fallen.

Silius drew inspiration for the duel from two scenes in Livy. The first one (23.46.12–47.8) took place long before the actual siege of Capua. When Fabius devastated the countryside of Capua, the inhabitants were forced to give battle, but, having no faith in their infantry, they challenged the enemy to cavalry battles. One of these challenges was that by one Cerrinus Vibellius Taurea to the Roman Claudius Asellus. After some time was spent circling each other with their spears poised, one of them suggested descending into a sunken road, where there was no space for such defensive manoeuvring. Taurea decided to back out, however; when Claudius did not meet his opponent, he returned as victor to his companions. Livy appends another ending, in which Claudius chased Taurea through Capua.1

The second duel (25.18.4–15), possibly a duplicate of the first,2 was between the Campanian Badius and his former host Crispinus. Despite his initial reluctance to respond to the challenge of his one-time guest, Crispinus was persuaded to fight him when Badius abused him in front of his fellows and entered the fray with his commander’s permission. The combatants rode into each other with their lances and Crispinus transfixed Badius’ shoulder, unhorsing him. Not wanting to be caught, Badius left his shield and horse and ran to his people; Crispinus returned to his comrades in glory.

Our poet derived several details of the present passage from these two stories. From the first one, the names of Taurea and Claudius were adopted, the description of the fighters as the most skilled in their respective armies,3 and the spectacular climax of the chase through Capua; the second may have supplied the element that the Roman was able to penetrate his opponent’s armour;4 both accounts mention that the Roman asked for permission first, a detail which Silius elaborates into a significant motif, suggestive of the renewed discipline since Fabius’ dictatorship.5 A point of difference between Silius’ text and Livy’s two

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1 The same tale is told summarily by Appian (Hann. 36), who adds a reason for Claudius’ ride through Capua: his horse had not been able to turn before the city gates because of the rate of the chase.
2 Spaltenstein ad 13.142.
3 Silius goes beyond Livy, however, by aligning Taurea with Hannibal’s troops; see n.142–145 superare lacerto ... et Autololas dabat et Maurusia tela.
4 With the distinction that in the Punica, Taurea is not unhorsed, nor wounded, so that he may still escape to Capua with Claudius on his heels.
5 See n.155–156a.
passages is the weapon the combatants use; in both authors, it is a *hasta*, but the word refers to two different types of spear. In Livy, the duels are to be fought by charging into one another (like medieval jousting); the *hasta* is the heavy thrusting lance, perhaps not as heavy as the ones traditionally used by the infantry,\(^6\) but surely not meant to be thrown. Silius thinks of javelins, however.\(^7\) The development of the duel—opened by a spear cast by both warriors, followed by fighting at close quarters—evokes the duels of epic poetry. Silius does not merely employ a traditional *topos* here, but alludes to specific models, as we will see.

As was shown earlier, Vergil’s description of the siege of Aeneas’ camp in *Aeneid* 9–10 is an important model for Silius’ siege of Capua.\(^8\) The Trojan heritage of both Capuans and Romans complicates the intertext, as is illustrated by the figure of Taurea. When he comes riding out of the city to challenge the Romans, he clearly evokes Turnus at the beginning of *Aeneid* 9 as he arrived at Aeneas’ camp; Taurea’s taunting challenge to Claudius is an amalgam of various observations Turnus made about the Trojan defenders.\(^9\) At first sight, Silius seems to have reversed the situation; instead of the attacker challenging Trojan defenders who remain inside their walls, the defender rides out and challenges Trojan attackers. But the allusion is more complex, and develops into two different, indeed quite opposite directions.

If Taurea is modelled after Turnus, Claudius is presented as the successor of Aeneas (153 *Aeneadae*). The only formal duel in Vergil’s *Aeneid* is that between Turnus and Aeneas in 12.699ff.; the passage resonates here through a few significant phrases. Claudius’ acceptance of Taurea’s challenge picks up Aeneas’ joy when he was informed that Turnus sought to enter into single combat with him.\(^10\) Vergil’s protagonists hurled their spears and moved in for close combat with swords; similarly, Claudius here draws his sword after having cast his javelin, but Taurea is already fleeing, like Turnus who ran when his sword had broken. Claudius’ pursuit of his Campanian opponent is modelled after Aeneas’ chase of Turnus.\(^11\)

At the same time, however, Claudius usurps Taurea’s identification with Turnus before the Trojan camp, as is indicated by his title *Rutulus* at 163 and 171. As he enters the fray, the Roman raises a dust cloud very similar to the one made by the approaching Rutulian army in *Aeneid* 9.\(^12\) He closely scans Taurea’s body for an entrance, just as Turnus looked for ways into the Trojan camp.\(^13\) From there, Silius skips to the end of *Aeneid* 9; when Claudius enters Capua on Taurea’s heels, he re-enacts Turnus’ deeds, who followed the routed Trojans into their camp. Claudius leaves through another gate, just as Turnus left at the other side of the camp by jumping into the Tiber.

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\(^6\) *hasta* is the technical term for the stabbing spear of the infantry; see *RE* 7.2501ff.

\(^7\) The *iaculum* or *hasta velitaris*; according to Liv. 26.4.4–10, the use of *velites* (javelin-throwing foot soldiers) was first adopted in the siege of Capua to counter the dominant enemy cavalry.

\(^8\) See Intr. 94–141 and e.g. n.99–103 *turribus altis*.

\(^9\) See nn.142–145 sublimis Taurea cristas bellator and 149–152.

\(^10\) See n.153–154 una mora Aeneadae.

\(^11\) See n.171–172.

\(^12\) See n.156b–158.

\(^13\) Cf. *A*. 9.58 *lustrat equo muros aditumque per avia quae rite* and 9.67 *qua temptet ratione aditus, et quam via* ... with Silius’ imitation at 164–165 *perlustrat, qua sit certissima ferro / in vulnus via*. Cowan (2007: 14) also observes the (negated) echo of *A*. 9.65 *haud alter Rutulo in 163 at non idem ... Rutulo.*
The two directions seem impossible to reconcile. As noted above, however, what fuels Silius’ intertextual play here is the claim that both Rome and Capua could lay to the Trojan legacy. Who are the true literary heirs of Vergil’s Trojans—is it the Capuans who are besieged with little hope of rescue, or rather, in a reversal of military and epic roles, the Roman besiegers? The best answer is: a bit of both. The Romans take on the victorious roles of both the Rutulians and Aeneas’ Trojans; the Capuans, conversely, are cast as the losing party—Trojans who have no Aeneas to relieve their camp (see n.99–103 turribus altis) and Rutulians whose champion is routed.

In the Aeneid, Turnus’ approach of the camp and his duel with Aeneas have the same intertext: the combat between Achilles and Hector in Iliad 22. Both Turnus’ search for an entrance into the camp and Claudius’ scrutiny of Taurea’s body allude to Achilles’ body allude to Achilles as he in similar fashion scans Hector’s armour for weaknesses. This is an important intertext. Silius’ two warriors, like Homer’s pair, are the informal champions of their respective armies, whose victory or defeat anticipates the fate of their country. Hector’s death represents the fall of Troy. Vergil played on this symbolic link between man and city by using the scene as a model for Turnus’ search for a way into the Trojan camp, which is the first of a series of ‘new Troys’ in Italy. It has been argued that the camp in Aeneid 9 stands for Rome, the ultimate ‘new Troy’, and that we should see accounts of Hannibal’s siege of Rome as intertexts. If so, Silius likely recognized this; for his presentation of

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14 See also Cowan 2007: 14. The almost fratricidal aspect of Rome’s siege of Capua is illustrated by a short allusion to the duel between the Theban brothers Eteocles and Polynices in Statius’ Thebaid; see n.146–148 trepido ac litem tinnitus stare neganti ... equo. For this motif of civil war, see Intr. 94–141.

15 In much the same way, the literary ancestry of Vergil’s Trojan camp is itself ambiguous; Cowan (2007: 13 n.81) aptly characterizes the siege of the camp as “a struggle to decide whether the Trojan camp will fall like Troy or take Latinus’ city like the Greek camp”. See Anderson 1957: 24–25, Knauer 1964: 270–280, Quint 1992: 67–68, Hardie 1994: 10–11, Rossi 2004: 66–67. Anderson notes that Turnus deceives himself in thinking that he is a second Achilles, since his deeds (e.g. setting the ships on fire) align him with Hector; the same incongruity between ‘self-proclaimed’ model and ‘actual’ model (i.e. what turns out to be the model) is present here, with Taurea comporting himself as another Turnus, whereas the entire setting of the siege rather connects him with the besieged Trojans. This form of intertextuality, in which a character does not ‘correctly recognize’ his literary ancestry, is primarily used for the characterisation of Hannibal; see Gen.intr. § 4.1 and 5.2.1, and Intr. 1–29.

16 Taurea is also aligned with Vergil’s losing Trojans through a number of echoes from the aristeia of Camilla. His taunt to Claudius at 151 si qua est fidicua dextreax puts the latter in the role of Camilla, who on her own goes against the Trojans (see n.149–152). Taurea himself is modelled after Camilla’s victims; cf. his spumantis equi (cf. A. 11.770 spumantemque agitabat equam, of Chloereus) and his flight at 169–170, when he puts the spurs to his horse (ferrata rapiebat calce volantem ... cornipedem; cf. A. 11.714 quadripedemque citum ferrata calce fatigat, of Ligier’s flight from Camilla; for fatigat, see 142 fatigans). The detail that Taurea surpassed Hannibal’s Autololes with his throwing arm (144 lucerto) may also be significant; for earlier in the Punica, the Autololes were characterized not by their skills with the javelin, but for running: 3.306 levibus gens ignea plantis, an echo of Vergil’s description of Camilla when she overtake Liger: A. 11.718 pernicibus ignea plantis.

17 The intertextuality between Aeneid 12 and Iliad 22 has been studied extensively; see e.g. Knauer 1964: 429–431, West 1974, Barchiesi 1984: 91–122, Quint 1993: 65–83.

18 ητορισμον ρος καλων, δη εξαε μαλστα. Cf. Juhnke 1972: 401 and Cowan 2007: 14, who notes (ibid. n.86) that Vergil and Silius pick up δην with qua ... qua via (A. 9.67) and qua ... via (164–165), but that only Silius reproduces the sense of μαλστα with certissima (165).

19 The formal duel between Menelaus and Paris was even meant to determine the outcome of the war (Hom. Il. 3.92–94), just like that between Aeneas and Turnus (A. 12.694–695). The other formal duel in the Iliad, that between Ajax and Hector (book 7), had no such official consequences, but is no less symbolic.


Hannibal ante portas is, conversely, modelled after Aeneid 9, first when Hannibal lays siege to Saguntum (the representative of Rome) in book 1 and then at the walls of Rome itself in book 12, including the detail of Hannibal scrutinizing the walls for an entrance.22

That after books 1 and 12 the same motif is used here for a third time is highly significant. Firstly, the allusion to Achilles’ inspection of Hector identifies Taurea as the embodiment of Capua, just as Hector symbolized Troy.23 In the second place, the re-use of the motif casts Capua as the substitute of Rome. After his scrutiny of the walls, Hannibal was only able to penetrate Rome with his gaze, and only partially at that (12.567–568 intrat / urbem oculis, 569–570 penetraret in omnis / spectando partis). At Rome, Hannibal’s identification with Turnus was incomplete, since he failed to enter the city in person. Claudius, however, here proceeds to penetrate the gates of Capua (cf. 180 penetratae tecta). Obviously, the climax of the scene is not “a narrative dead end” or an anticlimax;24 it is rather the logical development of the equation of man and city in Silius’ literary models to its ultimate conclusion. Taurea and Capua are one; seeking to penetrate the defences of the man, Claudius succeeds in penetrating the defences of the city.25

Analysis of the presentation of 142–178

After the beginning of the Roman assault, narrated at 138–141, the perspective of the narrative switches to the Capuan side. As in 94, the transition to a new passage is marked by a dum- clause, dum paviant;26 the reaction of the besieged to the sacrifice of their hind and the Roman assault (fear) forms the background to Taurea’s more heroic reaction of challenging Claudius to single combat. In some respects, the dum-clause here differs from

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22 Cf. Verg. A. 9.58 lustrat equo muros aditumque per avia quaerit with 1.298–299 (Hannibal at Saguntum) circumlustravit anhelo / muros saevis equo; with 12.563–565 (Hannibal at Rome) circum pavitantia fertur / quadrupedante sono percussae moenia Romae. / nunc aditus lustrat (pace Horsfall 1974: 83 “The common use of aditus and lustrat does not quite prove that Silius had Virgil in mind here”, although he suggests at p.86 a possible awareness on Silius’ part of the “relationship between the stories of Hannibal in 211, and Turnus in Aeneid, ix” which influenced “the characterisation of Hannibal in Punica xii”).

23 The model is continued at 367–370, the scene of Taurea’s death. Fulvius’ retort patriam moriens comitare cadentem (377) reminds of Achilles’ pithy τέθναθι (22.365) and at the same time emphasizes the connection between the death of Taurea and the fall of Capua. For other echoes of the fall of Troy, see Intr. 348–380.

24 Cowan 2007: 14; cf. Burck 1984: 41 “fast banale Abschlußakt eines gefähr- und ergebnisloses Zweikampfs”. Cowan (ibid.) may have a point that this is a “self-contained episode contributing nothing to the advance of the narrative, [...] a solipsistic action contributing nothing to the prosecution or raising of the siege”, but the same could be said of Turnus’ incursion. While Vergil, however, points explicitly to Turnus’ failure to open the gates to his men, Claudius is an exemplo to his peers (cf. 179–180), and the episode should therefore be treated accordingly: as a mise-en-abyme of the siege as a whole, with Claudius’ victory anticipating the conquest of Capua. For the differences between Claudius and Turnus, see n.173–178.

25 The fact that Taurea is not killed is irrelevant, or, rather, Silius saves that scene for a partial deconstruction of his identification of Taurea with Hector; after Taurea’s suicide, Fulvius notes that he could (and should) have died in battle. Taurea should have been a Hector in all respects; instead, his belated suicide points to Capua’s corruption, on which see Intr. 348–380.

26 The zero-anaphora paviant (“they tremble”) is remarkable; generally speaking, a zero-anaphora is found when the topic has been sufficiently established for the reader to supply the correct subject; here, the only previous reference to the besieged was clausis at 138. A similar point can be made about credunt (175; the subject is only provided at 177, trepidantum) and 125 credebant. Perhaps the best explanation is that when the narrator describes events in and about Capua, the people of Capua are the default ‘they’.
the earlier one. It falls between the normal categories of settings, which are either ‘recapitulating’ (a short summary of what precedes) and ‘non-recapitulating’ (a background setting of the main clause without connection to what precedes). It is clear that dum pavitant is related to the previous passage, even though it does not summarize its end; rather, it presents the reaction of the other party to the events that have just been narrated. Under the guise of recapitulating, the poet actually furthers his narrative.  

The change of perspective is characteristic of this scene, which repeatedly alternates between Taurea and Claudius. The duel can be divided into four stages; for each stage, the narrator first describes Taurea’s actions, then Claudius’. The first stage, to which half of the scene is devoted, is the introduction of both warriors. Taurea is presented first (142–152), not in a lengthy description in imperfect tenses, but through his actions in the main narrative, embellished with colourful verbs and adjectives (e.g. fatigans, sublimis, imperitans violenter) which portray him as an impetuous, boastful and aggressive man. The description of Claudius’ actions is antithetic, both in structure and character: in structure, because it mirrors the lines on Taurea (who rides out of the gate, evehitur, and then issues his challenge; Claudius accepts the challenge and then rides out to the plain, invectus); in character, because the Roman’s discipline in waiting for his commander’s approval contrasts with Taurea’s impetuousness. For each warrior the narrator employs only one background clause with imperfect tenses on their skills at arms (144–145 and 149–150), which presents them as the champions of their respective armies. 

The second stage (159–168) contrasts the fighting methods of the two men. At the arrival of Claudius, Taurea was already brandishing his javelin; the overlap of the actions is reflected by the imperfect vibrabat and lends speed to the narrative. The reader’s impression of Taurea’s impetuousness is confirmed; the headstrong man disdains the use of a throwing implement and trusts to his own strength. inde (162) marks the second, more intense step of his action—he casts his javelin. Again, his demeanour contrasts with Claudius’, as is marked by both at and non idem (163). With a series of present tenses (speculatur, perlustrat, vibrat, comprimit, mentitur), which describe not a chronologically ordered group of events but the iteration of several actions during a short time span (nunc … nunc), the narrator pictures Claudius as a rational and deliberate combatant. The portrait ends abruptly when the impact of his spear is related (166 tunc). After the extensive description of Claudius’ feint attacks, the speed of his real attack stands out. The spear cast itself is not narrated at all, only its result (he pierces Taurea’s shield, transigit); in the second half of the sentence, the narrator reflects on the frustrated expectation regarding the outcome—despite successfully piercing the shield, the spear was robbed of its prize, Taurea’s blood (fraudata est). Then (168 tum) Claudius immediately unsheathes his sword, 

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27 For a similar semi-recapitulating setting, see n.314–315.
28 At the beginning of each phase, a noun phrase is used to focus on each warrior; for Taurea, cf. his name at 143, 161, 170 and victum at 173; for Claudius, cf. 153 Aeneadae, 163 Rutulo, 171 Rutulus, 174 victorem.
29 Cf. e.g. 115–134 (the hind), 191–205 (the three opponents of Fulvius) and 219–233 (Scipio’s foe Calenus).
30 See n.149–152. The comment in 155–156a is not so much background information on Claudius as an explanatory side-note (155 quamque) by the narrator.
31 For the imperfect marking an action that had begun (just) prior to the moment that is narrated, see Adema 2008: 92–96.
32 For a similar use of inde at the transition to a more physically active phase of a scene, cf. 138, 374 and 750.
and again, the focus is on the result—the sword is uncovered (detegit) so that it is drawn (strictum, a participle which summarizes the preceding action of drawing).\textsuperscript{33} The use of tenses and particles in this explicitly chronologically ordered group of events emphasize the speed which with the events follow on each other.

The third stage (169–172), which describes Claudius’ chase of Taurea, is narrated in imperfect tenses (rapiebat, instabat) and forms the background to the fourth stage, the entry of both riders into Capua (173–178).\textsuperscript{34} While in most earlier stages, the narrator’s attention is divided roughly equally between Taurea and Claudius, the last lines focus on the latter’s actions almost exclusively;\textsuperscript{35} Taurea will not enter the narrative again until line 369. The first two stages of the duel were drawn out and recounted as a ‘live report’ in present tenses; for the last part, the narrator switches to a ‘storytelling’ mode in past tenses. This has several effects. Firstly, the compression of the chase into a few lines adds to the impression of speed; this is also achieved by the double use of iam (169, 172) and the dactylic movement of the lines.\textsuperscript{36} Silius has slowly built up his scene, with Taurea as the arrogant challenger, but Claudius quickly defeats him; the Roman’s rapid conclusion of the duel aligns well with the general swiftness with which the siege is conducted (see An. 94–141). Secondly, the terse narration brings out the boldness of Claudius’ deed: he goes in (immisit), through the city (egit) and out again (evasit). The action is the climax of the scene, and the passage closes with it. Unlike Livy, Silius does not mention the celebration of the victor (Liv. 23.47.7; 25.18.14) or Fulvius’ gifts (25.18.14); rather, he proceeds immediately with the effects of the duel, the morale-boost on the Roman side (179ff.). Such diligent elaboration of a setting and a short climax which swiftly concludes the scene are a defining aspect of Silius’ narrative technique.\textsuperscript{37}

The passage opened with a reference to the fear of the Capuans (142 dum pavitant), who are not only under attack, but also saw the genius of their city be killed on the sacrificial altar. At the end of this passage, the situation is much the same, with another dum clause (175 dum vix ... credunt) of which the subject are the trembling citizens (177 trepidantum). The parallelism shows not only that Taurea’s vain challenge has achieved nothing (or rather made matters worse), but also that his role is similar to that of the hind—the representative of Capua, which is doomed by the death of its talisman (the hind) and the defeat of its champion (Taurea).

\textsuperscript{33} For the complementary use of strictum and detegit, see n.168 strictum ... detegit.
\textsuperscript{34} I distinguish between two stages because both at 169–172 and at 173–174 the poet counterbalances a comment on Taurea with one on Claudius; moreover, lines 169–172 form the transition between the events on the fields outside the city and the mad chase through its streets.
\textsuperscript{35} Taurea figures only as victum at 173, being driven by fear (metus) into the city.
\textsuperscript{36} Especially Taurea’s flight at 170 (all dactyls), but also 171a, 172a, 177 and 178.
\textsuperscript{37} Cf. in the previous passage the elaborate description of the deer, followed by the succinct narration of its sacrifice by Fulvius; cf. e.g. also the abrupt endings at 92–93 and 210–212.
142–152

As they tremble, Taurea comes riding from the gate, wearying down the fierce spirit of his foaming horse, a warlike man with a tall crest; the Carthaginian general acknowledged that with his throwing arm, Taurea surpassed his Autololes and the Moorish javelins.

dum pavitant The besieged Capuans (138 clausis) are the subject; still, the ellipse of the subject is remarkable at this switch of topics. For this phrase, see An. 142–178. The fear of the besieged may be caused not just by the assault, but also by the flight of the deer and its subsequent sacrifice in 130–137, which prefigures Capua’s doom (see Intr. 94–141). This frightened reaction sharply contrasts with Taurea’s challenge, heightening the expectations for the coming scene.

sublimis Taurea cristas bellator Taurea is depicted as a Homeric heroic warrior, and more specifically Hector; cf. (with Juhnke 1972: 401) his Homeric epithet μέγας κορυθαίολος Ἕκτωρ (e.g. Il. 2.816). sublimis goes by enallage with cristas, but may also suggest (cf. μέγας) that the man was tall himself. A third option is that sublimis refers to his high mounted position; cf. Taurea’s other model Turnus, who enters the battlefield on his horse and adorned with a crista (A. 9.50), in a similar high position (9.53 campo sese arduus infert). The analogies with Hector and Turnus will be developed later in the scene.


superare lacerto ... et Autololas dabat et Maurusia tela I.e. Hannibal regarded Taurea as a better javelin thrower than his African troops; a nice compliment, for those peoples were renowned for their skill with the javelin, particularly the Mauretanians (Maurusia tela), a group of tribes (among which the Autololes) living at the foot of mount Atlas in modern-day Morocco (RE 2.2600.12ff.). With this portrayal, Silius both outbids Livy’s already laudatory description of Taurea (23.46.12 longe omnium Campanorum fortissimus eques, “far the bravest horseman of all the Campanians”) and aligns him, along with the rest of Capua, with Hannibal. By implication, Claudius’ victory over this man, who excels above Hannibal’s other troops, signals Rome’s ultimate triumph.

dabat is ‘acknowledged’ (cf. Duff “admitted”, Budé “à l’aveu de”, OLD do 16b ‘grant’, ‘concede’); cf. e.g. a similar construction with an AcI at Hor. Serm. 1.4.39 dederim quibus
esse poetas, “whom I acknowledged to be poets”. The addition of the ablative lacerto to superare (OLD s.v. 3a ‘excel’, ‘w. abl. expressing field of excellence’) precludes Burck’s peculiar interpretation (1984: 40) that “Taurea ist mit dem Kommando über erlesene afrikanische Truppeneinheiten von Hannibal ausgezeichnet worden”.

146–148 While he violently constrains his restless horse, which refused to stand still with the braying of the bugles, Taurea, when he sees that he is within earshot of the enemy and can call from close quarters, exclaims...

trepido ac lituum tinnitu stare neganti ... equo The restlessness of Taurea’s horse at the sound of the litui (traditionally the signal-horns of the cavalry, RE 13.1.804.33ff.) may be simply eagerness for battle (cf. Verg. G. 3.84 stare loco nescit, Ov. Met. 3.704–705, Luc. 4.750–753), but it is more likely nervousness or even fright. The horses that are said to be trepidus or trepidans in other passages (Liv. 1.12.10, Ov. Her. 16.208, Stat. Theb. 7.760, 12.563–564) are all frightened or otherwise troubled. Taurea’s horse contrasts with that of Statius’ Eteocles just prior to his duel with Polynices, which is ad lituos hilarem intrepidumque tubarum (Theb. 11.325), “[the horse] rejoiced at the trumpets nor feared the bugles”. Eteocles’ horse is, like its master, unfazed at the prospect of a horrible fratricidal duel, which above all else evokes civil war; Taurea’s horse, on the other hand, is less certain at the outset of this similar duel (for the image of civil war in the siege of Capua, see Intr. 94–141). The nervous steed does not suit its master’s heroic appearance, just as Taurea’s words do not match his behaviour during the duel; the horse’s fright anticipates the flight from the battlefield at 169ff. and the resulting fright of the Capuans (177 trepidantum).

clamore propinquuo The mss. transmission clamore propinquuo has troubled many scholars. The syntactical structure in these lines has been interpreted as the coordination of two different types of modifiers to the main clause (149 inquit), namely a temporal clause (postquam ... videt) and an ablative (clamore propinquuo). This reading has been defended by Housman ad Luc. 9.12 (who compares Ov. Met. 5.362–363 postquam exploratum ... est ... depositoque metu); but since the construction is unusual, several emendations have been suggested. i) Lefebvre (1781; cf. Campbell 1955: 138) reads en for et (‘en!’ clamore propinquuo / ‘Claudius huic’ inquit), eliminating the coordination. ii) Bauer conjectures clamare propinquum (adopted by most editors, including Delz). In this reading, videt governs two parallel AcI’s, “he sees that he is close to the enemy’s ears and that he is shouting from close by”. iii) Duff adopts both clamare propinquum and another of Bauer’s suggestions, viz. to read imperitat instead of imperitans; he takes clamare as a historical infinitive (‘and shouted at close quarters ‘Let Claudius,’ he cried’). A historical infinitive hardly ever comes alone, however, and indicates an indefinite duration and random order (see KS 2.1.135ff.), which is not called for here. iv) If we only adopt Bauer’s reading imperitat, this results in two main clauses (imperitat and inquit), coordinated by et, of which the first is modified by the postquam clause, the latter by clamare propinquuo. This reading is syntactically the easiest. v) A last option is to retain the mss. transmission and let et (148) coordinate vicinum and clamare propinquuo; both go with the omitted esse, one as predicate adjective (vicinum), the other as ablative of quality (clamare propinquuo). In all these readings, the sense of auribus hostis vicinum sese is repeated in propinquuo-um, which led Watt (1988: 177) to suggest profundo (adducing Stat. Theb. 10.760) to remedy
what he conceives as an ‘psychological error’. While I agree that Bauer’s two parallel AcI’s are too repetitive, the syntactical variation that clamore propinquuo entails largely removes this objection. Tautological expressions are common in Latin poetry, and a coordination of vicinus and propinquus is no exception to that (cf. e.g. 7.520–521 vicina propinquis signa iugis locat, Pl. Bac. 172–173, Verg. A. 3.381–382, Ov. Tr. 3.12.35); indeed, it seems even emphasized by the placement of vicinum and propinquo at the beginning and end of the line. This framing speaks against Lefebvre’s conjecture en (which breaks it) and in favour of the last reading, although the fourth remains a serious option.

149–152 He says: ‘Let Claudius,’ (for Claudius excelled in the art of fighting and his fame was earned in a thousand battles) ‘come to this field alone, if he trusts in his strength, and enter into combat with me.’

The reason Silius gives for Taurea’s singling out Claudius differs from that in Livy. Whereas the historiographer notes that both men had served in the Roman army and rivalled for glory in mounted combat (23.46.12 cum apud Romanos militaret, unus eum Claudius Asellus gloria equestri aequaret, “while he served with the Romans only one Roman, Claudius Asellus, rivalled him in reputation as a cavalryman”), here no such rivalry is mentioned, only Claudius’ renown in battle (cf. Burck 1984: 40 “Bei Silius muß man annehmen, daß Claudius sich in vorangehenden Kämpfen besonders hervorgetan hat und daß Taurea dadurch auf ihn aufmerksam geworden ist (149f.)”). This description of Claudius at 149–150 counterbalances that of Taurea at 144–145; Silius’ adaptation casts the two not merely as personal rivals, but, since each represents the best fighting skills of Hannibal’s and Fulvius’ armies, as champions of the Capuan/Carthaginian and Roman causes.

Taurea’s taunt and challenge of Claudius builds on his assumption of the role of Turnus (see n.142–145 sublimis Taurea cristis bellator). After the latter’s appearance at the walls of the Trojan camp, the Rutulians marvel at the unwillingness of their enemy to take the field (A. 9.55–56 Teucrum mirantur inertia corda, / non aequo dare se campo), at which Turnus observes that the Trojans have (only) faith in their walls (A. 9.142–144 quibus haec medii fiducia valli). In Silius’ inversing imitation, the defender Taurea assumes the role of challenger; his taunt is the logical sequel to Turnus’ observations: ‘let Claudius enter the field (det se campo), if he has any faith (fiducia) in his sword arm’ (note the same sedes of fiducia and its genitive). But compare also Camilla’s assertion to Turnus that she will face the Trojans sui merito sigua est fiducia forti (A. 11.502), “if the brave may justly put any trust in themselves”. The echo anticipates the reversal of both roles during the duel itself; not Taurea, but Claudius will assume the role of Camilla and Turnus who victoriously pursue the Trojans (see Intr. 142–178 with fn.16).

arte bellandi Combat prowess rather than tactical sense, which is the usual meaning (cf. 7.91–92). This phrase is otherwise found only in Late Latin prose (but cf. Liv. 3.2.12 ars pugnandi, or Caes. Civ. 3.50.1 bellandi rationes and B. Afr. 31.4 scientia bellandi); a more common expression is ars belli (frequent in Livy and later prose writers), the opposite of ars pacis. The gerund of bellare is rare in poetry, except for the Punica (11 instances).

merita ... fama fama is parallel with arte; Claudius exceeded his compatriots in prowess and in fame. For fama praestare, cf. Liv. 38.17.2 Gallos fama belli praestare.
153–158
una mora Aeneadae, postquam vox attigit aures, dum daret auspicium iusque in certamina ductor. sponte viris. erumpit ovans, ut Fulvius arma imperio solvit, patulumque invectus in aequor erigit undantem glomerato pulvere nubem.

153–154 The only delay for the Roman, after the challenge had reached his ears, was to wait until his leader had given his authorization and permission for the fight.

Although the Roman soldier Claudius is eager to fight, he is disciplined enough to wait for his commander’s permission. This discipline contrasts strongly with the impetuousness of Taurea to leave the safety of the city walls and demand a man-to-man fight. A similar contrast can be seen in their approach to the fight itself; see nn.159–161 and 163–165a.

una mora Aeneadae This element, that Claudius only waits for Fulvius’ permission, is derived from the two duels in Livy (see Intr. 142–178): 23.47.1 id modo moratus ut consulem percontaretur and 25.18.12 tantum moratus dum imperatores consuleret. But the use of the word Aeneades, which means ‘Roman’ but with the connotation of ‘heir of Aeneas’ (cf. 1.2, and in this book lines 500, 767 and 891; see n.890b–893 Aeneadis), points towards another intertext: Verg. A. 12.699–700 praecipitatque moras omnis, opera omnia rumpit / laetitia exsultans, “[Aeneas] flings aside all delay, breaks off all tasks … exultant with joy” (cf. 156 erumpit ovans, which picks up the second and third parts of Vergil’s lines). In this passage, Aeneas accepts Turnus’ challenge to a duel. Claudius is thus another Aeneas; cf. Cowan 2007: 13 n.83, who observes on the rare singular Aeneades that in each instance (here, at 13.767 and Ov. Met. 15.804, Pont. 1.1.35) it “marks the person so named as not merely a descendant but a type of Aeneas”. The allusion anticipates Claudius’ victory. For the shuffling of epic roles, see Intr. 142–178.

The only difference between Aeneas and Claudius is the latter’s compliance to strict military discipline, for which see n.155–156a.

vox attigit aures The expression is as old as Ennius’ tetigit aures nuntius (scen. 230); cf. also Varro ap. Nonius 263 M. (402 L.) adigit aures nuntius (Fletcher 1988: 104), Ov. Met. 1.211 contigerat … aures, 15.497 si contigit aures, Calp. Ecl. 3.39 contingam nuntius aures and especially V.Fl. 2.452 vox accidit aures.

In Livy, Claudius is informed of the challenge by others (23.47.1 haec ubi Asello sunt nuntiata; cf. the double at 25.18.5 quod ubi est Crispino nuntiatum). Here, he hears Taurea directly.

auspicium iusque auspicium does not refer directly to a religious context; as a commander, Fulvius had the right to consult the gods, from which part of his authority was derived, resulting in the more generalized meaning it has here: authorisation (OLD 6b). For this sense (unique to Silius), cf. also at 7.231 signum auspiciumque dedisset and 17.562 pugnae auspicium dedimus.

Spaltenstein and Littlewood ad 7.230–231 take signum auspiciumque as a hendiadys (signum ex auspicio). The same may apply here, but it is more likely that auspicium iusque refers to Fulvius’ religious and legal authorities, respectively. The legal context is continued at 155 with praevertitum et capital.
155–156a For it was forbidden above all else to the soldiers and a capital offence to join battle of their own accord.

Such discipline had saved the Romans under Fabius Cunctator (cf. the parallel phrase at 7.93–94 discedere signis / haud licitum), after too many had become the victim of the rash aggressiveness of generals like Flaminius. Fulvius’ permission for the duel, and his offensive conduct in general, is a sign of a change of policy in favour of aggression, which is continued by the other commanders in books 13–17, including Scipio. While the aggression of Flaminius and Varro was condemned as rashness (e.g. 5.54 excussus consul fatorum turbine mentem, “Flaminius, bereft of his senses and swept along by destiny”; 8.244–245 Varro ingentique ruinae festinans aperire locum fata admovet urbi, “Varro ... by his haste to prepare the way for a mighty downfall, brought Rome near to destruction”), Fulvius’ offensive strategy, tempered by the wisdom of Fabius, is not criticized. For the shift from Fabian defence to Scipionic offence, see n.772–773a.

praevetitum A hapax legomemon. The meaning in the OLD s.v., ‘forbidden beforehand’, is rather implausible; the ban on fighting without orders is formulated as a general prohibition (since namque marks that this is the general context in which Claudius’ request is to be understood), which is issued beforehand a priori. Because Fabius had emphasized the need for military discipline to be able to counter Hannibal’s stratagems, the meaning ‘forbidden above all else’ seems more probable; the prohibition stems from the harsh lessons of the Trasimene lake and Cannae. For this use of praev-, cf. 3.608 praeformidate, 4.226 praegelidis, 6.43 praesignis, 15.307 praegaudens, 16.563 praerapida (also 17.179). For other hapax legomena in the Punica, see Blomgren 1938: 55.

Silius often uses a neuter participle and infinitive for expressing a ban or permission; cf. (non/haud) licitum at 4.288, 6.422, 7.94, 7.739, 9.412, 13.608, 13.746, 14.198, 15.608, 17.266; (non) concessum at 5.407, 7.218, 11.257, 12.47, 13.646; permissum at 1.25, 13.736.

capital ‘capital offence’; the word is not found in poetry elsewhere (except Plautus). Livy also uses it in relation to the stern Roman discipline at 24.37.9 praesidio decedere apud Romanos capital esse, “to leave one’s post is among the Romans a capital offence”.

committere Martem The phrase is unique, although the expression committere pugnam / proelium etc. (‘to engage an enemy in battle, to join battle’, OLD 8) is fairly common. Mars is metonymic for ‘battle’ or ‘war’; see n.16b–18 Mavortem.

156b–158 He bursts forth rejoicing, as soon as Fulvius exempts him from the order, and riding towards the open plain he sends up a billowy cloud of gathering dust.

At the first appearance of Claudius the roles are immediately reversed. While Taurea had styled himself after Turnus as he went against the Trojan camp in Aeneid 9, Claudius now (on his own) resembles the entire Rutulian army, whose arrival at the camp is noted by the defenders when they see subitam nigro glomerari pulvere nubem (9.33), “a sudden cloud gathering in black dust”. From now on, it is Claudius (appropriately called Rutulus at 163 and 171) who will act the part of Turnus, seeking and finding a way into the enemy stronghold. For the dust cloud, see also below.

imperio Not, as Duff seems to think, an ablative of instrument (i.e. Fulvius exempts the man from his soldierly duties by means of his authority), but a separative with solvit; Fulvius releases Claudius from the order defined in 155–156 (for this use of imperium, OLD s.v. 8 cites e.g. Sal. Cat. 9.4 qui contra imperium in hostem pugnaverant).
erumpit ovans See n.153–154 una mora Aeneadae. The position of erumpit, even before the narration of Fulvius’ assent, emphasizes the verb; it counterbalances 143 evehitur.

undantem glomerato pulvere nubem The dust cloud is topical of advancing armies already in Homer (e.g. ll. 3.13–14). Latin poets pick up the ominous overtones that Vergil added; cf. Luc. 6.296 glomerato pulvere victus (Caesar at Dyrrhachium), 7.530 glomerataque nubes (Pompey’s cavalry turning against their own troops) and Stat. Theb. 7.117–118 falsa Nemeaenum pulvere campum / erigit (the illusion of a Theban army against the Argives, instead of the other way around; Statius’ innovation of the topos is clearly marked at 116–117 tunc acre novabat / ingenium). In Silius’ battle of Cannae, the Roman army is defeated in part by the dust cloud itself (9.500 caecam glomerato pulvere nubem). Here, his novel use of the topos for a single warrior signals Claudius’ threat to Taurea, and his status as representative of the entire Roman army.

undantem adds another intertext, namely the fall of Troy; Aeneas witnesses at A. 2.609 mixtoque undantem pulvere fumum, “smoke eddying up mixed with dust”. This intertext, and the one from Aeneid 9, do not bode well for Trojan Capua, which Taurea represents.

159–167
indignatus opem ammenti socioque iuvare expulsam nodo iaculum atque accersere vires Taurea vibrabat nudis conatibus hastam. inde furere ira telum contorquet in auras. at non idem animus Rutulo: speculatur et omni corpore perlustrat, qua sit certissima ferro in vulnus via. nunc vibrat, nunc comprimit hastam mentiturque minas. medium tunc transigit ictu parmam, sed grato fraudata est sanguine cuspis. tum strictum propere vagina detegit ensem.

159–161 Disdaining the aid of a throwing thong and to enhance his javelin cast with the help of a knotted strap and to borrow strength from elsewhere, Taurea was brandishing his spear with unaided effort.

The earlier picture of an impetuouss and rash warrior is here confirmed; Taurea does not use a thong, out of disdain for any form of help (even though, by implication, it was common practice to do so). This notion is repeated for emphasis, with three references to the unwanted ‘aiding’ aspect of an ammentum (opem, iuvare, accersere) and a comment on Taurea’s ‘naked’ (i.e. unaided) efforts. The tricolon in 159–160 gives insight into Taurea’s motifs; he refuses ‘aid’ (emphasized by iuvare) because he wants to rely on his own strength (vires).

indignatus ‘Disdaining’ (i.e. not using; cf. 16.352 indignatus habenas) rather than ‘resenting’ (i.e. using reluctantly). The participle governs two different types of complement, viz. an accusative (opem ammenti) and two infinitives (iuvare, accersere); Blomgren (1938: 62) provides other instances of coordination of accusative and infinitive in the Punica. For another such shift in syntactical construction, see nn.21–23 incumbere ... vigor and 348–350 iubente arceri ... relinquere.
ammenti A leather strap, which was twisted round the javelin and unwound during the throw, giving a spin to the missile that greatly boosted accuracy and range (OCD p.794 ‘javelin’). It is not clear whether this implement was already used by the Roman army in the Second Punic War, but it was in the late Republic (Cic. Brut. 271 hastae velitibus amentatae). In poetry, the ammentum appears first at Verg. A. 9.665 ammentaque torqueunt (of the Trojan defenders, which may be relevant); cf. also Ov. Met. 7.788, 12.321, Luc. 6.221, Stat. Theb. 4.153, 11.441 and 12.723–724. For the notion of a thong ‘aiding’ in the throw, cf. Sil. 4.14–15 hasta iuvatur ammento; cf. also 9.509–510 (adiuvat) and 14.422, where the wind that speeds along the javelin is compared to a thong.

nudis I.e. ‘unaided’, ‘devoid of external help’ (OLD 12). For this use, compare 198 nudo ... ferro, of a sword uncoated with poison.

162 Then, raging with anger, he casts the spear into the air.

furens Ira The mss. read ruens Ira (kept by Delz), which is an unusual combination (perhaps ‘attacking in anger’?); the only parallel is Verg. A. 9.694–695 immani concitus Ira / ... ruit, where Ira does not directly modify ruit. Nic. Heinsius’ conjecture furens Ira is an attractive alternative, as it is a far more common phrase (e.g. Ov. Met. 13.322, Sen. Her.F. 820, Luc. 7.124, V.Fl. 5.268 ille furens Ira; cf. also Sil. 6.253 furit ... irā) and fits the context; the phrase would align Taurea even more with Hannibal, who is constantly characterized by furor and Ira in the Punica (cf. 12.281 inde furens). That said, the line opening inde ruens is also found at 7.598, and the ablative Ira (‘in anger’) is used absolutely in a few passages (1.515 pressumque Ira simul exigit ensem, 9.382 ferrum impulit Ira; cf. also 5.253 frendens Ira and 2.619, 9.23 turbidus Ira), so it is not impossible that the mss. reading is correct.

telum contorquet in auras This line ending is almost identical to that of Verg. A. 5.520 qui tamen aerias telum contorsit in auras, “yet upward into the air he aimed his bolt”; there, the last competitor in the archery contest, Acestes, is left without a target and fires his arrow towards the sky. Silius does not tell the result of Taurea’s cast; perhaps the Vergilian echo is meant to suggest that his javelin did not hit any mark.

163–165a The Roman, on the other hand, has a different mindset: he watches and scans Taurea’s whole body to see where his weapon would have the surest path to wounding.

Claudius’ approach is totally different from the impetuosity of Taurea: he searches his opponent for weak spots while feinting. The contrast between the two combatants is doubly stressed, by at as well as non idem. For the multiple literary echoes in these lines (of Achilles–Turnus–Hannibal), see Intr. 142–178.

Rutulus Both here and in 171 a synonym for ‘Roman’, referring to the fusion of the Trojan and Rutulian peoples following Aeneas’ victory in Latium, the forebears of the Romans. The adjective also points, however, to Claudius’ usurpation of the role of (Rutulian) Turnus; see n.156b–158.

in vulnus via Cf. Prop. El. 2.25.46 haec atque illa mali vulneris una via est, “both this and that are alike avenues for a cruel wound”.

166b–167 Now he brandishes, now he checks his spear and feigns threats. Then he pierces the centre of the shield with a hit, but the spear point was cheated of the desired blood.

The suddenness of Claudius’ spear cast is reflected by the narration of its result (transigit) rather than the cast itself; see An. 142–178. The spear pierces Taurea’s shield,
but does not draw blood. This is a variation on the usual outcome of such topical duels involving a shield hit by a spear, for which there are four main patterns: i) the shield deflects the spear (e.g. *Il*. 3.348–349, Paris attacking Menelaus, and *Il*. 22.291, Hector attacking Achilles); ii) the shield is not fully pierced (e.g. *Il*. 7.247–248, Hector attacking Ajax); iii) the shield is pierced, but the spear only tears the enemy’s *chiton*, not his body (e.g. *Il*. 3.357–360, Menelaus attacking Paris, and *Il*. 7.251–254, Ajax attacking Hector); iv) the shield is pierced, and the enemy is lethally wounded (e.g. Verg. *A*. 10.482–485, Turnus attacking Pallas).

*mentitur minas* I.e. Claudius makes use of feints. For *minae* of a threatening attack, cf. 12.265.

*grato fraudata est sanguine cuspis* The blood lust of the warrior is transferred to his weapon; the javelin has been ‘robbed’ of the enemy’s blood which Claudius’ throwing skill merited (cf. 174 *meriti ... cruoris*). For a similar personification, cf. Luc. 2.305 *nullo fraudemus sanguine bellum*, “let us defraud the fighting of no blood” and the passages cited in n.173–174 *meriti ... cruoris*.

168 Thereupon he quickly drew and unsheathed his sword.

After having thrown his javelin, Claudius unsheathes his sword in accordance with the epic duels in Homer and Vergil, in which the initial spear cast is followed up by a fight at close quarters (e.g. *Il*. 7.255ff., *A*. 12.712ff.). Silius imitates Vergil’s formulaic line endings in such a context at *A*. 10.475 *vaginaque ... deripit ensem* (Pallas) and 10.896 (~4.579) *vaginaque eripit ensem* (Aeneas, against Mezentius who, like Taurea, harassed him with javelins from horseback); other poets use different verbs in similar constructions with *vagina ... ensem* (Ov. *Fast*. 2.793, *Met*. 6.551 *liberat*, Stat. *Theb*. 9.76 *exuerat*; cf. also 13.442 *eductum*).

*strictum ... detegit* While *stringere* is commonly used in the sense ‘unsheathe’, *detegere* is not; its meaning is vaguer (‘uncover’). For weapons, *TLL* only cites Luc. 3.128 *detege iam ferrum* as a parallel. Spaltenstein points out the semantic redundancy. Note, however, that the verbs complement each other (*strictum* is presumably proleptic): one verb (*detegit*) focuses on the physical action of unsheathing, the other on the result of this action (*strictum*, the sword is drawn).

169–178

et iam ferrata rapiebat calce volantem
Taurea cornipedem fugiens mimitantia fata. 170
nec Rutulus levior cedentis perdere terga
iam profugo rapidus fusis instabat habenis,
utque metus victum, sic ira et gloria portis
victorem immisit meritique cupido cruoris.
ac dum vix oculis, vix credunt mentibus hostem
confisum nullo comitante irrupere tectis,
per mediam propere trepidantum interritus urbem
egit equum adversaque evasit ad agmina porta.

169–170 *And Taurea was already hurrying away his flying horse with iron spurs to escape his impending fate.*
Taurea, who flees when Claudius has shown his martial superiority and with the weight of his javelin has rendered his enemy’s shield useless, comes across better than in Livy, who mocks him for abandoning the fight before it had even started (23.47.6 Taurea verbis ferocior quam re, “Taurea, more spirited in words than in action”). Like the piercing of the shield, the flight and chase is an epic topos; Taurea is comparable to Hector fleeing from Achilles, or Turnus from Aeneas when his sword had broken.

**ferrata ... calce** Cf. (with Spaltenstein) Verg. A. 11.714 quadrupedemque citum ferrata calce fatigat, “goading his charger to speed with iron spur”, of Ligus’ flight from Camilla; at 142, Silius used the same verb fatigare for Taurea’s treatment of his horse. The only other instances of ferrata calx (before Late Latin) are Sil. 7.696 and 17.540, both of the pursuer, not the pursued.

**minitantia** The verb usually means ‘threaten’ in the sense ‘pose a threat’ or ‘use a threat’, rather than, as here, ‘threaten to happen’ (i.e. ‘to be imminent’); for this meaning, TLL 8.1026.18–19 adduces only 1.506 minitantem ... procellam. The related minari is used by Silius in the same way at 15.589 minanti servitio, for which TLL 8.1031.1–4 only cites Late Latin parallels, among which Claud. Stil. 21.1.284 minitia fata. See also n.171–172 below.

171–172 But the Roman, no more ready to lose the back of his retreating opponent, was already pursuing the fugitive in speed and with free reins...

As soon as Taurea flees, Claudius gives chase and is close on his heels. The pattern in these lines is similar to that in the duel between Aeneas and Turnus; cf. Verg. A. 12.746ff. nec minus Aeneas ... insequitur trepideque pedem pede fervidus urget, “no less Aeneas … pursues and hotly presses, foot to foot, upon his panting foe”; compare here nec ... levior, but also instabat (A. 12.750 and 762 instat) and 170 minitantia fata (12.760–761 praesensque minatur / exitium, 762 mimitans; the addressee is not Turnus, but the phrases are part of the same scene). The scene is the reverse of that at A. 10.656ff., where Turnus chases (the phantom image of) Aeneas; cf. 10.657 nec Turnus segnior instat.

**nec ... levior ... perdere** The syntactic construction is not easy; levis with an infinitive is rare, and its meaning here is hard to determine, which is amply illustrated by the fact that most modern editions have printed an emended text. The mss. reading, which Delz prints, is defensible, however. nec levior is used in a similar narrative shift from one warrior to another at V.Fl. 6.524 nec levior comitatur Aron and Sil. 4.452 nec levior dextra generatus Hamilcare saevit; the sense of nec levior is there ‘just as fierce’. Here, nec ... levior cedentis perdere terga would then be ‘just as fierce (in trying) to strike with deadly force (perdere) the back of his fleeing foe’. For levis governing an infinitive, TLL cites two passages in classical Latin (both with a passive inf.): Hor. Carm. 2.4.11–12 leviora tolli / Pergama, “easier to be destroyed” and Sil. 3.40 nec levior vincit, “not more easily defeated”.

For adjectives governing an infinitive, see n.21–23 incumbere ... vigor.

**Rutulus** See n.163–165a Rutulus.

**fusis ... habenis** I.e. with the reins completely loose, without holding back his horse, and thus ‘at full speed’. Silius’ use of the simple fundere is unique (cf. 4.137 fusus habenas); the more common construction is with the composite effundo (cf. 1.161, 7.696 and 10.261). It is a fixed expression, as is illustrated by Livy’s adaptation effusissimis habenis (37.20.9).
... and just as fear drove the loser, so did anger and lust for glory send the victor through the gates, along with a desire for the blood that was due. And while the Capuans could scarcely believe their eyes or trust their senses that this enemy confidently rushed into their city without a companion, Claudius quickly drove his horse right through the city without fear of the trembling citizens and escaped through the opposite gate to his army.

Taurea runs through the city gates with Claudius still close behind. To the amazement of the besieged, Claudius will exit the city through another gate. The tale is appended by Livy to his account of the duel at 23.47.8 as a rem ... mirabilem (with the remark quam vera sit communis existimatio est; we modern readers might share his implicit disbelief, for as Burck (1984: 40) notes: why would both gates be open?). With the inclusion of this ending, Silius closely models Claudius after Turnus in victory, who at the end of Aeneid 9 penetrated the Trojan camp and managed to escape alive by jumping into the Tiber (cf. Burck 1984: 41; Miniconi-Devallet). The allusion is well developed; compare Verg. A. 9.756–761:

\[
\begin{align*}
diffugiunt versi & \text{ trepida formidine Troes,} \\
et & \text{ si continuo victorem ea cura subisset,} \\
rumpere & \text{ claustra manu sociosque immittere portis,} \\
ultimus ille & \text{ dies bello gentique fuisset.} \\
sed furor & \text{ ardentem caedisque insana cupidò 760} \\
egit & \text{ in adversos.}
\end{align*}
\]

“The Trojans turn and scatter in hasty terror; and, if at once the victor had taken thought to burst the bars by force and let in his comrades at the gates, that day would have been the last for the war and the nation. But rage and the mad lust of slaughter drove him in fury on the enemy facing him...”

The correspondences and differences between Claudius and Turnus clearly stand out. Both are characterized as victor when they break into the enemy’s stronghold; Turnus is driven by furor and caedisque insana cupidò, Claudius by the more noble triad ira, gloria and meriti cupido cruoris (173–174). The defenders can do no more than tremble (A. 9.757 trepida; Sil. 177 trepidantium). Other verbal elements are redistributed (9.758 immittere portis, 173–174 portis ... immisit; 761 egit ~ 178 egit equum; 761 in adversos ~ 178 adversa ... porta; cf. also 9.729 irruppentem ... urbi and here 176 irrupere tectis). But while Vergil dwells on Turnus’ fateful negligence to open the gate to his comrades, Silius’ Claudius is not condemned for his individualism; by contrast, his bravery incites the other soldiers to similar deeds (179–180). Rather than a brave, but essentially pointless feat of heroics, Claudius’ incursion is symbolic of the impending capture of Capua.

meriti ... cruoris ‘the blood he deserved’, i.e. as the victor, Claudius deserved to see Taurea’s blood. But meriti may also apply to Taurea (i.e. ‘guilty blood’), who deserved death, not merely because he had lost the duel, but because he represents Capua, guilty of perfidia. An interesting intertext is the only parallel for meriti cruores, Stat. Theb. 12.595 sitit meritos etiamnum haec hasta cruores, “this spear still thirsts for guilty gore”, of Theseus’ righteous war on Creon. The same Statian intertext operates at Sil. 12.264 non hunc sitiens gravis hasta cruorem, where a Carthaginian intercepts a spear directed at Hannibal. Theseus’ spear ended Creon’s life and thereby the war and injustice; the spear intended for Hannibal would (at least in poetic fiction) have done the same. Just as Capua
represents Carthage, Taurea here is a substitute for Hannibal; his suicide after Capua’s fall (369–380) adumbrates Hannibal’s end.

oculis .... credunt mentibus oculis credere is the Latin counterpart for English “to believe one’s eyes”, and common enough (cf. e.g. Stat. Theb. 9.538 vix credunt oculis). credunt mentibus is unique, however; our phrase is probably a zeugma for vix oculis credunt, vix mentibus capere possunt (“they can scarcely believe their eyes, or comprehend what they see with their minds”; cf. Liv. 27.50.7 quod mente capere aut satis credere possent).

The subject of credunt are the inhabitants of Capua (177 trepidantum), as at 142 trepidant.

trepidantum interritus It seems preferable to take trepidantum with interritus rather than with urbem, which with the attribute would be awkward. For interritus with a genitive, cf. Ov. Met. 10.616 leti. For Silius’ frequent use of the genitive see n.821–822 inclita leti.

adversaque evasit ... porta Compare several portent stories in Livy about wolves entering Rome through one gate and leaving the city unscathed at another (cf. Liv. 33.26.9 lupus ... prope intactus evaserat, “a wolf … escaped almost unharmed”, 41.9.6). The element aligns Claudius with the wolves that had entered the city by night (130; cf. Cowan 2007: 13); the entire episode is thus another anticipation of Capua’s doom.
179–255 The assault on Capua

Inspired by Claudius’ victory over Taurea, the Romans recommence their assault. Employing all kinds of missiles, the soldiers strive to outdo each other in bravery. Their commander Fulvius rushes into the fray and with his javelin kills one of three Capuan brothers who are causing a bloodbath among the Romans at the gates. When the Capuans suddenly sally forth, Scipio runs in and mows them down. The huge brute Calenus, who had already killed a score of Romans including Scipio’s friend Marius, is slain by the hero. As the Capuans retreat in disarray, one of them is beheaded by a Roman soldier in full flight. Since all hope is lost for the defenders if the gates remain open, they shut their fleeing comrades out. Nightfall prevents the Romans from taking the city at once.

In Silius’ presentation, this is still the first day of battle, which began with the appearance of the white deer and its sacrifice, saw the duel of Taurea and Claudius and now the attack on the gates by the Romans, a desperate sortie by the defenders and finally the sortie’s inevitable failure. Livy mentions such a sortie at a much earlier point in the war (see n.213–217a), but in most respects the poet’s account of the fall of Capua greatly differs from that in historiography (see Intr. 94–141 fn.1). While the number of correspondences with Livy diminishes, the echoes of *Aeneid* 9 are progressively more pronounced. The siege of Capua is in effect a replay of the siege of Vergil’s Trojan camp.

In this passage, the first indication of this interaction is that the Romans’ ardour to take Capua is described with the verb *ignescunt* (180), echoing Turnus’ desire to invade the Trojan camp (n.179–180). Next, the hail of missiles in which this ardour finds expression corresponds to the similar display which Vergil’s Trojans put up at *A. 9.666–671*, who derive inspiration from Ascanius’ killing of the boisterous Numanus; similarly, here the Romans seek to follow the example of Claudius, who was victorious over the self-confident challenger Taurea.1 What follows in Vergil is the decision of the two Trojan brothers Pandarus and Bitias to open the gates, trusting in their ability to kill any attacker foolish enough to enter (*A. 9.672ff.*). Their plan goes awry when Turnus himself shows up and kills Bitias; Pandarus’ closure of the gates cannot prevent the Rutulian from entering, leading to the demise of Pandarus and a great many Trojans, until they unite and drive Turnus from the camp. Silius has reworked this episode into a series of encounters:

i) The threat of the two brothers is emulated here by *three* brothers defending the gates,2 and the death and destruction which they spread under the Romans mirrors the situation in the *Aeneid*.3 Fulvius here assumes the role of Turnus; his rush towards the gates and the fury with which he throws his spear at one of the brothers is a close imitation of Turnus’ activities.4 Unlike Pandarus and Bitias, the triplets stand on the ramparts (see n.210–212 *ab alto*).

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1 Cf. Cowan 2007: 15 n.91, who draws attention to the reversal of roles; the “frenzy of bombardment” of the besieged is here transposed to the besiegers.  
3 See n.206–209 *portae limine circum*. Lines 192–193 also echo two earlier passages in *Aeneid* 9; see n. *ad loc*.  
4 Silius has redistributed part of the phraseology; cf. 189–190 *ruit impete vasto / ad portam* and 209 *concitat intortam furiatis viribus hastam* with *A. 9.694–695 immanni concitus ira / Dardaniam ruit ad portam fratresque superbos* and 9.744 *intorquet summis adnixus viribus hastam* (Turnus’ killing of Pandarus). Cf. also 210 *secat Itala taxus* and *A. 9.698 volat Itala cornus*. 

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ii) The gates are only opened at 213ff. (216 *reclusa ... portas* ~ *A. 9.675 portam recludunt*). Scipio rushes forwards to meet their onset, taking up the role of Turnus like Fulvius (*A. 9.695 ruit ~ here 189 and 217*). One of the soldiers sallying forth is Calenus, whose upbringing in the woods and huge frame matches that of Pandarus and Bitias.  

iii) Following the disastrous sortie, the defenders (like Vergil’s Pandarus) close the gates; a counterfactual emphasizes the near victory for the Romans, just as it does for Turnus.  

As was discussed in Intr. 94–141 and 142–178, the parallelism with *Aeneid* 9 and the shared Trojan heritage of Romans and Capuans turns their conflict into a sort of civil war. The ambivalence of the Trojan camp in the *Aeneid* (does it correspond to the camp of the Greek besiegers in the *Iliad*, or is it more like Troy, the city of the besieged?) is drawn out here to its fullest extent, with the Roman heirs of Vergil’s Trojans assuming the role of the attackers and their Capuan heirs that of the besieged. That Capua’s role is limited to that of the defending and ultimately doomed party is shown by the final lines of the passage; the citizens find themselves in the same position as the Trojans at the opening of *Aeneid* 10, but (unlike their literary ancestors) without hope for a deliverer (see nn.99–103 *turribus altis* and 253). The identification of Capua with Troy as a doomed city finds its most significant expression in the decapitation of Ascanius, whose name represents the hopes and aspirations of Capua as a ‘new Troy’ but whose fate recalls that of Priam, king of the old and fallen metropolis.  

The names of the three brothers defending the gates similarly point to the kinship between Rome and Capua and the fratricidal nature of this siege (see n.194–195). This aspect is only heightened by their number and the intertexts it suggests. The very fact that these brothers are triplets evokes the combat between the three Horatii and the three Curatii, a pair of triplets who were to decide the war between Rome and Alba. Cowan (2007: 17–19) pertinently adduces the ancient interpretations of that war as the equivalent of civil strife, and draws attention to Silius’ other, more elaborate reworking of the legend at 4.355–400, which ends (unlike its Livian model) with the remaining two combatants killing each other, in imitation of the Theban brothers Polynices and Eteocles—another powerful image of civil war.  

The number of the brothers is also significant in another way, as it justifies the simile of 200–205, which compares the triplets to the three-bodied Geryones. This monster figured as the main opponent in Hercules’ tenth labour, which took the hero to the western ends of

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5 *A. 9.673 quos Iovis eduxit luco silvestris Iaera ~ 219–220 Tifata umbriferum generatum monte Calemum / nutriment (cf. perhaps also 9.674 montibus aequos and 219 generatum monte); 9.708 conlapsa raunt immania membri (the death of Bitias) ~ 239 rapuitque immnia membri (the death of Calenus). For Burck’s suggestion that Scipio’s revenge of his friend Marius alludes to Vergil’s Nisus and Euryalus, see n.234–237.

6 For the verbal echoes of the closing of the gate, see n.249–252. For the two counterfactuals (254–255 ~ *A. 9.757–759*) and their differences, see n.254–255. For other reminiscences, see n.244–246 *proiectis ... armis* and n.253 *acrius hoc*.

7 In line with the identification of the Capuans with the Trojans, the Romans represent the Italian peoples (cf. 210 *Itala*, 253 *Itali*).

8 See also Cowan 2007: 20–23. For Ascanius’ highly symbolical name and decapitation, see n.246b–248.

9 Cf. also Fulvius’ *furiosis viribus* (209) with *furor* as image for civil war in Lucan (e.g. 1.8 *quis furor, o cives*).

10 E.g. Liv. 1.23.1 *civili similimum bello*.

11 At 191, *tres ... aequaevo ... corpore* already anticipates 201 *tricorporis* (Cowan 2007: 16 n.97).
the earth. The myth is a recurrent theme in the *Punica* for the traces that Hercules left (see n.200–201), including the foundation of Rome’s staunch ally Saguntum (1.273ff.). In the *Aeneid*, the same myth provides the occasion for the narration of another monster slaying; Hercules, passing through Latium on his way to Greece, rid the local populace of the menacing Cacus (*A*. 8.184ff.), a conquest which serves as a parallel for Aeneas’ victory in Latium. Just so does the comparison with Geryones here render their victor Fulvius a Herculean figure.\(^{12}\)

The brothers are portrayed, then, as a mythological monster—an amalgam of Geryones, Cacus and (following the excellent suggestion in Cowan 2007: 15 n.95) the Hundred-handers; for the retinue of a hundred men (*delecta manus cententi*) evokes Vergil’s description of Aegaeon at *A*. 10.565–566 *Aegaeon qualis, centum cui bracchia dicunt / centenasque manus.*\(^{13}\) The role of ‘monster’ is in the *Punica* mainly reserved for the Carthaginians, and especially Hannibal, whose war against Rome and Jupiter renders him a Titan or Giant.\(^{14}\) That the Capuans are closely aligned with their new Carthaginian allies emerges from several elements. The description of the triplets with their various weapons corresponds to the portrayal of Hannibal before Saguntum, who similarly wields a wide array of projectiles (see n.196–199). The second of the brothers, Laurens, employs poisoned javelins, which is a characteristic tactic of Hannibal’s Numidians.\(^{15}\) Similarly in the previous passage the description of Taurea, who is credited with being better with the javelin than the Autololes and Moors (144–145), aligns him with the Punic troops. In the same vein the other major Capuan enemy, Calenus, should be interpreted.\(^{16}\) On the one hand, the narrative of his exploits and Scipio’s defeat of him evokes a Centauromachy (see n.234–237); on the other, his appearance and conduct align him with the northern barbarians, such as the Gauls, who were also part of Hannibal’s army (see nn.219–221a *Calenus* and 225–228).\(^{17}\) The battle with the Centaurs was, like the Gigantomachy, a recurrent image for the assertion of civilization over barbarism, which in the *Punica* are represented by Rome (under the *aegis* of Jupiter) and Carthage, respectively.

The mention of Geryones is instrumental in evoking the association with Carthage. Vessey observes in his discussion of Saguntum’s founding myth (1974b: 30) that “Geryon with his three lives and triform body may be interpreted as a figure of Carthage, the city that waged war three times against Rome before its final destruction”, in reference to 1.8–11, where the tripartite nature of the war with Carthage was also stressed. The connection between Carthage and Geryones is also geographical; *Atlantiaco* (200) refers both to Africa and Spain, which were Carthaginian territory in the time of the second Punic war. It is of

\(^{12}\) Cowan (2007: 16) notes the Cacus-like carnage that is caused by the triplets, keenly observing that “the hyperbole of a pile of corpses on the threshold of the gate, of gateposts flowing with the blood of attackers evokes the *locus horridus* of the monster’s cave more than the gate of the city or camp”, and that Taburnus’ specialty of throwing torches should be compared to Cacus’ fire-breathing.

\(^{13}\) Just so Pandarus and Bitias are comparable to Giants; see Hardie *ad A*. 9.708–709.

\(^{14}\) See e.g. Hardie 1989: 14–15, 1993: 80; Fucecchi 1990a; Marks 2005: 168–169 (with bibl. in n.18); Tipping 2010b: 68. See also n.591–594.

\(^{15}\) Cf. 198 *nudo non credere ferro* and 1.219 *nec fidens nudo sine fraudibus ensi*.

\(^{16}\) For the similarities in composition of the *aristeia* of Fulvius and Scipio, see An. 179–255 below.

\(^{17}\) Cf. also the comparison of Crixus, leader of the Boian allies of Hannibal, with the Giant Mimas (4.275–276), and his epithet *semifero* (which Ovid applies to the Centaurs at *Met*. 12.406, Vergil to Cacus at *A*. 8.267 and Lucretius to the monsters of mythology at 2.702).
great significance that the myth of Geryones, first encountered at the siege of Saguntum, here returns at the fall of Capua. Saguntum and Capua are opposing twins, the first a substitute for Rome, the second for Carthage.\(^{18}\) Here, when the scales of war have turned and at the start of Rome’s campaign against Carthage, the reappearance of the myth anticipates Rome’s now closer triumph.\(^{19}\) It is presumably also in this light that we should read the end of Fulvius’ *aristeia*. The scene ends abruptly with the death of Numitor, with no further mention of his brothers (see also An. 179–255 below). If Geryones represents Carthage, then the death of one of the bodies (i.e. Numitor) reflects Carthage’s weakened position after the loss of Capua.\(^{20}\) The narrative (or rather the epic) is not so much “fractured” or unfinished as *not yet finished*.\(^{21}\)

The eventual triumph of Rome is also adumbrated in the second simile, in which the speed of Scipio’s spear is compared to the power of a Liburnian bireme. This simile is as significant as the previous one, not least because they are two of only three in this book.\(^{22}\) The Liburnian ships were adopted by the Romans only towards the end of the Republic; the speed of the *Liburnae* was instrumental in Octavian’s victory at the battle of Actium.\(^{23}\)

Since the subject of Silius’ simile is quite unique (see n.240–243 *Liburna*), and since it is used in a narrative with a distinct civil war colouring (see above), it may well be argued that the simile is evocative of exactly that future victory at Actium. The first emperor, who concluded the civil war, is thus a marked parallel for Scipio, who will end the Punic war.\(^{24}\)

At the same time, the simile, with its focus on strength and swiftness, suggests that Scipio has mastered the speed and vigour of the epic hero, which his adversary Hannibal has lost (see n.1–3 *segni iter emenso*).
Analysis of the presentation of 179–255

The anticipatory function of Claudius’ victory over Taurea is clearly indicated at the transition to the assault on Capua by the entire Roman army through multiple references to his status as an example (see n.178–179), which allows for a smooth transition to the actions of his fellow soldiers. As a whole, the assault passage can be divided into five unequal parts, each defining a new stage in the battle. The first and last of these parts give a general impression of the situation on the battlefield, whereas the three central parts focus on the deeds of individuals. Nonetheless, since these deeds are connected to what happens on the field as a whole, the narrator succeeds in describing, simultaneously, the flow of the battle as a whole.\(^\text{25}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative</th>
<th>Battle situation</th>
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<tr>
<td>179–185 Rain of missiles</td>
<td>The general assault begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>186–212 Fulvius’ aristeia</td>
<td>Fighting at the gates</td>
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<td>213–243 Scipio’s aristeia</td>
<td>The Capuans make a sortie</td>
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<td>244–248 Volesus and Ascanius</td>
<td>The sortie has failed; the Capuans are running back  (^\text{26})</td>
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<tr>
<td>249–255 The gates are closed</td>
<td>Slaughter at the gates; Roman victory is imminent</td>
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A conspicuous feature of this passage is that there is little narrative—in the sense of the chronological narration of actions and events.\(^\text{27}\) The poet’s technique here is one of stringing together a series of descriptions.\(^\text{28}\) The first part (179–185) is a clear example. In several sentences, the narrator describes the various types of missile that filled the air during the assault. The description is couched in present tenses and there is no progress of time, no chronological distinction between the phrases. It is only at 186, when the narrative focuses on an individual, Fulvius, that it is apparent that time has progressed.\(^\text{29}\)

The two aristeiai may be discussed together, since their composition is very similar; they are also near equal in length (186–212: 27 lines; 213–243: 31 lines). A schematic overview allows us to compare them in more detail.\(^\text{30}\)

\(^{25}\) It has been argued that a similar narrative strategy is employed in the Iliad, and that in an aristeia of a given hero, the narrator merely ‘zooms in’ while the battle rages on; cf. Van Wees 1994: 6 “scenes of mass and of individual combat depict one and the same thing from different perspectives” (his emphasis), 1997: 673–674, De Jong / Nünlist 2004: 76–79, Rossi 2004: 75. For the alternation of descriptions of collective fighting and individual combat, see also the seminal discussion by Latacz (1977).

\(^{26}\) The Capuans’ flight is implied by 245 quo levior peteret muros (which bears on Ascanius, see n.244–246a). Cf. also 250 recipique precantes—the defenders were obviously not fighting to the death.

\(^{27}\) See for a similar practice An. 94–141 and 256–298.

\(^{28}\) We may compare Ovid’s vignette technique, for which see Kroon 2007.

\(^{29}\) I.e. we must suppose an interval of time between the first bowshot and Fulvius’ entry on the battlefield.

\(^{30}\) We might compare the structure of Homeric androctasiai, which Beye (1964) schematized as a) basic information, b) anecdote and c) contextual information; in Silius, the description and death of the opponents match Beye’s second and third structural components. The introductory lines 186–190 and 213–219 roughly correspond to the first category, but instead of explicitly anticipating the death of the opponent (which is Homer’s practice), Silius provides a general setting for the androctasia. For Homer, see also Griffin 1980: 103–143; for Vergil, see Harrison 1991: xxiii, Mazzocchini 2000. For a more elaborate discussion of the structure of aristeiai in Flavian epic, see Smolenaars 1994: 416–423 (Appendix VIII).
Between these two passages, the length of the various parts is fairly similar. There is some variation; for instance, in the first passage, the simile is connected to the opponent, whereas in the second it bears on Scipio’s spear; furthermore, the initial success of the triplets at the gates is described in an ubi-clause in the context of Fulvius’ deeds at 206–208, while the corresponding victories of Calenus are part of his description at 229–233. In both passages, only the actions of the Roman hero are narrated in foreground tenses (mostly presents, but perfects at 234–239, for which see below). This suggests that any success of their opponents is only narrated as a foil for a display of Roman heroism: the more dangerous the Capuan is, the more glory is attained by the Roman who defeats him. In both cases, the description of the opponent forms the centre piece, and his dispatch by the Roman serves as a swift and short climax. The two descriptions, unlike the other parts of the aristeiai, have a different structure and character. The first, that of the triplets opposing Fulvius, focuses exclusively on the appearance of the men. It consists of three elements: i) the introduction of the triplets, with a mention of their retinue of a hundred men each (191–193); ii) their characteristics (194–195); iii) the disparity in their weapons of choice (195–199), remarkable enough to warrant a simile. The three brothers are described as they would appear to an onlooker on the battlefield; most verbs are imperfect tense forms, which describe the situation during the assault. There is no progress of time during the description, nor does the narrator introduce elements from outside the story time (i.e. personal history, reasons for joining the fight or any other information that is commonly

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31 The defenders are comparable to monsters (Geryones, Centaurs), and their conquerors are by implication to be compared to epic, mythological heroes; see Intr. 179–255 above. Note furthermore that the slaughter at the gate and the deaths of Veliturnus and Marius are the only explicit Capuan successes in the entire passage.

32 It is argued in n.196–199 that the three infinitives quatere, moliri and credere (197–198) bearing on Laurens should be taken as historical infinitives; as such, they describe several actions going on for some defined time in random order, viz. during the assault, rather than being a reference to his usual practice (for in that case, we would expect a verb such as solebat; cf. 224 adsuerat). Only the second part of the description, the characteristics of the three brothers, seems also valid in general; at any rate it might be hard to envisage how Laurens’ swiftness would be a visible feature during the siege.
found in the description of a minor character); the narrator focuses solely on the appearance of the brothers during the assault, on their mode of fighting, each with a different weapon. It is exactly their appearance, their highly visible versatility, which justifies the connection with Geryon. The description is recapitulated (206 *hos variantes*) in the *ubi*-clause which marks the transition to Fulvius’ actions. This recapitulating clause is quite long, and also introduces elements which are new, namely the brothers’ successes in battle (207–208 *conspexit ... portae limina circum stragem ac perfusos subeuntum sanguine postes*). The delayed narration of these battle deeds (related only in the *ubi*-clause) may be explained by the fact that the preceding description has no internal temporal dynamic; since such battle deeds necessarily involve the passage of time, they have no place in the description. Incidentally, another reason for the marked length of the *ubi*-clause is the insertion of the simile and the resulting distance between the description and the resumption of action; we need a little reminder after the mythological digression.

Before going into the description of Calenus (Scipio’s opponent), we should briefly look at the transition between the two *aristeiai*. The first ends abruptly with the death of Numitor; we hear nothing more of the two other brothers, which leads Spaltenstein to suppose a lacuna between 212 and 213. This ‘open ending’ may have a literary purpose, however (see the Intr. above); furthermore, the abrupt end is merely a more notable example of Silius’ usual practice in winding up his scenes: after the climax which usually coincides with the main action of the scene (here, the slaying of Numitor), not much remains to be said. The transition to another scene is also explicitly marked as ‘sudden’ by the particle *at* (213), which suggests an unexpected transition as well as a shift of ‘camera view’. The new turn of events, Virrius’ sortie, is presented as if it had just caught the narrator’s attention. The temporal orientation point for the narrative is Scipio’s entry onto the battlefield; the sortie itself is described with pluperfects (215 *eruperat*, 217 *obtulerat*) in the manner of a flashback.

Unlike the portrayal of the triplets, the description of Calenus does contain temporal progress; or, rather, it contains elements from several different moments in his personal history. The structure of these lines is very similar to that of the description of the white hind at 115–134, in which three sections may be discerned, each dealing with a progressively more recent part of the animal’s history. Likewise, lines 219–233 can be subdivided into three parts: i) Calenus’ upbringing and habits, covering the time from his birth to the time of the story (219–224); ii) with *is* (225) we return to the setting of the story

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33 In the simile, imperfect tenses are used; these do not refer to the time of the siege, but rather to the mythological age of Hercules. Usually in similes, the universal present tense is used (cf. e.g. 240–243); since Geryones was slain by Hercules and thus is no longer alive in the epic world, the imperfect is used instead. The use of the past tense thereby draws attention to the anticipatory function of the simile; Geryones’ fate prefigures that of the men with whom he is compared.

34 It is therefore rather a ‘semi-recapitulating clause’ (see An. 142–178), which furthers the narrative under the guise of recapitulating.

35 Cf. other examples in 77–79, 135–137 and 175–178; the Capua episode is concluded by the climax of Taurea’s suicide with Fulvius’ reply (369–380), while for the entire *Nekyia* episode and the book as a whole a mere two lines (894–895) will serve as (non-climactic) closure.

36 See Kroon 1995: 351 and 355–356. Here, the shift of the ‘camera’ is to a new topic; for the shift to a previously prepared topic, cf. 258, 348 and 494. Related is the use of *at* in e.g. line 111 (where it marks a new phase), and 482, 486 and 568 (where it introduces new items in an enumeration). In most of these cases, the notion of ‘frustration of expectation’ is not present; for *at* in 482 and 486, see n.468b–470.
and Calenus’ recent entry onto the battlefield (225–228), with *iam* (229, 230) we arrive at his most recent victories over Veliturnus and Marius (229–233). For each part, the orientation point for the tenses is Calenus’ confrontation with Scipio; the pluperfects refer to moments in time prior to that point, whereas the imperfects describe the immediate setting of the confrontation. It will be seen that the poet uses a strategy of zooming in; each section deals with a smaller amount of time, with the pluperfects referring to a successively more recent past. The narrative clearly builds towards the confrontation between Scipio and Calenus—or rather, since Calenus’ role is over and all action is Scipio’s, towards the latter’s heroic victory over his foe. At 236, the narrative shifts with *sed* to the new discourse topic, Scipio, who is only named explicitly at 236. The shift from background description to foreground narrative is also marked by a shift in tenses; Scipio’s actions (to which Calenus’ deeds formed only the background) are narrated in perfect tenses.

After the simile which concludes Scipio’s *aristeia*, the narrative shifts to two ordinary soldiers; the shift is not marked in any other way than the mention of two new characters. The alternation of tenses in the brief tale of Volesus and Ascanius clearly conveys the speed with which the action takes place. One moment Ascanius is being chased by Volesus over the plain outside Capua (*adsequitur* 246), in the next his head has already fallen (*iacuit* 247), whilst his body still runs due to its forward motion (*corruit* 248). With the perfect *iacuit*, the narrator is ‘catching up with his narrative’, a narrative technique peculiar to the ‘live’ mode of presentation. Since the narrator presents his story as it is unfolding before his eyes (as it were), (story-)time passes as he narrates; hence, some parts of his story are already happening when he has not yet completed narrating the last event, and he therefore refers to those parts as ‘having just happened’. It follows that these ‘catching-up’ perfects give the impression that the succession of actions is swift; in other words, the use of the perfect here conveys speed.

The last part of the narration of the assault, the beginning of which is marked by *nec* (249), consists of a series of events in rapid succession (*convertunt*, *excludunt*, *instant*). The absence of descriptive elements (such as those present in the *aristeiai*) lends the narrative much speed—which is also characteristic of the Roman attackers, as is reflected by *rapido ... milite* (255). In the passage as a whole, we have seen that the narrative, through the alternation of elaborate background descriptions and swift climaxes, reflects the initial resistance by the Capuan defenders and the inevitable, almost effortless Roman victory. The content of the story is thus clearly supported by the way it is presented.

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37 This use of *is* is comparable to that at 35 (see An. 30–93 fn.51); it summarizes the background information provided in the previous lines by the narrator in order to make a new narrative step (in this case the description of Calenus’ previous exploits during the sortie). See also An. 30–93 fn.67 on the similar function of *hic*.

38 For the temporal ‘zooming’ function of *iam* with a pluperfect, see Kroon / Risselada 2004.

39 First section: *nutrierant* (220) refers to Calenus’ childhood; second section: *exierat* (227) refers to the moment of the sortie; third section: *transegerat* (229) and *perculerat* (232) refer to his most recent victories over Veliturnus and Marius.

40 This is not uncommon for Silius; cf. e.g. lines 3, 96, 137, 215. In all these cases the name is found at the opening of the line, but towards the end of the sentence.

41 We might, of course, interpret *corruit* as a perfect along with *iacuit*, but that would imply that the orientation point of the tenses would have suddenly shifted to the time of the narrator; such a shift is not suggested by any other indications whatsoever.

42 For this use of the perfect for ‘time management’ see Adema 2008: 66–69.
179–185
hinc ardore pari nisuque incurrere muris
ignescunt animi penetrataque tecta subire.

tela simul flammaeque micant. tunc saxeus imber
ingruit et summis adscendunt turribus hastae.

nec pronum audendi virtutem excellere cuiquam:
aequarunt irae dextras. Dictaea per auras
tranat et in medium perlabitur urbis harundo.

179–180 Thereupon the Romans’ hearts burn to charge the walls with the same vigorous effort and to enter the penetrated city.

The favourable outcome of the duel bolsters the morale of the Romans; cf. the preface to Livy’s second duel (see Intr. 142–178) at 25.18.3 *restituit tamen his animos et illis minuit audaciam parva una res*, “one small occurrence, however, restored the courage of one army and lessened the boldness of the other”. Claudius’ incursion into Capua prefigures the success of the assault to come; Silius closely connects the efforts of the champion and the army in three ways: *hinc* (‘therefore’), *pari* (‘the same’; see on *ignescunt* below) and *penetrataque tecta*, which picks up 175 *irrumpere tectis*. For the interaction with 12.569 *penetraret*, see Intr. 142–178.

ardore pari nisuque Duff translates “all hearts burned with equal zeal and effort to attack the walls”, but as Spaltenstein rightly points out, *ardor* and *nisus* are not synonyms, and it is hard to imagine how hearts could burn with effort. Spaltenstein’s own suggestion to split the two ablatives (“*ignescunt ardore pari et ignescunt incurrere muris nisu*”) is no improvement, since *nisu* has little sense on its own. The entire phrase is best regarded as a hendiadys with *incurrere* (“attack with the same vigorous effort”), which in turn depends on *ignescunt*.

ignescunt The construction with an infinitive is unique (*TLL* 7.1.283.14–15), but is probably analogous to the more common *ardere* (36 instances in *TLL* 2.486.61ff.) or *furere, calere* and *flagrare* with infinitive (*LHSz* 2.346–347). The verb alludes to Verg. *A. 9*. 65–66 *haud aliter Rutulo ... ignescunt irae*, “just so ... the Rutulian’s wrath is aflame”, of the beginning of Turnus’ siege of the Trojan camp. Claudius had been closely modelled after Turnus in *Aeneid* 9 (see Intr. 142–178), and the rest of the Romans pick up the model in their own effort (*pari*, indeed!) to force their way into (Trojan) Capua.

181–182 Weapons and flames flash simultaneously. Then a rain of stones descends and javelins climb to the top of the towers.

The assault commences. Missiles of all sorts are used: torches (*flammae*), stones (*saxeus imber*), javelins (*hastae*) and arrows (184–185 *Dictaea ... harundo*). These projectiles are presumably from attackers and defenders alike (see on *saxeus imber* below), although the *hastae* which ascend to the height of the walls (and thus not flung by the defenders, who were standing on top of these walls) and the *harundo* that drops into the middle of Capua are obviously Roman in origin. For the predominantly Roman perspective of the narrative, see An. 179–255.

saxeus imber ‘a hail of stones’. Skutsch notes that the metaphor was coined by Ennius for a large amount of projectiles (particularly arrows) at *Ann.* 266 (Skutsch) *ferreus imber*,

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and based upon a simile in Homer ("Il. 12.156 and 278); there, a volley of stones is compared to a snow storm, indicated as Διος ὦμβος (12.286), inspiring Ennius to write *imber*. The same image is used at Verg. *A. 12.284* *ferreus ingruit imber* and at Sil. *9.311–312 stridens nimbus ... telorum*, the beginning of the battle of Cannae. Interestingly, Skutsch argues against the common theory that the Ennian phrase was part of his depiction of Cannae and suggests that it might allude to the *velites*, the army unit whose creation Livy connects to the siege of Capua (see Intr. 142–178 fn.7). If the phrase was part of Ennius’ description of this siege, it might have been an extra reason for Silius to use a similar expression here. In any case the Homeric passage is a relevant intertext, since the setting is the Trojan attack on the Greek ship camp (which in turn stood model for the Trojan camp in *Aeneid 9*, which Silius also imitates; the same simile is used by Vergil at *A. 9.666–671*); Silius has returned to the Homeric context by assigning *imber* to stones rather than arrows.


Stones as an offensive weapon are used regularly in epic (see n.229–233); in the *Punica*, cf. 1.317 *hic valido librat stridentia saxa lacerto*, “another poised whizzing stones with strong arm”. This line is part of a similar description of various missiles (1.311 *atra telorum ... nube*) at the opening of Hannibal’s assault on Saguntum.

183–184a *Nor is it by anyone easily attained that his courageous daring stands out; anger had made their prowess equal.*

*nec pronum ... virtutem excellere* It is not necessary to write *virtute* (Heinsius); *virtutem excellere* is presumably an AcI governed by *nec pronum* (cf. Miniconi-Devallet “mot à mot: ‘il n’est facile pour personne que sa vaillance intrépide l’emporte’”). *pronom* with an AcI is otherwise only attested in Late Latin, but it is more common with an infinitive; cf. Luc. 6.606, *Stat. Theb.* 7.278, *Silv.* 5.3.141, Juv. 9.43, Tac. *Ag.* 1.2 (*TLL* 10.2.2.1936.22ff.).

*aedendi virtutem* is somewhat tautological; cf. Luc. 9.302 *audax ... virtus*.

*aequarunt irae dextras* Cf. Liv. 10.35.1 *ira vires aequavit*; there, the phrase signifies that anger made the inferior army equal to the superior one, while here the phrase is used for the rivalry between the Roman soldiers. For the Roman *ira*, ‘righteous anger’ (as opposed to *furor*, ‘rage’), the prime stimulus for the siege of Capua, see Intr. 299–347.

184b–185 *A Cretan arrow travels through the sky and lands in the middle of the city.*

At a very basic level, the significance of the arrow’s falling in the middle of Capua is that its inhabitants were not safe behind their walls. The event also emphasizes that the Roman army has already begun to imitate Claudius’ feat; just as he rode *per mediam ... urbem* (177), penetrating the city, so is this arrow able to pierce *in medium ... urbis*.

There may also be a connection with Hannibal’s siege of Rome. In one variant of the story (which presumably goes back to an annalistic source), the Carthaginian general threw a spear inside the walls of Rome; cf. Plin. *Nat.* 34.15 *intra muros [Hannibal] solus hostium emisit hastam*, Cic. *Fin.* 4.22 *Hannibal ad portas venisset murumque iaculo tracieisset* (see Münzer...
In Silius’ rendering of *Hannibal ante portas*, the general hits the gate of the city with his spear and proceeds to almost penetrate Rome with his gaze (12.565ff.; for the passage, see also Intr. 142–178); at Capua, the Romans achieve more than that with their missiles. In this and other senses, Capua serves as the substitute of Rome.

It is no spear, however, which penetrates the city, but an arrow, and a Cretan arrow at that. The Cretans were famous for their skill with the bow, and *Dictaeus* (after mount Dicte on Crete) may simply reflect the marksmanship of the soldier whose shot was so powerful that his arrow flew right over the walls. But it is attractive to think of Vergil’s simile in *A*. 4.70–73, in which Dido is compared to a deer shot by an unwitting Cretan shepherd (who stands for Aeneas; cf. 4.73 *Dictaeos ... harundo*; perhaps relevantly, Dido in the next line (4.74) guides the Trojan leader *media ... per moenia*). Capua is altera Roma (see above), but also altera Carthago (13.100), and had a deer as its genius (13.115); the city is here shot through the heart, as it were, by another such (equally lethal) Cretan arrow. The image anticipates how the suicide of Virrius and the other senators will mirror Dido’s, for which see Intr. 256–298.

**186–190**

laetatur non hortandi, non plura monendi
Fulvius esse locum. rapiunt sibi quisque laborem.
quos ubi tam erectos animi videt et †superesse
fortunam† sibi quemque ducem, ruit impete vasto
ad portam magnaeque optat discrimina famae. 190

**186–187a** Fulvius is pleased that there is no occasion for incitement, nor for further admonishment.

*hortandi ... monendi ... locum* The construction of *locus* with a gerund is relatively rare in poetry. The sense here is ‘occasion’ or ‘cause’, rather than the usual ‘opportunity’. For the more literal meaning ‘space’, cf. e.g. 4.553 *locus ... cadendi*, Luc. 4.781–782, 7.494.

*hortandi* and *monendi* are two sides of the same picture, either to (positively) encourage or to (negatively) reprimand soldiers showing lack of courage and valour.

**187b** All claimed their own share in the fighting.

The Romans are eager to do their part; *labor* marks the deeds of each soldier as worthy of epic song (cf. 1.3 *da, Musa, decus memorare laborum*). The hemistich, which closes the general description of battle, resembles Verg. *A*. 12.552 *pro se quisque viri summa nituntur opum vi* (there, as here, followed by the deeds of the leader, viz. Aeneas / Fulvius). Similar phrases are found elsewhere in the *Punica*; cf. 9.33 *dux sibi quisque viam rapito* (Varro before Cannae, see n.188–190 below), 11.197 *pro se quisque alacres rapite hoc decus* (Decius exhorts his fellow Capuans to expel Hannibal) and 15.571 *hortator sibi quisque* (the Romans on the eve of the battle of Metaurus).

**188–190** When he sees that they are so valiant in spirit and that each is the commander of his own fate, Fulvius rushes with an awe-inspiring charge to the gate and seeks out dangers that offer great fame.

For the allusion to Turnus’ similar action in *Aeneid* 9 (cf. 9.694–695 *immani concitus ira / Dardaniam ruit ad portam fratresque superbos*), see Intr. 179–255.

et †superesse fortunam† sibi quemque ducem The mss. reading superesse fortunam hardly makes sense; several emendations have been proposed. I do not hope to solve the cruxes; but perhaps some light can still be thrown upon these words. It is easiest to adopt the old conjecture fortunae; Watt (1988: 178) usefully adduces the saying by Ap. Claudius Caecus (Sall. Rep. 2.1) fabrum esse suae quemque fortunae and Pl. Trin. 363 sapiens quidem pol ipsus fingit fortunam sibi. Silius’ phrase may well, as Watt suggests, be a “variation of a proverbial phrase about each man being the architect of his own fortune”. This would leave us superesse. I will consider a few options. i) Miniconi-Devallet defend superesse fortunae as “être à la hauteur de” (“to be up to fortune”, cf. OLD supersum 2b); it is, however, highly unlikely that Silius would have written superesse for prosodic reasons. Polysyllabic line endings are extremely rare in the Punica (pentasyllabic: 1.203 aetheriasque, 4.160 quadrupedantium; spondaic tetrasyllabic: 1.314 Apenninus and 8.621 Hellespontus); a caesura after the longus in the fifth foot followed by a tetrasyllabic word is only found when the line ending echoes Homeric practice, i.e. with Greek names (5.22 Hymenaeo, 17.79) and formulæ (1.152 superumque hominumque, 2.484, 15.542). superesse cannot be retained. ii) Should we then adopt Barth’s reading and split the word into super esse? A monosyllabic word followed by two disyllables is far more common (55 times; cf. in book 13 lines 280, 655 and 818), especially when preceded by a pyrrhic word ( ‾ ‾ ‾ | ‾ ‾ ‾ | ‾ ‾ ‾ | ‾ ‾ ‾ ), as here (videt). super could be taken as an adverb (‘moreover’); a parallel may be found at Verg. A. 2.71 et super ipsi. The problem is, of course, that a reader would be more likely to think of the existing word superesse rather than of super esse. It is indeed probable that for exactly this reason super has crept in before esse, replacing another pyrrhic word. iii) Watt argues (citing 6.233 and 10.247 as parallels) that we should read subit esse, where subit means “the proverb came to his mind”. His solution to superesse is less convincing than that to fortunam: this is rather crude for epic poetry, it is hard to arrive at this meaning of subit without menti or similar, and the fact that Fulvius is the subject of both verbs which precede and follow (videt and ruit) also renders it implausible. To sum up: it is implausible that Silius wrote superesse; it is plausible that we should read esse fortunae (as a reference to the proverbial saying), and that these words were preceded by a pyrrhic word, which has been corrupted into super due to the existence of the word superesse. Leaving aside what the pyrrhic word would have been, the whole sentence then reads ‘When Fulvius sees that they are valiant in spirit and ... that each man guides his own fortune’. Upon seeing that his men need no further encouragement and no further orders, the commander is free to join the fighting himself.

As Ruperti already observed, the phrase parallels Liv. 22.5.6 sibi quisque dux adhortatorque factus, of the battle of lake Trasimene. There is a clear contrast with our passage; at lake Trasimene, all men were their own leader because Flaminius was not, whereas at Capua Fulvius does not need to lead because his men see their duty already.

impete This form was coined by Lucretius (and used primarily by him) as replacement for the metrically inadmissible impētū. It is used again in line 248 and at 2.243 impete vasto.
191–205

tres claustra aequaevo servabant corpore fratres, quis delecta manus centeni cuique ferebant excubias unaque locum statione tenebant. forma ex his Numitor, cursu plantaque volucris præstabat Laurens, membrorum mole Taburnus. 195

sed non una viris tela: hic mirabilis arcu, ille hastam quaterae ac medicatae cuspidis ictu proelia moliri et nudo non credere ferro, tertius aptabat flammis ac sulphure taedas, qualis Atlantico memoratur litore quondam monstrum Geryones immane tricorporis irae, cui tres in pugna dextrae varia arma gerebant: una ignes saevos, ast altera pone sagittas fundebat, validam torquebat tertia cornum, atque uno diversa dabat tria vulnera nisu. 200

191–193 Three brothers of equal age were guarding the gate; with each of them a chosen band of a hundred men kept watch and held their position on the same post.

In Homer, the Greeks trusted the defence of their camp to seven leaders, each with a contingent of a hundred young men (Il. 9.85–86 ἵππες ἥγεσαν ἰγμόνες φυλάκων, ἐκατόν δὲ ἐκάστῳ κοῦροι ἅμα στεῖχον δολίῳ ἐγχέα χερσὶν ἔχοντες). Vergil doubled the number and assigned them to the Rutulian attackers; cf. A. 9.161–162 bis septem Rutuli qui milite servent / delecti, ast illos centeni quemque sequuntur (cf. also 9.159 vigilum excubiis obsidere portas; Silius’ tenebant may be a reminiscence of obsidere, but also of Homer’s ἔχοντες). Silius has reverted to the original context by using the phrase of the defenders. In Vergil, the sentries are spread out; cf. 9.160 moenia cingere flammis (“to encircle the battlements with fires”). It is possible that Silius’ lines should be interpreted in the same way, viz. that each brother guards a different gate (the plural claustra is ambiguous in this respect). At 206–208, however, Fulvius is said to see all three brothers (hos ubi ... conspexit) causing a bloodbath at a single gate (portae limina circum), the same gate as that mentioned in 190. Furthermore, the simile at 200–205 suggests that the three brothers are regarded as a unity, which also pleads in favour of the interpretation that they are guarding a single gatehouse.

Vergil uses the theme of multiple brothers fighting alongside each other twice. At A. 10.328ff., the seven sons of Phorcus attack Aeneas, by whom three are killed; at 12.270ff., one of the nine sons of Gylippus is killed by a Rutulian spear. One of Silius’ triplets, Numitor, shares his name with one of the sons of Phorcus (A. 10.342), but in most other respects it is rather the second Vergilian passage that is alluded to here; see n.210–212. For the triplets and the significance of their number, see Intr. 179–255.


unaque locum statione tenebant An imitation of A. 9.183 communi portam statione tenebant, “they were mounting sentry together at the gate”, of Nisus and Euryalus guarding
the gate of the Trojan encampment. The characteristics of these two may here return in the figures of beautiful Numitor (cf. A. 9.179–180 Euryalus, quo pulchrior alter / non fuit) and quick-footed, javelin-wielding Laurens (cf. A. 9.178 celerem iaculo, of Nisus, who would also have won the footrace in Aeneid 5 if he had not slipped).

194–195 Of these brothers, Numitor stood out in beauty, Laurens in running and fleetness of foot, Taburnus in the mass of his body.

The names of the triplets mark them as Italians, and emphasize the shared heritage of Romans and Capuans as another suggestion of the fratricidal nature of their clash. Numitor is the name of a Latin warrior in Verg. A. 10.342 (see n.191–193), as well as one of the kings of Alba Longa. Laurens refers to Laurentum; in the Punic, the Romans are called Laurentes too (e.g. in 1.109 and 17.62). Taburnus, Heinsius’ convincing conjecture for la-
/liburnus, is the name of a mountain in Campania. For membrorum mole, Silius may have thought of Vergil’s epithets at G. 2.38 magnum ... Taburnum and A. 12.715 summo Taburno (the only references to the mountain in the extant literature before Silius apart from Grattius’ Cynegetica 509 and Plin. Nat. 14.18). At A. 12.715, the mountain is the setting for a clash of two bulls (cf. also G. 3.219ff.) as analogy for Turnus’ duel with Aeneas; the image is often interpreted as a reference to Rome’s civil war. Here, the name and the intertexts associated with it serve as another reminder that Rome and Capua contest the supremacy of Italy (cf. 266).

196–199 But the men did not use the same weapon; the first was working wonders with his bow, the second brandished a javelin and waged battle by throwing poisoned spears and did not rely on untreated weapons, the third used torches with fire and sulphur, ...

Although they are triplets, the brothers have different approaches to fighting (sed marks the unexpectedness of the difference). Their order is the same as in 194–195: hic refers to Numitor, ille to Laurens and tertius to Taburnus. Numitor is mentioned first and identified as ‘closest’ (hic), because his fate will receive the most attention; his activities as an archer are picked up again in 210–212, where he is said to be pierced by Fulvius’ spear while lifting his bow to shoot.

The use of many different weapons by the defenders is derived from Vergil’s description of the Trojans protecting their camp at A. 10.130–131 hi iaculis, illi certant defendere saxis / molirique ignem nervoque aptare sagittas, “Some with darts and some with stones, they strive to ward off the foe, and hurl fire and fit arrows to the string”. These lines may be regarded as the model for our passage; not only do the weapons correspond (only the stones—saxis—are omitted by Silius), but the verbs moliri and aptare are found here in 198 and 199 too. Among the defending Trojans in Vergil’s passage is Ismarus, who like Laurens has coated his missiles in poison (10.140 calamos armare veneno).

A second intertext is Silius’ own description of the siege of Saguntum, where the attacker Hannibal employs a similar variety of weapons (1.319–323):

ante omnis ductor patris insignis in armis
nunc picea iactat fumantem lampada flamma,
nunc sude, nunc iaculo, nunc saxis impiger instat
aut hydro imbutas, bis noxia tela, sagittas
contendit nervo atque insultat fraude pharetrae ...
“In front of them all their leader, conspicuous in his father’s armour, now hurls a brand smoking with pitchy flame, now presses on unwearied with stake or javelin or stone, or shoots arrows from the string—missiles dipped in serpent’s poison and doubly fatal—and exults in the guile of his quiver.”

There, we find the same set of weapons (with the addition of *sudis* and *saxa*), the use of poison (1.322 *hydro imbutas*; cf. here 197 *medicatae*) and incendiary material (1.320 *picea*, pitch; here 199 *sulphure*, sulphur); moreover, the description of versatile Hannibal is also followed by a simile (whose phrase *spicula ... fundit* at 1.325–326 here returns at 211). These two intertexts thus align the triplets both with the Trojan defenders and with Carthaginian fighting methods (cf. also on *nudo ... ferro* below).

**mirabilis arcu** The construction is striking. In *TLL* 8.1052.39ff. several other instances of *mirabilis* with an ablative are cited, but all these cases involve an *ablativus causae* and not, as here, an *ablativus instrumentalis*. We might also interpret *mirabilis arcu* not as ‘remarkable with his bow’, but as ‘admirable for his marksmanship’, in which *arcus* does not signify the bow itself but rather the way in which it is handled, which seems equally unprecedented.

**quatere ... moliri ... credere** It is possible that we should supply *mirabilis* for Laurens as well, which would then govern three infinitives; Spaltenstein thought so and it is by no means impossible (see n.21–23 *incumbere ... vigor* for Silius’ frequent use of such a construction), even if *mirabilis non credere* seems awkward. But Duff’s interpretation, who regards the verbs as historical infinitives, seems preferable because it results in a less novel construction (*mirabilis* would otherwise first govern an ablative and then three infinitives). Moreover, the three brothers would then be described in three varying constructions (mirroring the differences between them): first a simple adjective, then a clause with historical infinitives, and lastly a clause with an imperfect tense. Historical infinitives are used to fill a reference time provided by the context; and in the case of verbs which denote short actions, the use of the infinitive suggests that these actions occur repeatedly during the given time span, i.e. the natural interpretation is in such cases iterative (see Adema 2007: 13–15 and 2008: 139–140). This suits these lines very well, since they describe how during the assault of the Romans Laurens was busy throwing poisoned javelins to his foes, not once, but all the time (Vergil uses the infinitive in the same way at e.g. *A*. 9.509–510 *telorum effundere contra / omne genus Teucri ac duris detrudere contis*, where the Trojans defend their walls, like the Capuans here). Similarly the imperfect *aptabat* in 199 implies a process; Taburnus was preparing (and throwing) torches for some time. For the tense usage, see An. 179–255.

**medicatae cuspidis ictu** Cf. the similar line-ending at Verg. *A*. 7.756 *medicari cuspidis ictum*, “to heal the stroke of the … spear point”; there, *medicari* has a entirely different meaning, i.e. medical treatment, instead of the appliance of poison, which is meant here.

**nudo ... ferro** I.e. ‘without poison’, as at 1.219 *nec fidens nudo sine fraudibus ensi* “nor do they trust to the naked sword but use guile also” (on the practices of the Numidians); see also n.159–162.

**flammis et sulphure** Taburnus uses sulphur to enhance the inflammability of his torches. This practice is also mentioned at Ov. *Her*. 7.23 *inducto ceratae sulphure taedae*, “torches of wax tipped with sulphur”, and *Met*. 3.373–374 *non aliter quam cum summis circumlita taedis / admotas rapiunt vivacia sulphura flammas*, “as when quick-burning
sulphur, smeared round the tops of torches, catches fire from another fire brought near”. For the use of torches as offensive weapons RE 6.1953.24ff. s.v. ‘Fackeln’ also cites Stat. Theb. 8.467, Sil. 9.336 and Liv. 4.33.2.

200–201 ..., similar to the terrible monster of three-bodied wrath they say once lived on the Atlantic shore, Geryones, ...

The Capuan brothers are compared to Geryon(es), the adversary of Hercules in his tenth labour. This giant with three bodies guarded a herd that Hercules was to bring to Eurystheus. The last part of this Herculean work is referred to several times in Punicia, mainly because on his return the hero was the first to cross the Alps (3.496–499), as Hannibal did after him, though straying from the path that Hercules had trodden (3.512–515). Other references to the myth include the founding tale of Saguntum (1.273ff.), which Hercules named after his companion Zacynthus who died there as they returned from the slaying of Geryones, and the story of Pyrene (3.421–441), the eponym of the Pyrenees and lover of Hercules when he stayed with her father on his way to Geryones.

Atlantiacus A very rare adjective, found only here, in Calp. Ecl. 4.83 (there referring to the giant Atlas) and Auson. Mos. 144; it is a lengthening of the more common Atlanticus.

monstrum ... immane The same phrase is used of the Giants at Ov. Fast. 5.35 and V.Fl. 2.17 (cf. also Apul. Flor. 22).

tricorpor The epithet, also found in 3.422, is an adoption of Vergil’s coinage in A. 6.289 forma tricorporis umbrae “the shape of the three-bodied shade” (analogous to bicorpor as stated by both Norden and Austin ad loc.), which is another reference to Geryones; Silius boldly puts it with irae rather than with Geryones himself. It is not altogether clear what Silius envisages here exactly. The word itself suggests that Geryones would have three torsos on one pair of legs (as in Lucr. 5.28 triceps corporis tergeminis vis Geryonai, “three-bodied force of the triple Geryon”), but at 1.278–279 only one body is mentioned (278 corpore), from which three pairs of arms protrude and three necks with their respective heads. The latter version is also found in Sen. Ag. 838 pectoro ex uno tria monstra, “three monsters from a single breast”.

202–205 ..., whose three right arms wielded various weapons in battle: one flung savage flames, the second shot arrows backwards, the third wielded a powerful spear, and with a single effort he inflicted three different wounds.

The weapons mentioned are the same as in 196–199, that is fire, a bow and a spear. Geryones’ versatility in using three different weapons (one for each body, or at least each right arm) is the tertium comparationis; the triplets are therefore regarded as a unity. By extrapolation, their adversary Fulvius is a second Hercules, as he proves to be equal to their combined might.

pone Duff translates ‘behind the first’, which seems anatomically implausible (insofar as such rules apply to a mythical multi-bodied giant). I agree with Spaltenstein that the word rather denotes that Geryones shoots behind him and thus is dangerous on all sides, making him an even more dangerous opponent.

fundebat The use of fundere here and at 211 in the sense of ‘shooting’ is rare in Latin literature in general (TLL 6.1.1568.35ff. cites only five earlier instances, viz. Prop. 4.10.42, Verg. A. 11.610, Luc. 3.670, V.Fl. 3.242 and Stat. Theb. 6.927), but common in the Punicia. According to the TLL (loc.cit.) the word denotes shooting missiles in large quantity
Notes to 179–255

(‘magna copia emittere, iactare’) and is comparable to Homer’s phrase at Il. 12.159 βέλεα ἱέον (which describes the siege of the Greek camp; see also n.n.181–182 saxeus imber).

validam ... cornum This could be either a wooden club, a stabbing spear or a javelin; in view of the weapons used by the three brothers the last interpretation is the most probable.

uno ... tria See n. 210–212.

206–212
hos ubi non aequis variantes proelia consul conspexit telis et portae limina circum stragem ac perfusos subeuntum sanguine postes, concitat intortam furiatis viribus hastam. letum triste ferens auras secat Itala taxus et qua nudarat, dum fundit spicula ab alto, arcum protendens Numitor latus, ilia transit.

206–209 When the consul sees them diversifying the fighting with dissimilar weapons and the carnage around the threshold of the gate and its posts drenched in the blood of the attackers, he hurls his spinning javelin with furious strength.

With non aequis ... telis (206–207) and variantes proelia (206) the disparity of the weapons used by the triplets is emphasized for the third time (earlier by 196 sed non una viris tela and the comparison to Geryones), probably pointing to the brothers’ capability of dealing with various kinds of opposition, or their enemy’s inability to deal with their versatility.

portae limina circum Cf. the Rutulians that fall to the hands of Trojan defenders Pandarus and Bitias at the (opened) gates of their camp at Verg. A. 9.687 ipso portae posuere in limine vitam; but cf. also the Rutulians causing a bloodbath at the gates of the same Trojan camp at A. 10.119–120 portis circum omnibus instant sternere caede viros.

subeuntum I.e. the Roman soldiers approaching the gate. For the verb, cf. in the Aeneid the Rutulian Lucetius who is killed portae subeuntem (A. 9.570).

concitat intortam Spaltenstein thinks that the phrase is redundant, as intorquere would mean ‘throw’ as well; similarly, Duff distinguishes the verbs by translating “he brandished his spear ... and threw it”. Yet there is another possible interpretation: intortam may refer to the revolving motion of the spear. For this use, cf. contorquere in Verg. A. 11.561–562 contortum hastile ... immittit, “[he] launches the spinning shaft”, on which Horsfall comments that “the verb implies the use of a throwing-strap”. For this throwing technique, see n.159–161 ammenti.

For line 209, cf. Vergil’s line on the spear that Pandarus throws at Turnus: A. 9.744 intorquet summis adnxius viribus hastam; cf. also A. 2.50 and 10.474. Vergil’s phrase is often imitated, almost always with the line ending viribus hastam, a form of torquere and an adjective accompanying viribus; cf. e.g. Ov. Met. 5.32, 12.369, Ilias 314, 408, 555, 825, V.Fl. 3.193, Sil. 2.124, 16.584.

210–212 The Roman spear cleaves the air bringing sad death and where Numitor had exposed his side as he extended his bow while he rained arrows from above, it pierced his groin.

These lines form an imitation of Verg. A. 12.267–276, in which one of nine Arcadian brothers is killed by a spear, marking the end of the armistice between the Trojans and the
Italians. There are numerous correspondences between our present passage and Vergil’s: 

i) Both youths are beautiful (Numitor; 194–195 *forma… praestabat*; cf. *A. 12.275 egregium forma iuvenis*). ii) The metaphor *auras secat* (210) figures in Vergil’s passage too (12.267–268); Vergil adds *certa* (‘unerring’), which is here picked up with *letum triste ferens*.

iii) Like Vergil, Silius slows time and narrates both the hurling of the spear, its flight and the transfixion of the youth. iv) If we adopt Delz’ conjecture *balteo* (211, for *ab alto*, see below), Numitor is hit on the same spot as the boy in the *Aeneid*, that is, where his sword belt (*balteus*) normally would cover his side. In the *Aeneid*, the brothers rush to the fight to avenge him, but since this results in another battle between Trojans and Latins, their fates are not narrated. In our passage even less is told and we hear nothing more of the other two brothers (see Intr. 179–255 for an interpretation of this open ending); instead, the next scene, Scipio’s *aristeia*, has already begun.


*taxus* The word merely means ‘spear’, as is so often the case with *cornus* and *robur* (cf. *cornum* in 204). Since the *taxus* is a symbol of death (see n.595–596 *taxus*), it may here be chosen to accompany *letum triste ferens*. With *Itala*, the phrase is a reminiscence of *A. 9.698 volat Itala cornus*, Turnus’ spear flying towards the Trojan Antiphates.

*ab alto* This is the mss. reading, which is dismissed by Delz (1975: 170), who states that Numitor and his brothers are nowhere said to be standing on top of a tower or wall, and that it is strange that Fulvius would cast his spear to a victim high above him. The geographical facts also plead against *ab alto*, since Capua is situated on a plain. Instead, he conjectures *balteo* (with synizesis of –eo), for the following reasons: i) *balteus* also occurs at Verg. *A. 12.257ff.*, which this scene imitates (see above); in addition, our lines are comparable to Silius’ other employment of the word at 10.180–181 *tergo qua balteus imo sinuatur* and to V.Fl. 3.189–190 *qua caerulus ambit balteus*. ii) Numitor moves his *balteus* when drawing his bow, leaving part of his body unprotected; the ablative *balteo* is to be read as dependent upon *nudarat* (cf. *OLD nudo* 1c for such ablatives). The conjecture is ingenious, but some objections must be made. Firstly, Delz’ reasons for not reading *ab alto* are at variance with Silius’ text. The triplets are surely not defending the gate on ground level, for three reasons: i) All three use some sort of missile, unsuitable for a mêlée at the gates, but on the other hand to be expected if they fight from a higher position (see also the intertexts at n.196–199). ii) At 213ff. Virrius makes a sortie, leaving a gate that was previously closed (*reclusa porta*); this implies that prior to the sortie, the defenders were only fighting from the ramparts. iii) Fulvius’ javelin, cast upward, counterbalances two scenes in the siege of Saguntum; firstly the spear that Hannibal casts at Caicus at 1.304–306, who was standing on top of the walls of Saguntum, secondly the one Asbyte throws at the archer Dorylas at 2.121–128, who was at a similar elevated position. The latter scene matches ours almost perfectly; Dorylas is also one of three named defenders, he is hit as he is plying his bow, and the effort of Asbyte closely corresponds to the description of Fulvius’ cast: 2.123–124 *totisque annisa doloris / viribus intorquet letalem in moenia*.
Notes to 179–255

cornum. Lastly, while the parallels for balteus are attractive, in all cases (10.181, Verg. A. 12.274, V.Fl. 3.190) the victim is hit in the place where his sword belt is, not where it would have been (as here). In my view, the reading ab alto should be kept, as it makes perfect sense here and would not result in a caesura in the middle of the fifth foot (as in the case of balteo), but in a natural half line, even if the connection to A. 12.267ff. is thereby somewhat weakened.

213–218
at non obsaepto contentus limine Martem exercere, levis bello, sed turbidus ausi,
Virrius incauto fervore eruperat amens
reclusa in campum porta miseramque furori vincentum obtulerat pubem. ruit obvia in arma
Scipio et oblatum metit insatiabilis agmen.

213–217a But Virrius, a lightweight in battle but impatient for a bold deed, was not content to wage war behind a barred gate; he had foolishly and with reckless zeal burst forth after opening the gate and had exposed his wretched soldiers to the fury of the victorious attackers.

The narrator emphasizes the folly of Virrius’ sortie (214 levis, turbidus, 215 incauto fervore ... amens); miseram ... pubem (216–217) and vincentum (217) anticipate its disastrous outcome. The opening of the gates recalls the enterprise of Pandarus and Bitias in A. 9.672ff.; the two brothers opened the gates of the Trojan encampment in order to kill those Rutulians foolish enough to enter, but in the end were killed themselves by Turnus, which nearly resulted in the capture of the camp. Cf. 216 reclusa ... porta, which echoes portam ... recludunt in A. 9.675; the narrator picks up the same intertext at 248ff., when the Capuans, like Pandarus, attempt to close the gate again; see n.249–252.

Livy also narrates a sortie by the Capuan soldiers, though in an earlier stage of the siege. In Liv. 26.5–6, Hannibal tried to relieve Capua and ordered its inhabitants to sally from the gates simultaneously with the Carthaginian attack. The sortie was a failure, and Hannibal therefore marched on Rome, hoping to pull the besiegers off Capua.

For the abrupt end of Fulvius’ aristeia and the use of at, see An. 179–255.

Virrius Silius’ presentation of Virrius supplements his portrayal at 11.65–66, where Virrius was depicted as an exceptional speaker, but low-born and without control over his temper: antistat cunctis praecellens Virrius ore / sed genus obscurus nullique furore secundus, “Their chief was Virrius, an eloquent speaker but a man of low origin and second to none in violence”. Virrius’ main fault is recklessness, referred to five times in these few lines: i) he is discontent with fighting a defensive battle from the ramparts—even if, by implication, this was the most sensible strategy (cf. 252 munimina sera); ii) he is levis bello, i.e. unblessed with strategic insight; iii) moreover, he is turbidus; that is, not brave, but reckless and impatient; iv) his sortie is made incauto fervore, again recklessness combined with tactical inaptitude; v) finally, he is called amens, which could just mean ‘very excited’ but carries overtones of insanity. This selfsame recklessness and irrational ambition characterizes his behaviour during the mission he led to the Roman Senate to demand a share in the consulship (11.55ff.; see n.99–103). Having been denied the request,
Virrius manipulated his people into an alliance with Hannibal: 11.130–131 *veris falsa per artem Virrius admiscens*, “Virrius, skilfully mixing truth with falsehood...”. Both in characteristics and in the role he plays in the demise of his country, Virrius is a Capuan Varro; see Intr. 256–298.

**eruperat ... reclusa in campum porta** Virrius here displays the recklessness against which Fabius warned, who observed at 7.237–238 *una reclusis omnes iam portis in campum effuderit hora*, “a single hour will see you all pour out into the field”—but it is a far greater blessing if one also returns to camp alive.

217b–218 **Scipio rushes against their counterattack and insatiably mows down the soldiers on his path.**

**obvia ... arma** At Verg. *A.* 9.56–57, the Rutulians wonder at the fact that the Trojans do not meet them in battle, but remain in their camp, *non aequo se dare campo, non obvia ferre arma viros, sed castra fovere* (for the same intertext, see n.149–152). The impetuousness of the Capuans is contrasted with the restraint of the Trojans at the beginning of *Aeneid* 9, a far more viable strategy than the unwise action of Pandarus and Bittias.

**Scipio** Livy does not mention Scipio’s presence at Capua, but his introduction by Silius in this passage facilitates the transition to the *Nekyia* in 13.381ff. where Scipio is the protagonist.

**oblatum metit ... agmen** At *Il.* 11.67–69, Homer compares the fighting Trojans and Greeks to reapers (*三种职业*) in a wheat field (cf. for *μἀω* as ‘mow down in battle’ A.R. 3.1187 and 3.1382—both of the ‘sown men’, *AP* 9.362.25, Soph. *Frg.* 625). Catullus applies the metaphor to Achilles at 64.355–357, who cuts down the Trojans just as a *messor ... demetit arva*. Vergil transposes the image from Achilles to Aeneas as he seeks revenge for the death of Pallas, no longer with a simile but with the verb directly applied to the warrior, at *A.* 10.513–514 *proxima quaeque metit gladio latumque per agmen / ardens limitem agit ferro*, “With the sword he mows down all the nearest ranks, and fiercely drives a broad path through the host with the steel”. Vergil’s *latum* probably goes with *limitem* (‘a broad path’), but it may nonetheless be picked up here by *oblatum*. Silius used the mowing metaphor earlier in the epic, also of Scipio, at 4.445ff. As the elder Scipio was surrounded by Carthaginians and fought for his life, his son (this Scipio) carved a path to his father through the enemy ranks (4.42 *metit agmina*) and rescued him. Scipio’s action was identified as a display of *pietas* (4.470), which he here again shows by avenging the death of his friend Marius (236–237). His minor role of avenger in this passage anticipates his major similar role in the remainder of the *Punica*; Scipio will be the *ultor* of his father and country (7.487–488, 15.205, 16.593; for Patroclus and Pallas as models for his father and uncle, see Intr. 650–704). Like Achilles and Aeneas, Scipio temporarily loses all moderation (*insatiabilis*; compare also Fulvius’ *furiatis viribus* at 209). For the Roman fury and its removal by the gods, see Intr. 299–347. For the same use of *meto*, cf. Hor. *Carm.* 4.14.31 and Stat. *Theb.* 7.713.

219–233

Tifata umbrifero generatum monte Calenum
nutrierant audere trucem, nec corpore magno 220
mens erat inferior. subsidere saepe leonem, nudus inire caput pugnas, certare iuvenco atque obliqua trucis deducere cornua tauri adsuerat crudoque aliqua se attollere facto. is, dum praecipites expellit Virrius urbe, seu spreto, seu ne fieret mora, nudus in aequor thorace exierat leviorque premebat anhelos pondere loricae et palantes victor agebat. iamque Velîternum media transegerat alvo, iam solitum aequali ludo committere equestres Scipiadae pugnas Marium tellure revulso perculerat saxo. miser implorabat amicum cum gemitu exspirans, scopulusque premebat hiantem.

219–221a Tifata had nourished Calenus, born on its shady hill, a man savage in daring, and his spirit was not inferior to his great body.

Tifata Mount Tifata (neuter plural) is a range of hills just to the north of Capua; in ancient times, it was covered in oak woods, as is suggested by the Latin translation of the name as iliceta (Paul. Fest. s.v. Tifata; cf. RE 6A.932.19ff.; Festus does not tell to which language the name Tifata belongs); hence its epithet umbrifero (219). In the vicinity of Tifata was also the famous sanctuary of Diana Tifatina, on which see n.124–125 famulamque Dianae.

Calenus The name is derived from the Campanian town Cales. Most probably, Silius wanted this warrior to have a Campanian sounding name, even if during the Second Punic war the town of Cales was Roman territory; it was the seat of jurisdiction for the whole of southern Italy (RE 3.1351.32ff.) and the place where the Capuan senators were sent after their city’s capitulation and Taurea committed suicide (Liv. 26.15), as described in 367ff.

Calenus, raised in the woodlands of mount Tifata rather than in a urban environment, is depicted as a typical barbarian: savage, daring, big and fierce. For the significance of the portrayal of Rome’s adversaries, see Intr. 179–255.

audere trucem For the infinitive governed by an adjective, see n.21–23 incumbere ...

nec corpore magno mens erat inferior I.e. Calenus’ mind was as fierce as his body was big. For the reference to A. 11.640–644, see n.225–228.

221b–224 He often used to lie in wait for lions, was wont to enter battle bare-headed, to wrestle with a bullock and force down the horns of a savage bull and to distinguish himself in some way with a brute deed.

nudus caput I.e. without a helmet; caput is accusative of respect. For this show of brawn, see n.225–228.

obliqua trucis deducere cornua tauri Cf. Hercules’ contest with Achelous, who had taken the form of a bull (Ov. Met. 9.80–81 tauri / forma trucis) but is defeated when Hercules forces his horns to the ground (9.83–84 depressaque dura / cornua figit humo).

There is a nice contrast between deducere and se attollere; by pressing down bulls, Calenus raised his own fame.
Notes to 179–255

**crudo ... facto** For *crudus*, compare English ‘raw power’; Calenus won renown through feats of brute strength.

225–228 *When Virrius drove his men rashly out of the city, Calenus had gone out onto the field without armour, either because he disdained it or not to be delayed, and burdened less, he was bearing down upon the Romans, panting from the weight of their corselets, and victoriously drove them before him in disarray.*

Once more it is stressed that the sally was rash rather than well-thought-out, given the haste expressed by Virrius’ action (*praecipites* 225) and Calenus’ (*seu ne fieret mora* 226). Yet for Calenus this rashness has some benefit, as he profits from his lack of armour by being fleeter of foot than his Roman opponents.

Calenus’ appearance, including his disdain of body armour, resembles the description of Herminius at Verg. *A. 11.640–644:*

> ingentemque animis, ingentem corpore et armis
deicit Herminium, nudo cui vertice fulva
cæsaries nudique umeri nec vulnera terrent;
tactus in arma patet
> “...and Herminius, giant in courage, giant in body and arms; on his bare head stream his tawny locks, and bare are his shoulders; for him wounds have no terrors; so vast a frame faces the steel”.

Silius imitates the first part (*ingentem ... animis, ingentem corpore*) at 220–221 *nec corpore magno mens erat inferior*; the second part is reproduced by 222 *nudus inire caput pugnat* and 226–227 *spreto ... nudus in aequor thorace exierat*. Like Calenus, Herminius is transfixed by a spear; cf. *A. 11.644–645 latos huic hasta per armos acta tremit duplicatque virum transfixa dolore, “through his broad shoulders the driven spear comes quivering and, piercing through, bends him double with pain”. Silius adopts and adapts Vergil’s words for his description of Calenus’ slayer Scipio at 234 *validas saevo vires duplicante dolores*. Horsfall *ad Verg. l.c.* notes that “Herminius’ name might also have been heard as Germanic (Arminius!) and the absence of armour is indeed attributed to Gauls and Germans (Caes. *Gall.* 1.25.4; 6.21.5; Tac. *Germ.* 6.2; 24.1: (?partial) nudity in battle)”. Calenus, like Herminius, is an Italian barbarian.

**spreto ... nudus ... thorace** The use of *nudus* is the same as in 222, that is, ‘lacking armour’, with the ablative denoting what is lacking (*OLD nudus* 4c).

**seu ... seu** By giving two possible explanations for Calenus’ behaviour, the narrator gives the impression not to be in full control of his story (i.e. he is not omniscient), suggesting that it is not fictitious at all, but the retelling of history, as he creates the illusion that his characters are real thinking persons with actions based on several possible underlying motives. In addition, by giving two different, but both possible options, the narrator succeeds in telling two things at the same time, namely that Calenus was the kind of warrior who would have disdained armour and that the sortie was a hasty business, fuelled more by the enthusiasm of its participants than by reason. For such a presentation of two options in the main narrative, cf. Verg. *A. 11.778–781 hunc virgo, sive ut templis praefigeret arma / Troia, captivo sive ut se ferret in auro / venatrix, ... sequebatur, “Whether hoping to fasten up Trojan arms in a temple or to flaunt herself in golden spoil, the maiden singled him out...” and Ov. *Met.* 10.79–81 *omnemque refugerat Orpheus /
femineam Venerem, seu quod male cesserat illi, / sive fidem dederat, “and Orpheus had shunned all love of womankind, whether because of his ill success in love, or whether he had given his troth once for all”; in both cases, the poet may suggest that the two options were both present in his character’s mind. The device is more frequent in character speech, precisely because there the speaker is not omniscient. For the principle of multiple explanations as a means to add a learned (here: historiographical) touch to a discourse, see e.g. Schrijvers 1978: 8–9, who traces its origin in Latin to Lucretius’ natural philosophy.

premebat anhelos The use of premo is a pun; the Romans are pressed down both by their armour and by Calenus. For the panting being caused by weight, cf. the similar use of anhelare at Sen. Med. 409 and Stat. Silv. 1.1.56–57.

current text points to Latin phrase: *palantes victor agebat* A reminiscence of Verg. A. 11.734 *femina palantis agit*, “does a woman drive you in disorder?”, of Camilla’s dominance over her opponents, and A. 5.265 *palantis Troas agebat*, of Demoleos pursuing the Trojans.

229–233 He had already pierced Veliternus right through his belly, already he had struck down with a rock that he had ripped from the ground Marius, who used to fight sham battles on horseback with Scipio, his equal in age. The poor man called to his friend for help while he groaning breathed his last, and the stone blocked his gaping mouth.

**Veliternum ... Marium** Both Veliternus, named after the town of Velitrae in southern Latium, and Marius, named after the future general, are recognizable as Romans by their names. The name Marius had been used for another Roman soldier in 9.401, incidentally also in a context of friendship in battle.

**aequali** This goes either with the dative *Scipiadae* or (less likely) the ablative *ludo*, and is to be understood as *aequaev* (TLL 1.994.49–50); Marius and Scipio were of the same age. Spaltenstein takes it with *ludo* and argues that the phrase is “‘un jeu où ils étaient des égaux’, ou mieux encore, comme ‘aequalis pugna’ serait inhabituel pour ‘aequa pugna’ ... ‘un jeu entre pairs’”. That Marius would be Scipio’s equal in fighting is, however, unacceptable in view of epic tradition (the hero is best) and of Calenus’ easy victory over him; if *aequali* would be equivalent to *aequa*, it would add little to the sense here, since the premise of a duel is already present in *committere Scipiadae pugnas*. The juxtaposition of *aequali* and *ludo* also suggests that they should not be taken together.

**saxo** The use of stones as projectiles is an epic motif, particularly in the case of heavy rocks. *tellure revulso* suggests the weight of the rock (Spaltenstein); the same phrase is used at Ov. Met. 12.281 for a threshold (an *onus plaustri*, i.e. heavy as a cartload) which is ripped from the ground to be used as a missile (see n.234–237). Such heavy rocks are topical from Homer on; cf. e.g. Il. 5.302 (Diomedes against Aeneas) and 20.285 (Aeneas against Achilles); in both passages the rock is labelled as too heavy for even two men of the modern age, but easily lifted by the hero. Cf. also Turnus’ rock at Verg. A. 12.896ff., which would be lifted with great struggle by the twelve strongest men on earth living in the narrator’s time. Silius used the *topos* also at 1.489–490 *corripit ingens aggere convulso saxum*, “[he] rent the rampart and seized a huge rock” (Hannibal against Murrus). The present lines thus reinforce the earlier picture of Calenus the strongman, a savage brute capable of feats of strength no ordinary man could do (see also n.221b–224).

**premebat** Both ‘was weighing down upon’ (Calenus’ action at 227 is transferred to the stone) and ‘closed off’ (i.e. the rock blocked Marius’ mouth). The phrase probably picks up
Vergil’s *Latagum saxo ... occupat os* (A. 10.698–699), part of Aeneas’ *aristeia*, for which see n.217b–218 *oblatum metit ... agmen*.

**234–243**

sed validas saevo vires duplicante dolore

*Vergil’s* *Latagum saxo ... occupat os* (A. 10.698–699), part of Aeneas’ *aristeia*, for which see n.217b–218 *oblatum metit ... agmen*.

*Chapter 234:*

**234–237** But wild grief doubled Scipio’s powerful strength, and as he shed tears he cast his whirring spear, eager to provide the consolation longed for in battle and to show his fallen friend the death of his enemy.

The theme of a warrior avenging his friend in battle is common in epic poetry, in the case of Achilles and Patroclus spanning the last third of the *Iliad*. In many cases the avenger is a minor figure, and is struck down himself by the man who killed his friend (cf. e.g. 9.401–402, 17.451–471). When the avenger is a more important character, the one who killed the friend is slain himself, for example Hector who is killed by Achilles or Turnus by Aeneas in revenge of Pallas’ death; in the latter case, Aeneas is driven to his deed by the sight of Pallas’ girdle (12.945 *saevi monumenta doloris*), for which compare *saevum ... dolore* here. For major characters avenging minor characters in the *Punica*, cf. 2.188–263, 5.287–332, 5.410–419, 7.634–660, 10.219–231, 15.672–691.

Silius’ scene also picks up Ovid’s narration of the battle of Centaurs and Lapiths. At *Met.* 12.361ff., the Centaur Demoleon kills Crantor, the armiger of Peleus; in revenge, the hero slays Demoleon. The topical theme of avenging a friend is shared with our passage; just as Peleus presents Demoleon’ killing as *infertae* (*Met.* 12.367) to the shade of his friend, so is the death of Calenus a *solamen* for the fallen Marius. To this, we may add a number of verbal parallels. Scipio’s *validas ... vires* corresponds to the description of Peleus, who with *valido ... lacerto* (12.368) and *contentis viribus* (12.369) throws his spear at his foe, piercing (12.370 *praerupit* ~ here 239 *rupit*) his side. At the same time, *vires duplicante dolore* picks up 12.373 *dolor vires animo dabat* (of Demoleon). Scipio’s whizzing spear (235 *cornumque sonantem*) resonates the blows reverberating on the Centaur’s armour (12.375 *ictus galea clipeoque sonantes*). Peleus’ eventual victory here returns in the simile of 240–243; just as he with his spear pierces two bodies (i.e. Demoleon’s human and equine parts) in a single blow (12.377 *uno duo pectora perforat ictu*), so is Scipio’s spear compared to a Liburnian ship travelling its entire length with a single stroke of the oars (*uno... ictu*). Lastly, Calenus’ victories over Veliternus and Marius echo other phrases in the same Ovidian passage: 229 *media transegerat alvo* ~ 12.389 *mediam ferit ense sub alvum*, and 231 *tellure revulso / ... saxo* ~ 12.281 *limen tellure revulsum*. The suggestion that uncivilized Calenus is to be compared to a rough Centaur is
reinforced by *immania membra* (239) and his epithet *trux* at 220, which Silius applies at 13.590 to the Centaurs. It is a striking paradox that overly civilized Capua is represented by a man whose model is a byword for barbarity (cf. also n.225–228).

Scipio’s revenge anticipates his major role of *ultor* in books 15–17; see n.217b–218 *oblatum metit ... agmen*. The narrative of the hero’s deeds is richly stylized: we find a zeugma (235), suggestive word order in 237, a metaphor in 238 and a full-flung simile in 240–243.

**solamen ... optabile in armis** I.e. in battle, it brings solace to a dying warrior to know that his death is avenged.

**duplicante dolore** For the Vergilian reminiscence, see n.225–228.

**effudit lacrimas pariter cornumque** A zeugma; *pariter* is frequently used as a marker of this figure (cf. e.g. Verg. *A*. 5.508, 9.559, and some Ovidian examples in Anderson 1998: 28–29). In book 13, other zeugmas can be found at 175, 288–289, 387–388, 390–391, 401, 675–676 and 828.

**238–239** The spear travelled quickly, as if it cleft thin air, through the man’s breast and penetrated his huge body.

Several scholars have regarded line 238 as a short simile, taking *volucris* as a substantive (‘bird’), most notably Duff (“Like a bird cleaving the clear sky”) and von Albrecht (1964), who included this line with 240ff. in his Anhang II (a list of similes in the *Punica*) as a double simile. The subjunctive, however, suggests comparison with a counterfactual situation (“as if”; cf. 2.378, 2.387, 12.234–235, 16.394–395, 17.479); if another simile was intended, the indicative would have been used. *volucris* should therefore be taken with *hasta* (cf. e.g. 6.247–248); the point is that the spear goes through Calenus’ breast as easily as when it would traverse thin air.

**tranavit** Line 238, including its metaphor, may have been based on Enn. *Ann*. 21 *tranavit cita per teneras auras*, “it flew swiftly through the clear air”; cf. 3.681–682 [*columba* *per auras in Libyen ... tranavit*], “[the dove] flew through the sky to Libya”. For other instances where *tranare* refers to motion through air, cf. e.g. Verg. *A*. 4.245 and 10.265. Silius’ use of the verb for a concrete object (the *hasta*) traversing another concrete object (*viri pectus*) seems to be unique (in the few other instances of *tranare* applied to motion through a medium other than water or air, all cited under OLD 3a, the subject is incorporeal: Lucr. 4.601 *vox*, Cic. *N.D*. 2.25 *genere igneo*, Cic. *Arat*. 584 (338) *nox*). The marked verb anticipates the ship simile of 240–243.

**immania membra** An echo of the death of Bitias (*A*. 9.708 *conlapsa ruunt immania membra*), one of the two brothers who had foolishly opened the gates of the Trojan camp (see n.213–217a). Bitias’ death is also followed by a simile.

**240–243** A manoeuvrable Liburnian, gliding over the waves of the sea, has the same force; whenever the oars have been drawn back to the chests of the rowers and have struck the sea in unison, it flies faster than the wind and travels further than its own length with a single stroke of the oars.

**per caerula summa** An illustration of the speed of the ship (Spaltenstein); it only skims the surface of the sea. Cf. e.g. Verg. *A*. 5.819 *caeruleo per summa levit aequora curru*, “over the water’s surface lightly he flies in azure car” (of Neptunus’ chariot).
Liburnae  The *Liburna*, designed originally as a pirate ship (the Illyrian Liburnians were infamous pirates), was after its adoption by the Romans the bireme of the Imperial age (*RE* 13.1.143.62); these exceptionally fast ships won the naval battle of Actium for Octavian, who deployed them against the hulking ships of Cleopatra and Mark Antony. For the reference to the end of civil war and the parallel between Scipio and Octavian/Augustus that may be implied, see Intr. 179–255.

To my knowledge, Silius is the only poet to use a Liburnian ship as the subject of a simile; indeed, the use of contemporary objects in similes is rare. In addition, while other poets have plenty of ship similes (see Miniconi 1951: 204), the point of comparison is often distress, rather than ease and swiftness (an exception is the simile in Stat. *Silv.* 5.1.242ff., which alludes to Vespasian’s voyage from Alexandria to Rome; but that is similarly a reference to the end of another civil war). The singularity of the simile justifies the suspicion of a connection between Scipio and the Liburna that goes beyond the direct context.

**revocatae ad pectora tonsae** Possibly a reminiscence of Enn. *Ann.* 230 *poste recumbite vestraque pectora pellite tonsis*, “lean back and hit your chests with the oars”, and 231 *pone petunt: exim referunt ad pectora tonsas*, “they bend back: next they pull the oars to their chests” (cf. Fürstenau *apud* Häussler 1978: 157). Cf. also 11.489 *et simul adductis percussa ad pectora tonsis*, “and when the rowers all together brought the oars back sharply to their breasts” (Woodruff *apud* Häussler *l.c.*) with V.Fl. 1.369 *tum valida Clymenus percusso pectore tonsa*, “next Clymenus, striking his breast with the strong oar”. As Skutsch *ad* Enn. *Ann.* 230 remarks, “a certain similarity of phrasing in such contexts is inevitable”; hence the allusion to Ennius is far from certain.

**ventis fugit ocior** The entire simile is in effect an inversion of the metaphor at Verg. *A.* 10.247–248 *fugit illa per undas ocior et iaculo et ventos aequante sagitta*, “it speeds on over the wave, fleeter than javelin and wind-swift arrow”, where the velocity of Aeneas’ ship is compared to that of a spear or an arrow which matches the winds in speed; cf. also Ap.Rhod. 2.600. Winds are proverbially the measure for high velocities; cf. Otto *ventus* 5. The words *fugit ocior* often occur together in similar contexts; cf. e.g. Verg. *A.* 12.733 *fugit ocior Euro*, “swifter than the East Wind he flies” and Ov. *Met.* 1.502 *fugit ocior aura*, “she flies ... swifter than the fleeting breeze”.

**se ... praeterit** The diction almost suggests that the ship is so fast that it overhauls itself.

**quam longa est** “as long as it is”, i.e. its entire length.

**uno remorum ... ictu** For the reference to Ovid see n.234–237. The line may be inspired by Luc. 3.538 *quod semel excussis posset transcurrere tonsis*, “[as much sea] as each fleet can race across by one stroke of the oars”; for allusions to Lucan’s description of the siege of Massilia (this time to its naval battle), see Intr. 94–141.

**244–248**

Ascanium Volesus, proiectis ocius armis
quo levior peteret muros, per aperta volantem
adsequitur planta. deiectum protinus ense
ante pedes domini iacuit caput; ipse secutus
corruit ulterior procursus impete truncus.
On foot, Volesus overtook Ascanius, who was fleeing over the plains after quickly having thrown away his shield to be able to run for the walls with less burden.

The sortie has failed; the defenders are running back to the city. Silius’ use of the name of a Latin leader for the Roman attacker (cf. also 253 *Itali*) and that of a most conspicuous Trojan for his Capuan victim is significant; the siege of Capua is a replay of the Latin attack on the Trojan camp in *Aeneid* 9, which ends far less favourably for the besieged than its Vergilian counterpart.

**Ascanium** Besides being the name of Aeneas’ son, Ascanius was also the name of various other Trojans, amongst whom were a son of Priam (Apollod. 3.12.5.9, Hyg. *Fab.* 90.2) and a leader of a Phrygian band (Hom. *Il.* 2.862, 13.792); another Ascanius is mentioned at Prop. *El.* 1.20.4 and 1.20.16. Since, like Rome, Capua boasted a Trojan as its founder, Silius’ use of a Trojan name is natural; it is the status of its Vergilian bearer (Aeneas’ son) which makes it highly significant (see n.246b–248).

**Volesus** An old Italian name and common in Rome (*RE* 9A.1.906.58); the gens Valeria claimed the Sabine Volesus (also spelled as Volusus) as its founder and used the name as a cognomen (cf. 2.8). A Latin leader with this name figures at Verg. *A.* 11.463.

**proiectis ... armis** I.e. the shield; cf. 11.524 *proiectis degerent armis*, of the fleeing Varro. Despite its proximity to the name *Volesus*, the ablative absolute goes with Ascanium ... *per aperta volantem*; throwing away the shield is a sign of cowardice. The Capuan is not only a coward, but also a weakling, who is not able to reach the safety of the walls quickly enough.

At Verg. *A.* 9.577 *proiecto tegmine demens*, a Rutulian is killed after he has thrown away his shield to cover a wound with his hand.

**ocius** The adverb often has no comparative force, but simply means ‘quickly’; cf. e.g. 298 *subici iubet ocius ignes*, 427–428 *cavare refossam ocius urget humum*, Verg. *A.* 4.294–295 *ocius omnes imperio laeti parent*, 8.555 Fama volat ... *ocius ire equites Tyrrheni ad litora regis* with Servius (*ad loc.*). *ocius positivus antiquus est*, id est ‘celeriter’; nec enim *potest esse comparativus*, ubi nulla est comparatio; see *TLL* 9.2.414.80ff.

**246b–248** The head, blown forward by the sword, has fallen before the feet of its owner; the trunk itself by the speed of its career stumbles on and collapses further away.

Lines 246–247 closely imitate Verg. *A.* 9.770–771 *huic uno deiectum comminus ictu / cum galea longe iacuit caput*, “severed by a single blow at close quarters, his head with its helmet lay far away” (Spaltenstein); cf. also the line ending *comminus ictu* with *protinus ense* here. There are also echoes of another decapitation scene in *Aeneid* 9, viz. 9.322–323 *tum caput ipsi aufert domino truncum relinquit sanguine singultantem*, “then [he] lops off the head of their lord himself, and leaves the trunk spurting blood”; for *domino*, which Vergil uses in its normal sense (master over servants) and Silius for ‘owner’, i.e. of body parts, see below. In Vergil’s scenes (as in its model at Hom. *Il.* 20.481–483) the head flies away while the trunk remains. Silius has inverted the image; here the head flies down (*deiectum*) and lies on the ground before Ascanius’ feet (*iacuit*) whereas his body keeps moving and falls only later (*corruit ulterior*). These details may be based upon two other beheadings in the *Iliad*: i) at *Il.* 13.202–205 the head of Imbrios is cut off and thrown towards the Trojans, landing right before Hector’s feet; ii) at *Il.* 11.145–147 Agamemnon decapitates Hippolochus and sends his trunk rolling through the ranks (cf. also Verg. *A.* 10.555–556 *truncumque tepentem / provolvens*).
The decapitation also has symbolical value. The Punic war is fought for the hegemony of the world, to determine which nation would be the terrarum ... caput (1.8). The similar aim of Capua’s leader Virrius is to usurp the (Trojan) realm of Rome (266). Just as the fall of Troy is symbolized by the headless trunk of Priam, so are the aspirations of Capuan ‘new Troy’, represented by the suggestive name Ascanius, nipped in the bud. Unlike Priam’s corpse, however, which lies on the shore (A. 2.557 iacet ingens litore truncus), Ascanius’ headless trunk stumbles on. In this respect Ascanius also represents his city. Cowan (2007: 23) compares Livy’s description of Capua at the end of the Hannibalic war as urbs truncus (Liv. 31.29.11), a city devoid of citizens and leadership. The Capuan magistrates either committed suicide or were beheaded, like Ascanius (cf. 367–368); significantly, its senate will be described as perfidiae ductorque caputque at 261. For the recurrent theme of decapitation, see n.861–862a.

domini This use of dominus, as ‘owner’ of body parts, is Ovidian; cf. e.g. Met. 6.560 moriens dominae vestigia quarerit, “with its last dying movement it seeks its mistress’s feet” (of the tongue of Philomela which had been cut out and lay at her feet). TLL 5.1.1919.15ff. cites 16 instances of this use of dominus (8 Ovidian); for domina (TLL 5.1.1936.48ff.) almost all are Ovid’s.

impete See n.188–190 impete.

249–255
nec spes obsessis ultra reserata tueri moenia. convertunt gressus recipique petentes (infandum) excludunt socios, dum cardine verso obnixi torment obices, munimina sera. acrius hoc instant Itali clausosque fatigant. et ni caeca sinu terras nox conderet atro, perfractae rapido patuissent milite portae. 250

249–252 The besieged can no longer hope to defend the unbarred walls. They turn back and shut out (horrible!) their comrades, who beg to be admitted, by turning the hinge and rotating the bolts with an effort, a late protection.

The gates need to be closed now that the sortie has failed. Silius again picks up Vergil’s narrative of the foolish enterprise of Pandarus and Bitias. After the latter’s death (cf. n.238–239 immania membra), Pandarus shuts the gates on his own; cf. 9.724–726 portam vi magna converso cardine torquet obnixus latis umeris, multosque suorum moenibus exclusos duro in certamine linquit, “With mighty effort [he] pushes with his broad shoulders and swings the gate round on its hinge, leaving many a comrade shut outside the walls in the cruel fray” (cf. also Stat. Theb. 10.509ff., which shares obnixus umeris, torserunt and exclusere suos with Vergil’s passage, but has no exclusive verbal parallels with Silius’ lines). Another parallel is the Trojans’ own attack on the city of Latinus, where a similar scene occurs: Verg. A. 11.883 pars claudere portas / nec sociis aperire viam nec moenibus audent / accipere orantes oriturque miserrima caedes, “Some close the gates, and dare not open a way to their friends, nor receive them inside the walls, implore as they may; and slaughter most pitiful ensues”; accipere orantes corresponds to recipi petentes, and the authorial comment miserrima caedes to infandum. The exclusion of fellow
defenders to prevent the enemy’s entrance is topical in historiography; see Rossi 2004: 112–115. Silius’ scene may have originated in Livy’s remark magna vis tamen hostium ante portam est caesa, ceteri trepidi in urbem compulsi (26.6.5), “Nevertheless a great number of the enemy were slain before the gate, and the rest driven in disorder into the city”, of a failed sortie by the Capuans earlier in the war (see n.213–217a).

For the clear allusion in 249 nec spec obsessis and 253 instant Itali to the hopeless situation for the Trojans in Aeneid 10, see n.99–103 turribus altis.

dum The action in the main clause (excludunt) is the result of the dum-clause; see for this use OLD dum 4a.

munimina sera I.e. the Capuans should have trusted in their defences earlier, instead of mounting an attack. There is likely a pun on sēra (late) / sēra (bar) (Cowan 2007: 24 n.56).

253 All the more fiercely do the Romans attack and harass the besieged.

acrius hoc Presumably another echo of Aeneid 9, transposed from Trojan defenders to Roman attackers; cf. A. 9.743 acrius hoc Teucri, as they band together to attack the intruder Turnus. The latter is saved by plunging into the Tiber, the Capuans by nightfall.

The anaphoric pronoun hoc is probably (in conjunction with the comparative) ‘all the more...’ (cf. eo + comp.), as indeed it is in Verg. G. 2.248 hoc acrius, where it is correlative to quo magis earlier in the line. It is an ablativus causae: the Romans press on harder, because they sense the distress of the defenders. Cf. also (always as a line opening) V.Fl. 2.457, Sil. 5.105, 5.217, 5.558, 9.743, 15.711 and 16.494.

Itali The word suggests that the Romans represent the Italian peoples in Vergil attacking the Trojan camp, which is Capua here. Still, its use is striking, since the inhabitants of Capua were no less Italian; Silius could also have used, for instance, Rutuli to stress the allusion (cf. the model A. 10.118 Rutuli ... instant). The contrastive Itali might indicate that the Capuans, having allied themselves with Hannibal, were no longer part of the Italian (i.e. Roman) cause; see also Intr. 179–255.

254–255 And if dark night had not covered the earth with her black cloak, the gates would have been opened, broken down by the swift soldiers.

The counterfactual points to an allusion to A. 9.757–759, where Turnus, having invaded the Trojan camp, could have ended the war if he had thought of opening the gates to his men: et si continuo victorem ea cura subisset, rumpere claustra manu sociosque immittere portis, ultimus ille dies bello gentique fuisset.

“and, if at once the victor had taken thought to burst the bars by force and let in his comrades at the gates, that day would have been the last for the war and the nation.”

Note that et si corresponds to et ni here, and rumpere claustra to perfractae ... portae. The counterfactual also draws attention to the different situation; Turnus’ mistake influenced the outcome of the war, whereas for Capua nightfall is a mere stay of execution. For the same intertext, see also n.173–178.

Line 254 resembles Sil. 12.613 terras caeco nox condit amictu, “earth was hidden by the black robe of night”, of the storm which prevents Hannibal from attacking Rome. The echo of the siege in book 12 suggests once more that Capua is the surrogate of Rome.
The assault of Capua is concluded in 255 by a so-called golden line (in which the two adjectives and two substantives are divided by the verb), further adorned by alliteration of P. The golden line, often accompanied by other stylistic features, commonly marks the closure of a scene or episode; cf. Wilkinson 1963: 216 and Smolenaars ad Stat. Theb. 7.63.

nox Nightfall is often explicitly mentioned as marking the end of battle, from Homer on. Although it is likely that in ancient times fighting actually was restricted to daytime, nightfall marking the end of battle was as much a topos in historiography as in epic, and was frequently combined with a counterfactual; cf. e.g. Liv. 7.33.15 nec superfluisset multi, ni nox victoriam magis quam proelium diremisset, “nor would many have survived, if night had not ended what was now a victory rather than a battle” with Bömer ad loc., 23.18.7; in epic, cf. e.g. Verg. A. 11.912–914 continuoque ineant pugnas et proelia temptent, ni roseus fessos iam gurgite Phoebus Hibero tingat equos, “And they would enter the fray at once and try the issue of battle, but ruddy Phoebus already bathes his weary team in the Iberian flood”. The counterfactual is a special form of praeteritio; the narrator alludes to the likely result of the battle situation, while saying that it did not happen.

atro The adjective refers of course to the darkness of the night, but might also carry more sinister overtones, black being the colour of death. The phrase would anticipate the troubles of Capua during the night, as described in 256ff.

rapido milite Ablative of agent with perfractae. Although the phrase refers to persons, the preposition a is omitted, since miles refers to the soldiers as an impersonal collective, not as individuals (see n.36–38a miles). Cf. the same use at 683 socio desertos milite.
256–298 The last night of Capua

The fighting has ended with nightfall: the Romans retire to their camp. The Capuans realize they have gained only a night’s respite. In an address to the senate, Virrius states that no relief is to be expected from Hannibal and proposes to commit suicide en masse during a last grand banquet, since he prefers a voluntary death to slavery or execution. Meanwhile the common people are harassed by feelings of guilt for having broken their alliance with Rome. The goddess Fides, the embodiment of loyalty, haunts them like a Fury and makes their last night a miserable one. Virrius and his senatorial friends embrace each other on their funerary pyre.

According to Livy, Capua capitulated not because of imminent Roman victory, but because there was no hope of being relieved (see Intr. 94–141 fn.1). Virrius’ speech at 26.13 is similar to his words here at 264–275, although the emphasis is different. In Livy, Virrius reacts to his colleagues’ intention of submitting to Rome by reminding them of the severity of their own crimes and of the Roman perseverance in besieging Capua; no mercy can be expected.¹ In Silius’ rendering, the recital of crimes is transformed into a recital of Virrius’ achievements. The historiographer provides no specific temporal setting for the suicide, since it is irrelevant.² In the Punic, however, the nocturnal setting is important for the development of the narrative; because of the military supremacy of the Romans, this will be the last night of freedom for the inhabitants of Capua, which lends the situation a degree of urgency not found in Livy.³ In addition, the darkness of the night symbolizes the misery inside the walls.

Besides historiography, three major intertextual models stand out: i) the internal intertext of the fall of Saguntum (2.457–707); ii) the death of Dido (the end of Aeneid 4); iii) the fury of Venus against the Lemnians (V.Fl. 2.98ff.). In addition, Virrius is presented as a Capuan counterpart to Roman Varro. I will discuss each of these models in detail below.

The Saguntine suicides

Silius’ narration of the siege of Capua shares many characteristics with the earlier siege of Saguntum in books 1–2. Towards the end (2.457ff.), the similarities with Capua are most conspicuous. When the Saguntines realized that they could not hope for aid from Rome, they gave in to despair. The goddess Fides, in whose name the Saguntines suffered, strengthened their resolve so that they would die in her defence (i.e. remaining loyal to Rome). In response, Juno sent the Fury Tisiphone to madden the defenders of Saguntum and incite them to mass suicide. A pyre was made of their valuables in the middle of the city, and the citizens started killing themselves and each other. After their death, the Carthaginians entered the city unopposed. The second book ends with a eulogy of the Saguntines and the foretelling of Hannibal’s end.

¹ A few correspondences: 267 misi ~ Liv. 26.13.6 ad oppugnandam Romam hinc eum miserimus; 265 si dexter ... deus et Fortuna fuisse ~ 26.13.14 si data fortuna esset; ... aliter dis immortalibus est visum; 270–272 dum copia noctis ... libertas ~ 26.13.14 dum liber, dum mei potens sum; 271–272 cui cordi ... petat ille meas mensasque dapesque ~ 26.13.17 quibus vestrum ... in animo est, iis apud me hodie epulae instructae parataeque sunt.
² At Liv. 26.13.17, Virrius merely speaks of hodie; it remains unclear whether the banquet and subsequent suicide happened during the same day or during the night, as in Silius’ version.
³ Cf. Spaltenstein ad 13.270.
Many critics have noted the correspondences between the two suicide scenes, while at the same time also pointing to the marked contrasts.⁴ The two passages counterbalance each other; several elements from book 2 return here, but have been transformed through inversion; to borrow an image from the visual world, this form of intratextuality is much like a seal and its impression: the latter mirrors the image of the former but shows impressions where the seal has protrusions. Some of the more obvious parallels are that i) both groups turn to suicide when it is clear that their great ally (Rome / Carthage) will not come to their aid; ii) the goddess Fides and a Fury play a role in the suicide; iii) there is a pyre to receive the suicides.⁵ But even in these three parallels, the contrasts stand out: i) Saguntum shares with Rome its commitment to fides, while Capua, like Carthage, ‘adheres’ to perfidia; ii) a Fury perverts Fides’ inspiration at Saguntum, whereas at Capua Fides acts as Fury herself (see n.291b–295); iii) in Saguntum, a communal pyre is raised; Virrius’ pyre is for private use. As these few examples suggest, it is best to read the two passages together, and to be on the look-out not merely for correspondences, but also for marked differences.⁶

One of the key interpretative issues in both passages is the moral evaluation of the suicide. Firstly, Virrius’ exhortation to his colleagues to end their lives as a means to preserve libertas is evocative of Capuan resistance to Roman tyrannical oppression.⁷ Some compare the famous suicides under the imperial regime; while the decadent banquet which the Capuans enjoy is hardly compatible with the typical Stoic suicide, it might be compared to that of Petronius, as “a lower-case epicurean riposte ... to the self-aggrandising Stoic gesture of a Cato, a Seneca or, perhaps, a Saguntine”.⁸ The passage in which Taurea falls on his sword to deny the Romans the opportunity of executing him has been read in the same vein.⁹ Secondly, a number of critics consider the divine interventions, which should be instrumental in decoding the moral message, to have instead problematized matters. Through the madness induced by Tisiphone, Fides’ inspirational work in Saguntum came to naught; the scene in which the Saguntines kill each other recalls Lucan and thus suggests the madness of civil war.¹⁰ Some even maintain that Fury and Fides essentially have the same role, “to incite the Saguntines to destruction”, and that “the citizens’ embodiment of fides and pietas is portrayed as being morally useless and politically calamitous”.¹¹ While the first point would draw the Romans on a level with the Carthaginians as morally dubious

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⁵ Another parallel is that the genius has fled the city (2.584–591 the snake that may represent Zacynthus; 13.130–134 the hind of Capua); see Intr. 94–141.
⁶ Another such contrast is the speed with which both cities are taken; Hannibal is able to take Saguntum only after several months, but the fall of Capua is a matter of days. Cf. Pomeroy 1990: 127 and An. 94–141.
⁸ Cowan 2007: 28 in reply to Stärk 1995: 224. As Cowan wittily comments, “the Capuan suicide is a very Capuan suicide”; its decadent end (yet another contrast with Saguntum, whose defenders are starving; cf. 2.461–474) is emblematic of its flaw of luxus, and underscores the ring composition with book 11, in which the Carthaginians were the victims of Capua’s decadent banquets. For the philosophical ring of Virrius’ proposal, cf. also Kißel 1979: 59–60, Burck 1984: 44; for the parallel with 1st c. Rome, see McGuire 1997: 224 and 226.
¹⁰ McGuire 1989: 40, Dominik 2003: 487–488; both also point out that it is Tisiphone, rather than Fides, who conducts the Saguntines to the underworld, despite Fides’ promise at 2.510 ipsaque laudatas ad manes proseguat umbras, “and I myself will follow their glorious spirits to the nether world”.
¹¹ Dominik 2006: 118 and 114, respectively.
oppressors, the second even casts doubt on the entire value system in the *Punica; fides* and *perfidia* lead to the same end.

Such a radical take does not agree with other elements in the text, however. In book 2, Fides’ purpose was that the Saguntines would keep fighting against Hannibal and not capitulate.12 Tisiphone (and Juno who sent her) aim to pervert this purpose by filling them with madness, which leads to parricide. When the poet sings the Saguntines’ glory (2.613 *infelix gloria*),13 it is important to remember that it was the Fury who made them kill themselves; the glory lies not so much in the way in which they kill themselves, but in their willingness to follow Fides to the bitter end and their unbowed opposition to Hannibal.14 The situation in Capua is exactly the reverse. The decision to commit suicide is made without the influence of a Fury. Virrius’ speech presents the suicide as a noble thing (a means to retain *libertas*), but Fides’ speech serves as a counter (see An. 256–298) and unmasks it for what it is: the Capuans seek to evade due punishment for their crime of perfidy.15 Just so does Fulvius respond to Taurea when he has killed himself that he should have sought death in battle instead—that is, the fate which Fides envisaged for her Saguntines.16 Both at Saguntum and Capua, the suicide shifts from something noble to a form of punishment;17 the death of the Saguntines remains noble in essence, however, while that of the Capuans has always been a punishment, despite Virrius’ self-ennobling efforts. The antithesis results in the cooperation (or coalescence) of Fides and Fury at Capua.

The antithesis of Saguntum and Capua, of *fides* and *perfidia*, has a greater significance in the epic as a whole. Both cities represent their great ally: Rome and Carthage, respectively. The political alliance between Saguntum and Rome is supported by ethnic bonds and shared ideology.18 As for the first, the Saguntines claimed (partial) descent from Latin Ardea; like the Romans, they were in part of Rutulian origin.19 The close bond between the two cities is presented as a blood-tie; indeed, the Saguntines view themselves as part of the body that is Rome.20 Secondly, the Saguntines share their reverence of Fides

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12 Cf. 2.508–509, 2.518.
13 The oxymoron conveys the paradox inherent in the perverted suicide; cf. also 2.632 *pietate sinistra* and 2.650 *laudandaque monstra*.
14 Cf. Vessey 1974b: 34 “On the one hand, [Silius] had to enhance and dignify this culminating moment, in which the Saguntines achieved the pinnacle of glory. On the other he is faced with the fact that the act of communal destruction necessitated events which would normally be regarded as criminal and impious...”, a dilemma which is solved by having Tisiphone guide the violence. Cf. also Agri 2010: 150 “It is probable that Silius uses the Fury as a way to decriminalise the Saguntines’ mad behaviour, which would conveniently allow him to praise their *pietas* later on without contradicting himself”.
16 13.379–380 *tibi, si rebare pudendum iusta pati, licuit pugnanti occumbere letum*. The execution scene at 367ff. also emphasizes another difference with Saguntum; the Saguntines had all committed suicide (Hannibal invades an empty city), whereas not all Capuans had had the heart to do so: 13.303–304 *quis leto avertere poenas defuerant animi*, “those who had not had the courage to avoid punishment through death”, a fittingly paradoxical phrasing.
17 Cf. 2.651 *Fidei poenas*; the Capuans are instead punished for *perfidia* (261); cf. 295 *poenas*.
19 Cf. 1.291–293, 1.658, 1.665–669 and the various occurrences of *Rutulus* for the Saguntines. Cf. also the reference to Italy as the *antiqua ... domo* of Saguntum (1.572).
20 1.608 *consanguineae ... Romae*; 1.655 *consanguineam dextram*; 1.670 *decisa atque avulsa a corpore membra*, “a limb cut off and torn from the body”.

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with the Romans. A further connection between Saguntum and Rome lies in the journey of Hercules, who on his return from Geryones founded Saguntum in honour of his companion Zacynthus and later established the Ara Maxima at the future site of Rome; Vessey interprets the relation again in terms of fides: “the hero’s foundation in Saguntum was ... an episode in his journey to Rome. Zacynthus, his comes, was bound to him by fides, just as Saguntum was to Rome”. The myth also suggests the other significance of Saguntum, namely as the first step on Hannibal’s journey towards Rome. The extent of the identification between Saguntum and Rome becomes clear when Hannibal’s siege of the former is presented as a strike against the latter. For Hannibal, the fall of Saguntum should anticipate the fall of Rome; it turns out, however, that Saguntum is all that he will get. Saguntum is his, and the reader’s, substitute for Rome.

A very similar argument can be made for the relation between Capua and Carthage. Kinship and ‘ideology’ coincide in Capua’s title of altera Carthago with its different connotations in each of the two passages in which it occurs: Hannibal likened Capua to Carthage as his second patria (11.424–425), while Fulvius did so for its perfidy and threat to Rome (13.99–100). Capua’s defection from Rome is phrased in the same terms as Hannibal’s assault on Saguntum, namely as the breaking of pacts. But Capua is not merely as perfidious as Carthage; it shares also other traits with the African city, such as anger (ira), madness (furor), wickedness (impietas) and treachery (fraus). The identification of Capuans with Carthaginians even extends to their fighting techniques, which invite comparison with Punic tactics. Capua, like Saguntum, represents its ally; the siege of Capua is the first step of the Roman campaign towards Carthage. Capua’s fall and the punishment of its crimes anticipate Carthage’s similar fate, and also act as

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21 Saguntum: 1.598 Fidei domus inclita, 2.487 tuae = Fidei! Sagunti, 2.654 urbs habitata diu Fidei; Rome: 1.634 sacrata gens clara fide. The relation between the city is expressed in terms of fides: 1.332–333 dignam Ausonia mortem putat esse Sagunto servata cecidisse fide, “they think it a death worthy of Italy, for Saguntum to fall with her loyalty preserved”, and 2.436 Regulus ... fidei dat magna exemplo Sagunto, “Regulus provides to Saguntum a great example of loyalty”.


23 1.343–344, 1.346, 1.389 hac iter est ... vobis ad moenia Romae (“by this path must ye march to the walls of Rome”), 1.479, 1.485–487, 1.638–652, 2.31–32.


26 In addition Capua functions as surrogate for Rome, in that it falls when Rome does not. For this idea, see Intr. 94–141 and 142–178, and nn.184b–185 and 254–255.

27 Hannibal: 1.268 rumpere foedera certus and passim (see n.99–103); Capua: 13.99 post foedera rupta, 13.283 foedera ... ne ... rumpite, 13.286–287 frangere ... pacta.

28 A small selection: Carthage is ferox (1.2) and fraudum domus (6.479); Hannibal is clothed with iras by Juno (1.38) and with rabies by his father’s furor (1.70–71); a similar furor leads the Capuans to join Carthage (11.29; 13.304), described as impia dementis vulgi ... consulta (11.68); two exemplary Capuans are typified by mad rashness (Virrius: 11.66 nullique furore secundus; 13.214–215 turbidus ... amens) and violent fury (Taurea: 13.147 violenter; 13.162 ira; 13.374–375 minaci obtutu ... furiale renidens).

29 See n.144–145 (Taurea compared to African javelin throwers) and Intr. 179–255 (the Capuan triplets as Hannibal / Autololes; Calenus as a barbarian).

30 This is supported by other connections between books 13 and 17, for which see Intr. 1–29 and 30–93. Cf. also Pomeroy 1990: 127 (with a Hannibal-centric viewpoint) “Capua is treated as the obverse of loyal Saguntum, her fall signifying the decline in Hannibal’s fortunes just as the destruction of Saguntum began his attack on Rome”.

substitute for it, albeit not in the same way as Saguntum was merely a surrogate for Hannibal’s failed siege of Rome. Capua acts as surrogate city on the narrative level; it both adumbrates and replaces the capitulation of Carthage, which is told in a mere seven words (17.618–619).  

**The suicide of Dido and the fall of Carthage**

The identification of Capua with Carthage, and the anticipation of the latter’s end in the fall of the former, also shows in the prominent allusions to perhaps the most famous suicide in Latin poetry, the death of Dido. While scholars have identified *Aeneid* 4 as an intertext for the end of *Punica* 2, its prominence in the Capuan passage has largely escaped critical attention. The parallel between the Carthaginian queen and the city of Capua was already anticipated in the introduction of the white hind (115ff.) and the detail of an arrow piercing the heart of the city (184–185) which both interact with Vergil’s simile for Dido as a deer shot by a Cretan shaft. In the present passage the allusion to Dido’s suicide is quite pronounced. Her frenzy and restlessness after Aeneas had announced his departure here resonates in the despair of the besieged city of Capua which, like Dido, prays for an end to its misery. Virrius’ proposal to commit suicide corresponds to the next step in Vergil’s narrative; Dido’s tragic last speech finds a rational and resigned counterpart in the words of Virrius. Like Dido, the Capuan leader has a pyre erected in the centre of his house, which he ascends while embracing his friends, just as the dying Dido was embraced by her sister Anna on her pyre. The hidden flame of love which consumed the queen’s marrow (*A. 4.66 est mollis flamma medullas*) is here transformed into the poison which Virrius allows to penetrate his body (296 *medullas*).

Now that the presence of the allusion has been established, it becomes easier to discern the direction of Silius’ development of Vergil’s themes. Dido herself found that she deserved to die for her faithlessness to the memory of her deceased husband Sychaeus (Verg. *A. 4.552 non servata fides cineri promissa Sychaeo*), which is politicized by Silius’ *Fides* in Capua’s faithlessness to Rome (285 *castam servate fidem*); the very word *castam*, along with *violata* (291), plays on the metaphor of political loyalty as marital chastity.

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32 Cf. Burck 1984: 52 n.79.  
33 Cf. Dominik 2003: 491, who sees Aeneas’ desertion of Dido return in Rome’s abandonment of Saguntum (“Similarly, the Saguntines misplace their trust in the descendants of Aeneas, are abandoned, and are left with no alternative but to commit suicide”) and Agri 2010: 149, with a comparison of Dido and Tiburna (a prominent Saguntine woman and widow of Murrus, who had been killed by Hannibal at 1.475–517). Other parallels include the madness which prompted the Saguntine defenders to kill themselves (cf. Verg. *A. 4.474–475 conceptit furiis ... decrevitque morti*) and the pyre that is constructed of their valuables (2.599–608), reminding of Dido’s pyre of her keepsakes of Aeneas.  
34 A noteworthy exception is Cowan 2007: 28.  
35 See n.184b–185.  
36 See nn.256 *sed non* and 257–260 *exterrita ... tormentis finem metatmque laboribus orat*.  
37 See n.262–263 *pulsis vivendi e pectore curis* and n.264–269 for a full comparison of the two speeches.  
38 See nn.278–279 and 296–298 *adscenditque pyram atque amplexibus haeret*.  
39 Cf. Cowan 2007: 28 n.187. Virrius’ poison is typified as *venenis*, with a possible etymological play on *Venus*. Dido’s inflammation during the banquet with Aeneas is picked up by Silius in book 11, where Hannibal and his men fall victim to Venus and *luxus* in Capua.  
40 See n.284–286a *castam ... fidem*. This point is also the main contrast between Dido and the Saguntines, who died exactly *because* they maintained loyalty (1.333 *servata cecidisse fide*). This contrast becomes apparent in the
While in Vergil this judgment is Dido’s own and her suicide a personal expression of guilt, for which she is pitied by Juno, in the *Punica* the Capuans’ guilt is established by divine authority; Dido’s personal *furor* is here personified in an avenging Fury. The queen died undeservedly, before her time and not according to *fatum* (*A. 4.696–697*), while Virrius rather tries to escape due punishment in an attempt to ‘disarm the *fata*’ (275). Another clear difference is the method of suicide. Dido falls on the sword; Virrius, on the other hand, uses poison. In this, Silius adumbrates the fate of another famous Carthaginian: Hannibal. The general’s suicide by poison is foretold both at the end of book 2 (when the narrator glorifies the Saguntines) and at the end of book 13 by the Sibyl.

The connection between Virrius and Hannibal is the key to interpreting the allusion to Dido’s suicide. Following Vergil, Silius presents Hannibal as the *ultor* of Dido, who is to seek revenge on the descendants of Aeneas. Yet through Hannibal’s unjust persecution of this revenge, through his breaking pacts, the sympathy we might feel for Dido is not transferred to her *ultor*. Instead, his misdeeds cause Fides to promise a different, divinely sanctioned type of vengeance, whose ultimate champion will be Scipio. The repetition of Dido’s suicide by the Capuans indicates that her curse, despite having been effective for over twelve books, ultimately fails and backfires. Her vindicator will suffer defeat and die, like her, by his own hand, yet not by the honourable sword but by poison. On the narrative level, Virrius may be seen as the substitute for Hannibal (whose death falls outside of the temporal scope of the epic), just as much as Capua’s fate prefigures that of Carthage; the allusion to Dido’s death anticipates the fall of her city, while the subtle alterations of Vergilian elements suggest Silius’ transformation of Hannibal from rightful avenger to punishable villain.

**Furious vengeance: Valerius’ Venus and Silius’ Fides**

After her speech, Fides assumes the role of a Fury to torment the Capuans. In this and other respects, Silius’ narrative of Capua’s last night bears close resemblance to the episode of Valerius Flaccus’ *Argonautica* 2 in which the women of Lemnos kill their husbands. The actions of the Lemnians are instigated by Venus, who is angered by the citizens’ negligence of her cult and therefore similarly turns into a Fury-like being (*V.Fl. 2.101–106*). The Lemnian women seek to punish their husbands for their infidelity, a parallel with Capua’s
politicized faithlessness to Rome.\footnote{More precisely, the men were “enslaved by delicate living and shameful lust” (V.Fl. 2.131 luxurique cupidine captos), an echo of Aeneas’ luxurious entrapment at Dido’s palace (Verg. A. 4.193–194) and a parallel for the Capuans’ decadent lifestyle. Silius’ other intertext thus also reminds of Aeneid 4.} Certain verbal echoes underline the correspondences between the two passages. The women headed to their homes for a banquet, such as the one Virrius invites his fellow senators for (V.Fl. 2.190 iamque domos mensasque petunt; cf. here 272 petat ille meas mensasque dapesque). The banquet is a scene for mass destruction; Valerius compares the women reclining with their husband for dinner to Tisiphone in Hell reclining next to Phlegyas and Theseus (V.Fl. 2.193–194 accubat ... Tisiphone), similar to Fides/Erinyes here (293 accumbit). Valerius’ Fury tastes foul food and drinks (2.194 saevasque dapes et poca libat, “[Tisiphone] tastes the ghastly meats and wine”), while Silius’ furibund Fides serves the drinks herself (294–295 spumantia poca tabo porrigit). Valerius’ Lemnos is a fitting parallel for a city destroying itself at the behest of a spurned goddess for the crime of faithlessness. Because of the introduction of furo (madness), the narrative highlights not Virrius’ conception of the suicide as a noble prosecution of the principle of libertas but rather its self-destructive aspects.

\textit{Varro–Virrius: instruments of doom}

Thus far, we have seen that Capua’s function as counterpart to Saguntum and substitute for Carthage and Hannibal reflects the turn of the tide of war and anticipates the end; a similar significance should be attached to the prominence of the figure of Virrius. In many ways, Silius has cast his role for the Capuans as comparable to that of Varro for Rome.\footnote{The auditive similarity of Varro–Virrius may play a role.} Both politicians were of lowly origin, but skilled in speaking;\footnote{Varro: 8.246–248 sine luce genus surdumque parentum nomen, at immodice vibrabat in ore canoro lingua procax; Virrius: 11.65–66 praecellens Virrius ore, sed genus obscurum nullique furore secundus.} both are powerful demagogues, but worthless in war.\footnote{Varro: 8.259–261 debilis arte beligera Martemque rudis versare nec ullo spectatus ferro; Virrius: 13.214 levis bello sed turbidus ausi. Compare also Varro’s rash departure from the gates of Rome towards Cannae (8.278ff.) with Virrius’ reckless sortie from the gates of Capua (13.216–217).} Each of them represented the misguided views of the populace, which proved destructive to the nation; the narrator holds the people responsible.\footnote{Cf. 8.255 suffragia caeca, ‘blind voters’, and 11.68–69 impia dementi vulgi ... consulta, ‘the outrageous proposals of a brainsick mob’.} Both Varro and Virrius aided Hannibal, the first with his extreme aggression,\footnote{At 8.332–333, Aemilius Paulus describes his colleague as Heaven’s gift to the Carthaginians.} the second by orchestrating Capua’s defection and show of friendliness towards the Carthaginians; in both cases, the move was fatal to their nation. Silius’ Varro, with his antipathy towards his consular colleague Paulus and eagerness to rush the nation towards its doom, evokes civil strife.\footnote{McGuire 1997: 126–127, Dominik 2003: 492–493 and 2006: 121, Ariemma 2010: 252, who also point to the echoes of Lucan’s \textit{Bellum Civile} in the Cannae episode.} The presence of a Varro-like figure on the enemy’s side suggests that the roles are now reversed and that the course of war has swung in Rome’s favour.
Analysis of the presentation of 256–298

The opening line of the passage (256) serves also as an abstract of what follows; unlike the Romans, the inhabitants of Capua were not to enjoy their rest. The move from Romans to Capuans is clearly marked by hinc (257) ... at Capua (258); the use of hinc (“on this side”) confirms our findings in the preceding passages, namely that the narrator presented events from a Roman viewpoint. The particle at marks both the shift of “camera view” and the unexpectedness of the activity in Capua at a time normally reserved for sleep, in marked contrast with the unperturbed rest in the Roman camp.56

The passage as a whole may be roughly divided into four parts: i) the general situation in Capua (258–261); ii) Virrius’ speech and return home (262–278); iii) Fides’ haunting of the Capuans (279–295); iv) Virrius’ suicide (296–298). The scene derives much of its strength from the structure. The narrator alternates between the frantic emotions of the people in the first and third parts and Virrius’ aloofness in the second and fourth sections. The two central sections (which are equal in length) play against each other; Fides’ speech colours Virrius’ self-ennobling words, and her actions undermine the tranquil preparations for death he promised in 273–275.57 There is also an alternation in mode of narration; the first and third sections are descriptive in nature, whereas the other two are narratives, with a chronological succession of events. Note also that the four sections do not just present an alternation between senate (261 senatus) and people (279 vulgus); each part represents a distinctive step in the narrative (panic → resolve to commit suicide → preparations are tainted by Fides → the suicide itself). The line between frantic people and stoic (?) senate becomes blurred toward the end.58

The first, short section juxtaposes the grief and terror of Capua, represented by the matres and patres, with the hesitance of its senate. The nouns at the end of lines 258, 259 and 261 structure the narrator’s thematic progress through the groups in Capua: the wailing of the matrum, the groans of the patrum, the muttering of the senatus. The last group stands alone, counterbalancing the rest of the populace; Capua orat (260), but the senate mussat (261). The two present tenses are descriptive, presenting a situation rather than consecutive actions.

The mention of the senate leads to the prominent figure Virrius; his name at the beginning of 262 asyndetically contrasts with senatus which closes the previous line. With docet, the narrator gives the impression of another descriptive sentence, but then proceeds to give the last part of Virrius’ words in direct speech.59 This speech is divisible into two parts; in the first (characterized by first person perfects) Virrius dwells on his achievements, in the second he extends his offer of joint suicide. Exactly in the middle, hactenus est vixisse satis (270) both concludes the summary of his life and anticipates the proposal for suicide. The entire speech is adorned with alliterative phrases.60 After its conclusion, the

55 For sed as indicator of a shift to another topic, see An. 517–614 with fn.38.
56 See Intr. 179–255 on 213 with fn.36; cf. also the parallels given in n.256 sed non.
57 The interplay may be emphasized by the use of the same syntactic structure in the middle part of the speech: Virrius’ cui cordi ... petat ille (271–272) is picked up by Fides’ qui ... gaudebit ... non illi ... manebit (286–288).
58 See n.296–298 interea.
59 Lines 262–263 are marked by the alliteration of alternating V’s and P’s.
60 264–265 speravi sceptra ... sub ... si; pepigi ... Poenis; 265 dexter ... deus; Fortuna fuisset; 266–267 Capuam Iliaci ... Quirini qui quaterent; migrarent ... muros ... moenia misi; 269 nostro ... nomine; 270–271 copia .. cui cordi comes; 272–274 meas mensasque ... mentem ... membra ... morsu medicamina.
narrative pace picks up with a short series of consecutive events (ait ... repetit ... exstruitur), of which the last is more descriptive in nature, describing a process that is not yet finished (cf. 277 consurgens) when the narrator turns to the plight of the vulgus.

Like the first section, lines 279ff. are descriptive rather than narrative; the verbs cessat (279), redit (280), despectat (281) and agitat (282) are not consecutive events, but present different aspects of the same situation. Even the words of the vox occulta appear not to represent a single specific event, in view of passim and diffusa (283). After the speech, lines 291–295 may be seen as a more detailed version of 282 agitatque virum fallacia corda; it is another descriptive overview, as follows from adit omnia ... concilia (291–292) and presumably also large (295). Yet there is at least some temporal progression (cf. 291 iamque), which supports the evolution which is already discernible during the speech of 284–291; with every line of the description, the goddess Fides is presented (and presents herself) more and more as a Fury, with the climax at the end of 293 Erinys. As she gains this Fury-like quality, her role is an increasingly active one, culminating in ipsa etiam (294).

In the last three lines, the narrator turns back to Virrius with interea. The scene is closed with a short series of consecutive events in present tense forms (297–298 adscendit ... haeret ... iubet) narrating Virrius’ suicide. These events occur in a relatively short time span, whereas the preceding banquet scene covers much more time. Throughout the passage, there are no specific temporal markers; there is also hardly any explicit advancement of time through the narration of consecutive events. In most of the passage, temporal progress is rather made through the use of descriptions. While there is little progress within the description, time is not halted; after the description, time has advanced by an indefinite amount. A case in point is the description of 279–295, which covers the time from Virrius’ arrival at home to his suicide—presumably the greater part of the night. The description itself is therefore a distinct narrative step, rather than an interruption of the narrative. Here and elsewhere (e.g. 104–110), Silius uses descriptions as a narrative strategy to cover indefinite (often quite large) amounts of time.

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61 Compare Hannibal’s address to his soldiers at 8–18, which is introduced by hic modo primores socium, modo iussa deorum, nunc sese increpitat, suggesting that the direct speech is merely a reproduction of several like speeches delivered during an indefinite time span.

62 It seems not fortuitous that the previous sentence ended with Fides.

63 Arguably, the immediately preceding lines on the banqueting Capuans (esp. 292 mensas ~ 272) prepared for this transition; see also n.296–298 interea.
256–261

sed non in requiem pariter cessere tenebrae:
hinc sopor impavidus, qualem victoria novit;
at Capua aut maestis ululantum fleble matrum
questibus aut gemitu trepidantum exterrita patrum
torrentis finem metamque laboribus orat. 260
mussat perfidia ductorque caputque senatus.

256 But the darkness has not brought rest in equal degree.

This line facilitates the transition to the new scene; tenebrae picks up nox in 254, whereas non ... pariter is a short preview of the following lines.

sed non Cf. the restlessness of Dido, which is contrasted with the peaceful sleep of others, at Verg. A. 4.529 at non infelix animi Phoenissa. See also n.257–260 exterrita ... tormentis finem metamque laboribus orat and Intr. 256–298. Silius uses the same marker (at non) at 7.285 to emphasize Hannibal’s lack of sleep due to curae while the world rests.

257–260 On this side there is unperturbed sleep, such as victory knows; but Capua, frightened either by the mournful laments of mothers shrieking in tears or the groaning of trembling fathers, pleads for an end to its torments and a limit to its suffering.

hinc ... at Capua The deictic adverb hinc suggests that up to now, the story was presented from a Roman viewpoint, ‘at this side’ perhaps even meaning ‘at our side’. In the previous passage, all sub-scenes had a Roman protagonist and the actions of their Campanian adversaries were relayed to background descriptions (see An. 179–255). Here, the narrator switches from a stand in the Roman camp (hinc) to one in the city of Capua (at Capua 258). For the use of at for a shift in camera view, and more particularly a switch to the enemy camp, see Kroon 1995: 355–356.

sopor impavidus This phrase continues the interaction with a simile in Punica 7. As has been observed in n.130–134 incursu saevorum .... luporum, the incursion of wolves into Capua (anticipating its conquest by the Romans) plays against the simile for Fabius at 7.126–130, where he is compared to a shepherd guarding his flock against wolves. The interaction points to contrasts between the situations in books 7 and 13; there, Fabius protects his men against Hannibal, but here Hannibal has abandoned Capua to the Romans. In this line, a further contrast with the simile is made. In 7.127–128, the shepherd can rest secure that the wolves (i.e. the attacking Carthaginians) would not enter: munitis pastor stabulis per ovilia clausum impavidus somni servat pecus, “the shepherd sleeps secure who keeps his flock penned in the fold behind iron bars”; here, conversely, it is the attackers who can sleep secure, sure of their imminent victory.

For the collocation, TLL 7.1.527.41–42 also cites [Sen.] Her.O. 645 impavidos ducere somnos, “brings slumbers that are free from fear”.

qualem victoria novit victoria poetically replaces victores; cf. also e.g. Luc. 4.660 and (with Delz) Stat. Theb. 12.8 saevi meminit victoria belli, “victory remembers fierce war” (contrastingly of the restlessness of the Thebans). For novisse with an inanimate subject, cf. e.g. Prop. El. 2.15.30 (amor), Ov. Fast. 2.83 (mare) or Sen. Her.F. 175 (quies).

fleble A neuter adverbal adjective, common with intransitive verbs in poetry, especially for sound or nonverbal expression (see KS 2.1.281); compare e.g. 347 dulce

matrum ... patrum I.e. the unwarlike part of the populace, the mothers and the aged fathers of the defenders (cf. Spaltenstein “les vieux”), rather than taking patres as ‘senators’, as Duff does. Compare Verg. A. 11.453 fremit arma iuventus, flent maesti mussantque patres, “‘Weapons!’ the young men shout, their unhappy fathers weep and moan” (for this line, see also n.261). The image here, first of the non-military populus (women, old men) and then (at 261) the senate, has a parallel in 1.561–564. There, the Saguntine defenders (puer invalidique senes ... femina ... miles) work in concert throughout the night to close a breach in the walls, while their senate sends an embassy towards Rome; here, by contrast, the Capuans give in to despair and their senate does not know what to do (261 mussat).

exterrita ... tormentis fine metamque laboribus orat Cf. Verg. A. 4.450–451 tum vero infelix fatis exterrita Dido / mortem orat. The parallel between Dido and Capua, which has been prepared in the preceding 150 lines (see n.184b–185), here arrives at its climax; the phrase anticipates the suicide of Capua’s leading men. For a detailed comparison with Aeneid 4, see Intr. 256–298.

261 The senate, leader and head of the perfidy, mutters in indecision.

I agree with Delz that senatus should be read as nominative, followed by a full stop. If a comma is read after senatus, or if Summers’ conjecture coetuque senatus is accepted (as in the Loeb edition), the subject of 261 would be Virrius; this is implausible for several reasons: i) mussat is not a fitting description of Virrius’ demeanour, whose speech shows purpose rather than uncertainty; his mind is quite set on suicide. ii) In view of the polysyndeton ductorque caputque, it is awkward to allocate perfidiae to ductor and senatus (read as genitive) to caput: the strong connection suggests that one attribute (perfidiae) applies to both (cf. the probable model at Verg. A. 12.600 crimenque caputque malorum; see n.302–304a pandunt attoniti portas). Summers conveniently disregarded the first –que. iii) Not only Virrius, but the entire senate was held responsible for Capua’s perfidy; cf. 367–368 sontes procerum ... punit. The description of the senate as caput anticipates their beheading (see n.246b–248). For the senate collectively acting as caput, cf. e.g. Liv. 5.39.12 senatus, caput publicii consili, “the senate, the source of public wisdom”.

mussat The verb is found only here in the Punica. Maguiness ad Verg. A. 12.657 mussat rex ipse Latinus notes that it “means ‘to make inarticulate sounds’, then ‘to be at a loss’ or ‘uncertain’, as here”, while Tarrant ad Verg. l.c. notes that the use of the verb (“usually applied to the powerless or the ruled”) illustrates king Latinus’ lack of control; similarly here, the Capuan senate sees no clear course of action. Besides the Latin king witnessing the imminent fall of his city, another likely model for our passage is A. 11.454 flent maesti mussantque patres (“[the] unhappy fathers weep and moan”; Horsfall ad loc. suggests that it is an Ennian coinage after the Greek μύζειν). The context there is the panic in Laurentum when Aeneas marches on the city. Vergil’s words are here redistributed over the three parties: flent and maesti correspond with flebile and maestis questibus (of the matres), whereas mussare is said of the senate, not of the patres (for the distinction between these two, see the previous note).
Notes to 256–298

For the feebleness of the Capuan senators, cf. Livy’s account at 26.12.8 nobilitas rem publicam desuerat neque in senatum cogi poterant (“The nobility had deserted the state and could not be brought together in the senate”); the difference is of course that in the Punica, the senators do not abandon the state (there is a meeting), but are just at a loss what to do.

**perfidiae** The strong word closely aligns Capua with Carthage; cf. 871 (of Hannibal) and 1.5–6 sacri perfida pacti / gens Cadmea.

262–269

Virrius a Poeno nullam docet esse salutem, vociferans pulsis vivendi e pectore curis: 'speravi sceptr a Ausoniae pepigique, sub armis si dexter Poenis deus et Fortuna fuisse, ut Capuam Iliaci migrarent regna Quirini. qui quaterent muros Tarpeiaque moenia misi; nec mihi poscendi vigor afuit, alter ut aequos portaret fasces nostro de nomine consul.

262–263 *Virrius reminds them that no relief will come from the Punic general, and cries out (having dispelled all care for living from his mind) ...*

Hannibal had attempted, unsuccessfully, to relieve Capua at 12.479ff. After his failure to take Rome instead, the Carthaginians withdrew to southern Italy (13.92–93). Virrius’ statement picks up 94–95 infaustam ... famam, where it is implied that Hannibal will not come to Capua’s rescue. Similarly, his speech at 264ff. corresponds to Fulvius’ accusations at 99–103. The repetition of both data, viz. that the Capuans are on their own and can expect no mercy from the Romans, is coloured by the fact that they have just shown their inability to mount an effective defence; the situation for the besieged is truly hopeless.

nullam ... salutem The allusions to Aeneas’ camp in *Aeneid* 9 come to their logical conclusion. Of the two available models, i.e. Troy and the Greek camp, Aeneas’ fort proved to imitate the latter (see Intr. 142–178); Capua, by contrast, clearly plays the role of the urbs capta, i.e. Troy. Virrius here echoes Aeneas’ rousing words to his countrymen at *A*. 2.354 una salus victis nullam sperare salutem, “one chance the vanquished have, to hope for none”. Aeneas exhorts his fellows not to cling to life in vain (since the city has fallen), but to die fighting. Conversely, Virrius urges his companions to commit suicide. In book 2, the Saguntines have the same sentiment, but only after the Fury has poisoned their minds; cf. 2.595–596 sperare saluti / pertaesum (with an echo of *A*. 2.354). For Capua as Troy, see Intr. 348–380; for the contrasts with Saguntum, see Intr. 256–298.

pulsis vivendi e pectore curis Another reference to Dido; cf. the opening plea of her last speech meque his exsolvite curis (*A*. 4.652), “release me from my woes” (for the rest of her speech, see the following note). Silius’ rendering of Dido’s suicide is an even closer parallel; cf. 1.85–86 hoc sese, ut perhibent, curis mortalibus olim exuerat regina loco, “In this place, they say, the queen had cast off long ago the miseries of life”. The active exuere and pellere suggest that Silius’ Dido and Virrius explicitly take control of their own fates. The diction suggests a philosophical, perhaps Stoic, dismissal of earthly cares (cf. e.g. V.Fl. 1.838 cui ... studium mortales pellere curas, of philosophers); for these undercurrents, see Intr. 256–298.
264–269 “I hoped for the dominion over Ausonia and arranged that, if god and Fortune had favoured the Carthaginians in war, the realm of Trojan Quirinus would pass to Capua. I sent them to shake the walls of Rome and the Tarpeian citadel; and I did not lack the strength to demand that one of the two consuls be of our nationality and carry equal rods.

The first part of Virrius’ speech has the form of a recital of his deeds in life, his major accomplishments. It has a twofold function. On the one hand, it is a eulogy of himself, describing his grand deeds of aggression towards Rome, with which the other senators presumably are to identify themselves. On the other, it serves as an explanation why no clemency should be expected from the Romans: the transgressions had been too great and too many. Both these functions facilitate the call for mass suicide which follows in 270ff. The point of discounting Roman mercy is especially clear when we compare Fulvius’ list of Capuan war crimes (99–102), which closely matches Virrius’ eulogy, but from the opposite viewpoint: 99–100 urbi altera Carthago nostrae ~ 264–266; 101 missum ad portas Poenum ~ 267; 101–102 iura petita consulis alteri ~ 268–269.

The form of the recital of deeds is illustrated by the repeated use of first-person perfects: 264 speravi, 264 pepigi, 267 misi, 268 nec mihi afuit). The list of deeds is not chronological, but runs from least active or aggressive to most active / aggressive. speravi denotes silent hopes, but pepigi suggests active negotiation with the Carthaginians for domination in the Italian peninsula; misi (on the accuracy of which see below) reflects a more aggressive act towards Rome, and the deed described in 268–269 was done by Virrius himself in front of the Roman senate.

This speech, in which the speaker gives his own eulogy just before his suicide, recalls a more famous death-speech, namely Dido’s in A. 4.651ff.:

‘dulces exuviae, dum fata deusque sinebat,
accipite hanc animam meque his exsolvite curis.
vixi et quem dederat cursum Fortuna peregi,
et nunc magna mei sub terras ibit imago.
urbem praeclaram statui, mea moenia vidi,
ulta virum poenas inimico a fratre recepi,
felix, heu nimium felix, si litora tantum
numquam Dardaniae tetigissent nostra carinae.’

“O relics once dear, while God and Fate allowed, take my spirit, and release me from my woes! My life is done and I have finished the course that Fortune gave; and now a majestic shade of me shall pass beneath the earth. A noble city I have built; my own walls I have seen; avenging my husband, I have exacted punishment from my brother and foe—happy, too happy, had but the Dardan keels never touched our shores!”

Dido similarly lists her achievements in life with first-person perfects: she has lived and followed Fortune’s course, she has built a city, saw her own walls, avenged her husband. A number of verbal parallels serve to underscore both the correspondences and differences between Dido and Virrius: i) The first saw the foundation of her own walls, while the latter sent Hannibal to destroy the walls of Rome (mea moenia vidi ~ Tarpeiaque moenia misi). ii) Virrius would have succeeded in his aims, if deus et Fortuna had favoured Hannibal; this picks up both Dido’s cry that she would have been happy, if Aeneas had not come (si
with subjunctive pluperfect), her wish for suicide *dum fata deusque sinebat* and lastly her claim that she followed the course of *Fortuna*. iii) The retrospective *vixi* with which Dido begins her speech is counterbalanced by Virrius’ *vixisse* (270) which concludes his eulogy. For another parallel, see also n.262–263 *pulis vivendi e pectore curis*. Dido’s list serves to comfort her with the knowledge that she will be remembered: 654 *nunc magna mei sub terras ibit imago*, “now a glorious ghost of what I am shall go beneath the earth” (tr. Austin *ad loc.*); Virrius builds on this at 271–272 when he speaks of *libertas* as the companion for this journey to the nether world. A marked difference is of course that Dido has actually accomplished something (with Carthage as the lasting monument of her legacy), whereas Virrius is left only with failed aspirations (having succeeded neither in promoting the glory of his own city nor in the destruction of Rome).

**dexter deus** Virrius, like Dido, does not specify the deity; *dexter deus* is more generally the ‘favour of heaven’. The same phrase is used by Mago at 11.529 in reference to the battle of Cannae, Hannibal’s last great victory, and, after the change of divine favour, by Marcellus at 12.193 for the first Roman victory over Hannibal at Nola. But compare also Aeneas’ narration of the fall of Troy, which might have been averted *si fata deum, si mens non laeva fuisse* (A. 2.54), where *non laeva* corresponds to *dexter* here (cf. Cowan 2007: 26).

**Iliaci** The epithet stresses the Trojan descent of the Roman leadership. In view of the similar Capuan claim to Trojan ancestry (see n.117–119 *Capys*), Virrius seems to imply that the Capuans are as much entitled as the Romans to the dominance over Italia, which falls to the descendents of the Trojans. The juxtaposition of *Iliaci* and *Capuam* underscores the point.

**migrarent regna** Cf. 7.431–432 *num migrarent Rhoeteia regna in Libyam superi?* (“Are the gods removing the empire of Rome to Libya?”), the only other occurrence of *migrare regna* and another speculation of Rome’s loss of supremacy in Italia. The correspondence shows that the agenda of Capua is closely aligned with that of Carthage.

**Quirini** The name of the deified Romulus. Its use here is striking, as we might not expect Capua to credit that the founder of its rival city Rome was deified. Is it sarcastic, i.e. is Virrius scoffing at the ‘supposed divinity’ of Rome’s founder? Or is he unconsciously admitting that fighting Rome equals fighting against the gods (which is implied by *Tarpeia moenia*)?

**qui quaterent ... misi** *qui* picks up *Poenis* (265). Virrius’ assertion that he sent the Carthaginians to conquer Rome contradicts the accounts of both in Livy and Silius himself; when he was unable to pry the besieging Romans off Capua, Hannibal elected to march on Rome without consulting the Capuan senate. Virrius’ statement is therefore only for rhetorical effect; it underscores his active opposition of Rome. It reflects a similar statement in Virrius’ speech in Liv. 26.13.6 *ad oppugnandam Romam hinc eum miserimus*, “We have sent him away to lay siege to Rome”. The Romans seem to believe the same, or at any rate Fulvius aims at a similar rhetorical effect at 13.101 *missum ad portas Poenum*.

**Tarpeia moenia** I.e. the Capitol, both as the *arx* of Rome and as the seat of Jupiter (see n.1–3 *Tarpeia ... culmina*). Virrius’ bellicosity towards the Capitol can thus be construed as an act of aggression against the gods; this matches the recurrent presentation of Hannibal’s march on Rome as such (see Intr. 1–29 on Hannibal as a second Capaneus). In addition, the use of the epithet in this context may suggest that Capua’s defection equalled the treason of Tarpeia when she delivered Rome to its Sabine enemies.
alter ut aequos portaret fasces ... consul For this demand, of which Virrius was the Capuan spokesman, see n.99–103 iura petita consulis alterni. The haughty demand (with which they tried to blackmail Rome in its moment of direst need) is presented last, even if chronologically it preceded the bargaining with Hannibal and Hannibal’s ‘mission’ to Rome described at 264–267, because it was the occasion for Virrius’ most prominent personal action against the Romans. It is both the crown on Virrius’ career and the main reason why no mercy is to be expected for Virrius and for the Capuan senate.

270–278

cui cordi comes aeterna est Acherontis ad undam
libertas, petat ille meas mensasque dapesque
et victus mentem fuso per membra Lyaeo
sopitoque necis morsu medicamina cladis
hauriat ac placidis exarmet fata venenis.’
275
haec ait et turba repetit comitante penates.
aedibus in mediis consurgens ilice multa
exstruitur rogus, hospitium commune peremptis.

270a It is enough to have lived until now.

Exactly at the centre of his speech Virrius pronounces his intent, stating that he has lived long enough.

vixisse satis The use of satis with a perfect infinitive is very common in Latin, but the perfect seems to pick up Dido’s vixi at A. 4.653 (see n.264–269).

270b–275 While there is still plenty of night, let anyone who cherishes liberty as his eternal companion, even to the river Acheron, seek my table and banquet and let him, his mind conquered when wine has spread through his body and the bite of death has been dulled, drink the medicine of death and disarm Fate with gentle poison.

Virrius proposes that anyone who wishes to remain free, even in death, follow him to his house and join him in a last grand banquet, after which they will commit suicide by poison. After Capua’s fall, the senators will be at the mercy of the Romans, whereas now they still are at liberty to decide their own fates and can die as free men.

copia noctis This night is the last ‘possession’ of Capua; next day will be Rome’s. Virrius proposes that they use this asset well.

comes aeterna Apposition to libertas. The phrase is explained by Acherontis ad undam: “even to death”. Those for whom liberty is the greatest asset are even willing to commit suicide in order to retain it. The line-ending Acherontis ad undas (not undam, as here) is found at 12.126, Verg. A. 6.295 and Prop. 3.5.13.

Virrius echoes the words of the Carthaginian leader Gestar, who defends the war Hannibal has started as a war for liberty at 2.366–367 nec te, patria inclita, dedam / aeternum famulam liberque Acheronta videbo.

mensasque dapesque The word group is slightly tautological, with mensas denoting the tables themselves and dapes the dishes on the tables. The combination is also found in Man. 5.144. Cf. also V.Fl. 2.190 iamque domos mensasque petunt (see n.291b–295).
victus ... sopito ... medicamina ... placidis ... exarmet The lines describing the actual taking of the poison (273–275) are dressed in euphemistic terms to ease the prospect of death. The senators will drink wine to cloud their senses (273 victus mentem), so that the sting of death is soothed (274 sopito necis morsu). The poison itself is called medicamina cladis, which is to be interpreted as ‘medicine against doom’ (i.e. capture or execution by the Romans; cf. Duff “antidote against defeat”). In addition, the poison is peaceful (275 placidis) and takes away the pain of death (275 exarmet fata). The dulling effect of the wine may be reflected by the slow spondees of 273.

The stupefying effect of the wine is also mentioned by Livy in the narration of the banquet itself: 26.14.3 epulatique cum eo et, quantum facere potuerant alienatis mentibus vino ab imminenti sensu mali, venenum omnes sumpserunt, “and after they had feasted with him, and so far as possible had deadened their minds with wine to the sense of impending misfortune, they all took the poison”.

per membra In Vergil, this phrase is only found in the context of sleep, which illustrates the dazing effect of the wine here; cf. A. 1.691, 8.30 and 8.405–406, and also Sil. 6.97 mitem fundit per membra quietem.

exarmet fata By choosing the time of theirs deaths, the Capuans will not allow Fate to deliver the death blow; Fate is disarmed and the Capuans victorious in death. Another possible interpretation is that by using poison, death will not be painful (“without a weapon”).

276 Thus is his speech and he goes home with a large throng accompanying him.

According to Liv. 26.14.3, twenty-seven senators joined in Virrius’ plan. Silius does not specify their number, nor is anything said here of the other senators, but it emerges from 367 sotnes procarum that a number of patricians dared not or would not commit suicide. Livy (26.16.6) reports that some 70 senators were executed and 300 Campanian nobles were imprisoned after the fall of Capua.


penates ‘house’, ‘home’; see TLL 10.1026.74ff.

277–278 In the middle of his house a pyre is constructed, rising with much oak-wood, which will welcome them together when they are dead.

Delz curiously begins a new paragraph at 277; aedibus in mediis refers to Virrius’ house, coming just after 276 penates. The shift of scene is only at 279 nec vulgum. In lines 261–278 the actions of the senators, led by Virrius, are narrated, in 279–295 those of the people.

The placement of the pyre in the middle of the house (obviously in the courtyard) recalls Dido’s pyre; cf. A. 4.504–505 pyra penetrali in sede sub auras erecta ingenti taedis atque ilice secta, “when in the heart of her home the pyre rose heavenward, piled high with pine logs and hewn ilex”. For exstruitur, cf. Ovid’s rendering of Dido’s suicide at Fast. 3.545 arserat exstructis in sua fata rogis, “she had burned ... on a pyre built for her doom”.

Virrius’ private pyre contrasts with the grand pyre in Saguntum, which was constructed for all people; cf. 2.600 in media stetit urbe rogus, “a pyre ... was erected in the centre of the city”. For the contrast, see Intr. 256–298.
Notes to 256–298

**Ilice multa / exstruitur rogus** Cf. A. 4.505 *ilice secta*, but also Luc. 6.823–824 *tunc robore multo / exstruit illa rogum* “then the witch heaps up a pyre with plenteous timber”. For a similar word order, cf. A. 6.214–215 *pinguem taedis et robore secto / ingentem struxere pyram* “they raise a huge pyre, rich with pitchy pine and oaken logs”.

**Hospitium** A slightly ironic twist, referring to Virrius’ special ‘hospitality’, which resulted in the death of all his guests.

279–295

*nec vulgum cessat furiare dolorque pavorque.*

exilio punita truci. despectat ab alto

sacra Fides agitatque virum fallacia corda.

*vox occulta subit passim diffusa per auras:*

‘foedera, mortales, ne saevo rumpite ferro,

sed castam servate fidem. fulgentibus ostro

gaudebit pacta ac tenuis spes linquet amici,

non illi domus aut coniunx aut vita manebit

umquam expers luctus lacrimaeque. aget aequore semper

ac tellure premens, aget aegrum nocte dieque

despecta ac violata Fides.’ adit omnia iamque

concilia et mensas contingit et abdita nube

accumbitque toris epulaturque improba Erinys.

ipsa etiam Stygio spumantia pocula tabo

porrigit et large poenas letumque ministrat.

**279 Nor do grief and fear cease to infuriate the people.**

**Furiare** The word anticipates the Fury in 291ff. As will be argued in n.291b–295, the Fury is in fact Fides herself, whom the inhabitants of Capua had failed to revere.

**Dolorque pavorque** Cf. the companions of the Fury at Saguntum, 2.549–551 *Luctus et ... / ... Planctus Maerorique Dolorque / atque ... Poenae.*

280–281a **Now Decius comes belatedly to their mind, and his good righteousness which was punished with cruel exile.**

Decius figured in book 11 as the last inhabitant of Capua who would not break the alliance with Rome nor hail Hannibal as his saviour (11.158 *tum solum Decius Capuae decus*, “Decius, the sole glory of Capua in that hour”). For his hostility, Hannibal had him transported to Carthage to await punishment; by the mercy of Jupiter, the ship was driven to Cyrene (11.379ff.) and Decius fell under the protection of King Ptolemy.


**Serae** Used instead of the adverb *sero* (for the adjective taking the place of an adverbial phrase, see *KS* 2.1.234–239; parallel uses of *serus* instead of *sero* include Verg. *A.* 10.94 *sera querelis haud iustis adsurgis* and Liv. *praef.* 11 *in quam civitatem sera avaritia*
Notes to 256–298

luxuriaque immigraverint). The word voices the narrator’s disapproval, like munimina sera at 252.

281b–283 Sacred Loyalty looks down upon them from on high and troubles the men’s treacherous hearts. A hidden voice is heard everywhere, spreading through the air.

despectat Probably with the added nuance of contempt (Miniconi-Devallot “avec mépris”, pace Spaltenstein), in view of the repetition at 291 despecta ... Fides, which defines the disdain of the Capuans for her. Scorned herself, Fides scorns the Capuans.

agitat The verb anticipates Fides’ acting as a Fury in 291ff.

vox occulta subit passim diffusa per auras As Spaltenstein remarks, it is unclear whether the voice in 283 is that of Fides herself. Impersonal voices are found often in Latin epic in similar settings; cf. Bömer ad Ov. Met. 3.96 vox subito audita est “Es gilt als typisches Kennzeichen der römischen Religion, daß die kündende Gottheit nicht persönlich erscheint, sondern nur ihre Stimme vernimmt läßt”; and Horsfall ad Verg. A. 3.93 vox fertur ad auris “Apollo’s voice is introduced anonymously, in the passive, rather in the manner of Roman portent-voices”. Similar phrases are found in Verg. A. 3.40, 3.93, 7.95, 9.112–113 tum vox horrenda per auras excidit (“then through the air fell an awful voice”), Ov. Met. 3.96, V.Fl. 4.518, 5.231–233, Sil. 3.699 and 10.365 tum vox effusa per auras, “at last a voice came down from the sky”. Cf. also the altar to Aius Locutius (Cic. Div. 1.101, 2.69, Liv. 5.32.6–7, 5.50.5, 5.52.11, RE 13.964ff.), erected after Rome had been captured by the Gauls, in propitiation of the powerful nocturnal voice which had warned of their coming, but had been ignored. In view of the content of the speech, it seems most probable that it is Fides who speaks here. That she names herself in 285 and 291 is no objection, since it is common for speakers to present themselves in the third person; cf. Norden ad Verg. A. 6.510 (for the Punica, Spaltenstein ad 10.9 adduces 2.29, 2.285 and 5.639 as examples).

In any case, it is the voice of a god (as the above parallels show); the gods themselves have therefore condemned the Capuans, a powerful counter to Virrius’ self-glorifying speech.

vox occulta is thus vox occultae (or occulti): a voice from a hidden source.

For the diction, cf. 22 sensim diffusus ad aures (with n. ad loc.).

284–286a “Do not, mortals, break pacts with the cruel sword, but honour chaste loyalty. She is more powerful than kingdoms resplendent in purple.

Fides’ speech interacts with the narrator’s praise of the Saguntines at 2.696–707. There, the narrator warns the nations that Hannibal, who achieved an unjust victory (i.e. by disregarding the principles of fides) will be banished from his homeland and wander the whole earth, and at the end will commit suicide by poison (2.699–703):

cui vero non aequa dedit victoria nomen (audite, o gentes, ne rumpite foedera pacis 700
 nec regnis postferte fidem) vagus exul in orbe errabit toto, patriis proiectus ab oris
tergaque vertentem trepidans Carthago videbit.

Whereas he, who gained glory by an unjust victory—hear it, ye nations, and break not treaties of peace nor set power above loyalty!—banished from his native land he shall wander, an exile, over the whole earth; and terrified Carthage shall see him in full retreat.
Various elements return in our passage, such as the call to keep faith and prefer loyalty to power (2.700–701a ~ 13.284–286a), the construction of a relative clause defining the pact-breaker (2.699 ~ 13.286b–287) and his banishment and wandering over the earth (2.701b–702 ~ 13.288–291). The allusion serves two aims: i) the Capuans are set diametrically against the Saguntines, as faith-breakers against faith-keepers; ii) the Capuans are strongly identified with Hannibal and the Carthaginians, and prefigure their fate at the end of the war. These lines will be picked up at 876ff., the prophecy of Hannibal’s fate after the Punic war.

foedera ... ne ... rumpite As at 13.100, foedera rumpere recalls the pact-breaking of Hannibal himself before the walls of Saguntum, expressed in the same words at 1.268, 1.648–649 (per enes, cf. saevo ... ferro), 2.297 and 2.700; cf. also 2.293 armis foedus fasque omne abrumpitur armis, “and therefore the treaty is broken by the sword, and by the sword every obligation is broken”. The prohibitive echoes 2.700 (see above).

castam ... fidem ‘Pure’ or ‘untainted’ loyalty. The use of castus in relation to fides is almost exclusive to Silius (except for Col. 10.279). At Sen. Ag. 111, 241, Her.F. 309 and Stat. Silv. 5.1.154, casta fides denotes female chastity in marriage. In the Punica, such chastity and its violation (cf. 291 violata) is used as a metaphor for political loyalty; cf. 1.481 castamque fidem servataque iura, 2.524, 2.698, 3.1 (of Saguntum), 6.548, 14.84, 17.86 and 17.130 (of Scipio). The adjective is found in connection with all important allies in the poem, either those able to keep their faith to Rome (Saguntum) or those failing to do so (Capua, Syracuse, Syphax). For the interaction with Verg. A. 4.552 non servata fides cineri promissa Sychaeo, see Intr. 256–298.

Delz has opted to print fidem, although Fidem is equally possible. It does not seem necessary to distinguish between the two here; Silius probably did not.

fulgentibus ostro haec potior regnis Cf. 2.701 nec regnis postferte fidem (“nor set power above loyalty”). Capua valued power far too much, dazzled by its trappings; for the folly in that, see n.605 sceptris fulsisse superbis. The sentence may refer to various offences, which are not mutually exclusive: i) the Capuans defected to Hannibal on account of his success; the (Tyrian!) purple is associated with Carthage throughout the Punica, and Hannibal acts as an eastern potentate (see n.612 letiferis ... tyrannis); ii) the Capuans sought a share in the Roman consulship (also visualized by the purple; cf. e.g. 6.443 umeris fulgentibus ostro) and thus power for themselves (cf. also 264–266), rather than honouring their alliance; iii) the downfall of Capua is caused by its inhabitants’ lust for luxury (13.353), of which the purple may be a symbol.

286b–289a He who in uncertain times is happy to break bonds and abandons the fragile hopes of a friend, will not keep his home or wife or a life that is ever free of grief and tears.

Such is the fate of Hannibal; see 876–881 with n.

dubio ... rerum For dubium as a substantive, see TLL 5.1.2121.36ff. It is almost always plural; for the singular, cf. only Sen. Ag. 59 and Ennod. dict. 1.20. In the Punica, other instances are 1.562 ferre ... opem in dubiis and 1.680 nec laetus dubiis. For the construction with a genitive the TLL compares Tac. Hist. 2.33 dubiis proeliorum exemptus.

The use of this word is significant, since it marks a clear contrast between Capua and Lucan’s Massilia; cf. Luc. 3.301 Phocais in dubiis ausa est servare iuventus ... fidem, “the Phocaean warriors [...] ventured in dangerous times to preserve loyalty”, of Massilia’s
resistance to Caesar. For Massilia as a model for Silius’ Saguntum and (by inversion) for Capua, see Intr. 94–141.

**gaudebit** The verb is particularly acid; such a man is evil indeed, who enjoys stabbing another in the back.

**frangere ... pacta** Another phrase for the programmatic *foedera rumpere*.

**tenuis spes** *tenuis* is presumably plural accusative rather than genitive with *amici*; cf. e.g. Liv. 25.38.18 *in tenui spe* and (with the neuter *tenue* as substantive) Sil. 4.248 *in tenuis spes exiguumque salutis*.

**non illi domus aut coniunx aut vita manebit umquam** *expers luctus lacrimaeque* Duff takes *expers luctus* with both *domus, uxor* and *vita*, but Spaltenstein is probably right in regarding lines 288–289 as a light zeugma: the pact-breaker shall have neither house nor wife, and his life will nevermore be free of misery. That he will no longer have a home is suggested in the next lines (289b–290 *aget aequore semper ac tellure premens*) and in the passage to which this speech is an allusion, Sil. 2.701–702 *vagus exul in orbe errabit toto* (see n.284–286a).

**289b–291a** *She will drive him forever over sea and land, harassing him, she will drive the wretched fellow by night and day, despised and violated Loyalty.*

The implication of Fides’ speech is clear: as long as she is revered and faith is being kept, she is undefiled and pure (*castam Fidem* 285), but as soon as people despise her and violate her sacred principles (*despecta ac violata Fides* 291), she turns into a revenging Fury who pursues those who would pay her no heed.

**nocte dieque** A rare phrase in the extant literature. This line may echo V.Fl. 2.281 *nocte dieque pavor fraudataque turbat Erinys*, “by day and by night fear troubles her […] and Erinys, cheated of her victim” (for the Lemnian passage of which this is a part, see Intr. 256–298). This allusion, along with the expressive verb *ager*, stress the transformation of the goddess Fides into an avenging Fury, which is complete at 293 with *Erinys*.

**291b–295** *Already, she visits all meetings and pollutes the tables and hidden in a cloud she reclines on the couches and dines, as a relentless Fury. With her own hand she even offers cups foaming with Stygian poison and richly serves punishment and death.*

In all earlier interpretations these lines have been read to suggest that a Fury was suddenly present in Capua (Duff “a Fury was present now”). Spaltenstein admits that the sudden appearance of a Fury is unexpected, but rejects the possibility that the *Erinys* might be Fides herself: “elle n’aurait pas accès aux enfers (vers 294)” and tries to alleviate the unexpectedness by ascribing the *vox occulta* in 283 to this unnamed Fury. The Fury is, however, far from unexpected (cf. 279 *furiare*), and a few hints suggest that she is none other than Fides herself. Though she may not be an actual Fury from Tartarus like Tisiphone in book 2, Fides certainly acts like one: *agitat* 282, *ager* 289, *ager* 290 (cf. Verg. A. 7.405 *reginam Allecto stimulis agit*; A. 12.101 *his agitur furii*; Ov. Fast. 6.489 *hinc agitur furiiis Athamas* and most importantly Sil. 2.595 *agit addita Erinys*). The goddess transforms from the peaceful benefactress of the loyal Saguntines in book 2 into an avenging Fury for the crimes of Capua. This eliminates the supposed transition in 291ff.; Fides is still the subject, and the predicative *Erinys* marks the completion of her transformation. For the transformation of a heavenly deity into a Fury, one may compare V.Fl. 2.101ff., where Venus acts as and physically transforms into a Fury; see Intr. 256–298.
Notes to 256–298

For the phraseology, Silius was inspired by some other famous Fury-scenes. Verg. A. 6.605–606 *Furiarum maxima iuxta accubat et manibus prohibet contingere mensas* (“reclining hard by, the eldest Fury stays their hands from touch of the table”) is clearly echoed at 292–293 *mensas contingit et ... accumbitque toris*; in the *Aeneid* the Fury prevents the criminals in Tartarus from touching the food that is placed next to them, whereas here she touches it herself to pollute it. Line 294 is based upon V.Fl. 1.816–817 *adstitit et nigro fumantia pocula tabo contigit ipsa gravi Furiarum maxima dextra*, “The chief of the Furies stood close by him, and touched with heavy hand the cup that steamed with deadly venom”, of the suicide of Aeson; cf. also Ripoll 1999: 513–514.

**spumantia pocula** Used in happier settings at Verg. Ecl. 5.67 *pocula bina novo spumantia lacte* (“two cups, foaming with fresh milk”) and V.Fl. 1.260 *valido spumantia pocula Baccho* (“the foaming goblets of strong wine”).

**Stygio** The epithet reinforces the idea that the drink that the Fury serves brings death.

**poenas letumque ministrat** The verb paints a vivid picture of the Erinys ‘waiting on’ the guests; today’s courses are *poenae* and *letum*. Part of the phrase is found in a similar context at 2.674 *Allecto ... poenasque ministrat*.

296–298
Virrius interea, dum dat penetrare medullas exitio, adscenditque pyram atque amplexibus haeret iungentum fata et subici iubet ocius ignes.

296–298 Meanwhile Virrius, as he allows the doom to reach his inmost parts, ascends the pyre and clings in the embrace of those who shared his fate and orders to light the fire at once.

**interea** It is unclear whether *interea* marks a clear boundary between the feasts held everywhere in the city (291–292 *omnia ... concilia*) and Virrius’ banquet, which is now concluded with the mass suicide of its participants, or if the events of 291–295 should be interpreted as taking place at the house of Virrius (so Spaltenstein, who reads *concilia* and *mensae* as references to the various groups of diners there). The mention of poison (*Stygio ... tabo* 294) naturally brings Virrius’ proposal in 271–275 to mind, but the scene is a direct continuation of the speech of Fides, which concerned Capua’s entire populace (* nec vulgum* 279); *omnia ... concilia* also suggests that the Fury’s actions were aimed at all of the citizens. In any case the reader is reminded of Virrius’ speech and gets the impression that not all senators died as stoically and peacefully as Virrius’ words had promised.

**dat penetrare** For *dare* with an infinitive in the sense of ‘allow’, ‘permit’, cf. 411, 447, 622, 636, 676, 793 (with *ut*), 823, and see *TLL* 5.1.1688.81ff., where Silius is said to use this construction *saepissime* (first at 1.3 *da, Musa, ... memorare, “grant me, O Muse, to record”).

**adscenditque pyram atque amplexibus haeret** A last reminiscence of Dido’s suicide; cf. Verg. A. 4.645–646 *altos conscendit furibunda rogos*, “[she] climbs the high pyre in a frenzy” and (of her sister Anna) 4.686 *semianimemque sinu germanam amplexa*, “throwing her arms round her dying sister”.

The –que of *adscenditque* is coordinated with *atque haeret; iungentum* (Virrius’ friends) is dependent on *amplexibus* and has *fata* as its object. For the rare coordination of -que and *atque*, cf. e.g. Verg. G. 1.182 and see *KS* 2.2.37, *LHSz* 2.516. For *haereo* of embraces, cf. Ov. *Met*. 7.143 *avidisque amplexibus haerent*, V.Fl. 1.316 (*TLL* 6.3.2495.45ff.).
At dawn, the Romans renew the attack; the soldier Milo is the first to gain the walls. The Capuans open their gates and prostrate themselves before their enemies in supplication. As the Romans wonder about their cowardice and eagerly await the signal to raze the city, they are suddenly filled with a sense of awe. This is the work of Pan, who was sent by Jupiter to save Capua. A description of the god follows, with references to the Lupercalia and bucolic themes. Having fulfilled his mission, Pan returns to Arcadia.

In Livy, the decision to spare Capua is made by the Roman senate, motivated by Capua’s usefulness as an agricultural base in fertile Campania and by a desire to present themselves to their allies as lenient. The same motives of *utilitas* and *clementia* are found in Silius’ passage, but the poet introduces them through the means of a divine intervention rather than rational senatorial debate. Gods meddling in human affairs is a common theme in the *Punica*; Fides’ presence in 281ff. is still fresh in our minds, as is Jupiter’s defence of Rome at the end of book 12. In the universe of the *Punica*, the gods do not act on a whim (as in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, for instance), but use their powers to save or punish important characters; divine interventions tend to enhance the significance of the mortal(s) involved. In our passage, it is important to note that the intervention is not aimed at saving the Capuans, but rather at the Romans and their attitude towards the city. It is the city which is saved, although its citizens are executed or punished otherwise. The Romans are ‘saved’ as well, in the sense that they are prevented from harming their own interests; the gods guarantee Roman moral superiority, the end of (civil) war, and the preservation of Campania.

One aspect of Pan’s mission is to correct the Romans—they should display clemency rather than seek revenge. This lesson ties in with the Romans’ development in the poem as a whole. The opposition of Rome and Carthage is essentially an opposition of values—Carthage and her allies are characterized by *perfidia*, *ira*, *furor*, whereas Rome stands for *fides*, *pietas*, *ratio*. In the first half of the epic, the Romans do not consistently display these virtues; the commanders Flamininus and Varro, for instance, fail to listen to reason or divine signs (thus demonstrating a lack of *ratio* and *pietas*) and are guided rather by *furor* and rashness. Only through the consecutive defeats (which culminate in Cannae) do the virtues of old return; in a way, the *Punica* can thus be read as the struggle for recovery of the true Roman virtues. Early in the poem, Jupiter presented the Second Punic war as a testing ground for the Romans to revive the prowess of their ancestors and to prepare them

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1 Liv. 26.15.7 *urbs servata est ut esset aliqua aratorum sedes*; 26.15.12 *quaesita etiam apud socios lenitatis species incolumitate urbis nobilissimae opulentissimaeque*. For a comparison with Livy, see n.320b–324a.
2 Cf. also e.g. Juno rescuing Hannibal (1.548ff.), Mars’ empowerment of Scipio at 4.454ff., the elder Scipio’s battle against the river Trebia with Venus’ intervention (4.675ff.), the aid of Mars and Minerva to Scipio and Hannibal, respectively, during the battle of Cannae (9.438ff.), Apollo’s protection of Ennius (12.405–414), and Juno’s removal of Hannibal from battle and the epic (17.522ff.). The most extensive discussion of Silius’ divine apparatus is still Feeney 1990: 301–312.
3 Cf. 326–327 *Iove ... servari tecta volente Troia*; the city is kept for its Trojan origin and superior location.
4 Cf. von Albrecht 1964: 18. For the Carthaginian traits (shared by the Capuans), see Intr. 256–298 with fn.28.
5 For Flamininus ‘fighting against Heaven’ with *ira* and *furor*, cf. e.g. 5.103–106; for the self-destructive rashness of Varro, cf. 8.243ff.
for the greatness of empire that is to come; 7 the principles that should guide the Romans are restored to them by the gods through hardship or, as here, through direct intervention. During the siege of Capua, it is clear that the Romans have already taken some earlier lessons to heart—for instance Claudius’ discipline which contrasts with his opponent’s rashness and ira (n.155–156a)—but in their zeal to punish Capua for its perfidia they sometimes still display the furor which characterizes their enemies. 8 The role of Pan here is similar to that of Fides in book 2; there, the goddess showed the Saguntines how to be her champions in defeat, whereas here the Romans are taught how to be virtuous victors; 9 the lesson of mercy is put into practice by Marcellus at Syracuse (14.580ff.). 10 Furthermore, Pan’s correction of the Romans counterbalances Venus’ corruption of the Carthaginians (also in Capua) at 11.385ff.; 11 the parallelism illustrates the divine involvement in bringing out the moral antithesis of Rome and Carthage.

A close and highly relevant parallel for Pan’s intervention is Mercury’s mission to Aeneas in Aeneid 4.219ff. There, the god (sent by Jupiter, like Pan here) admonished the hero not to stay in Carthage and to continue his journey to Italy. By giving in to passion, Aeneas had likewise strayed from the virtue of pietas that was required of him if he was to found a new nation; similarly, the Romans need to return to their virtues in order to found an empire. Pan reminds the Romans that it had been Capys who had laid the foundations of Capua; his words echo Mercury’s rebuke to Aeneas that he was now founding Carthage, not (the forerunner of) Rome. 12 Silius has inverted the direction; while Aeneas needed reminding that Carthage is not the new Troy he was to build, here the Romans have to realise that Capua, despite its appearance and bearing as another Carthage, is actually another ‘new Troy’. Other verbal parallels underscore the connection between the two passages. Most are found in the description of Pan, which partly harks back to Vergil’s depiction of Atlas which embellishes Mercury’s flight towards Carthage. 13

7 Cf. 3.163–165; 3.373–374; in these passages, hardship and peril are the means through which Jupiter will test the Romans to raise their fame to heaven. For this theme, we may compare V.Fl. 1.555ff., in which the prophecy of Rome’s rise to greatness is juxtaposed with an exhortation to Hercules and the Dioscuri (part of the Argo’s crew) to try and attain heaven, although the path is difficult. See also Intr. 615–649 and 762–805.
8 Cf. 209 furiatiss viribus, 216 furori vincentum, 344 furentum; cf. also ira at 173, 184 and 324, ferox at 315, saevus at 113, 234 and 317.
10 For a comparison between the aftermath of Syracuse’s siege and Capua, see Intr. 348–380. Mercy is also valued positively at 10.615ff., where Fabius convinces the Roman populace to receive the defeated Varro with pity rather than anger; Fincher (1979: 148) argues that the image of Carthage in Scipio’s triumphal procession (17.635–636) is a subtle reminder of his mercy in sparing the city, but Silius clearly does not press the point there.
12 See n.320b–324a superbae fundamenta Capyn possuisse antiquitus urbi.
13 Cf. the repetition Atlantis ... Atlantis (A. 4.247–248) ~ 326–327 Pan ... Pan, with the second element marking the beginning of the description (cf. also Silius’ own description of Atlas at 1.201–202 Atlas, / Atlas). Atlas’ head is covered in pine-trees (4.249 piniferum caput) ~ Pan wears a wreath of pine (331 cingit ... comas ... pinus). Atlas
The parallel also draws attention to the surprising identity of the \textit{mitis deus}. The question why Pan, who is best known for being a rustic god and for his propensity for chasing nymphs and causing panic, here acts as Jupiter’s messenger instead of Mercury has puzzled many scholars. The answer is twofold, and shows the relevance of the description of Pan for the main narrative: i) Silius’ passage interacts with Valerius Flaccus’ portrayal of Pan; ii) the god represents, and defends, the endangered Italian countryside—the rural wealth of Capua is within Pan’s sphere of influence. Both of these aspects will be discussed presently.

At V.Fl. 3.43ff., panic spread among the subjects of king Cyzicus when a sudden cry was heard that their old enemies, the Pelasgians, had returned. In reality, the arrivals were the Argonauts (Cyzicus’ guests) and a tragic battle ensued in the dark, with each of the two parties unaware that their enemy was in fact a friend. The panic-monger was Pan, who had been sent by the goddess Cybele to punish Cyzicus for slaying her lion. Valerius gives an elaborate description of Pan with a focus on his terrifying aspects. He refers to the god as \textit{nemorum belli que potens}; Pan’s association with warfare lies in the comparison of the rout of an army with the devastating panic that sometimes seizes herds of animals, a phenomenon that was ascribed to Pan’s agency. A feature shared with our text is the repetition \textit{Pan ... Pan} (V.Fl. 3.47–48, here 326–327) at the beginning of the description and the pluperfect which marks the lines as an authorial explanation (V.Fl. 3.46 \textit{lymphaverat}, here 326 \textit{missus erat}).

We have seen in Intr. 94–141 that Silius alluded to the first part of Valerius’ narrative at 115ff., mainly by inverting his predecessor’s narrative; the same technique of inversion is at work here on all levels. Valerius’ Pan brings terror and war, Silius’ Pan by contrast brings calm and peace. The first roams at midnight, while the latter tends his flocks during daylight. In the \textit{Argonautica}, Pan’s appearance is terrifying, but in the \textit{Punica} he is a more gentle

14 In her book on the reception of Pan, Merivale (1969: 4) calls his presence in the \textit{Punica} doubly odd: not only is a rustic god an uncommon sight on the battlefield, but Pan (whose name was the basis for the word ‘panic’) seems entirely unsuitable as a bringer of peace. Miniconi-Devallèt regretfully withhold from elucidating their bold statement that Pan was ‘tout indiqué’ for this mission. Currie (1985: 62) believes that Pan’s presence alludes to an old Italic legend, but as no such legend has survived, this thesis cannot be proven. Burck (1984: 47) thinks that the answer lies in Pan’s being a son of Mercury; the god would share in the plethora of his father’s duties. But the only other passage in which Pan is a messenger is V.Fl. 3.46ff. (see below), where he acts as such not by virtue of being Mercury’s son, but because of his connection with Cybele and his function as panic-monger. Cowan (2007: 31) suggests that Jupiter’s sending of Mercury’s son reflects the \textit{Punica}’s filial relationship to the \textit{Aeneid} and the explicit presentation of A. 4.219ff. as the parent passage, a nice point that would be stronger if Silius had hinted somehow at Pan’s relation to Mercury.

15 Herbig 1949: 19, Borgeaud 1979: 143–144. The Athenians believed that Pan had aided them at Marathon, presumably by routing the Persians (Hdt. 6.105, Sim. \textit{frg}. 143, where Pan is called the foe of the Medes and the friend of the Athenians). Cf. also Longus 2.25–26, and in Roman literature the figure of Eurymedon, the terrifying son of Pan, in Stat. \textit{Theb}. 7.264 and 11.32–34. See also Borgeaud 1979: 137–155 and Cowan 2007: 32 for a few other examples of Pan (as the instigator of panic) in a military context. In visual art, an Ephesian altar presents Pan as a soldier equipped with a helm, armour and shield (Herbig 1949: 21, Abb. 2; \textit{Arch. Ztg.} 1873: 112).

16 The correspondence of the repetition is often noted, but most scholars have left it at that.


18 V.Fl. 3.49 \textit{ad medias ... noctes}, Sil. 13.341 \textit{solem}. 

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figure. Valerius says that he wanders \textit{per devia} as a scary sight (3.49), while in the \textit{Punica} he hops \textit{per avia} from cliff to cliff (348). The cliffs also feature in Valerius; his Pan amuses himself by driving panicked flocks off them (3.56–57). Silius’ Pan takes better care of the flocks, as a herdsman; for him, amusement is to look at the antics of his tail. Lastly, Valerius’ Pan shouts loudly, inciting terror (3.51–53), while in Silius, he works silently to calm the Roman soldiers. 

But the inversion is not restricted to the description or its immediate surroundings. The Cyzicans believed that the men who had arrived were their enemies, while in fact they were their friends; at Capua, however, the arriving Romans really were the enemies, but the Capuans’ earlier defection to Hannibal suggests the nature of their mistake: they have taken as friends those who should have been their enemies, and vice versa. In the \textit{Argonautica}, Pan provokes a war between host and guest; scholars have noted the hints at fratricidal civil strife in Valerius’ passage. Silius’ Pan prevents exactly such a ‘civil war’, the destruction of a Capuan Troy (326–327 \textit{tecta ... Troia}) by Roman Trojans.

In addition to the restoration of Roman morals, Pan’s mission thus has a second aspect: to end the civil strife between Rome and Capua and to break the perpetuation of \textit{furor} which such a strife would represent. The events around Capua find a parallel in Statius’ \textit{Thebaid} 12. There, the Thebans left their city as bewildered as the Capuans here, although they were the victors (\textit{Theb}. 12.13 \textit{attoniti} ~ here 302); while the Romans could sleep soundly in victory, the victorious Thebans were restless because of their memory of the brutal conflict. Then, when the fratricidal war finally seemed to have ended, Creon’s refusal to grant burial to the Argives (a continuation of Eteocles’ policy) restarted the cycle of war. The cycle was broken by Theseus; the Argive women came to him in supplication at the Athenian altar of Clementia. Mercy softened the hearts of the Athenians in sight of their pitiful enemy, just as the Romans’ anger here fades away. When Creon is slain, the war is ended immediately; his death is presented as just punishment for his crimes. Just so,

\begin{itemize}
  \item Valerius’ Pan has a \textit{latus saetigerum} (‘hairy’ or ‘rugged’) and \textit{frons torva}, ‘fierce’. Silius’ Pan carries the welcome skin of a tender deer at his \textit{latus} and having small horns on his \textit{frons}; the words \textit{grata}, \textit{tenerae} and \textit{parva} all convey a more gentle figure.
  \item Cf. also 347 \textit{dulce sonans}, a different contrast on the same auditive level.
  \item The reception of the Argonauts by king Cyzicus at the end of \textit{Argonautica} 2 is an intertext for Hannibal’s reception in Capua in \textit{Punica} 11; both scenes are modelled upon Aeneas’ reception in Carthage, but there are a few lines in which Silius echoes Valerius rather than Vergil. Apart from the misconception about their ‘true enemies’ which the hosts in these two passages have in common (see above), cf. e.g. V.Fl. 2.652 \textit{regifico} ~ Sil. 11.271; V.Fl. 2.655 \textit{carchesia} ~ Sil. 11.300; V.Fl. 2.655 ~ Sil. 11.300 (similar anaphora); V.Fl. 3.1 ~ Sil. 12.1 and V.Fl. 3.3 ~ 12.5.
  \item Cowan 2007: 33, who also draws attention to Valerius’ allusions to the sack of Troy (Hardie 1993: 87). His contention that “Capua, altera Roma, altera Carthago is not quite \textit{altera Troia}” must be modified, however, since in certain ways, the Romans’ plunder of Capua does allude to the fall of Troy; see Intr. 348–380. For the aspects of the siege of Capua alluding to civil war, see also Intr. 94–141, 142–178 and 179–255.
  \item Sil. 13.257 \textit{sopor impavidus, qualem victoria novit} vs. \textit{Stat. Theb}. 12.8 \textit{saevi meminit victoria belli}.
  \item The repetitious pattern is well illustrated by Theseus’ outcry \textit{novus unde furor?} (12.593), which can be interpreted metapoetically as the renewal of epic conflict; the absence a \textit{novus furor} for the poet himself (12.808; i.e. vatic inspiration) finally draws the epic to a close.
  \item For the verbal echo of \textit{Theb}. 12.727, see n.324b–325 \textit{ira \textit{languescunt} ... et vis mollitia \textit{senescit}}. For the influence of the \textit{mitis deus}, we should also compare that of \textit{mitis ... Clementia} (\textit{Theb}. 12.482); cf. \textit{Theb}. 12. \textit{procul starent irae} ~ here 324–325 \textit{ira \textit{languescunt} and 12.514} \textit{sedavit requierunt pectora curis} ~ here 344 \textit{sedavit rabiem et permulsit corda furentum}.
\end{itemize}
Capua’s siege ends with the righteous execution (368 iusta ... securi) of the city’s leaders for their perfidy. \(^{27}\)

The end of civil war, of fratricidal self-destruction, is not just beneficial for the people involved; it also prevents the further destruction of the land in which they live. Pan reminds the Romans of two things: the Capuans’ Trojan heritage (which informs the presentation of the war with Capua as a civil conflict) and the value of leaving the fertile plains habitable. The Romans are taught that they should not be the destroyers of their own lands, and thus not to emulate Hannibal’s efforts. His devastation of Campania features prominently in book 7, \(^{28}\) with his Roman adversary Fabius in the role of defender of the Italian land. \(^{29}\) The conflict between Hannibal and Fabius is highly relevant for the present passage because of Fabius’ connections with Faunus, who was his ancestor through both Evander and Hercules. \(^{30}\) Pan’s description here begins with a reference to the Lupercalia (a festival in which the Fabii played an important role), \(^{31}\) which shows that we should view him in his aspect of Faunus, the Italian fertility god. That fact that Pan returns to Arcadia does not diminish his significance for Italy, \(^{32}\) particularly in view of the other aspects of this passage; since Vergil’s *Eclogae*, Arcadia is essentially a representation of the idealized Italian countryside, *especially* when contrasted with the horrors and destruction of civil war.

### Analysis of the presentation of 299–347

The passage can be divided into three parts: i) the reaction of the Capuan populace to the capture of their city by the Romans (299–313); ii) the divine intervention to soften the Romans’ hearts (314–325); iii) a description of the intervening god, Pan (326–347). In each section the action is very limited; large parts of the passage are descriptive.

The first sentence (299–301), with its reference to the dawn, clearly marks the end of the night described in the previous scene, which lacked explicit temporal structuring (see An. 256–298), and provides a clear temporal setting for the subsequent narrative. These three lines condense time; in only a few lines the narrator takes us from Virrius’ nocturnal suicide to a morning scene in which the Romans are already busy. The imperfect tense forms in these lines (stringebant ... victorque ruebat, iamque superstantem muro ... Milonem ... videbat) do not express consecutive events, but rather situations which had already begun when the narrator turns our attention to them (“dawn was breaking, and the Romans were attacking, and one of them was even already on the walls”); the use of the imperfect (stringebant ... ruebat ... videbat) suggests that the Roman successes at first sunlight form the background against which the reaction of the Capuans is described. The reader’s attention is thus drawn to the actions of the latter, which are narrated in present tense forms, in the now familiar ‘live’ mode of presentation. Lines 302–304a give a general overview (the gates are opened and the survivors pour out) while 304b–313 fill in the

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\(^{27}\) For the echoes of Theseus’ desire to punish Creon in Claudius’ chase of Taurea (whose death concludes the Capua episode), see n.173–178 meriti ... cruoris.

\(^{28}\) See An. 299–347 fn.42 below.

\(^{29}\) Littlewood 2011: xl.

\(^{30}\) Littlewood 2011: xliv–xlvii.

\(^{31}\) Their name was associated with one of the priestly colleges of the Luperci; cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.365ff.

\(^{32}\) *pace* Cowan 2007: 32.
details; 304b–305 (patet ... reserat) pick up 302 pandunt portas with an added emphasis on Capua’s confession of crimes and 306–313 focus on the citizens and the pathos (or contemptibility) of their supplication.

The focalization of the Capuans’ self-abasement through Roman eyes in 308–313 (on which see below) allows for a smooth transition to the second section in which the narrator turns to the Romans themselves. The section opens with a dum-clause which follows the same format as earlier ones, namely the recapitulation of the deeds of one party (here the Capuan supplicants) to which the reaction of the other party (here the Romans) is added as new information. This reaction of the Romans (amazement and an unabatedly fierce desire to raze Capua) is contrasted with the feeling that overpowers them through divine agency. The description of this feeling is symmetrically composed. The narrator first describes its nature (316 tacito percurrit pectora sensu religio et effect: saevas componit numine mentes), then its purpose (to prevent the destruction of the city) in a pair of clauses (318–319b ne ... ne ...); the central sentence reveals that a god is at work (mitis deus) and varies the diction of the first sentence (319–320 subit intima corda perlabens sensim); then a second pair of clauses lists the two arguments for allowing Capua to remain (321b–324a: ille ... monet, ille ... docet), and the final sentence narrates again the effect of the god’s actions upon the Romans (324b–325).

At this point the narrative is briefly paused as the narrator explains who the god was. The ‘live’ mode of presentation (with present tenses) is abandoned for the moment; as the pluperfect missus erat (326) indicates, the narrator has resumed his role as storyteller from a point later in time to fill in the details that were not clear from the story itself—i.e. background information. Similarly, the entire description of Pan which follows is not given from a story-internal perspective; it is rather a general portrait of the god with a number of his familiar aspects. The present tenses in this part are therefore to be interpreted differently from those in the first part of the passage; they are universal presents (i.e. always valid), comparable to the use of the present in similes and such. Pan always (327 semper) looks this way and has these habits (339 interdum). The god’s portrait is structured iconically in the classical way from head to toe; first his hair, temples, horns, ears and beard are described (331–333), then his body, adorned with staff and cloak (334–335), then his feet (336–338) and lastly his tail, which falls outside the normal description order (339–340). The description is framed by a number of aspects and religious functions of the god; his light-footedness and frivolity are

34 A similar juxtaposition of opposite reactions is achieved at 142 (see the prev.n.): fear vs arrogant challenge.
35 Schematically, this structure is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>316–317</th>
<th>nature: tacito percurrit pectora sensu religio et effect: saevas componit numine mentes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>318–319a</td>
<td>purpose: ne flammam taedasque velint, ne templa sub uno in cinerem traxisse rogo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>319b–320a</td>
<td>nature: subit intima corda perlabens sensim actor (= central) mitis deus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>320b–324a</td>
<td>arguments: ille superbae ... monet ille refusis ... docet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>324b–325</td>
<td>effect: paulatim atrocibus iura languescunt animis et vis mollita senescit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

36 At 322, the god is said to be non cuiquam visus, which precludes a description through the eyes of the characters or the narrator-as-eyewitness (in the ‘live’ presentation mode).
the subject of 327–328 (plus 329 lascivit) and 336–340, whereas 329–330 and 341–342 draw upon his role as patron of the Lupercalia and herdsmen, respectively. Many of these elements may have been borrowed from representations of the god in visual art.\textsuperscript{37}

With \textit{hic} (343), which summarizes the description (“now this god”),\textsuperscript{38} and the recapitulating \textit{postquam}-clause (343–344) we return to the narrative proper. Since the description was delivered by the narrator in his role as storyteller from a distant future, the other lines on Pan are presumably to be read in the same way; \textit{revisit} (345) is perfect tense (the common tense in narrative) and \textit{ducit} (347) another universal present (i.e. “Maenalus, where Pan \textit{is wont to lead} his flocks”).\textsuperscript{39} The ‘live’ mode of presentation is only resumed when the narrator focuses on the Romans again at 348, at the same time and place at which the narrative was frozen at 326.

An intriguing question remains. Why is Pan described, if no one could see him? Is it ‘merely’ for the aesthetic pleasure of the reader? To answer this question, a closer analysis should be made of the poet’s direction of his reader’s views in the entire passage. As was argued above, the frame with which the scene opens (299–301) draws our attention to the capitulation of the Capuans and their supplication before their enemy (302–313). The last part is focalized through the Romans, who stand and watch the Capuans prostrate themselves: \textit{stabant ... spectabantque} (308–309). These imperfects convey that the action that is described (i.e. the viewing) started at a prior moment;\textsuperscript{40} the Romans were already watching their enemy by the time the narrator turns his attention to them. Since they were watching all along, we might—in retrospect—interpret the preceding lines as Roman focalization as well. But it would be better to say that the poet directs the reader’s view to align it with that of the Romans. The strong focus on the self-abasement of the Capuans, combined with suggestive language such as \textit{defuerant animi} 304, \textit{pudendis} 312 and \textit{femineum} 313, suggests that the reader should sympathize with the Romans and agree with them in their contempt. Yet through the course of lines 314–325 it becomes progressively clearer that the behaviour of the Romans themselves is not to be approved of, either.\textsuperscript{41} The mental change that the Romans undergo is therefore to be repeated by the reader; it is likely that the description of Pan is inserted to attain that goal. Its length and idyllic nature contrasts with the earlier scenes of the siege. The ‘bucolic pause’ reminds the reader of the importance of agriculture and of the preservation of cultivable land; it accents the desirability of leaving Capua intact. This is done through the emphasis on gaiety, fertility and pastoral themes in the description. The result is that at 348ff. the reader is not surprised by the sudden reversal of attitude and that the poet can even praise the Romans’ element approach (350 \textit{mite decus mentis}).\textsuperscript{42} Silius thus directs his reader’s view here, an observation which reinforces the common perception that the \textit{Punica} may be read as a poem with a clear moral lesson.


\textsuperscript{38} See An. 179–255 on \textit{hos} (206) and \textit{is} (225) with fn.37 and Kroon (forthc.).

\textsuperscript{39} This would add another general bucolic element to the description.

\textsuperscript{40} Adema 2008: 91–96.

\textsuperscript{41} Since it echoes Carthaginian traits; see Intr. 299–347 above.

\textsuperscript{42} A clear and relevant contrast is found in book 7, where a similar ‘bucolic pause’, the story of Falernus (7.162–211), marks the framing narration of Hannibal’s ravaging of the Campanian countryside (7.159–161 and 212–214) with far greater emphasis.
Notes to 299–347

299–307
stringebant tenebrae metas, victorque ruebat,
iamque superstantem muro sociosque Milonem
voce attollentem pubes Campana videbat.
pandunt attoniti portas trepidoque capessunt
castra inimica gradu, quis leto avertere poenas
defuerant animi. patet urbs confessa fuorem
et reserat Tyrio maculatas hospite sedes.
matronae puerique ruunt maestumque senatus
concilium nullique hominum lacrimabile vulgus.

299–301 The darkness was reaching its end, and the victor was rushing on, and the Capuan troops already saw Milo standing on the wall and calling for his companions to come up.

tenebrae takes us back to 256 and to the last vision of the battlefield before nightfall, when the Romans were about to take the city (254–255). Darkness has been nothing more than a delay of victory. It is significant that the Romans capture the city themselves, or at least cause the Capuans to surrender by taking their walls. Their decisive and swift victory over Capua contrasts with Hannibal’s capture of Saguntum in book 2, which came about only after many months and was largely to the credit of Juno and Tisiphone, whose efforts left the city devoid of defenders (cf. Dominik 2006: 118).

Capua in defeat is a replay of the capture of Troy; cf. Verg. A. 2.801–803 iamque ... surgebat Lucifer ... / ducebantque diem, Danaique obsessa tenebant / limina portarum, “And now ... the day star was rising, ushering in the morn; and the Danaans held the blockaded gates”, where the Greeks’ possession of the walls at first daylight also serves as the backdrop for the actions of the defenders (as the use of the imperfect indicates). For Capua as Troy, see Intr. 348–380.

stringebant tenebrae metas The metaphor is taken from the chariot-races. metam stringere (‘to graze the turning-point) is ‘to make the sharpest possible turn’; the phrase is found at Ov. Am. 3.2.12 nunc stringam metas interiore rota, “now grazing the turning-post with inner wheel” and used in its original meaning at Sil. 16.361. The sense here is that dawn (the turning point of night and day) is breaking. The use of the metaphor evokes the image of the chariot of the night, an alternative for the more common one of the chariot of the sun; cf. Verg. A. 5.835–836 iamque fere medium caeli Nox umida metam contigerat, “and now dewy Night had just reached its mid-goal in heaven” (where medium ... metam is midnight), Ov. Met. 2.142–143 Hesperio positas in litore metas umida nox tetigit, “dewy night has reached her goal on the far western shore” and Sil. 5.24–25 et iam currículo nigrum nox roscida metam stringebat, “and now the chariot of dewy night was close to its dusky goal”.

ruebat Delz’ suspicion of the verb (1997: 172 “Die Soldaten hatten ruhig im Lager geschlafen [cf. 13.257] ... Zum ‘Losstürzen’ war kein Anlass.”) is ill-founded. In the next line the Roman Milo is already on the wall; ruebat prepares the reader far better for this than Delz’ own suggestion redibat.

Milonem See n.364–366.

attollentem “Lifting up”, both mentally (‘encouraging’) and quasi-physically (with his voice, voce, i.e. ‘telling them to scale the walls’).
They opened the gates in bewilderment and went to the enemy’s camp with trembling steps, those who had not had the courage to avert punishment through death.

Opening the city gates marks either victory or surrender. For the former, cf. Verg. A. 2.27 panduntur portae, where the Trojans leave their city after the apparent departure of the Greeks; the scene is imitated at Sil. 12.744 (after the real departure of Hannibal; see also n.306–307) and Stat. Theb. 12.10 (of the victorious Thebans, who are, however, still in shock, 12.13 attoniti). Here, it is the latter. The capitulation of Capua contrasts with the Saguntines’ refusal to surrender (cf. Hannibal’s demand at 1.300 pandere iamdudum portas) and anticipates the fall of Carthage (17.618 reserantur ... arces).

There are also several echoes of the near-fall of Laurentum in Aeneid 12. There, some suggest to open the gates to Aeneas (A. 12.584 urbein alii reserare iubent et pandere portas; cf. also here 305 reserat ... sedes). The king is in shock (12.610 attonitus) after the suicide of queen Amata, who killed herself when she had identified herself as crimenque caputque malorum (12.600); here the reaction of the populace is similar after the suicide of several members of the Capuan senate, which was typified as perfidia ductorque caputque (261). Latinus, like the old men of Capua here at 311, soiled his grey hair in the dust (12.611 canitiem immundo perfusam pulvere turpans). Amata was brought to her deed after witnessing the Trojans’ assault (12.595–596 venientem prospicit hostem, incessi muros), just as the Capuans here surrender when they see the Romans on their walls (superstantem muro ... Milonem ... videbat). The exodus of women, children, grey senators and people (306–307) picks up Vergil’s references to the same groups on the walls of Laurentum (A. 11.475–476 muros varia cinxere corona matronae puerique; 12.131–132 matres et vulgus inermum / invalidique senes). The designation of the Roman camp as castra inimica may go back to the same phrase at A. 9.739 for Aeneas’ camp. Capua was earlier identified with the Trojan camp when it was besieged and in dire straits (see Intr. 179–255); both Rome and Capua replay Trojan and Latin roles (which suggests just how much Capua is altera Roma), but Capua has only the loser’s parts (see Intr. 142–178).

trepidoque capessunt ... gradu A marked echo of 13.63 quis trepidus monitis Saturnia regna capessit, of Diomedes’ journey to Aeneas upon Minerva’s advice. If we may attach any significance to the correspondence, it is probably that Rome’s superiority, as foretold by Minerva (cf. 61 melioris ... Troiae), is now for the first time truly displayed in the epic.

quis leto avertere poenas defuerant animi Not merely those senators who had not joined in Virrius’ proposal of mass suicide (so Spaltenstein), but all remaining citizens (cf. 306–307); for it is likely that besides the senators others also committed suicide (see n.296–298 interea).

avertere poenas suggests that in fact all Capuans were reprehensible; those who committed suicide did so to avoid (just) punishment and those who chose to live did so out of cowardice. At 379–380 Fulvius marks death on the battlefield as the only honourable way to die for Capuan men.

The city lies open, admitting its madness, and unbars the houses which were stained by having received Punic guests.

Besides denoting Capua’s madness in choosing the foreign invader over their long-time allies (cf. 11.29–30 Capuae ... furorem ... placuisse), the word also suggests that Capua had become alike to Carthage in its furor; see Intr. 256–298.
reserat ... sedes  Cf. 17.618 reseretur ... arces (the surrender of Carthage); here, the city unbars itself (cf. a similar metonymy at 258–260 Capua ... orat). All other three instances of reserare sedes are of the underworld (in general: Verg. A. 8.243–244 terra ... infernas reseret sedes; Stat. Silv. 2.7.57; Elysium: Luc. 6.600); a suggestion of Tartarus seems relevant, since the Capuans atone for their wrongdoing (304 confessa furorem), their sedes are stained (305 maculatas), and recently a Fury administered them infernal poison (294 Stygio ... tabo).

maculatas  For this figurative use (‘to tarnish’, ‘to taint’), TLL 8.28.72ff. compares Verg. A. 10.851 tuum maculavi crimine nomen, “I ... have stained your name with guilt” and Luc. 7.517–518 sceleris sed crimine nullo externum maculant chalybem, “but they stain their foreign steel with no charge of wickedness”. Cf. also Sen. Phoen. 344 maculatos lares.

306–307  Matrons and children rush out and the sorry assembly of the senate and the lowly crowd that is pitied by no man.

matronae puerique ruunt ... senatus .... vulgus  Combined with 301 pubes Campana (the male defenders), this means ‘all people’. The list features several opposites: women and men, young and old, highborn and lowly. Cf. a similar list at 6.366 omnis turba ruit, matres puerique senesque, “all the people hastened to the shore—women and boys and old men”. With the addition of nobles and plebeians, cf. Ov. Met. 3.529–530 turba ruit, mixtaeque viris matresque nurusque / vulgusque proceresque, “the people rush out of the city in throngs, men and women, old and young, nobles and common, all mixed together” and 8.526–527 lugent iuvenesque senesque, vulgusque proceresque gemunt, “young men and old, chieftains and commons, lament and groan”. For the groups, see also n.302–304a pandunt attoniti portas.

ruunt  counterbalances 299 ruebat; the Romans rush in, the Capuans rush out of the city. The scene also contrasts with the end of Punica 12, where the Romans leave the city in joy after Hannibal had been forced to lift his siege; cf. 12.744–745 iamque omnes pandunt portas; ruit undique laetum ... vulgus, “Next they threw open all the gates; and from every quarter the people came rushing with joy” (laetum ~ maestum here). Once again, Capua’s fall is suggested to be the substitute of Rome’s.

nullique hominum lacrimabile vulgus  These words contrast with two other phrases for a defeated populace: i) At Verg. A. 2.798, Aeneas finds his fellow Trojans outside of the city, a miserabile vulgus; whereas our sympathy is roused for the Trojans, the Capuans do not deserve our tears. For Capua re-enacting the fall of Troy in Aeneid 2 (cf. 326–327 tecta ... Troia), see n.299–301 and Intr. 348–380. ii) At the end of Punica 2, the Saguntines (who had committed mass suicide) are hailed by the narrator: 2.697 venerabile vulgus. For the contrasts between Saguntum and Capua, see Intr. 256–298.

308–313

stabant innixi pilis exercitus omnis

spectabantque viros et laeta et tristia ferre

indociles nunc propexis in pectora barbis

verrere humum, nunc foedantes in pulvere crinem

canentem et turpi lacrima precibus pudendis

femineum tenues ululatum fundere in auras.
The entire army stood by, leaning on their spears, and watched the men who did not know how to handle either prosperity or adversity: now they swept the ground with their beards that hang upon their breast, now soiling their white hair in the dust and with degrading tears and shameful pleas they emit a womanish wailing into the thin air.

The contemptibility of the Capuans is made clear in the contrast between the word *viro* and the actions that are described, which are more appropriate for women (311 *verrere humum*, 312 *lacrima*, 313 *femineum ululatum*) or which are otherwise explicitly denounced (312 *turpi*, 312 *pudendis*).


*stabant ... exercitus omnis* For a plural verb form with a collective singular noun, cf. 350 *legio ... condunt*; see for other examples Blomgren 1938: 68–69.

*laeta et tristia ferre indociles* The Capuans could not bear prosperity, i.e. they were corrupted by their luxury which led them to make questionable choices such as the alliance with Hannibal (cf. 353 *quisque bonis periere*), nor adversity, in which they behave as dishonourably. The collocation *laeta et tristia* may go back to a Latin proverb (see Bömer ad Ov. *Fast*. 6.463 *miscentur tristia laetis*, “sorrow is ... blent with joy”).

*indocilis* is ‘unable to learn’, hence ‘not having learnt’; for the construction with inf., cf. 15.567, Hor. *Carm*. 1.1.18 *indocilis pauperiem pati*, *TLL* 7.1.1217.8ff.; cf. also 120 *docilis accedere mensis*.


*barbis verrere humum* It was a typically feminine act of religious supplication to sweep the temple-floor or altar with their hair, described as a Roman custom in case of national emergency at Plb. 9.6.3–4; cf. Sil. 6.560–561 *aliae laceris canentes crinibus alta verrunt tecta deum*, “women also, with their grey hair torn, lay their heads in the dust of the lofty temples”, Liv. 3.7.8 *stratae passim matres crinibus verrentes veniam irarum caelestium finemque pesti exposcant*, “Everywhere were prostrate matrons, sweeping the floors of the temples with their hair, while they besought the angry gods to grant them pardon and end the pestilence”, Liv. 26.9.7, Stat. *Theb*. 9.638 and Apul. *Met*. 6.2 (there not of a temple or altar, but *humum*, like here). That the old men with their long, venerable beards perform the same act before their Roman victors is degrading.

*foedantes in pulvere crinem canentem* Two notions run parallel here. Firstly, that of the vanquished lying in the dust; cf. Verg. *A*. 12.99 *foedare in pulvere crinis* (the fate Turnus envisages for Aeneas in defeat). Secondly, that of old men soiling their grey hair in mourning; cf. Catul. 64.224 *canitiem terra atque infuso pulvere foedans*, Verg. *A*. 10.844 *canitiem mutlo deformat pulvere*, Ov. *Met*. 8.529–530 *pulvere canitiem genitor vultusque seniles foedat humili fuso* (cf. also Ov. *Tr*. 1.3.93–94 *foedatis pulvere turpi crinibus*), and esp. king Latinus lamenting the fall of his city at *A*. 12.611 *canitiem immundo perfusam pulvere turpans*. Here, *turpi* is transferred to *lacrima*; the physical stain becomes a figurative blot on the Capuans’ honour and maleness. Our phrase thus shows both that the Capuans are defeated and that they mourn their own fate. Since in all passages cited the
subject mourns for someone or something else, the fact that the Capuans weep for themselves might contain hidden criticism.

**femineum ... ululatum** For an excellent overview of the use of this phrase, see Pease *ad* Verg. *A*. 4.667. Here, *femineus* does not denote that the lamentations are uttered by women (as in most cases), but that the men act like women; for this pejorative use of *femineus*, see n.16b–18 *femineam*.

**tenues ... in auras** A common poetic phrase since Lucretius (1.1087, 3.232). In most cases, it is used with a verb of disappearing and thus means ‘to vanish into thin air’ (e.g. Verg. *A*. 2.791 *tenuisque recessit in auras*, “[she] drew back into thin air”, *A*. 5.740 *tenuis fugit ceu fumus in auras*, “[Anchises’ image] passed like smoke into thin air”, Sil. 6.39, 8.184); the implication may be that likewise the Capuans’ pleas were lost after they were uttered—that is, they fell on deaf ears.

### 314–325

atque ea dum miles miratur inertia facta
exspectatque ferox sternendi moenia signum,
ecce repens tacito percurrit pectora sensu
religio et saevas componit numine mentes,
ne flammam taedasque velint, ne templae sub uno
in cinerem traxisse rogo. subit intima corda
perlabens sensim mitis deus. ille superbae
fundamenta Capyn posuisse antiquitus urbi
non cuiquam visus passim monet, ille refusis
in spatium immensum campis habitanda relinqui
utile tecta docet. paulatim atrocibus irae
languescunt animis et vis mollita senescit.

### 314–315

*And while the soldiers wonder at these unmanly deeds and fiercely await the signal to raze the walls...*

**atque ea dum** A typical line (and scene) opening in the *Punica* (cf. 2.391, 5.530, 8.61, 10.170, 10.449 and 11.542), otherwise only found at Verg. *A*. 12.383.

**miratur inertia facta** The Capuans are once more aligned with the Trojans defending their camp in *Aeneid* 9; cf. *A*. 9.55 *Teucrum mirantur inertia corda*, “they marvel at the Teurcians’ craven hearts”. The allusion is also an inversion: i) the phrase is displaced from the beginning of the siege in *Aeneid* 9 to the end of one here; ii) the Trojans refrain from leaving their camp, whereas the Capuans open their gates in surrender; iii) the reluctance of the Trojans is common sense and the result of Aeneas’ explicit instructions, but here the reproach of unmanliness is confirmed by the unfavourable descriptions at 303–304 and 309–313.

**exspectatque ferox ... signum** The bellicosity of the Romans, while perhaps justified, is not altogether fitting for them; see Intr. 299–347. Even so, their characteristic discipline holds them back. For the Roman military discipline, which contrasts strongly with the rashness of their enemies, cf. n.155–156a.

### 316–320a

*look, a sudden awe pervades their breast with a silent sensation and calms their warlike minds through divine power, to make them no longer want fire and torches,*
nor wish to reduce the temples to ashes in a single conflagration. A clement god gradually penetrated their bodies and reached their hearts deep inside.

**tacito percurrit pectora sensu** An echo of 2.521 *it tacitus fessis per ovantia pectora sensus*, of Fides’ inspiration for the defenders of Saguntum. Both the Saguntines in their plight and the Romans in their victory are aided by the gods in upholding their principles; see Intr. 299–347.

**ne flammarum taedasque velint, ne ... traxisse** In the first clause, *velle* has a direct object, in the second a complementary infinitive (*traxisse*, which has *templa* as its object). For a similar shift in grammatical construction, see n.159–161 *indignatus*.

**sub uno ... rogo** The preposition here probably expresses that the city will serve as the fuel ‘under’ the conflagration.


In poetry, the perfect infinitive is commonly used where we would expect a present. This use seems to have originated from prohibitions with *velle* or *nolle* with infinitive and became popular with poets in a wider range of applications, possibly under the influence of the Greek aorist, but also for its metrical convenience; see *KS* 2.1.133–134, Pinkster 1990: 236. In *Punica* 13, cf. also 369 *occultiisse probarim*, 390 *tenuisse valent*, 519–520 *causa ... iuvisse fuit*, 624 *vidisse liceret*, 729–730 *dulce [est] ... vidisse*, 744–745 *coeperat ... excessisse*.

**subit intima corda** A comparable passage is Stat. *Theb.* 9.712–713 *talia cerenti mitis subit alta Dianae corda dolor*, “as Diana sees the spectacle, tender grief goes to the depth of her heart”. Cf. Dewar *ad loc.* “*subeo* is often used of emotions, e.g. anger (Virg. *A.* 2.575), hope (Ov. *Tr.* 2.147), pity (Plin. *Ep.* 3.710)”. Hence here the god, *mitis deus*, stands for mildness itself, just as at 2.513ff. Fides entering the Saguntines’ hearts suggests their renewed sense of *fides* (cf. those passages where ‘Vulcanus’ means ‘fire’, as at Hor. *S.* 1.5.74, or ‘Mars’ means ‘warlike spirit’, as at Sil. 10.14 *plenus Gradivo mentem Cato*, “Cato, full of martial spirit”). For a similar use of *subeo* (and other verbal correspondences), cf. 10.543ff. *subit horrida mentem formido incerti casus, tacitusque pererrat intima corda pavor*, “they felt a dreadful apprehension of the uncertain future, and an unspoken fear invaded their inmost hearts”.

**deus** The divine intervention is revealed progressively clearer; first *religio* (317) and *numine* (317), then the unambiguous *deus* here, who is finally shown to be Pan in 326.

**320b–324a** The god, not visible to anyone, reminds all around that Capys had laid the foundations of the proud city long ago, the god shows that it is useful if homes are left to be inhabited on these fields spreading to a vast extent.

Two arguments should persuade the Romans. The first addresses the kinship between Rome and Capua; its founder Capys was a Trojan (see n.117–119 *Capys*). This was Jupiter’s reason to send Pan; cf. 326 *servati tecta volente Troia*. The same contrast between the venerable origin of Capua and its present degeneration (cf. *superbae*) is found at 11.30ff.

The second argument, that it would be useful to leave some habitation on the fertile plains, is adopted from Liv. 26.16.7–13, which describes a discussion in the Roman senate
on the policy which was to be pursued regarding the city of Capua and its surroundings. Livy states that usefulness gained the upper hand in the dispute (utilitas 26.16.7, echoed by 324 utile); because of the high fertility of the arable land, the city itself would be spared to serve as a place of residence for farmers. That the Romans did not vent their anger upon innocent buildings (26.16.12 non saevitum incenditis ruinisque in tecta innoxia murosque), which Livy praises as common sense, is taken up by Silius at 318–319 ne templae sub uno in cinerem traxisse rogo, with the added notion of pietas (cf. religio 317)—the Romans should not burn temples. The mildness, expressed by mitis deus and again in 350 mite decus mentis, is also a theme in Livy, where states that the Romans strove to appear mild by preserving the famous and prospering city that Capua was. For the theme of the preservation of Italy, see Intr. 299–347.

superbae fundamenta Capyn posuisse antiquitus urbi The choice of words connects Capua with Carthage; cf. Verg. A. 4.265–266 tu nunc Karthaginis altae fundamenta locas, “are you now laying the foundations of lofty Carthage” and A. 1.12 urbs antiqua fuit. Aeneas is berated at A. 4.265–266 for laying the foundations of Carthage rather than Rome; similarly Capua, the city of another Trojan, has turned out to be more like Carthage than like Rome. The contrast between Capua’s noble origin, which should be respected by the Romans, and the Punic perfidia of its inhabitants, which was to be punished, is very marked.

non cuiquam visus It is a common theme in poetry that gods are invisible to men unless they want to be seen (Hom. Od. 11.573–574); cf. e.g. Verg. A. 5.610 nulli visa cito decurrit tramite virgo, “[Iris] runs swiftly down her path, a maiden seen of none”. On the question why the god Pan is described in 326ff. despite his invisibility, see An. 299–347.

324b–325 Slowly the anger subsides from their fierce minds and their determination softens and fades.

irae languescunt ... et vis mollita senescit Cf. Stat. Theb. 12.727 languescuntque minae et virtus secura resedit, “their threats lack force, their valour sinks in assurance of victory”, of the Athenians under Theseus whose bellicosity wanes at the sight of the Thebans’ feebleness. For the intertext, see Intr. 299–347. senescit is “abates” and has no negative connotation here; cf. in a similar context Liv. 29.22.8 iam senescente invidia molliebantur irae.

326–342
Pan Iove missus erat servari tecta volente Troia, pendenti similis Pan semper et imo 
vix ulla inscribens terrae vestigia cornu. 
dextera lascivit caesa Tegeatide capra 
verbera laeta movens festae per compita caudae. 
cingit acuta comas et opacat tempora pinus, 
ac parva erumpunt rubicunda cornua fronte. 
stant aures, imoque cadit barba hispida mento. 
pastorale deo baculum, pellisque sinistrum 
velat grata latus tenerae de corpore dammae. 
nulla in praeruptum tam prona et inhospita cautes,
in qua non librans corpus similisque volanti
cornipedem tulerit praecisa per avia plantam.
interdum inflexus medio nascentia tergo
respicit arridens hirtae ludibria caudae,
obtendensque manum solem infernescere fronti
arcet et umbrato perlustrat pascua visu.

326–327a Pan had been sent because Jupiter wanted the Trojan city to be saved ...  

The narrative is briefly paused for an explanation of the nature of the intervening deus
(“it was Pan”); the pluperfect missus erat introduces a description of the god (which is
universally valid, i.e. not bound to the time of the story; see An. 299–347). The narrative is
resumed at 343; we return to the Romans at 348.

love For the interference of Jupiter himself, see the introduction to 299–347. love is not
an ablative of agent (the preposition a would then be required), but the subject of an
ablative absolute. Rather than explicitly making Jupiter the authority responsible for Pan’s
intervention, the causal relation between missus erat and Jupiter’s wish is left vague.

tecta ... Troia Capua’s founder was the Trojan Capys, a companion of Aeneas; see
n.117–119 Capys. Note that Jupiter only wanted the city itself (tecta) to be saved on
account of its illustrious origin; its citizens deserved no such favour.

327b–328 ... Pan who always seems to hang in the air and who with the tip of his hoof
hardly leaves any imprints on the ground.

pendenti similis Taken up by similisque volanti in 337. The verb expresses that Pan
scarcely touches the ground (rather than Duff’s “to stand on tiptoe”), which hints both at his
light-footedness and at his tendency to be always on the move. Cf. the similar use of
pendeo at Stat. Theb. 6.640 and for actual levitation Sil. 17.358 (of a cloud), Ov. Met. 2.726
aethere pendens (Mercury), TLL 10.1.1.1035.21ff. (see also the loc.cit. at n.336–338
librans corpus). The phrase evokes a picture of Pan who scarcely ever touches the ground,
similis with the present participle in dative case is poetic idiom for “seeming to”, “as if”,

Pan ... Pan For the intertextual models for the repetition, see Intr. 299–347. Reduplication of a name commonly introduces exegetic information in the form of an
apposition or relative clause, a feature which Lausberg (1960: 314–315) mentions in
relation to anadiplosis (the repetition of the last word of a line or clause at the beginning of
the next); as our lines and other examples show, the first element does not necessarily take
the last position of its clause. The figure is relatively frequent in the Punica; cf. (with

329–330 After the sacrifice of a Tegean goat, his right hand frolics around dealing fertile
lashes with its festive tail at the crossroads.

The reference is to the feast of the Lupercalia, which was held on Feb. 15th in Rome.
The festival had two related aspects: purification and promoting fertility (RE
13.2.1823.54ff.; for a discussion of the ritual and its significance see Fowler 1899: 310–321
and Ogilvie ad Liv. 1.5.1–2). Goats were sacrificed and their skin was cut into broad straps.
Subsequently a special group of priests, the Luperci, would run naked (gird only with the goat-skins) through the city and strike everyone they met with their straps of goat-skin; women believed the blows to improve their fertility and therefore actively offered themselves to be hit (cf. e.g. Ov. Fast. 2.425–428, see below).

According to popular tradition, the festival had been imported from Arcadia by Euander; its name was connected with that of a similar Arcadian festival, the Lykaia (λύκος). This connection (cf. Verg. A. 8.343–344, Ov. Fast. 2.267ff., Liv. 1.5.2, Dion.Hal. 1.32.3–5, Plut. Rom. 21.3, Caes. 61.1) is present here in the epithet Tegeatide; Tegea was the main settlement of Arcadia. The presiding deity over the Lupercalia was Faunus, the old Italian rustic god (cf. Ov. Fast. 2.361 cited below; Livy calls the god Inuus, a name which according to Serv. ad A. 6.775 is a Latin name for Pan). The identification of Arcadian Pan with Faunus is common, and for some poets, such as Horace and Ovid, the names are interchangeable; cf. Hor. Carm. 3.18.1 Faune, Nympharum fugientum amator, “Faunus, the lustful pursuer of the fleeing Nymphs” and Ov. Met. 1.699 (Pan) ≈ Her. 5.137 (Faunus).

The purification aspect of the feast may be important here for relating the description to the narrative. The Capuans are tainted by their hospitality to the Carthaginians (cf. 305 maculatas ... sedes) and so the Romans in dealing with them and by giving way to furor require the purifying presence of a god.

festae ... caudae goes with verbera laeta.

lascivit The verb (here used of the hand instead of Pan himself) evokes the image of a young animal playfully ‘capering’ in the field, fittingly for the half-goat god.

dextera ... verbera laeta movens Cf. Ovid’s lines on these lashes at Fast. 2.425–428 excipe fecundae patienter verbera dextrae, iam socer optatum nomen habebit avi, “submit with patience to the blows dealt by a fruitful hand, soon will your husband’s sire enjoy the wished-for name of grandsire”. laeta here is ‘fertile’, ‘fruitful’ (cf. OLD laetus 1).

caesa ... capra The straps which the Luperci used for striking were cut from the skin of the goats sacrificed at the beginning of the Lupercalia (see above); even so, this phrase is not an instrumental ablative with lascivit (so both Duff and Spaltenstein, who read capra as ‘goat-skin’), but rather an ablative absolute. Cf. the corresponding line at Ov. Fast. 2.361 cornipedi Fauno caesa de more capella, “a she-goat had been sacrificed as usual to hoof-footed Faunus”, where the ablative cannot be read as instrumental. Silius’ Pan uses his own tail to strike out (verbera laeta movens festae ... caudae).

Frazer ad Ov. Fast. 2.267ff. (p.352–353) concludes that the fertility rites during the Lupercalia required that the goat that was to be sacrificed be male. Apparently Ovid himself was not aware of this (capella; cf. Bömer ad loc.) and neither was Silius, who followed Ovid.

331–332 Sharp-needled pine girds his hair and shades his temples, and small horns protrude from his ruddy brow.

cingit acuta comas ... pinus Cf. the very similar descriptions at Ov. Met. 1.699 Pan ... pinique caput praecinctus acuta ≈ Her. 5.137–138, Met. 14.638 pinu praecincti cornua Panes, Fast. 1.412 tibi, qui pinu temporae nexa geris. The pine was sacred to Pan; according to myth, the god had once loved a nymph called Pitys, who fled from his advances and was turned into a pine or fir tree. Cf. also Lucr. 4.586–587 Pan, pinea semiferi capitis velamina quassans and Prop. El. 1.18.20 Arcadio pinus amica deo, Stat. Silv. 2.3.52 nostrae ... pinus.
opacat tempora For ‘shaded temples’, cf. Verg. A. 6.772 umbrata gerunt civili tempora quercu, “the civic oak that shades their brow”, A. 8.33–34 crinis umbrosa tegebant harundo, “shady reeds crowned his hair”, V.Fl. 4.137–138 umbrata ... tempora Parrhasio ... galero, “the brow shaded ... by an Arcadian hat”, Stat. Theb. 6.554 Olympiacis umbratus tempora ramis, “his temples ... shaded by Olympian branches”. Silius’ phrase may have inspired Claud. rapt. 1.203 silex quam pinus opacat.

rubicunda ... fronte The word rubicundus (‘ruddy’) refers to the fact that Pan is always outside and thus sun-tanned, but also points to the red minium with which the face of his statues was painted (cf. Verg. Ecl. 10.27 minioque rubentem with Serv. ad loc.). The same dye is more commonly associated with images of Priapus (for his red colour, see Herter 1932: 172–174); cf. a similar word play at Ov. Fast. 1.415 ruber ... Priapus and 6.319 rubicunde Priape.

333 His ears stand erect, and a shaggy beard falls down from the end of his chin.

Pan’s pointed ears and goatee show that Silius clearly opted for the tradition in which the god was predominantly goat-like, as opposed to the variant tradition in visual art which depicted the god as a beardless youth, with the horns as the only reminder of his caprine nature (cf. e.g. LIMC ‘Pan’ 56).

For the allusion to Vergil’s description of Atlas at A. 4.250–251 flumina mento praecipitant senis, et glacie riget horrida barba, “rivers plunge down the aged chin and his rough beard is stiff with ice”, see Intr. 299–347.

334–335 The god carries a herdsman’s staff, and the skin from the body of a soft deer covers his left side.

For the description of these two traditional items, staff and skin, Silius was inspired by Ovid’s description of pastoral Apollo at Met. 2.680–681 illud erat tempus, quo te pastoria pellis texit, onusque fuit baculum silvestre sinistrae, “In those days ... [t]hy garment was a shepherd’s cloak, thy staff a stout stick from the wood”. Several words of Ovid’s lines are echoed here with the usual transposition of adjectives: pastorale (cf. Ovid’s pastoria) has been transferred to baculum, while sinistrum now qualifies the pellis clause. In visual art Pan was also often depicted with a staff and an animal hide (cf. e.g. LIMC ‘Pan’ 87).

grata Håkanson (1976: 30) rejects grata in favour of Heinsius’ conjecture rapta or his own alternative tracta, claiming that the MSS reading is incompatible with the other elements in the description (stant aures, hispida barba), which are un-gratus. But Silius’ image of Pan stresses his peacefulness (see Intr. 299–347) and his roughness is counterbalanced by his playfulness. Therefore grata should be kept; the alternatives proposed would evoke too aggressive an image.

tenerae ‘soft’ (so Duff; tenerae is then by enallage applied to pellis), but probably also ‘young’ (OLD s.v. 2) and ‘gentle’ (Spaltenstein; cf. OLD s.v. 7) as a hint towards the unwarlike nature of deer; see Intr. 299–347 for the implication of this point.

336–338 There is no rock sloping so steeply into the depths and so inhospitable, on which Pan is not able to move his foot over untrodden precipices, balancing his body and seeming to fly.

Up to here, the poet described Pan in the traditional manner, starting at the top of his body and gradually going down, with a focus on the individual body parts. He has now reached the feet of the god, but our attention is directed not at their appearance, but rather at their function or ability to climb steep rocks, which stresses Pan’s light-footedness and his
resemblance to a mountain goat. The mode of body description is discarded even more clearly in the next element, Pan’s tail (see foll. n.).

in praeruptum ... prona et inhospita cautes Silius used the same words to describe the rugged terrain of the Alps at 3.634–635 prona minaci praerupto turbant et cautibus obvia rupes, “he was troubled by the dreadful steepness of the descent and by rocks confronting cliffs.” Dausqueius ad loc. adduces the Homeric Hymn to Pan, 19.6–10, which also portrays Pan darting across mountain crests and steep rocks.

librans corpus The phrase is used in the context of flying (cf. similisque volanti) at Ov. Met. 8.201 geminas opifex libravit in alas ipse suum corpus motaque pependit in aura, “the master workman himself balanced his body on two wings and hung poised on the beaten air” and Sil. 12.94 suspensum hic librans media inter nubia corpus, “keeping his body poised amid the clouds” (both of Daedalus).

similisque volanti Recall pendenti similis (327).
cornipedem ... plantam Cf. Ov. Fast. 2.361 cornipedi Fauno and Priapea 3.16 cornipes capella; the epithet stresses once more Pan’s half-goat appearance.

339–340 Sometimes he turns around and looks behind him with a laugh at the playfulness of the hairy tail growing in the middle of his back ...

The description of the tail, which is last in order since it is normally not part of a body description, is replaced by a habit (interdum) which relates to it. These lines draw upon Pan’s frivolity; cf. 329 lascivit.

inflexus .... respicit There seem to be no literary parallels for this phrase, but in visual art Pan is depicted in this pose in LIMC ‘Pan’ 56.

arridens hirtae ludibria caudae A verbal reminiscence of Luc. 9.14 risitque sui ludibria trunci, “[Pompey’s shade] laughed at the insults to his torso”.

341–342 ..., and by putting up a hand he keeps the sun from becoming too hot for his brow and with shaded sight he views the pastures.

The pose that is described in these lines is common for Pan in visual art (cf. e.g. LIMC ‘Pan’ 8, 27, 31); it represents him as a herdsman (cf. 342 perlustrat pascua) whose flocks are commonly spread far and wide. Both satyrs and herdsmen were often depicted in this characteristic pose, called ἀποσκοπεύω by the Greeks, ‘to look far away’ (cf. a piece of art in Plin. Nat. 35.138 nobilissimo Satyro cum pelle pantherina, quem aposcopeuonta appellant, “most famous of all, his Satyr with Leopard’s Skin, called in Greek the Man Shading his Eyes”); it is only fitting that Pan, who is both herdsman and a sort of satyr, here acts likewise.

perlustrat pascua Cf. the similar idea in the Homeric Hymn to Pan, 19.11 ἀκροτάτην κορυφὴν μηλοσκόπον [μηλοσκόπος Roscher] εἰσαναβαίνων, “as he climbs up to the highest peak to survey the flocks”.

343–347

hic postquam mandata dei perfecta malamque sedavit rabiem et permulsit corda furentum, Arcadiae volucris saltus et amata revisit Maenala, ubi argutis longe de vertice sacro dulce sonans calamis ducit stabula omnia cantu.
When Jupiter’s commands had been fulfilled and Pan had calmed down the evil rage and had pacified the hearts of the angry Romans, he returned swiftly to the glades of Arcadia and to his beloved Maenalus...

*malam ... rabiem* The rage of the Romans is here denounced explicitly; *rabies* and *furor* were Carthaginian traits (cf. 1.70–71 *hanc rabiem ... addiderat puero patrius furor*, “when he was a mere child, his father’s passion had kindled in Hannibal this frenzy”; see Intr. 299–347). The idyllic phrases of the preceding and following lines emphasize that such fury is out of place (and un-Roman).

*Arcadiae ... Maenala* Arcadia in the Peloponnese was Pan’s traditional home-region; the mountain Maenalus was sacred to him (cf. e.g. Verg. *G*. 1.17 *Pan ... tibi Maenala curae*).

..., where sweetly sounding far and wide on his clear reed pipe from the sacred peak he leads all the flocks with his music.

*argutis ... calamis* Cf. Verg. *Ecl*. 8.22–24 *Maenalus argutumque nemus pinosque loquentis semper habet; semper ... ille audit ... Panaque, qui primus calamos non passus inertis*, “Maenalus has ever tuneful groves and speaking pines; ever does he listen to ... Pan, who first awoke the idle reeds”; cf. also Man. 39–40 *Pana sonantem in calamos*.

*de vertice sacro* Maenalus was sacred to both Pan and Zeus. The phrase echoes Verg. *A*. 10.230 *Idaee sacro de vertice pinus* and is found also at Sil. 4.152 (the Capitoline hill), 4.347 (mount Massicus) and 7.469 (mount Ida).

*dulce sonans* For the adverbial use of *dulce*, see n.257–260 *flebile*. Cf. the *Homeric Hymn to Pan*, 19.15–16 δονάκων ὑπ’ ἐμοῦ σοφον ἀθύρων / νηδύμον, “playing sweet and low on his pipes of reed”.

*stabula* For its use of the animals occupying a stable or pen, see 3.383, *OLD s.v.* 1b.
348–380 Aftermath of the fall of Capua: plunder and execution. Taurea’s suicide

At Fulvius’ order the Roman soldiers put away their swords and torches. Capua is plundered of the riches which had caused its corruption: garments, rich furniture, tableware, money, slaves. After Fulvius has ended the looting, he rewards with the mural crown the soldier who had been the first to gain the walls, Milo. The nobles of Capua are put to death. The warrior Taurea commits suicide with his sword and is rebuked for his deed by Fulvius.

The narration of the aftermath of Capua’s capitulation consists of a series of short scenes. The discussion below will begin with the first and last of these (clemency and execution) and then move on to the central parts (plunder and ceremony).

The Romans’ decision to spare the city of Capua is praised by Silius (mite decus mentis 350). Some scholars have called the extent of their clemency into question, however, pointing to the divine intervention which denies full credit to the Romans and Fulvius’ harsh reaction to the suicide of Taurea. That Pan had a hand in the Roman display of clemency seems not to be an issue for the narrator, however; the praise of 350 comes after the revelation of divine interference. Even so, the passage may provoke doubts as to the nature of Roman clementia which need to be addressed.

As has often been noted, Fulvius’ mercy should be set alongside another act of clementia in 14.665ff., where Marcellus spares Syracuse and refrains from sacking the city. In many respects, the two passages are comparable. The description of the booty from Capua (13.351–360) corresponds to that of Syracuse’s splendour (14.643–665). Marcellus’ order that the houses should remain standing echoes Fulvius’ similar command; he delivers his judgment on the city from a high hill, just as Fulvius rewards Milo and punishes the Capuan nobles from his position on a high platform. In a moral sense, however, Marcellus’ attitude at Syracuse is an improvement over the Romans’ demeanour at Capua. In book 13, the Romans have been led by feelings of revenge and their injured pride and only learn clemency through divine intervention, whereas Marcellus was averse to fighting Syracuse in the first place and felt weighed down with the burden of having to decide its fate.

It would be wrong, however, to judge Fulvius against Marcellus; it is only in retrospect that Fulvius’ mercy seems imperfect. The change in Roman attitude in book 13 reflects the conflict of fides (which demands punishment of the breaking of bonds) and clementia

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1 Ahl / Davis / Pomeroy 1986: 2537.
2 Burck 1984: 58. It should be noted, however, that many elements in the description of Syracuse have no counterpart in our lines, and that 13.351ff. primarily underscore excess whereas 14.643ff. describe beauty.
3 14.672 iussit stare domos ~ 13.348–349 ductore iubente ... stantes ... relinquere muros.
5 Cf. 13.99 dedecus hoc defende manu; 13.315 expectatque ferox sternendi moenia signum.
6 14.182 ferri languebat amor, “he felt less eagerness for battle” (cf. 13.324–325 irae languescunt, after the intervention); 14.295–296 ad bella vocari invitum, “he was challenged to war against his will”; 14.670 ingemuit nimio iuris, “he groaned aloud because of his excess of power”.
7 Marks (2005: 261–262) also draws attention to the fundamentally different relationship the two cities had with Rome; the Capuans’ violation of ancient, ancestral ties constituted a far graver offense against Rome than the Syracusans’ political defection.
(which mends these broken bonds), the precarious balancing of opposing virtues which to the Roman mind is fundamental to the resolution of civil war; Silius’ solution here is the coexistence of mercy and justice.\(^8\) The behaviour of each Roman commander in books 13–17 shows an aspect of the Roman virtues: Fulvius’ keen sense of justice, the clemency and pietas of Marcellus, the speed of Claudius Nero, the selfless patriotism of Livius, culminating in Scipio, who combines all virtues. While it would be futile to try and discern an upward trend in the list of generals (indeed, it would be hard to find fault with Marcellus in the way he is depicted by Silius), a plausible reading of the last books of the *Punica* is that the Romans gradually rediscover their morals and virtue, a process which finds its pinnacle in Scipio.\(^9\) In this light, the imperfection (or rather incompleteness) of Roman clemency in the present passage is not in itself problematic.

When the Romans start to execute the Capuan leaders at the end of the scene, the figure of Taurea reappears; he delivers a short speech of defiance and then kills himself. Taurea’s suicide presents an interesting case. The narrator claims that he would not have wanted to conceal such a display of *virtus* (369–370), but Taurea is rebuked for his action by Fulvius. Does the authorial comment suggest that we should sympathize with the Capuan warrior, or should we revaluate Taurea’s words and action after Fulvius’ words? To address this question, a comparison should be made with Livy’s account of the event.

Livy devotes the greater part of *caput* 26.15 to the execution of the Capuan nobles. Fulvius, who did not agree with his colleague Appius Claudius about their fate, did not wait for instructions from Rome. As he ordered the execution of all Capuan senators, an express letter from Rome was brought to him; he laid the letter unopened in his lap, however. After the execution it emerged that, as Fulvius had suspected, the letter had tried to prevent what had been done. This narrative is followed by two variants of Taurea’s suicide. In the first (Liv. 26.15.11–15), Taurea pushed through the crowd when the executions were over and shouted to Fulvius that the Roman should execute him as well, so that he would be able to pride himself in killing one better than himself. When Fulvius refused and declared Taurea mad, the Campanian laments that after the fall of his country, the demise of his friends, wife and children, he could not even share the death of his fellow citizens; he revealed the sword he had hidden under his tunic and committed suicide, falling dead before Fulvius’ feet. In the second version (26.16.2–3), Taurea was due to be executed; he declared to Fulvius that he, a very brave man, would be killed by someone vastly inferior in manliness, at which Fulvius ordered the lictor to whip that brave man some more and to administer the law on him first.

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\(^8\) For *clementia* and *iustitia*, we should compare the two options open to Aeneas at the end of Vergil’s epic: the mercy which Turnus pleaded or *pietas* to Pallas which demanded Turnus’ death. At the sight of Pallas’ baldric, *furor* and *ira* (*A. 12.946*) prompted Aeneas to kill Turnus; it is significant that in the *Punica*, Pan’s intervention put an end to exactly this kind of rage. Silius’ treatment seems therefore a correction to Vergil’s resolution of the war in the *Aeneid*. With the removal of *furor*, still both options are pursued at the same time, however—Capua is spared due to Roman *clementia*, but its leading citizens yet pay with their blood (*iustitia*, cf. 368 *iusta*). Line 381 *Capua infaustam luit haud sine sanguine culpam* may well pick up Aeneas’ condemnation of Turnus at *A. 12.949 poenam scelerato ex sanguine sumit*.

\(^9\) Cf. Ripoll (1998a: 456), who notes that the fact that Marcellus’ clemency was the result of his own *moderatio*, whereas Fulvius’ clemency was brought about by divine intervention, “ressemble bien à une progression concertée”.

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\(^9\) Cf. Ripoll (1998a: 456), who notes that the fact that Marcellus’ clemency was the result of his own *moderatio*, whereas Fulvius’ clemency was brought about by divine intervention, “ressemble bien à une progression concertée”.
What is immediately apparent is that Silius has given both Fulvius and Taurea a more favourable treatment than Livy did. The historiographer depicts the Roman general as an implacable man who is unwilling to confer with the senate over his decision; Silius completely left the incident out. Had he included it, Fulvius would have only seemed to be another Flaminius or Varro, whereas Silius after Cannae stresses rather the unanimity of the Roman people.\(^{10}\) In his brief reference to the execution, emphasis lies rather on justice being done.\(^{11}\) For Taurea, Silius has not simply adopted one of Livy’s two versions, but created a new one by combining both; Taurea’s words suggest that he is due for execution along with the other nobles (e.g. 372 *iusso lictore*), which is taken from the second version, but the suicide is taken from the first, with a reversal of motive; Taurea does not offer himself to be killed as a greater individual by an inferior one, but acts to deny Fulvius this opportunity.\(^{12}\) In both of Livy’s variants, Taurea’s behaviour is essentially pointless; we might tend to agree with Fulvius’ verdict that Taurea is a madman in the first version, and in the second his words are futile bragging. By contrast, Silius’ Taurea shows his courage and independence by depriving the Romans of the chance to execute him, reminding us of Virrius; his actions are described as *virtus* (369, albeit modified by *atrox*) and *decus* (370).\(^{13}\) Taurea acts as Capua’s champion for the last time and his death is a fitting end to the narrative of Capua’s fall.

In his analysis of suicides in Flavian epic, McGuire (1997) recognizes a similarity between Taurea’s suicide and other self-destructive acts of defiance of victims before their oppressor and infers that Fulvius is here put in the role of the epic tyrant.\(^{14}\) His assertion has been refuted by Marks (2005: 262–263), who has pointed out that the identification of Fulvius with a “tyrant” figure solely on the basis of the general pattern of suicide scenes is untenable, that the relation between Fulvius and Taurea as victor over a perfidious enemy is different from that of tyrant and subject,\(^{15}\) and that Fulvius “does not otherwise behave in a recognizably tyrannical fashion”. Indeed, had Silius wanted to put the Romans in a bad

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\(^{10}\) Spaltenstein’s comment that Silius simplifies is thus only a half truth. That Silius omitted the event in order to represent Fulvius more favourably is also the interpretation of Ripoll (1998a: 399 n.110, 453, 456 n.146) and Marks (2005: 260 n.64).


\(^{12}\) That Taurea should still have his sword despite being taken for execution is probable to be regarded as a poetically uninteresting detail. Verbal echoes from the first story include 372 *te maiorem* (cf. Liv. 26.15.11 *multo fortiorum quam ipse es*), 373 *ante pedes* (cf. 26.15.15), 376 *per pectora transigit* (cf. 26.15.15 *per adversum pectus transfixus*); and possibly 379 *pudendum ... pati* (cf. 26.15.14 *ne quid indigini paterentur, of the indignity Taurea spared his wife and children by killing them*); from the second story, cf. the contrast *ignavos ... fortissima* (373; cf. 26.16.3 *virum se fortissimum ab nequaquam pari ad virtutem occidi*, “he, the bravest of men, was being killed by one who was in no way his equal in courage”). See the notes for reminiscences of other authors.

\(^{13}\) From Livy’s original two variants, Silius has thus created a more effective scene; see also Nesselrath 1986: 229–230.

\(^{14}\) McGuire compares Taurea’s suicide to that of Maeon before Eteocles in Stat. *Theb.* 3.79–98. In general, he maintains that “Silius frequently sets the Carthaginians up as monstrous and cruel oppressors, and later, as Rome gains the upper hand, attributes the same actions to the Romans” (1997: 24) and that “… the final instances of suicide in the *Punica* leave us with images of brave defiance to Roman conquest and provides us with a sympathetic view of the victims of Roman imperialism” (1997: 222), an interpretation which I do not share.

\(^{15}\) In response to the comparison with Maeon, Marks (2005: 263) observes that “Eteocles has otherwise shown himself to be a tyrant, that Maeon, when facing Eteocles, is a subject facing his tyrannical ruler, and that Eteocles’ cause is morally indefensible”. Ripoll (1998a: 401) also sees the suicides of Taurea and Maeon in terms of contrast.
light, he could easily have adopted and reinforced Livy’s account of Fulvius’ haste in executing the Capuan prisoners, rather than stressing their clemency (348–350) and justice (367–368). The only figure whose behaviour bears similarity to that of tyrants is Taurea himself; his menacing gaze and fierce grin liken him to the most prominent tyrant of the Punica, Hannibal.17

Moreover, the Romans have the last word; Taurea’s deed is dismissed as misguided by Fulvius in his reply that meeting death in battle would have been a better way to escape submission.18 Taurea’s suicide is, in essence, merely the escape of just punishment. With Taurea, all Capuan suicides are denounced for not fighting to the death; for like Virrius, Taurea symbolizes the whole city. This important connection, which was discussed in detail in Intr. 142–178, is underscored here again in Fulvius’ reply patriam moriens comitare cadentem (377). The warrior’s challenge to Claudius and his death mirror Capua’s challenge of Rome and subsequent fall; Taurea’s narrative frames that of Capua to reflect this. Both Virrius and Taurea display the Carthaginian character of Capua and show aspects of Hannibal; Virrius as Capua’s spokesman personifies its perfidia, while Taurea is the Campanian embodiment of furor and ira.19 Just as Capua’s fall anticipates that of Carthage, so are the suicides of Virrius and Taurea an adumbration of Hannibal’s end.20

The identification of Taurea with his city also brings out another aspect of the passage: the parallel with Hector and Troy. At 142ff., Taurea’s duel with Claudius evoked the duel of Iliad 22; Achilles’ scrutinizing Hector’s body for a weak spot was paralleled first in Claudius’ inspection of Taurea and then in his penetration of Capua itself, an analogy which builds on the interpretation of Hector as a symbol of Troy.21 The connection with Troy’s champion is continued here. Fulvius’ retort to Taurea echoes Achilles’ reply to the dying Hector and emphasizes the connection between warrior and city.22 But the connection of Taurea with Hector is not the only parallel between Capua and Troy. The sack of Troy also resonates in the description of luxurious spoils from Capua in 353–360, which has a model in A. 2.763ff.:23

16 McGuire (1997: 225) compares Aeetes’ gaze at V.Fl. 5.519 vultu ... minaci and Creon’s “phony smile” at Stat. Theb. 12.688 fictum ac triste remiden. For Creon, see also Intr. 299–347.
17 See n.369–371a and Intr. 256–298 with fn.28; for Hannibal as tyrant, see n.612 letiferis ... tyrannis.
18 Cf. Burck 1984: 50, Ripoll 1998a: 401. That suicide is not necessarily regarded favourably in Flavian epic is also observed by McGuire (1997: 228). In combination with the suicide of Virrius at 256–298, the scene may react to Lucan’s narrative of Vulteius and his men, who commit suicide when their raft is trapped and they are about to fall into the hands of Pompeians (Luc. 4.465–581). Like the Capuans, the Caesarians have only a single night of freedom left (Luc. 4.476 libera non ultra parva quam nocte iuventus ~ 13.270ff. dum copia noctis ... libertas); Taurea’s suicide echoes Vulteius’ death (Luc. 4.545 viscera ... transigit ensis ~ 13.376 per pectora transigitensem). Vulteius’ deed is also labelled virtus (4.470, 558, 576; cf. 4.512). Lucan commends suicide as the means to escape slavery (4.576–577 non ardua virtus / servitium fugisse manu), a sentiment which is contradicted by Silius’ Fulvius.
19 See Intr. 256–298 with fn.28. The exposure of Virrius’ suicide as evasion of due punishment is discussed earlier in the same introduction.
20 See Intr. 256–298 with fn.43.
22 Hom. Il. 22.365 τιδωβαθι ~ 377 patriam moriens comitare cadentem; for the modification, see n.377.
23 Cf. Cowan 2007: 35 n.235. While the narrative of Taurea’s suicide had its basis in Livy, the historiographer says nothing of a sack of Capua.
huc undique Troïa gaza
ingensis erepta adytis, mensaeque deorum
crateresque auro solidi captivaque vestis
congeritur. pueri et pavidae longo ordine matres stant circum.

“Here the treasures from all parts of Troy, torn from blazing shrines, tables of the gods, bowls of solid gold, and plundered raiment, are heaped up; boys and trembling matrons in long array stand round.”

Verbal echoes and other correspondences abound; the spoils, hauled from the temples, include tables, golden vessels, cloths and slaves.24 But there are also marked differences; in Silius’ version, the rich booty is not only taken from the temples, but also (or rather, primarily) from the private (luxurious) houses (domibusque nitentibus auro 351). The mensae, vestes and crateres are not those of the gods, but of the inhabitants themselves and extremely luxurious; men wear effeminate garments, the tables are imported from exotic places and the gold is used only for dining. The other elements added in the Punica stress Capua’s wealth: gem-inlaid goblets, limitless silverware, enough money to fund a war and trains of servants purely for serving at banquets.

Such descriptions of opulence are a favourite topos in Latin literature. After the fall of Corinth and Carthage (146 BC), an ever increasing supply of exotic luxury was shipped to the capital, with another impetus when the Ptolemaic wealth fell to Rome (30 BC). In Silius’ day, cups made from gems and tables of Mauretanian citrus wood were the pride of the very rich; the praise of luxury is a recurrent theme in contemporary literature.25 But ever since the first item was imported, moralizing authors had also condemned the corrupting force of that same opulence and identified decadence as the root of debased values and, ultimately, civil war.26 This view also pervades the Punica. The goddess Fides complains that “all honour is undermined by luxury” (2.502–503 luxuque solutum omne decus) and Virtus warns Scipio with the example of “the cities which once spread and flourished but were overthrown by luxury” (15.92–93 late florentes quondam luxus quas verterit urbes).

Rome is not yet affected, but the poem looks ahead at the corruption of later generations through the predictions of Jupiter and Voluptas,27, and the narrator’s conclusion of book 10, when Roman virtue shone most brightly in their unified defence after the debacle of

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24 A.2.763–764 gaza incensis eretna adytis ~ 351–352 templis domibusque ... egeritur praeda (for egeritur cf. also A.2.766 congeritur); A.2.764 mensae ~ 354 mensae; A.2.765 crateresque auro solidi ~ 356 caelataque pondera facti ... auri; A.2.765 vestis ~ 353 vestes; A.2.766–767 pueri et pavidae longo ordine matres stant circum ~ 357–358 corpora longo ordine captiva (for captiva cf. also A.2.765).
25 Cf. e.g. Stat. Silv. 1.3, 1.5, 2.1.157–165, 2.2, 3.3.86–95; for the luxury items cf. also Mart. 9.59, 12.66. For the praise of beauty and splendour see Cancik 1965: 45–46, 77–79, Van Dam 1984: 91, 188–190.
26 Among the first critics was Cato the Censor. The condemnation of decadence was a topos in historiography (notably Sallust) and in poets such as Vergil and Horace (cf. e.g. Verg. G. 2.505–506, Hor. Carm. 1.38, 2.18 and 3.1; see Nisbet-Hubbard ad Hor. Carm. 2.18 and Nisbet-Rudd ad Hor. Carm. 3.1). Seneca repeatedly speaks of the destruction caused by immoderation to wealth and cities (e.g. Ep. 71.15 and 74.19). For Lucan, see below (the same theme is expounded in the epic in Petronius’ Satyricon; cf. 119.13 and 119.43–44).
27 Jupiter notes that Rome’s dominion, which the suffering of Paulus, Fabius and Marcellus will establish, will not be undone by “their descendants, for all their luxury and degenerate hearts” (3.589 lux et multum mutata mente nepotes). In reaction to Scipio’s choice for Virtus, Voluptas angrily foretells that there will be a time in which she alone will be honoured (15.125–127).
Cannae, “Such was Rome in those days; and, if it was fated that the Roman character should change when Carthage fell, would that Carthage were still standing!”⁵⁸ It is significant that these last lines of book 10 are immediately followed by the narration of Capua’s defection in book 11, in which Silius highlights the corrupting influence of the city’s luxury.⁵⁹ Decadent Capua serves both as an antitype for the Rome of Scipio’s day and as an anticipation of the future, corrupted Rome.

Which future is anticipated, precisely? It is possible to read into Silius’ condemnation of *luxus* a critique of contemporary practices,⁶⁰ but the epic also certainly foreshadows the Roman civil wars. As has been shown earlier, Capua’s Trojan origin and its re-enactment of the fall of Troy are in themselves already evocative of civil strife considering the Trojan roots of their Roman enemies.⁶¹ With the description of the city’s opulence, Silius introduces a direct link with the crisis at the end of the Republic as it is narrated in Lucan’s *Bellum Civile*. Lucan considers greed and decadence the main causes for the civil war he writes about. Silius’ portrayal of Capua’s opulence here and at the city’s introduction into the epic at 11.38–43 are both modelled after Lucan’s description of the declining Roman morals at 1.158–182 and elsewhere.⁶² But while Lucan discussed the origin of civil war, Silius here focuses rather on its conclusion. Capua’s luxury is removed from the city and its corrupting influence undone.⁶³

The notion that a civil war is being ended also emerges from two other intertextual phrases. The line on the mural crown awarded to Milo (366) pointedly alludes to Vergil’s

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²⁸ 10.657–658 haec tum Roma fuit; post te cui vertere mores si stabat fatis, potius, Carthago, maneræ. These lines suggest not so much that Rome’s moral decline set in directly after Cannae and thus within the epic (pace McGuire 1997: 57), but rather after Carthage’s final fall in 146 BC (see Marks 2005: 255–256 with bibl. in n.44), which is in line with the common view among Roman writers.

²⁹ Luxury has corrupted the Capuan citizens themselves (11.32–36) and undermines the morale of the Carthaginians (11.419 miserisque bonis perit korrida virtus, “and their stern valour is sapped by the bane of luxury”; 12.83 fessor lucri attritusque secundis, “and their stern valour is sapped by the bane of luxury”; 12.83 miserisque bonis perit horrida virtus, “enfeebled by luxury and enervated by prosperity”).

³⁰ Cf. e.g. Kīsel 1979: 142 n.140 and 220. Whether such a critique includes the practices of the imperial court (cf. e.g. the description of Domitian’s own banquets, tables of citrus wood on ivory supports and troops of servants at Stat. 4.2.38–39) or, conversely, it should be seen as defence of the new regime who did away with the old corruption under Nero (see e.g. Pomeroy 1989: 130–132) is a question that cannot be explored in full here.

³¹ See Intr. 142–178, 179–255.

³² Marks 2010a: 143 (with n.45 for more examples from Punic 11). Lines 13.351–360 have some clear verbal echoes: exotic imports are the bane of every nation (Luc. 1.167 quo gens quaeque perit) ~ luxury as the cause of Capua’s downfall (353 quisque bonis periere) ~ foreign origin of the goods (Luc. 1.164 totoque acceptitur orbe ~ 354 alia tellure petitae); effeminate clothing (Luc. 1.164–165 cultus gestare decoros vix nuribus rapuere mares, “clothes hardly decent for young wives to wear were seized upon by men” ~ 353–354 virum de corpore vestes feminineae); immoderation in gathering wealth (Luc. 1.163 non auro tectisve modus ~ 356 nec modus argento). Some of the luxurious spoils are reminiscent of other passages from Lucan’s epic. Book 9 contrasts African simplicity and Roman decadence, which covets Mauretanian citrus tables (Luc. 9.430 extremoque epulas mensasque petimus ab orbe, “and from the world’s extremity we sought feasts and tables” ~ 354 mensaque alia tellure petitae) and eastern gems (Luc. 9.516 Eois ... gemmis ~ 355 Eoa ... gemma). In book 10, the description Cleopatra’s palace bears semblance to Capua’s richness here; cf. the palace shining with marble (Luc. 10.114–115 domus ... nitabit marmoribus) ~ the Capuan houses shining with gold (351 dominibusque nitentibus auro); an immense crowd of servants (Luc. 10.127 famulae numerus turbae populosusque minister ~ 360 immensique greges famulae ... turbae).

³³ Cf. Pomeroy 1989: 134, Marks 2005: 260 with n.65. Cowan (2007: 36) argues that the implication of plunder is that the luxury goods are taken to Rome, which anticipates its own moral decline; we should note, however, that Silius here emphasizes removal rather than transference.
line on the naval crown which Agrippa received for his victory at Actium. Silius thus draws a parallel between Rome’s victory over Capua and the end of its future civil wars. Another hint at the conclusion of civil war lies in Taurea’s suicide. The Capuan warrior denies the Romans the opportunity to execute him by killing himself. More specifically, now his ‘severed head’ will not fall before cowardly feet. These words evoke the fate of Pompey in the *Bellum Civile*, a fate which Taurea seeks to evade by committing suicide. In this respect, his action anticipates the suicide of Hannibal which is prophesied at the end of book 13. Hannibal, too, is cast as a Pompey figure in this prophecy and he too commits suicide rather than face execution by his enemies. For both these defeated enemies of Rome, it is suggested that they find themselves in the same position as Pompey, having fled from a lost battle in which they should have died and facing capture and death; in their deaths, however, they seek to be different from Pompey. In both cases, the suicide concludes (the narration of) a war which is analogous to civil war.

**Analysis of the presentation of 348–380**

At the end of the episode on the fall of Capua, the events are narrated in quick succession in a series of five scenes within merely 33 lines: i) the Romans put away their swords and torches (348–350); ii) the sack of Capua (351–360); iii) the ceremony for Milo (361–366); iv) the execution of the Capuan nobles (367–368), which is the setting for v) Taurea’s suicide (369–380). Although the temporal order is clear (361 *ut ... dedit*, 367 *tum*), the intervals of time between the events are largely unspecified. There is also little explicit passage of time within each scene; the narrator instead shows the core of each scene through a single vivid present verb. The mode of presentation for the aftermath of the siege is that of an overview—various actions are presented as single events (in themselves a contained whole) on a timeline.

With *at*, the narrator refocuses the reader’s attention on the Romans after the description of Pan and the god’s departure to Arcadia; the scene of 314–325 (which is summarized and

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34 See n.364–366 *tempora murali cinctus turrita corona*. For Silius’ ‘positive Milo’, the ancestor of the Milo who was associated rather with the beginning of civil war, see n.364–366 *Lanuvio generate ... Milo*.

35 For the verbal echo, see n.371b–374a *recisa ... cervix*. It may be relevant that Taurea represents his city (as was discussed above); for a connection between the city of Capua and Pompey was made already in book 11. After Pompey’s death, Lucan expresses his wish that there will come a happier day (8.869 *veniet felicior aetas*) when people will no longer believe his murder to be true; Silius alludes to these words with the assertion that, despite Capua’s traitorous demand that the Roman consulship be opened to them, a happier age will come (11.123 *veniet quondam felicior aetas*) in which Rome will take joy in a consul from Capua (Cowan 2007: 40, Marks 2010a: 146 n.50). While Lucan’s phrase is found at the very end of Pompey’s tale in the *Bellum Civile*, Silius’ imitation is located at the beginning of book 11 when Capua’s role has just begun, immediately before their defection from Rome; just as Pompey’s murder was a crime that resolved a civil war, Capua’s crime of perfidy sparked one.

36 See Intr. 850b–895 for Hannibal as Pompey; see also n.890b–893 for an allusion to Vergil’s words on the end of civil war.

37 Taurea’s (un-Pompeian) suicide, following immediately upon the reference to the battle of Actium, perhaps evokes the suicide of Mark Antony (who also killed himself with his sword), just as Hannibal’s death by poison reminds of the suicide of that other African leader who wished to escape being paraded in triumph: Cleopatra.

38 Cf. 350 *condunt*, 352 *egeritur*, 364 *inquit* (the whole ceremony is comprised in Fulvius’ speech) and 368 *acciet et ... punit*. 

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192
concluded at 343–344) now has its natural sequel—the Romans put away their instruments of destruction (350 *condunt*). It is striking (and characteristic of Silius’ narrative style) that the narrator then immediately moves to the description of the sack of Capua, without mention of the Romans entering the city or a similar intermediate event. At 361, the use of a recapitulating clause (i.e. explicit temporal structuring) suggests that a narrative scene will follow, but there are no verbs besides *inquit* (364); as in the previous sections, Silius focuses on the defining moment (the speech) and has omitted everything else. The fourth scene, which is marked by *tum* (367), summarizes the executions; we may read *acciet* and *punit* (368) as finished actions, although *prima* (367) suggests that the executions have only just begun and that *punit* is therefore the start of a situation during which the last part of the episode, Taurea’s suicide, takes place.

It is only in this last part that the narrator zooms in on a specific incident; lines 369–380 form the only true narrative of the passage. The move of zooming in is made explicit through *hic atrox virtus* (369) and expressly motivated (perhaps ‘justified’) with the comment that virtue, even when found in an enemy, should not be concealed. The short scene has three successive events: Taurea’s speech (371 *inquit*), his suicide (376 *transigit*), Fulvius’ reply (377 *cui ductor*).

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40 Compare for this abrupt beginning the truncated end of Fulvius’ battle with the Capuan triplets; see An. 179–255 with fn.36 on the similar use of *at* there for a shift in view and discourse topic.
41 For the use of such descriptions in the narrative as a strategy to cover a larger span of time, see An. 256–298.
42 For the marked use of the present in 365 *dat*, see n.364–366.
43 The golden line in 366 is also a closural device; see n.254–255.
44 To *hic*, we should presumably supply *fuit*—this is an authorial comment from the narrator’s own time.
45 *inde* (374) marks the transition from speech to action; for the use of the particle for the next, more active phase of a scene, cf. 138 and 162.
348–350
at legio Ausonidum flammata ductore iubente
arceri portis stantisque relinquere muros
(mite decus mentis) condunt ensesque facesque. 350

348–350 When their commander orders that fire should be kept away from the gates and to leave the walls standing, the army of the Romans puts away their swords and torches—a merciful virtue of the mind.

at legio Ausonidum Cf. Verg. A. 10.120 at legio Aeneadum and Verg. A. 12.121 legio Ausonidum; these phrases are also echoed in Stat. Theb. 10.195 Aonidum legio.

Forms of Ausonius are far more common in the Punica, but for the plural genre, Silius has followed Vergil’s use of Ausonidae (or the adjectival form Ausonis); at 7.80, as here, it is a synonym of ‘Roman’, and at 9.188 (where it is an adjective) it means ‘Italian’.

For the plural form of the verb with legio, see n.308–313 stabant ... exercitus omnis.

ductore iubente For the discipline in the Roman army, see n.155–156a.

iubente arceri ... relinquere The syntax parallels that in 326 (love ... servari tecta volente ~ flammata ductore iubente / arceri); Fulvius’ order reflects Jupiter’s will. Within the ablative absolute, there is a marked shift in syntactical construction from an AcI (with flammata as its subject) to a complementary infinitive (in which legionem is the silent subject of relinquere). For other such shifts in construction, see nn.21–23 incumbere ... vigor and 159–161 indignatus.

mite decus mentis The position of this phrase in the sentence provides no clue to whether this authorial praise applies to Fulvius or the soldiers, but it probably holds for both. The phrase picks up the description of Pan’s efforts at 316ff.; cf. componit numine mentes (317) and mitis deus (320). Cf. a very similar phrase at 14.148–149 mite ... dextrae decus.

With mentis, the phrase may be an etymological play on clementia; cf. e.g. Don. Ter. Ad. 864 clemens est qui colit mentem suam, ne eam urgeat irascendo.

351–360
multa deum templis domibusque nitentibus auro
geritur praeda et victus alimenta superbi
quisque bonis periere: virum de corpore vestes
femineae mensaeque alia tellure petitae
poculaque Eoa luxum irritantia gemma,
nec modus argento, caelataque pondera facti
tantum epulis auri, tum passim corpora longo
ordine captiva et domibus deprompta talenta
pascere longinquum non deficientia bellum,
immensique greges famulae ad convivia turbae. 360

351–353a From the temples of the gods and the houses resplendent with gold, many spoils are carried away, the sustenance of their proud way of life, the goods which had caused their downfall:...

deum templis It is striking that the temples are looted as well, even though Pan had prevented the Romans from setting fire to those temples at 318–319; this seems a breach of
Notes to 348–380

the newly regained pietas. However, the mention of temples might stem from the allusion to Verg. A. 2.763–767, where the temples of Troy are pillaged; see Intr. 348–380.

**victus alimenta superbi** Since *victus* and *alimenta* can both denote ‘sustenance’, ‘food’, it is probably best to read *victus* here as ‘way of life’ (*OLD* s.v. 2). What *alimenta* refers to is not altogether clear; it could be exotic foods (the looting of food would be welcome to any army), or the riches with which these foods and other luxury goods were purchased. The last reading would suppose a tautology, but 352–353a should probably be read as a tricolon in which each coordinator (*et ... -que*) is explicatory and introduces another aspect of the same booty; first it is simply identified as *praeda*, then the notion of Capua’s pride is added and finally the fact that these goods have caused its downfall. Both aspects relate more to the spoils from the Capuans’ private possessions (*domibus*) than from their religious offerings (*templis*).

**quisque bonis periere** I.e. *et bona quibus periere*. Cf. the same fatal impact of Capua’s luxury on the Carthaginians at 11.419 *miserisque bonis perit horrida virtus*, “and their stern valour is sapped by the bane of luxury”. There are two aspects to *periere* here: i) the Capuans had been corrupted by their luxury; ii) now they have perished due to it. For the echo of Lucan, see Intr. 348–380.

*bona*, ‘riches’, is slightly ironic due to its original meaning ‘good’; what the Capuans regarded as ‘good’ is now their undoing. It is used in the same way at 11.419 cited above and at 12.287 *debellata bonis Capuae*, “defeated in peace by the luxury of Capua”.

353b–360 ... effeminate garments which men had worn, and tables acquired abroad, and goblets which stimulate luxury with their eastern gems, and limitless silverware, and chased masses of wrought gold, used purely for dining, and also captives everywhere in long array, and from their houses enough money to fund a long war.

Many elements in Silius’ list are also found in Vergil’s lines on the sack of Troy (A. 2.763–767); all items are topical in descriptions of opulence, both in condemnatory moralizing (e.g. Lucan) or encomiastic praise of luxury (e.g. Statius’ *Silvae*). Silius’ list, with its significant alterations with respect to Vergil’s, falls into the first category. For the echoes of Vergil and Lucan, see Intr. 348–380.

**virum de corpore vestes femineae** In Vergil’s description, the *vestes* were used for the decoration of the temples; here (as all riches in the list) they are the private possessions of the Capuans. The epithet *femineae*, which due to the enjambment comes as an ἀπροσδόκητον, is sharply contrasted with *virum*; a similar effect is pursued at 309ff. *viros ... femineum ululatum* (see n.308–313) and at the first mention of this Capuan vice at 11.40–41 *madefacta veneno Assyrio maribus vestis*, “their garments, even those worn by men, were dyed with Assyrian purple”. Luxurious clothing worn by men is listed as a symptom of Roman corruption at Luc. 1.164–165 *cultus gestare decoros vix nuribus rapuere mares*, “clothes hardly decent for young wives to wear were seized upon by men”; cf. also Man. 5.152 *vestes femineae* in a description of effeminate men. For the negative connotation of *femineus*, see n.16b–18.

**mensae alia tellure petitae** Either exotic food or, more likely, the tables themselves; we should probably think of the famous and expensive tables made from citrus wood, which were imported from western Africa. Cf. the reminiscence of Luc. 9.430 *extremoque epulas mensasque petimus ab orbe*, “and from the world’s extremity we sought feasts and
tables”, which is preceded by a description of the citrus-tree and its place of origin, Mauretania; cf. also Petr. 119.28, Stat. Silv. 4.2.39 (with Coleman’s n.), Mart. 12.66.6, 14.89. For the phrase, compare Stat. Silv. 4.6.6 epulas diverso a sole petitas (exotic foods).

poculaque Eoa luxum irritantia gemma Eous (derived from the Greek Ἑός, ‘dawn’, adj. ἠὕος) refers to the lands in the east, more specifically the Persian Gulf, which the ancients believed to be a source of gems; cf. e.g. Tib. 2.2.15–16 gemmarum quicquid felicibus Indis nascitur, Eoi qua maris unda rubet, “every gem that comes from the rich Indian sea, where the gulf of the Eoan water colours red” (Maltby ad loc. notes that rubet refers to the Red Sea, the ancient name for the Persian Gulf). The epithet may also refer to India, which was the main supply for gems such as onyx and rock-crystal (cf. Bühler 1973: 4–5), of which drinking vessels and oil flasks were made (see below).

Jewelled goblets were a sign of great richness (cf. Cic. Ver. 2.4.62, where they are associated with eastern kings). Possibly our phrase refers to cups made out of a single gem (cf. Cic. l.c. vas vinarium ex una gemma pergrandi trulla excavata, “a wine-vessel, a ladle hollowed out of a single enormous precious stone”); see for such cups Bühler 1973. Such artworks of precious stone were the pinnacle of luxury; cf. Verg. G. 2.506 ut gemma bibat, “all to drink from a jewelled cup”, Prop. 3.5.4 nec bibit e gemma divite nostra sitis, “nor do I refresh my thirst from jewelled goblets” (preceded by a reference to the richness of Campania), Luc. 10.160–161 gemmaeque capaces excerpere merum, “and huge jewelled cups received the wine” and the story in Plin. Nat. 37.7 that Nero possessed one such drinking cup worth one million sesterces. See also Bömer’s discussion ad Ov. Met. 8.573 in gemma posuere merum. For drinking cups made of gems, Bühler mentions also Prop. 4.5.26, Sen. Ep. 119.3 and Mart. 10.80.1; for oil flasks from the same material, Hor. Carm. 4.12.17, Prop. 2.13.30, 3.10.22 and Mart. 7.94.1.

The reference to such vessels made from gemstones (if that is what is intended) constitutes an anachronism, since they became popular in Italy only after the battle of Actium. Bühler (1973: 12) states that when the Ptolemaic treasure fell into Roman hands, containing untold riches such as these, everyone wanted such an object.

irritare is here ’stimulate’, ‘arouse’ (OLD s.v. 3a); cf. V.Max. 2.6.1 luxuriae irritamenta, Tac. Ann. 14.15.2 irritamenta luxui, Sen. Ep. 76.17 cetera quae cupiditates nostras irritant.

nec modus argento Both i) the amount of silverware was boundless and ii) the moral point that the Capuans had known no bounds in acquiring luxury. For the first meaning, cf. 11.38–40 non largior ulli Ausonieae populo ... aurique argentique modus, “no people of Italy possessed gold and silver in more abundance”. For the second, cf. Pers. 3.69 quis modus argento and Luc. 1.163 non auro tectivse modus, “there was no limit to gold and houses”. That silverware is meant rather than coin is shown by its position between drinking cups and golden plates, and by the explicit mention of money at 358 talenta.

caelataque pondera facti ... auri An echo of Verg. A. 10.527 caelati argenti, ... auri pondera facti infectique, “chased silver, ... masses of gold wrought and unwrought”; cf. also Silius’ description of Capuan luxury at 11.277–278 aspera mensa pondera caelati fulgent antiquitus auri, “heavy golden cups, chased in relief by craftsmen of old, sparkled on the board”. aurum factum is wrought gold (i.e. objects made out of gold), here golden plates, which are engraved (caelata); cf. Isid. Orig. 16.18.13 aurum factum quod in vasis et signis est and TLL 1.1528.80ff.
tantum epulis Silius emphasizes the golden plates’ sole use for banquets (epulis), rather than for the temples as their Vergilian counterparts crateresque auro solidi (A. 2.765). The Capuans use their golden wares as diner platter, another sign of opulence and hubris.

corpora ... captiva A standard poetical paraphrase; for the same expression, cf. 11.374–375, Liv. 31.46.16 urbs regi, captiva corpora Romanis cessere (“the city was given to the king, the prisoners to the Romans”), Stat. Theb. 10.450 and 12.68–69.

longo ordine Cf. the Trojan captives at Verg. A. 2.766–767 pueri et pavidae longo ordine matres stant circum (“boys and trembling matrons in long array stand round”) and in similar contexts of spoils of war (both human and non-human) A. 8.722 victae longo ordine gentes, 11.79 longo praedam ... ordine and Sil. 14.563–564 captivae vincili ad litora longo ordine ducuntur puppes (“their captive ships were towed ashore in long procession”).

domibus The fact that enough money to fund a war was plundered from the houses is significant, as in Rome normally such amounts of cash were only available in the temples.

talentum Cash. The word is probably taken from Verg. A. 10.526–528 est domus alta, iacent penitus defossa talenta caelati argenti, sunt auri pondera facti infectique mihi, “I have a lofty house; buried deep inside lie talents of chased silver, and I have masses of gold, wrought and unwrought” (see n. caelataque pondera facti ... auri above), where it refers to the private wealth of one of Aeneas’ opponents.

pascere longinquum non deficientia bellum War was (and is) incredibly expensive (cf. Cic. Phil. 5.5 nervos belli, pecuniam infinitam, “the sinews of war, infinite treasure”), so enough money to fund a long war is a very large amount, especially from private houses. The clause points at the threat that Capua posed to Rome; Spaltenstein compares the description of Capua at Liv. 26.16.7 urbem praevalidam, propinquam, inimicam, “a city very powerful, near, and unfriendly”.

For pascere in this transposed sense (‘to feed’, ‘to fund’), cf. 4.8–9 docilis per inania rerum pascere rumorem vulgi pavor, “fear, quick to feed the talk of the populace with falsehood” and a few parallels in TLL 10.597.27ff.; pascere bellum or sim. seems unique.

immensique greges famulae ad convivia turbae The expression ‘flocks of servants’ is also found at 11.274 non una ministri turbæ greges (also of the Capuan slaves), Petr. 119.28 greges servorum, Stat. Silv. 3.4.56 famulumque greges, 5.1.21 famulos ... greges; cf. also Silv. 4.2.39 famulas ... turmas. The phrase alludes to Luc. 10.127 famulae numerus turbae populusque minister, “the numerous servant crowd and multitude of attendants”, part of the description of the lavish display of wealth during Cleopatra’s banquet. Lucan’s grammatical construction of famulae ... turbae as a genitive with numerus suggests that the same applies here (pace Spaltenstein). With ad convivia, Silius returns to the banquet theme of 354–357a, which evokes the luxurious (and corruptive) banquet of 11.270ff.

361–366

Fulvius ut finem spoliandis aedibus aere belligero revocante dedit, sublimis ab alto suggestu, magnis fautor non futilis ausis
‘Lanuvio generate,’ inquit ‘quem Sospita Iuno dat nobis, Milo, Gradivi cape victor honorem tempora murali cinctus turrita corona.’
When Fulvius has ordered an end to the plundering of the houses and the martial trumpet has called the men back, he proclaims from his elevated position on a high dais (no mean supporter of great bravery): ...

After the plunder of Capua, the Roman Milo, who was the first to gain the walls (300–301), is decorated.

**finem ... dedit** A poetic variant of the more common *finem facere*. *TLL* 6.1.796.65ff. cites this line along with Acc. *trag.* 293 and Verg. *A.* 1.199 as examples of *finem dare rei alicui* (without a dative, cf. from Acc. *frg.* 37 and 577). The construction of *finis* with *dare* and a gerundive is also found at Verg. *A.* 6.76 *finem dedit ore loquendi*, “his lips ceased speaking” and of *finis* with a dative gerund at Lucr. 1.551–552, 1.746–747, 1.844 and Quint. *Inst.* 9.3.99.

**belligero** The word is common in Silius (24 instances) and applied both to things (as here) and men (cf. 13.532). For the frequent use of compounds with *-fer* and *-ger* in Latin poetry, see Arens 1950.

**sublimis ab alto / suggestu** The line ending of 362 is also found at 14.666 (cf. 7.521, 15.636), where Marcellus looks down upon captured Syracuse and decides to spare the city (*iussit stare domos 672; cf. 13.348–349 *iubente ... stantesque relinquere muros*); for the correspondences between the fall of Capua and that of Syracuse, see Intr. 348–380.

**fautor non futilis** A reminiscence of Verg. *A.* 11.339 *consilii habitus non futilis auctor*, “in counsel deemed no mean adviser”.

“Son of Lanuvium, whom Juno Sospita gives to us, Milo, receive for your victory the decoration of Mars, your temples wreathed with the towers of the mural crown.

A similar ceremony is found at 15.254–262, where several soldiers receive rewards for their valour, one of them a mural crown (257 *ille nitet celsus muralis honore coronae*).

**Lanuvio generate … Milo** Silius connects the soldier to the well-known defendant of Cicero’s *Pro Milone*, T. Annius Milo, who was a native of Lanuvium (a town in Latium); cf. Asc. *Mil.* 27. Lanuvium was famous for its temple of Juno Sospita, on which see below. For the phrase, cf. Verg. *A.* 6.322 *Anchisa generate* (the Sibyl’s formal address to Aeneas), Stat. *Theb.* 5.38, Sil. 4.542, 11.371; with the city name, cf. *A.* 5.61 *Troia generatus Acestes*.

Lucan’s Caesar names the trial of Milo in 52 BC as one of the causes of the Roman civil war (Luc. 1.319–323, referencing to the unconstitutional military guards posted around the court by Pompey). Milo’s name is thus evocative (like 231 *Marius*) of the civil wars at the end of the Republic. In the *Punica*, Rome’s conflict with Capua is also a form of civil war, but the predominant notion here is the end of such strife (see the note on *tempora murali cinctus turrita corona* below for echoes of Actium). Silius’ Milo, representative of a re-unified Rome, is thus a more positive counterpart to his infamous descendant.

**Sospita Iuno** The cult of Juno Sospita (also called Sospes, originally Sispes or Sispita) was the most important of all Juno-cults in Latium, and was incorporated into the Roman state religion in 388 BC; see also *RE* 10.1120ff. and Oakley ad Liv. 8.14.2. She was venerated as a martial goddess (cf. also her cult-name *Sospita*, ‘Protectress’), as Cicero’s description of her statue’s seems to indicate in *N.D.* 1.82 *cum pelle caprina cum hasta cum scutulo cum calceolis repandis*, “equipped with goat-skin, spear, buckler and slippers turned up at the toe”. The reference to the goddess makes the Roman victory a divinely sanctioned one (cf. Burck 1984: 49 n.70). The cult-name might indicate that we should not confuse this Juno with the goddess who poses as the adversary of the Romans in the epic
Notes to 348–380

(cf. Spaltenstein). Or does the reference to Juno hint at a reconciliation between the goddess and the Romans and at the end of the war she started (cf. below on *tempora murali cinctus turrita corona* for a reference to the decisive victory at Actium)?

**dat** Spaltenstein compares V.Fl. 1.444 *te ... dant campi ... Pheraei*, “the plains of Pherae send thee” and 1.477–478 *te moenia ... Thespia ... dant*, “thou ... art the gift of Thespiae’s city”. Cf. the similar present tense form in Verg. *A*. 9.266 *cratera antiquum, quem dat* Sidonia Dido (note also the similar sentence structure). Adema (2008: 29–30, n.43) classifies this Vergilian instance among the universal sentences in which “a single event is presented as a universal image or as a characteristic of an object or person”; similarly Pinkster 1999: 714ff., who paraphrases “an old crater, one that Dido normally gives”. With the same interpretation here, the sense is that Juno Sospita ‘gives’ all children of Lanuvium to the world, including Milo.

**Gradivi** A name for Mars, or here (probably), battle; the genitive goes with *honorem*. The name, sparingly used in the Augustan time (mainly Ovid with 8 instances), is very popular with the Flavian poets (V.Fl. 10, Stat. 19, Sil. 26; cf. also 4.222 *Gradivicolam*). In most cases in the *Punica*, the god himself is meant, but in a few instances *Gradivus* is used (similarly to *Mars* or *Mavors*) in the denotation ‘battle’ (11.101, 13.532, 15.15, 17.485[?]) or ‘martial spirit’ (10.14, 15.337). On *Mars* / *Mavors*, see n.16b–18. Here, both the god and ‘battle’ are possible interpretations. For the first, cf. 378–379 *qui nobis animus, quae dextera cuique viritim, decernet Mavors*, that is, the prize or honour that Mars himself has bestowed upon Milo; for the latter, *Gradivi honorem* would be ‘reward for valour in battle’, or the ‘first place’ in the competition of the battlefield.


**tempora murali cinctus turrita corona** This golden line (see n.254–255) is a clear allusion to Verg. *A*. 8.683–684 *cui ... tempora navali fulgent rostrata corona*, “his brows gleam with the beak of the naval crown”, possibly combined with Ov. *Ars* 3.392 *navalique gener cinctus honore caput*; both lines refer to Agrippa’s decoration for his naval victory at Actium. The victory over Capua is thus connected with the decisive battle of the Roman civil war; see also Intr. 179–255 and (for the Hannibalic war as a whole) n.882.

*cinctus* is proleptic, “receive this decoration and let your temples be wreathed”.

The nature of the mural crown, one of many military crowns used as distinctions (the ancient counterpart of our medals), is explained in Gel. 5.6.16 “muralis” est corona, qua donatur ab imperatore qui primus murum subiit inque oppidum hostium per vim ascendit; idcirco quasi muri pinnis decorata est, “The ‘mural’ crown is that which is awarded by a commander to the man who is first to mount the wall and force his way into an enemy’s town; therefore it is ornamented with representations of the battlements of a wall”. Cf. also Liv. 26.48.5 and *RE* 4.1640.63ff. According to Plb. 6.39.5, the crown was made of gold.

Bailey ad Lucr. 2.606 *muralique caput summum cinxere corona* (on Cybele) notes that the military mural crown was based upon representations of Cybele, the Phrygian goddess who was represented with a crown with battlements. Silius may have thought of her, as he uses the word *turrita* (corresponding with Vergil’s *rostrata*, see above), an epithet often applied to Cybele and by analogy to the goddess Carthago at 13.13 (see n.).
367–368 Then he summons the guilty ones of the nobles, those who had deserved to atone first, and punishes their crimes with a just axe.

Fulvius orders the beheading of the leaders of Capua. Silius’ presentation of the execution is markedly different from Livy’s; see Intr. 348–380. Since it is merely summarized, its chief purpose is to serve as the setting for Taurea’s suicide.

sontes procerum I.e. those senators who had chosen not to join Virrius in suicide (cf. 276 turba comitante). According to Livy (26.14.9), fifty-three Capuan senators had been imprisoned after the capture of the city, who all were executed by Fulvius (26.15.8–9).

meritos ... prima Spaltenstein suggests that prima refers to Fulvius’ haste in executing the Capuans, and should be interpreted as quam primum. Silius makes no further reference to haste, however, and it is highly unlikely that he would want to evoke that element of Livy’s story (see Intr. 348–380). Duff reads sontes and meritos as a hendiadys, “those of the nobles whose guilt marked them out as the first victims”. This interpretation is supported by Liv. 26.14.9 quorum de sententia maxime descitum ab Romanis constabat, “[the senators] known to have especially promoted revolt from the Romans”, but it is more likely that their status as senators made them the first candidates for execution, in view of Liv. 26.33.9 securique percussos a Q. Fulvio fuisse magis quorum dignitas inter alios quam quorum culpa eminebat, “and those beheaded by Quintus Fulvius were the men whose rank rather than their guilt was conspicuous among the others”. The focus, however, is not on the identity of the first victims; the phrase rather tells that the execution had just begun, when Taurea stepped forward. Supposing a hendiadys is therefore not necessary.

piacula ‘Expiation’, an important word with religious overtones, as it reminds us that the Romans, as the champions of Fides, wage a ‘sacred war’ (cf. iusta ... securi). It may be relevant that the same word is used of Hannibal at 2.41–42, when the Romans demand his extradition for his assault on Saguntum; cf. Liv. 21.10.12 dedendum [sc. Hannibalem] ... ad piaculum rupti foederis, “he ought to be surrendered in expiation of the broken treaty”. The punishment of the Capuans, who atone for their pact-breaking with Rome, can be seen as an adumbration of Hannibal’s fate (see also Intr. 256–298).

iusta ... securi That is, they are beheaded; cf. Liv. 26.15.8 securi percussi. For citizens and especially those of higher rank, decapitation (originally with an axe, later with a sword) was a common form of capital punishment, to which the axes in the lictor’s fasces served as a warning reference.

For iusta, Spaltenstein compares Luc. 10.523 iusto ... ferro and Sen. Phaed. 1197 mucrone ... iusto. The same reference to justice being done is found in Livy; cf. 26.15.9 lictorem lege agere iuberet, “order the lictor to carry out the legal punishment” and 26.16.3 (sim.).

369–380 hic atrox virtus (nec enim occuluisse probarim
spectatum vel in hoste decus) clamore feroci
Taurea ‘tune’ inquit ‘ferro spoliabis inultus

370
te maiorem anima et iussu lictore recisa
ignavos cadet ante pedes fortissima cervix?
haud umquam hoc vobis dederit deus.’ inde minaci
obtutu torvum contra et furiale renidens
bellatorem alacer per pectora transigit ensem.
cui ductor: ‘patriam moriens comitare cadentem.
qui nobis animus, quae dextera cuique viritim,
decernet Mavors. tibi, si rebare pudendum
iussa pati, licuit pugnanti occumbere letum.’

369–371a At that moment, as a feat of unrelenting bravery (for I cannot think it right to
conceal a noble deed, even if it is witnessed in an enemy), Taurea cries ferociously:

This is the first mention of Taurea since 178; his duel with Claudius and suicide frame
the fall of Capua. Silius’ presentation of Taurea’s suicide is certainly more favourable than
Livy’s (see Intr. 348–380), but despite the use of *virtus* and *decus*, it is clear that Taurea’s
bravery is ultimately misguided, as is shown by Fulvius’ rebuke in 377ff. Many telling
*furiale* 375. These adjectives are commonly applied to the Carthaginians throughout the
*Punica*, especially to Hannibal; see Intr. 256–298 with fn.28.

*atrox virtus* Not an oxymoron, strictly speaking, but the combination is surprising and
recalls 1.58 *improba virtus* (of Hannibal), and Verg. *A.* 12.19–20 *quantum ipse feroci
virtute exsuperas*, “the more you excel in proud valour” (of Turnus; cf. Sil. 5.555–556).

*nec enim ... probarim* Cf. a very similar introduction to a single attempt at resistance
by a Capuan youth, there against Hannibal, at 11.304–305 *neque enim, iuvenis non digne
sileri, tramittam tua coepta libens famamque negabo quamquam imperfectis, magnae
tamen indolis, auis*, “for I will not pass over your design in silence, Perolla, or fail to
record your purpose, which, even though it failed, proceeded from a noble mind” (cf. also
11.308 *decus*, 11.328 *atrox*). Perolla wanted to kill Hannibal with his sword, but was
dissuaded by his father, Capua’s chief magistrate; Taurea, emblematic of Capua’s self-
destruction, kills himself.

*vel in hoste* A topical phrase; it was a commonplace that something can be learned from
or admired even in an enemy. Cf. Cic. *Amic.* 29 *tanta vis probitatis est ut eam ... in hoste
etiam diligamus*, “the force of integrity is so great that we love it, ... even in an enemy”,
*Curt.* 4.6.26 *virtuitis etiam in hoste mirator*, “an admirer of valour even in an enemy”. In
Ovid it is a recurrent theme; cf. *Met.* 4.428 *fas est et ab hoste doceri* (“’Tis proper to learn
even from an enemy”), *Tr.* 1.9a.35 *ista etiam in miseris pietas vel ab hoste probetur* (“there
is loyalty even for the unfortunate and it finds approval even in an enemy”), 1.5a.39–40
*saepe fidem adversis etiam laudavit in armis inque suis quod amat, Caesar in hoste probat*
“Ofttimes faith even among his enemies in arms has been praised by Caesar; when it exists
among his own, he loves it; in an enemy he approves it”. The use of *probare* in the last two
passages may have inspired Silius to write *probarim* in 369.

371b–374a “Will you with impunity deprive a man greater than yourself of his life with the
sword, and will after an order to the lictor this most brave head fall before your cowardly
feet? Never will the gods grant you that.”
ferro spoliabis ... anima  The reading in ω ferro spoliabis ... animam (Blass: “Solltest du ungestraft einem Tapferen seines Schwertes berauben usw.?”) is defended by Håkanson (1976: 30–31), who adduces 10.57–58 eripe leto / hanc nostris maiorem animam, “snatch from death a life that matters more than ours” and notes that this is the logical order—disarmament, then execution. With Bauer’s conjecture anima (printed by Delz; cf. Spaltenstein, Nesselrath 1986: 230 n.51), Taurea says that he is to be deprived of his life rather than of his sword. A strong argument in favour of this reading is that this is what Livy wrote in Silius’ source text; cf. Liv. 26.15.12 me quoque ... iube occidi ut gloriari possit multo fortiores quam ipse es virum abs te occisum esse, “Order me also to be slain, that you may be able to boast that a much braver man that you are yourself has been slain by you”, 26.16.3 virum se fortissimum ab nequaquam pari ad virtutem occidi, “he, the bravest of men, was being killed by one who was in no way his equal in courage” (cf. also V.Max. 3.2.1, on the same incident). In both passages the focus lies upon the fact that Fulvius was about to kill a man braver than himself, not deprive him of his sword (and subsequently execute him). Another argument is that spoliare is commonly used in such a context; cf. Enn. trag. 198 date ferrum, qui me anima privem (of Hecuba’s suicide) and vita spoliare in Sil. 5.410–411 nec Bagaso ... daturve impune relictum ... vita spoliass Libonem (for impune cf. here inultus), Verg. A. 6.168, Ov. Ib. 621, Ilias 435; conversely, the only instance of spoliare ferro is Luc. 3.675 spoliante cadavera ferro, where the ones ‘disarmed’ are already dead.

inultus  With impunity; cf. TLL 7.2.241.21ff. (“fere i.q. impinnitus, indemnis”).

iusso lictore  The lictor acted as executioner; cf. Liv. 26.15.9 praecori imperavit ut lictorem lege agere iuberet, “[Fulvius] commanded a herald to order the lictor to carry out the legal punishment”.

recisa ... cervix  A Lucanian phrase which evokes the murder of Pompey; cf. Luc. 8.674 trunco cervix absissa recessit and 9.214 cervice recisa, with the same use of cervix (litt. ‘neck’) for the severed head. The use of recidere in the sense ‘decapitate’ (first in Ov. Met. 9.71) is also chiefly found in Lucan; cf. Luc. 2.112, 2.172–173, 8.677 and Wick’s detailed n. ad 9.214. Taurea’s aim, then, is not to end as a Pompey, as a headless corpse. He commits suicide rather than face execution by his enemies, an abumbration of Hannibal’s suicide which is prophesied at the end of this book (890–893). Note that the description of Hannibal’s final years also interacts with Lucan’s description of Pompey, casting the Carthaginian general exactly as what Taurea does not wish to be—Pompey in defeat (see Intr. 850b–895).

ignavos ... fortissima  A very strong antithesis, and not very deserved given Taurea’s own flight in 169ff. and the Romans’ bravery in taking the city. The superlative is adopted from Liv. 26.13.3 virum ... fortissimum (see n. ferro spoliabis ... anima above); for the phrase, cf. also Tac. Hist. 4.29.2 ignavorum saepe telis fortissimi cadere, “the bravest men often fall to the shafts of cowards”.

haud umquam hoc vobis dederit deus  Not so much a wish as an assertion, all the more since Taurea fulfils it as regards his own case by his suicide. The future perfect marks the condition to a future action or situation: ‘a god will have allowed it to you’ > ‘you will have the opportunity’. A similar phrase is found at 6.600–602 haud umquam tibi Iuppiter, ... o iuvenis, dederit portas transcendere Romae, “never shall Jupiter have permitted you,
young man, to pass the gates of Rome” (i.e. “you will never enter Rome, since Jupiter will never first give his permission”); cf. also 10.603–604 *muros haud fregerit umquam ... Maurus*, “the ... Moor will never have broken down city walls” (i.e. “he will never conquer the city after first breaking down the walls”).

374b–376 *Then with a menacing face, fiercely and madly grinning towards his enemy, he rashly drives his martial sword through the heart.*

The colourful adjectives and menacing looks are usually favoured by the Carthaginians in the *Punica*; cf. e.g. Hannibal’s *torvos ... vultus* (13.2–3) and of Hamilcar 2.431 *torvumque minatur, 3.76 torvaque oculos sub fronte minaces*; see also n.369–371a.

*torvum ... et furiale renidens* Cf. the similar construction at Stat. *Theb*. 12.688 *fictum ac triste renidens* (for which see Intr. 348–380 fn.16). Compare also Saguntum’s main warrior Murrus at 1.398 *saevum arridens*. For the adverbial use of *furiale*, see also n.257–260 *flebile*.

*bellatorem ... ensem* The adjective *bellator* (‘warlike’) is usually applied to living creatures; for things, *TLL* 2.1807.19–22 only compares Stat. *Theb*. 8.377 *campum* and Quint. *Decl*. 306.12 *currus* (at Sil. 12.532 the city of Frusino, as a collection of humans, is not really inanimate). The adjective more aptly applies to Taurea himself (cf. 143–144 *Taurea ... bellator*).

377 *The general says to him: “In dying, join your falling country.*

Fulvius’ address to the dead Taurea recalls Achilles’ reply to the dying Hector (Hom. *Il*. 22.365–366) and Mezentius’ response to Orodes at Verg. *A*. 10.743–744. In both cases the defeated warrior predicts his opponent’s imminent death just before dying. Taurea’s cry that the gods would not allow the Romans to execute a braver man with impunity (371 *inultus*) picks up Orodes’ prophecy that his death would not go unavenged (*A*. 10.739 *non me ... inulto*). Achilles and Mezentius both reply with a pithy ‘die!’ (Hom. τέθναθι, Verg. *nunc morere*) and say that Zeus/Jupiter will decide over their own fate. Fulvius’ reply is more elaborate and connects Taurea’s death with the fall of Capua (see Intr. 348–380); the remark that Mars decides each man’s bravery and strength (rather than Jupiter each man’s hour of death) prepares for the rebuke that Taurea should have fallen in battle, if he had wanted to escape just punishment. From the model of the haughty victor scorning the warning of his defeated opponent, Silius has created this scene with a haughty loser rebuked by his victor.

*cui ductor* In the *Punica*, nine speeches are a reply to a battle-taunt or act of aggression; these speeches are often preceded by a short clause with *cui* (4.286, 4.538, 10.254, here), which seems to be the standard practice, or *huic* (5.253, 17.460; in these cases the preceding lines mention a third person, which would make *cui* ambiguous). The remaining three are 2.256 (where the addressee is not mentioned in the preceding lines and is indicated with the dative *ruenti*) and 1.383 and 1.388 (where the speeches are not really replies to the individual soldiers, but rather programmatic statements). For the short half-line introducing a speech cf. also 1.482 *cui talia Murrus*, 2.493 *contra cui talia virgo*, 10.116 *cui Poenus*, 16.75 *cui rector Latius*, and with *huic* (after a description) 7.328 and 8.297. See also Horsfall *ad* Verg. *A*. 2.547 *cui Pyrrhus* and Harrison *ad* Verg. *A*. 10.580 *cui Liger*. 

203
What courage we have, what strength is given to each man individually, is decided by Mars.

‘to each man individually’, a prosaic word used primarily in contexts of distribution; in poetry it is only found in 12.270–271 and 17.477 (where the sense is rather ‘every single man’), and Pl. Ps. 440–441, Lucr. 2.1172, Hor. Ep. 2.1.91–92 (see Brink ad loc.).

decernet Mavors For the idea, cf. Sen. Phoen. 630–631 quodcumque Mars decernit; exaequat duos, licet impares sint, gladius, “Mars decides everything; two men, however unevenly matched, are made equal by the sword”, Verg. A. 9.717 Mars ... animum viresque Latinis addidit, “Mars ... lent fresh strength and valour to the Latins” (cf. also A. 2.617, 9.764, Ilias 772 for other gods). For the gods deciding each man’s fate in battle, cf. also e.g. Hom. Il. 20.435–436. For Mavors, see n.16b–18.

If you thought it shameful to endure another’s commands, you could have met death in battle.

The implication is that committing suicide after a capitulation is still not a laudable thing, or to put it differently, a true warrior dies in battle. This sentiment is expressed several times in the Punica, especially by Hannibal; cf. 4.674 liceat bellanti accersere mortem (note the similarity in wording), “suffer me to fight and welcome ... death” (the elder Scipio), 4.509 pugnantem cecidisse meum est, “to fall fighting belongs to Hannibal” (Hannibal) and 17.261–262 egregium fortis cui dextera in armis pugnanti peperit letum, “you died gloriously, falling in battle by a soldier’s hand” (Hannibal about his brother Hasdrubal).

The expression denotes servitude in Verg. A. 10.865–866 neque enim, fortissime, credo, iussa aliena pati et dominos dignabere Teucros, “for you, gallant steed, will not deign, I think, to endure a stranger’s orders and a Trojan lord”, where Mezentius shows his unwillingness to bow before the Trojans, choosing either to avenge Lausus in battle or to die trying (10.865 occumbes, again to his horse). This is the course that Taurea should have chosen when faced with other victorious Trojans, the Romans of the Punica. iussa is then a general notion, ‘servitude’, Capua’s submission to Rome. Whether for Taurea personally this means execution (as indicated by his words in 371–373) or to be sold into slavery like the rest of the Capuan populace (as Livy’s text on which this scene is based implies; see Intr. 348–380) remains unclear. The conjecture iusta (printed in the Loeb edition; Duff “submit to just punishment”) is an unnecessary repetition of the sense in 368 iusta ... securi.

occumbere letum An Ennian expression, mostly used for death in battle; the verb was popular in Flavian epic (V.Fl. 6, Stat. 4, Sil. 15). The construction with an accusative is rare; cf. Enn. Ann. 398 occumbunt multi letum, Cic. Tusc. 1.102, Curt. 4.15.24, Suet. Aug. 13.2. Skutsch ad Enn. l.c. observes that Silius seems to have chosen the accusative “to avoid the ambiguity which would arise from leto. Classical poetry otherwise does not use the accusative; the dative or ablative, though not very common, is preferred.” There is no way to tell, however, since in all other cases Silius uses no complement to occumbere.
381–416 Scipio’s grief and his visit to the priestess of Cumae

Meanwhile Scipio’s father and uncle have both fallen in Spain. Scipio is inconsolable and rages against the gods for their cruelty. After some days of unremitting mourning, he decides to go to the underworld, in order to ease his grief by speaking to the shades of his kinsmen and to learn the future. Scipio visits the priestess of Cumae, who tells him to go to the Avernian lake at midnight and summon the shades of the dead through a blood offering. The ghost of the ancient Sibyl will come, who will tell him of future events.

Scipio’s grief for his father and uncle is described at length. Silvius emphasizes undesirable and excessive aspects of his mourning: violence (398 violenter), negligence of status (390–391 non ullus honorum militiae pudor), rage against the gods (391–392 sinistris caelicolis furit), inertia and waste (393 dies iterumque dies absumpsa). Scholars have pointed out that Scipio’s conduct is problematic, also by the epic’s own standards.1 Dietrich (2005) observes the correspondences with female grievers in the first half of the epic.2 She believes that in displaying womanish and extreme behaviour, Scipio is comparable to the grieving tyrants in the epics of Silvius’ contemporaries, Pelias (V.Fl. 1.709–711) and Creon (Stat. Theb. 12.92–93), who both lament the death of a son.3

We should note, however, that the force of Scipio’s grief is not used for a negative or destructive act (such as Pelias’ revenge on Jason’s parents, or Creon’s banning the cremation of the Argives), nor does he linger in his mourning; rather, the energy of grief is channelled into more epically appropriate ways of displaying pietas (cf. 391) towards the dead. Scipio follows in Aeneas’ footsteps by going to Cumae with the intention of seeing the ghost of his father. The same shift from self-destructive grief to heroic behaviour is found in book 4, when Scipio tries to commit suicide when he sees his father in mortal danger, until Mars intervenes and turns his anger against the Carthaginians (4.454–459). There, too, Scipio imitates Aeneas as he carries his father from the fight.4

Before exploring Silvius’ interaction with the Aeneid more fully, a few other intertextual models for Scipio’s emotional ‘transformation’ may be adduced. In the Iliad, Antilochus holds Achilles’ hands for fear that he might kill himself over the death of Patroclus (Hom. II. 18.33–34; cf. here 390 non comites tenuisse valent).5 Instead, Achilles’ grief works as a catalyst for his return to the battlefield and his dominance of the last books of the epic, similarly to Scipio’s rise to prominence here.6 We should also (as Dietrich does) look to the epics of Valerius and Statius, albeit not to their tyrant figures. In Argonautica 3, Jason and

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1 Ahl / Davis / Pomeroy 1986: 2547–2548, who adduce the narrator’s condemnation of the Capuans, who could not handle laeta et tristia (13.309; cf. 383 fortuna ... permiscens tristia laetis) and the contrast with Hannibal’s admirable control when faced with the death of his brother (15.819–823).
2 See also n.88b–89 pulsato lacerat ... pectore amictus. Dietrich maintains that the lamenting or frantic women (Tiburna in book 2, Imilce in 4, Marcia in 6) “embody the threatened position of Rome” (2005: 83), but her inference that Scipio’s grief similarly symbolizes “a threatened Rome” in view of “the problematic role that Scipio will play in Roman politics after the Punic wars” (2005: 85) is unconvincing.
6 For the elder Scipio and his brother in the role of both Vergil’s Pallas and Homer’s Patroclus, whose deaths are to be avenged, see nn.382–384, 507 ulcisceris and Intr. 650–704.
his men are similarly numbed with grief when they learn that they have killed their former host Cyzicus. Scipio in mourning shows several correspondences with Jason. The latter identifies his own inertia as a problem and asks the seer Mopsus for guidance, who advises him to perform an expiation rite involving the sacrifice of black sheep to send the shades of the Cyzicans to the underworld. Here, Scipio receives instructions from the Cumæan priestess for a similar ritual meant to do the opposite, viz. summon the ghosts from down below. A last possible correspondence is with Statius’ Argia, the mourning wife of Polynices who sets out to bury him in Thebaid; just as she sees the image of her husband asking for burial before her eyes and is goaded by pietas, so is Scipio in similar pietas also motivated by a mental vision of his slain kin and is spurred on by the vicinity of the underworld.

Scipio’s motivation is worthy of a closer inspection. Silius names three considerations for his visit to the priestess of Cumae: i) his filial piety (cf. pietas 391), which drives him to great grief upon hearing of the deaths of his father and uncle, causes him to try and ease this grief by conversing with their shades (395–396); ii) the geographical vicinity of the entrance of the underworld suggests such a visit (397); iii) Scipio hopes to learn the future. Each consideration has a basis in the literary tradition, as a brief overview of the various models for Silius will show.

Homer’s Odysseus is sent by Circe to consult the shade of Teiresias, who will be able to show him the way home. The hero thus seeks out the seer for advice on his immediate future and does so per Circe’s instructions. Teiresias’ divination of Odysseus’ future on Ithaca (Od. 11.115b–137) exceeds the hero’s initial reasons for summoning him; similarly, Odysseus’ conversation with the other shades was not his goal but rather an opportunity of the moment. 7 Both Scipio and Jason call the gods hostile (V.Fl. 3.303–304 divis ... sinistris ~ 391–392 sinistris / caelicolis). Jason gives in to tears, although a leader should bear misery with a serene face (V.Fl. 3.369–370 quamquam tristissima rerum / castiganda duci vultuque premenda sereno) ~ Scipio is not restrained by any regard for his status (390–391 non ullus honorum / militiaeae pudor). The Argonauts ‘take pleasure’ in grieving (V.Fl. 3.368 segniqve iuvat frigescere luctu, ‘their joy is to grow cold in the languor of distress’, 371 dulcis induget lacrimis, [Jason] indulges the sweetness of lament’) ~ Scipio ‘hates solace’ (392 odit solacia luctus). Visions of their slain friends haunt the Argonauts day and night (V.Fl. 3.362–363 at non inde dies nec ... nox Minyas tanta caesorum ab imagine solvit) ~ Scipio mourns day after day and sees the image of his kin before his mind’s eye (393–394 iamque dies iterumque dies absumpta querelis. versatur species ante ora oculosque parentum). Scipio would normally not give in to hardship (388 duris ... non cedere suetus), which echoes Jason’s self-advertisement before Aeneas at V.Fl. 7.95 mos iussa pati nec cedere duris;

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7 See Bassett 1963: 86–87, Ripoll 1999: 511. The relevance of Arg. 3 is also established by two other clear allusions to earlier parts of Valerius’ book in the Capuan episode; see Intr. 94–141 and 299–347.
8 Both Scipio and Jason call the gods hostile (V.Fl. 3.303–304 divis ... sinistris ~ 391–392 sinistris / caelicolis). Jason gives in to tears, although a leader should bear misery with a serene face (V.Fl. 3.369–370 quamquam tristissima rerum / castiganda duci vultuque premenda sereno) ~ Scipio is not restrained by any regard for his status (390–391 non ullus honorum / militiaeae pudor). The Argonauts ‘take pleasure’ in grieving (V.Fl. 3.368 segniqve iuvat frigescere luctu, ‘their joy is to grow cold in the languor of distress’, 371 dulcis induget lacrimis, [Jason] indulges the sweetness of lament’) ~ Scipio ‘hates solace’ (392 odit solacia luctus). Visions of their slain friends haunt the Argonauts day and night (V.Fl. 3.362–363 at non inde dies nec ... nox Minyas tanta caesorum ab imagine solvit) ~ Scipio mourns day after day and sees the image of his kin before his mind’s eye (393–394 iamque dies iterumque dies absumpta querelis. versatur species ante ora oculosque parentum). Scipio would normally not give in to hardship (388 duris ... non cedere suetus), which echoes Jason’s self-advertisement before Aeneas at V.Fl. 7.95 mos iussa pati nec cedere duris.

9 Here, more echoes are found: V.Fl. 3.416 coepitis ~ Sil. 13.418 coepito; both Mopsus and Scipio must purify themselves (V.Fl. 3.422–423; 3.424 castus ~ Sil. 13.414 castus). The instruction at 415 duc praedicta sacris duro placamina Diti imitates the sentence structure of V.Fl. 3.412–413 tu socios adhibere sacris armentaque magnis bina deis, “do thou summon thy comrades to the sacrifice, and bring two steers for the mighty gods”; for the line ending placamina Diti, cf. also V.Fl. 3.409 lustramina caesis, ‘lustreations to the slain’. The black sacrificial animals include cattle (V.Fl. 3.412, Sil. 13.429–431) and sheep (V.Fl. 3.431, 3.439, Sil. 13.433). Juhnke (1972: 282) observes that Scipio’s rise at midnight has a counterpart in Mopsus’ (V.Fl. 3.417–421).


11 ergo (395) emphasizes this connection between grief and visit, suggesting that Scipio’s (heroic) Nekyia is a logical and natural solution to his (unheroic) expression of grief.”

In Vergil’s *Aeneid*, the hero is commanded by the ghost of his father Anchises, who speaks on Jupiter’s authority, to come and visit him in the underworld. As in Homer, the journey to the underworld is a divine mandate, but it is not motivated by immediate need. Aeneas does not receive instructions for his further voyage to Italy; instead, Anchises (with Jupiter) seeks to fill his son with purpose to aid him in the upcoming war. During his meeting with the Sibyl, Aeneas also motivates his request to visit the underworld with a reference to the proximity of its entrance.\(^{13}\)

In post-Vergilian literature, the protagonists are no longer externally (divinely) charged with seeking knowledge of the future, but do so of their own accord. Lucan’s *Bellum Civile* features two such scenes, Appius Claudius’ consultation of the Pythia Phemonoe (5.64ff.) and Sextus Pompeius’ visit to Erictho, a witch well versed in the necromantic art (6.413ff.).\(^{14}\) Both are guided by fear and the uncertainty of the battles ahead, a fear that they seek to assuage through learning of future events.\(^{15}\) In Statius’ *Thebaid*, Eteocles is also afraid; frightened by bad omens, he consults Tiresias, who then makes a libation to the shades of the underworld (Stat. *Theb*. 4.406ff.).\(^{16}\)

Essentially, Scipio’s motives do not differ much from Aeneas’, with the addition of a few elements from later poets. Both Scipio and Aeneas act out of *pietas* towards their father, both also expect to learn of future events. An important difference is that Aeneas (like Odysseus) is commanded to go and acts out of obedience, whereas Scipio goes on his own initiative; he wishes to assuage his grief, just as Sextus Pompey and others seek to alleviate their fears. Contrary to the situation in Lucan’s and Statius’ epics, *pietas* is still paramount—Scipio’s enterprise is just a more active interpretation of the concept, and he contrasts favourably with the oracle-seekers of contemporary epic who are led by fear.

While knowledge of the future is a means for alleviating fear in the other post-Vergilian epics, there is no such connection here; consolation and divination are two distinct goals. Silius does not go into detail as to why Scipio seeks to know the future, or, for that matter, why the priestess so readily agrees to instruct him (404 *nec cunctata diu*). The outer motivation is probably the same as in the *Aeneid*; both Aeneas’ *Katabasis* and Scipio’s *Nekyia* serve to instruct and prepare the hero for the coming difficulties. The inner motivation, which is obedience in the case of Odysseus and Aeneas, is more difficult to reconstruct for Scipio. It is probably exactly because of this that Silius has laid so much emphasis on Scipio’s reaction at the news of his kin’s death; Scipio’s *pietas* is presented as the first reason for him to consult the dead, and the search for oracles is put in by the back door, as it were,\(^{17}\) acceptable because of tradition and wanted by Silius both because of its

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13 See n.397–398 *hortatur vicina palus ... stagnans Acherusius umor*.
14 Silius has echoes of both scenes. For Appius and Phemonoe, see n.382–384 *permiscens tristia laetis*, n.400–403 on *Autonoe* and on *tripodas sacros antrumque tenebat*; for Sextus and Erictho, see n.399.
15 In the case of Sextus, it is the immediate neighbourhood (viz. Thessaly) which puts the idea of visiting Erictho in his head, similarly to Scipio here; cf. Luc. 6.570 *hanc ut fama loci Pompeio prodidit*, “When local rumour revealed her to Pompey”.
16 Cf. the same motive of fear also V.Fl. 1.730ff., where Jason’s mother Alcimene seeks to dispel fears for her son and to learn of his fate by summoning the dead. Statius comments on Eteocles’ visit to Tiresias that this was *mos incerta paventibus* (*Theb*. 4.408), “the wont of those fearing the unknown”; *mos* suggest the literary tradition, in this case the poet’s immediate predecessors. See also on Silius’ use of *mos* at n.404–407.
17 Cf. Juhnke 1972: 281 “der nachträglich und geradezu beiläufig angeführte Drang, das Künftige zu erfahren”. That the quest for knowledge is as powerful a motivation in the narrative as is consolation for Scipio’s grief (*pace*
poetic value (as a means of protepsis in the narratological sense) and programmatic impact (Scipio as a second Aeneas has to be prepared in the same way). And yet there may be more to Scipio’s quest for knowledge. The venturos ... annos interest him directly; the phrase refers to the outcome of the war with Hannibal. Scipio is therefore concerned about the future of his homeland—another show of pietas on a grander scale. Furthermore, he is the appropriate person to do so, since Rome’s fata depend upon his fata (cf. the Sibyl’s address to him at 503–504), which is why Autonoe assents quite willingly. Like Aeneas, Scipio acts from motives both personal and national.

Analysis of the presentation of 381–416

In this commentary, the Nekyia episode has been divided into ten passages, of which this is the first. We should note that such a division is entirely artificial and actually goes against the grain of the poet’s method. As Reitz (1982: 12–13) has observed, the transitions between the various scenes are smooth (“der Erzählverlauf ist fließend”); often a new subject is announced in a speech, or connected with what precedes through a single referential clause, or the first lines of a new scene share an intertextual model with the last lines of the previous one. Silius has apparently gone to great pains to make this episode a continuous narrative, and the division suggests stronger breaks than can be found in the text. The present passage is a clear example of this smooth style of narrative; for where should it end? We might consider with Reitz 381–399 a separate unit, and take 400–434 together (“Die Vorbereitungen”). Yet this supposes a break between 434 and 435 which is not there; the shades of the dead rise to the surface directly after the libation. I have chosen to follow the arrangement in Silius’ prime models, the Odyssey and the Aeneid, where the instructions for the nekyia are separated from the actual preparations and the sacrifice itself (in the Odyssee even by a book division).

While the end of the passage is thus not clear-cut, its beginning is distinctly marked. The recapitulating dum-clause (381) indicates the conclusion of the previous episode (which itself had also begun with such a clause at 94). The new episode opens with the

Opening: frames for the Nekyia episode

Juhnke, who focuses almost exclusively on “Consolatio ... und ethische Katharsis”) shows in Autonoe’s reply, in which she does not explicitly refer to Scipio’s kin (despite his request to see them in 403) but on the other hand does promise his meeting with the Sibyllae ... fatidicam ... umbram (411–412), who will give him oracula (410).

At 505–506, the ancient Sibyl names both reasons, oracula vitae ... petere and patrios visu contingere manes.

18 This quite obvious point is underscored by intertextuality; Silius hints at the desire of Lucan’s Sextus Pompey to know the outcome of the battle of Pharsalus; see n.399.

19 E.g. 445–446, 488–493, 519–522, 613–614; at 850, the transition is even made within the line.

20 As in 719–720, where priscos contrasts the new objects of Scipio’s view with the previous ones, and 798, where gratantum marks the transition from Homer to the shades of his grateful characters.

21 E.g. 648–653 and 703–706; see An. 650–704.

22 In Hom. Od. 11.34ff. the arrival of the first shades is connected to the sacrifice even more closely.

23 Lines 417–418 could equally be considered a conclusion of 400–416 as an introduction to 419ff.; in view of the similarity of 417–418 with A. 6.236 (see n. ad loc.), which is directly followed by Aeneas’ journey to the entrance of the underworld, Delz’ paragraphing has been followed.

24 Silius frequently uses a recapitulating dum-clause to mark the transition to a different character and place, either within the same setting (cf. 2.148, 4.216, 5.376, 5.530, 9.244–248, 9.524, 10.170, 10.605, 11.201, 12.179, 14.353 and 15.138), often to introduce, for instance, the events on another part of the battlefield, or, like here, with a complete change of place and scenery (cf. 2.391, 3.630, 6.54, 6.641, 7.90, 7.494, 10.387, 10.449 and 17.385).
previous history (382–384, the deaths of the brothers Scipio), which is temporally connected to the preceding narrative through the dum-clause. Silius then focuses our attention on Scipio in two steps; he opens with a general orientation at 385–386, and then zooms in to the arrival of the message (387–388a), the incident which marks the beginning of the actual scene and occasions the description of Scipio’s grief. These two steps are narrated in perfect tenses (385 sedit, 388 tulit), whereas the subsequent narrative is told in present tenses; this shift is typical for the transition from a summarizing style of narration (with which a story tends to begin and end) to a scene (commonly the main and central part of a story).

The narrative from 388 onwards falls into three parts: i) the description of Scipio’s grief (388b–394); ii) his reasons for going to Cumae (395–399); iii) his visit to the priestess of Cumae (400–416). The first section is another interesting example of Silius’ employment of descriptions as a distinct narrative step. Rather than displaying a chronological ordering of events, these lines describe the various aspects of Scipio’s grief. Time does not stand still, however; line 393 shows that the period described is a few days. While there is little or no temporal progression within the description, it is a narrative device that Silius frequently uses to bridge an indefinite period of time.

At 395, ergo marks that Scipio has reached a conclusion and that the description has finished. The previous line (394), Scipio’s mental image of his fallen kin, forms the transition to this conclusion. The narrator sums up three considerations for his visit to Cumae, a new description, as it were, of his new mindset: i) his desire to assuage his grief by summoning the ghosts of his father and uncle (395 excire parat); ii) the vicinity of the underworld (397 hortatur vicina palus); iii) his desire to learn the future (399 noscere ... agitat mens).

With sic (400), we return from the descriptive mode of presentation (with little internal temporal dynamics) to a more clearly chronological narrative. The deeds and words of Scipio are narrated quickly; his wishes are presented in indirect speech. The tale slows down for Autonoe’s reply. This slowing down is paralleled in the metre, which is dominated in 404–407 by heavy spondees.

Autonoe’s role is limited to the ‘technical’ side of the nekyia, viz. the procedural instructions which are explained in the first and last parts of her speech (404–408, 413–416). The promise that the ancient Sibyl will prophesy for Scipio derives emphasis from its central position (409–412), an emphasis which also shows in Scipio’s reaction to Autonoe’s words at 417 hoc alacer monitu et promissae nomine vatis.

similar, but slightly different instance is 4.417, where the dum-clause is itself not recapitulating, but a part of it (quas acies) does refer to the previous passage. In many cases the summary in the dum-clause adds something to the preceding passage (as in 94, where haud laetus makes explicit what was only implied in the previous lines); here it is the unequivocal condemnation of Capua’s guilt (see n.381).

25 The pluperfect abstulerat (383) shows that these lines are background information for what follows.
26 Cf. 316–325, which similarly describe the aspects of the Romans’ religio; see An. 299–347.
27 In other descriptions (e.g. 104–110) we find no such explicit temporal markers, but the description can still
28 For a discussion of this type of description see Intr. 256–298. Explicit temporal markers are presumably unfitting in an epic poem; note that even the reference in 393 is rather vague.
29 In each line three of the first four feet are spondees.
381–384
dum Capua infaustam luit haud sine sanguine culpam,
interea geminos terra crudelis Hibera
fortuna abstulerat permiscens tristia laetis
Scipiadas, magnumque decus magnumque dolorem.

381 While Capua paid not without blood for its ill-starred crime, ...

This summary of the fall of Capua and the execution of its leaders reiterates the notion of justice (cf. 368 *iusta*); the final note before we move to the underworld is not the *virtus* of Taurea’s suicide but rather the righteousness of Roman punishment. The phrasing *luit haud sine sanguine* connects Capua’s fall to the Roman civil wars; cf. Vergil’s line *sanguine nostro Laomedontae luimus peruria Troiae* (*G*. 1.501–502), “our lifeblood [has] paid for Laomedon’s perjury at Troy”. Vergil identified the perjury of Trojan king Laomedon as one of the root causes of the civil war among the Roman descendants; Silius’ Capua, whose conflict with Rome can be labelled civil strife on account of their shared Trojan heritage (see Intr. 142–178 and 179–255), is now shown to share the fate of its metropolis Troy for exactly this crime of *perfidia* (cf. Cowan 2007: 37). That instigators of civil war ‘atone with their blood’ is also the message of Luc. 4.805–806, for which see n.382–384 *permiscens tristia laetis*.

For *culpam luere*, see *TLL* 4.1307.78–83.

382–384 ... meanwhile cruel Fortune, mingling sorrow with joy, had taken away on Spanish soil the two Scipios, both a great glory and a great grief.

Silius has the deaths of the two brothers occur at about the time of Capua’s fall, whereas in Polybius and Livy the Scipios died in 212, a year before Capua capitulated. The position of the narration of their death here, directly after the account of Capua’s siege, facilitates the transition to the *Nekyia* of the younger Scipio, which also takes place in Campania. For the different order in which Silius presents the historical events, see Gen.intr. § 4.2.

Scipio’s descent to the underworld marks his preparation for his role as conquering victor in the last books. Significantly, Silius ascribes his more prominent presence to the traditional catalyst of avenging a fallen beloved. The deaths of the Scipios evoke that of Pallas in the *Aeneid*; the connection is prepared here through a few key allusions: 384 *magnumque decus magnumque dolorem* ~ *A*. 10.507 *o dolor atque decus magnum rediture parenti* (“o you who will go home as a great grief and yet great glory to your father”, of Pallas’ body being brought to Evander); 383 *abstulerat* and 387 *funera acerba* ~ *A*. 11.27–28 *Pallas, quem ... abstulit atra dies et funere mersit acerbo*, “Pallas [...] whom [...] the black day swept away and plunged in bitter death” (cf. also *A*. 10.508 *aufert*); see also n.391b–392 *odit solacia luctus*. Similarly, Scipio’s uncontrollable grief brings to mind Achilles’ mourning for Patroclus (see n.390–391 *non comites tenuisse valent*). In the next books, Scipio will take up the role of *ultor* both of his father and uncle (7.487–488, 15.205) and of his *patria* (16.593). For the parallels with Pallas and Patroclus, see Intr. 650–704.

geminos ... *Scipiadas* Publius Scipio (the father of Scipio Africanus) and his brother Gnaeus Scipio, who had been fighting in Spain for years. As ghosts, they narrate the tale of their death to the younger Scipio at 671–695; for an overview of the events on the Iberian peninsula and the differences between Livy’s account and Silius’ rendering, see Intr. 650–704.
The phrase echoes Verg. *A. 6.842–843* geminos, duo fulmina belli, Scipiadas, which is, as suggested by the apposition cladem Libyae, a reference to Scipio Africanus Maior and Minor. As Norden *ad loc.* notes, it is through this apposition that we identify Vergil’s Scipiadae with the conquerors of Carthage rather than with the brothers Gn. and P. Scipio, who in earlier literature are described in very similar terms (cf. with Norden Cic. *Balb.* 34 cum duo fulmina nostri imperii subito in Hispania, Cn. et P. Scipiones, extinti occidissent and *Par.* 12 duo propugnacula belli Punici Cn. et P. Scipiones). An attractive interpretation is that Silius recognized how Vergil ‘repurposed’ these (possibly Ennian) phrases and himself now does the same with Vergil’s own geminos Scipiadas, effectively ‘returning’ the phrase to its original context. This kind of intertextuality is common in post-Vergilian poetry; cf. e.g. Lucan’s play on Pompey’s body at 1.685–686, which alludes to Vergil’s identification of Priam with Pompey at *A.* 2.557, and Silius’ similar modelling of *Punica* 12 on *Aeneid* 9, which itself was probably inspired by Hannibal’s siege of Rome (see Intr. 142–178 with fn.21). The allusion also entails that Scipio, like Aeneas, will encounter two Scipiadae in the underworld. The same adjective geminus is applied again to the Scipios at 15.3 and 16.87 (another adaptation of Verg. *l.c.*).

**crudelis ... fortuna** For the phrase, cf. Hor. *Serm.* 2.8.61–62, *Ciris* 313 and crudelia fata in Verg. *G.* 4.495–496, *A.* 1.221–222, Ov. *Met.* 9.359 and Mart. 4.18.5 (cf. also [Sen.] *Oct.* 65 crudeli sorte, *Ciris* 199 crudeli fatorum lege). Soldevila *ad Mart.* *l.c.* cites a number of sepulchral inscriptions with the phrase, noting that “the expression is frequent […], especially when related to the topos of mors inmatura”. This notion of prematurity is present here as well (cf. 387 funera acerba) on account of the literary models of Patroclus and Pallas.

**abstulerat** For auferre of death ‘snatching away’, see *TLL* 2.1337.20ff.

**permiscens tristia laetis** The tristia are the deaths of the two Scipios, the laeta the capture of Capua. For the expression cf. Ov. *Fast.* 6.463 interdum miscentur tristia laetis; see also Otto *s.v.* mel 3.

The thought is taken from Luc. 5.2–3 miscens adversa secundis / ... fortuna. There are several correspondences with the plot of Lucan’s narrative here. In *Bellum Civile* 4, Caesar (like the Carthaginians here) had defeated two Roman generals in Spain. Those successes were counterbalanced by setbacks, namely the deaths of Vulteius and Curio, which both find a parallel in Silius’ Capua. In Lucan, Vulteius and his men had jointly committed suicide in order to escape capture by the enemy; this is similar to the deeds of the Capuans Virrius and Taurea (see Intr. 348–380 fn.18). Lucan’s Curio betrayed Rome to Caesar because of luxus (Luc. 4.816ff.), just as Capua’s defection to Hannibal was caused by their own luxus (Sil. 11.33ff.). Curio paid with his blood (4.805–806 has urbi miserae vestro de sanguine poenas / ferre datis, luitis iugulo sic arma, potentes, “This, doubtless, is the penalty, mighty men, you pay to unhappy Rome with your own blood, like this you make atonement with your laughter”), like Capua (381 Capua infaustam luit haud sine sanguine culpam). The narrative in the *Punica* has reached a similar point as that in the *Bellum Civile*; for both parties, success and loss are mingled. Just as in the beginning of Lucan’s book 5 the uncertainty of the war sets the stage for Appius’ consultation of the Pythia Phemonoe, so will Scipio here visit the Cumaean priestess Autonoe.

**magnumque decus magnumque dolorem** As in Verg. *A.* 10.507 (cited above), decus and dolorem are used predicatively of the fallen (cf. Duff “once the boast of their country
and now their grief”). *decus* refers to the many victories the Scipios gained in Spain, while *dolorem* arises from the prematurity of their death (cf. Harrison *ad* Verg. *l.c.* “Pallas is a grief to Evander for his death (508) but a glory for his achievements (509)”). Silius has reversed the order in the Vergilian model and positioned *dolorem* last so that it may trigger the account of the younger Scipio’s grief. The reduplication of *magnum* parallels Livy’s emphasis (25.36.14–16) on the magnitude of the grief for the brothers, whose passing was not only greatly mourned in Rome but also by the Spanish people.

### 385–394

forte Dicarchea iuvenis tum sedit in urbe

Scipio post belli repetens extrema penates.

hoc tristes lacrimas et funera acerba suorum

fama tulit. duris quamquam non cedere suetus

pulsato lacerat violenter pectore amictus.

non comites tenuisse valent, non ullus honorum

militiaeae pudor. pietas irata sinistris

ciaelicolis fuit atque odit solacia luctus.

iamque dies iterumque dies absumpta querelis.

versatur species ante ora oculosque parentum.

### 385–386

It so happened that Scipio was residing in the town of Puteoli at that time, visiting the family estates when warfare had ended.

_forte_ The fiction of convenient coincidence; it was most fortunate that Scipio was near the entrance to the underworld when he heard the bad news. This use of _forte_ is common in poetry; often the character involved ‘happens to be’ on the right spot or is already occupied with the business that will have a central place in the following section. In the _Punica_, cf. 2.481, 2.526, 7.326, 8.57, 8.116, 13.637, 15.416.

**Dicarchea ... urbe** Puteoli, on the bay of Naples and close to Cumae. Its old Greek name Δικαίαρξεια was picked up by Latin poets, especially Statius. The adjective is shortened to _Dicarcheus_ (cf. also _Dicarchis_ at Petr. 120.68) for metrical reasons; for the name and the shortening, see Van Dam 1984: 196 and 252. In the _Punica_, cf. 8.533 and 12.107.

_iuvenis_ The word distinguishes Scipio Africanus from his fallen kin, but is also a common epithet of him (23 out of 113 instances of *iuvenis* in _Punica_; cf. 9.459, 9.545, 13.402, 435, 466, 517, 623, 652, 696, 762, 868, 895, 15.10, 18, 69, 123, 129, 201, 404, 16.190, 596, 17.179, 384). While _iuvenis_ is of course in many instances a generic word, often used when a proper name would be repetitious, its frequent use for Scipio is programmatic. After book 12, the young Roman has usurped the role of victor in the epic from Hannibal, to whom the same epithet applies in the earlier books (also 23 instances: 1.55, 641, 649, 677, 2.296, 3.64, 171, 7.73, 99, 8.30, 10.52, 91, 340, 354, 366, 11.135, 371, 12.199, 486, 702, 15.527, 732, 17.352; the last three instances refer to Hannibal’s earlier exploits). After his failure in book 12 to take Rome (his epic quest), Hannibal is no longer characterized by youthful vigour; cf. 13.1 segne.

_post belli ... extrema_ I.e. the siege of Capua, in which Scipio also had a part (217–243).

_repetens ... penates_ It is possible that Silius thinks of nearby Liternum, Scipio’s later place of exile, and extrapolates his earlier residence at the site (*pace* Spaltenstein). At 8.530,
Liternum is mentioned in the same breath with Cumae and receives the epithet *palustre* (cf. 397 *hortatur vicina palus*). Since, however, Puteoli is mentioned separately only three lines later, we should probably not identify the two towns; Spaltenstein’s interpretation that Scipio was going to embark in the port of Puteoli en route to Rome (his *penates*) is attractive.

For the phrase *repetere penates* (“going home”), used four times by Silius (also at 6.67, 668–669 and 13.276), cf. in the rest of classical literature only Hor. *Carm.* 3.14.3–4 (but cf. *repetere larem* at Stat. *Theb.* 8.616–617 and Mart. 11.82.2).

387–388a *There news finds him, reporting his sad loss and their untimely deaths.*

*lacrimas et funera ... tuli lacrimae* is probably used metonymically for that which causes the weeping, as a synonym of *funera*; Spaltenstein compares Stat. *Theb.* 11.270 *funeribus patriae lacrimisque*. Alternatively, we may suppose a zeugma, with *tuli* first as ‘brought’ / ‘caused’, then ‘reported’ (for zeugmas, see n.234–237 *effudit lacrimas pariter cornuque*).

*funera acerba* Untimely death, as in Verg. *A.* 11.27 (see n.382–384).

388b–389 *Although he is not wont to give in to hardship, he tears his clothes and violently beats his chest.*

Scipio’s excessive grief is presented somewhat unfavourably; he mourns like a woman (389), cannot be restrained (390a) or comforted (392b) and blames Heaven for his misfortune (391b–392a). While this is a strong display of *pietas* towards his father and uncle, his conduct is not perfect; Scipio’s solution to consult the shades of his kin and ease his mind follows from this scene.

For the echoes of Jason’s numbing grief at the death of Cyzicus, see Intr. 381–416 with fn.8 and 9; the parallel with Jason is also made through a reminiscence of his words to Aeetes at V.Fl. 7.95 *mos iussa pati nec cedere duris*, “I am accustomed to obey nor yield to hardship”.

*pulsato lacerat ... pectore amictus* Dietrich (2005: 79–86) notes the similarities with female mourners in the first half of the *Punica*; cf. e.g. Marcia’s grief at Regulus’ departure for Carthage at 6.405 *squalentem crinem et tristis lacerabat amictus*, “in her sorrow she tore her disordered hair and rent her garments”. Likewise, Ovid portrays many women beating their breast or tearing their clothes or both (cf. Börner *ad Fast.* 3.864 and *Met.* 11.680ff. for examples). This might suggest that Scipio’s behaviour is womanish (and thus weak, cf. n.16b–18 *femineus*). But many males display the same behaviour in mourning; tearing one’s clothes could an effective and acceptable display of grief for many Roman leaders (cf. Levy: 1947: 72–75, who adduces from poetry e.g. Verg. *A.* 5.685, of Aeneas; cf. also Stat. *Silv.* 2.1.166–174; for the acceptability of exaggerated grief, see also MacMullen 1980). The first part of Scipio’s expression of grief is thus well within the standards for mourning in society and literature; still, the manifestations of sorrow become progressively more excessive and the strong words (cf. below) suggest that Scipio is carried away too far by his emotions.

390–391a *His companions cannot restrain him, nor can any consideration for his social status or military rank.*

Another slight zeugma (see n.387–388a above); friends cannot restrain him, nor will he himself.
non comites tenuisse valent Statius has similar phrases for mourners who can barely be constrained from committing suicide; cf. *Theb.* 9.77 comites tenuere (of Polynices when he sees the corpse of Tydeus; cf. also Crenaeus’ mother who threatens to commit suicide at *Theb.* 9.398), *Silv.* 2.1.25 vix tenui similis comes, 3.3.178 vix famuli comitesque tenent. Compare Scipio’s near-suicide when his father was in mortal danger at 4.457–458. This motif goes back to Hom. *Il.* 18.32–34, where Antilochus holds Achilles’ hands for fear that he would kill himself over the death of Patroclus (cf. Laudizi 1991: 3 n. 1).

Another parallel is *Theb.* 8.762 nec comites auferre valent, “nor can his comrades wrest it away”, where Tydeus’ friends try (but fail) to prevent him from his cannibalistic treatment of his foe. This last parallel reinforces the impression that Scipio’s behaviour is in fact unwanted, and should be remedied in some way (i.e. the consultation of the shades).

honorum ... militiaeve The honores probably refer to Scipio’s social status as a member of one of the great houses (cf. *TLL* 6.3.2928.79–80), or possibly to his election as curule aedile in 213 BC (Liv. 25.2.6–8). militia relates to his military rank; Scipio had commanded a regiment of Campanians at Cannae (8.546ff.) and had been charged with the duty of meeting any flank attacks by the Numidian cavalry (9.275–277).

391b–392 His angry filial piety rages against the malevolent gods and will not seek solace for his mourning.

pietas The word is ironic here; in his pietas towards his kin Scipio rages against the gods, forsaking pietas towards them.

irata ... furt ... odit Strong words that contrast sharply with pietas and the Stoic virtue of ἀπάθεια. Anger, rage and hate are typical of the Carthaginians, and excess in these emotions should be avoided by the Romans (see Intr. 299–347).

sinistris caelicolis Cf. Jason’s reaction upon learning of Cyzicus’ death in *V.Fl.* 3.303–304 heu divis visa sinistris regna mihi, “Alas, under heaven’s displeasure did I see this realm!”. odit solacia luctus Spaltenstein cites several instances of “deuil complaisant” or complacent sorrow; with odit, compare esp. the opposite phrasing in Luc. 9.112 amat ... luctum and Stat. *Theb.* 12.45 amant ... lamenta (see also n.393 dies absumpta). See also Van Dam ad Stat. *Silv.* 2.1.14–15 and Gibson ad *Silv.* 5.5.56. Grieving may be acceptable and good, but to wallow in it is perverse, Silius seems to say.

The phrase is another reminiscence of Pallas’ death in the *Aeneid*; the thousand-man escort for Pallas’ bier is called solacia luctus / exigua ingentis (*A.* 11.62–63), “scant solace for grief so vast”. For the collocation, cf. 10.618 and Stat. *Silv.* 3.3.31–32.

393 Already one day and another is lost in lamentation.

iamque dies iterumque dies Cf. Verg. *A.* 3.356 iamque dies alterque dies processit, “And now day after day has passed” (imitated at *V.Fl.* 5.276 ille dies alterque dies). The phrase means ‘a few days’, without defining the exact number (cf. Horsfall *ad Verg.* *l.c*.; in Valerius, the phrase does seem to mean ‘two days’).

dies absumpta Cf. Stat. *Theb.* 12.44 iam lacrimis exempta dies, of the Thebans mourning their dead (see also n.391b–392 odit solacia luctus). For absumere (‘waste’), cf. *V.Fl.* 4.25 in vanos absumis tempora questus; this use of the verb is rare in poetry, but frequent in Livy, often to denote a span of time spent on long and/or futile attempts. The verb stresses the pointlessness (and therefore again the undesirability) of Scipio’s mourning.
The faces of his kinsmen come before his face and eyes.

Ganschinietz (RE 10.2423.43ff.) takes this line to imply that Scipio’s father and uncle came to him in a dream, exhorting him to come to them, just as Anchises called Aeneas (A. 5.724ff.). This seems to stretch the meaning, however; Silius would surely have been more explicit had he wanted to refer to a dream vision similar to Vergil’s scene. Scipio will summon the shades of his own accord (395 exire parat manes; see also Intr. 381–416); the images that are described here are merely projected into his mind’s eye (see below). Our line (together with the next lines) rather picks up A. 6.695–696 tua me, genitor, tua tristis imago saepius occurrens haec limina tendere adegit. Even so, Silius seems to refer to Vergil’s first scene; as Reitz (1982: 18–19) points out, A. 5.722 facies ... parentis is taken up by species ... parentum here. parentum here refers to both father and uncle, a nod to the Vergilian model but also a reference to Scipio’s own reference to them in Liv. 26.41.17 as parentibus meis – aequentur enim etiam honore nominis.

The line ending ante ora oculosque parentum is a nice example of Silius’ flexible use of Vergil’s diction. The phrase is adopted from A. 2.531 ut tandem ante oculos evasit et ora parentum “When at last he came before the eyes and faces of his parents” and A. 11.887 exclusi ante oculos lacrimantiumque ora parentum, “shut out before the eyes and gaze of weeping parents”; in both passages the parents witness the deaths of their children. In our line, parentum goes with species. The image is effectively reversed; while this is once again the ‘normal’ order (the death of the parent precedes the child’s death), the reminiscence of Vergil gives the phrase significance. The grief expressed in Vergil’s lines (and similarly in Evander’s mourning for Pallas, who is a model for the Scipios; see n.382–384) is thus transferred to Scipio without further mention.

These mental images of his kin exhort Scipio to stop idle grieving and take action. Compare in Statius’ Thebaid the figure of Argia, the wife of the deceased Polynices, who is spurred on (Theb. 12.186 hortantur; cf. 395 hortatur) to go and cremate her husband by pietas and by the thought of Polynices requesting burial (Theb. 12.187 ipse etiam ante oculos and 12.191 animo versatur imago). For a full discussion of the intertextual significance, see Van der Keur 2013: 328–329 and 341–342.

versari ante oculos is a favourite expression of Cicero (18 instances), which the orator uses to evoke an image before his audience’s mind’s eye (cf. e.g. S. Rosc. 98 non versatur ante oculos vobis in caede Glaucia?, “is not Glaucia before your eyes implicated in the murder?”). Cf. also Lucr. 2.112–113, Tac. Dial. 16.5, 23.2, Hist. 2.75, Quint. Decl. 337.4, Gell. 15.3.6.

Therefore he prepares to summon their shades, the spirits of his kin, and to ease his great sorrow by conversation with these men.

exire A verb commonly used for ‘summoning ghosts’ and other denizens of Hades; cf. 1.97 and 16.310 (cf. Spaltenstein ad loc.), Verg. Ecl. 8.98 animas imis excire sepulchris,
“call spirits from the depth of the grave”, V.Fl. 1.732, 791, TLL 5.2.1246.83ff. Cf. also 2.584, of the snake which is supposed to be Zacynthus’ genius and thus also closely connected to the underworld. The recurrence of excire at 16.310, Scipio’s invocation of the shades of his father and uncle at the beginning of their funeral games, is conspicuous; does Scipio summon them again, or does he only call their names (cf. Hom. Il. 23.178 ὄνομηνες, Verg. A. 5.98 animamque vocabat, 6.506 manis ter ... vocavi)?

manes Reitz (1982: 19) compares lines 394–396 with 2.296 and 3.139, where Hannibal is said to be incited to war by the shade and image of his father (manes in both passages). Just as Hannibal is driven to wage war by Hamilcar, so do images of his family prompt Scipio to do deeds of pietas and ultimately, like Hannibal, to be an ultor.

virum = virorum. For the objective genitive with alloquium (‘interview with’), cf. Ov. Pont. 3.6.40, Tac. Hist. 2.49.1.

tantos mulcere dolores Cf. Verg. A. 12.880, where Iuturna complains that she cannot end her great grief for Turnus (tantos finire dolores) by joining him in the underworld, since she is immortal. Scipio does assuage his grief by going to the nether world, but not by dying.

397–398 The lake close by summons him, where the stagnant water of Acheron marks the murky entrance to the underworld.

Aeneas also motivates his request to visit the underworld by referring to the vicinity of its entrance at A. 6.106–107 quando hic inferni ianua regis dicitur et tenebrosa palus Acheronte refuso, “since here is the famed gate of the nether king, and the gloomy marsh from Acheron’s overflow”. During his ‘guided tour’ through Campania, Hannibal was also informed of its presence at 12.126–128 huic vicina palus (fama est Acherontis ad undas / pandere iter) caecas stagnante voragine fauces / laxat, “a swamp, not far away—legend tells that it opens a way to the river Acheron—opens up darksome abysses of stagnant water”. Klaassen (2010: 109–110 with n.27) observes the echoes of Aeneas’ words (also A. 6.109 iter ... pandas) and actual katabasis (A. 6.295 hinc via Tartarei quae fert Acherontis ad undas); Hannibal misses the opportunity for an epic katabasis, while Scipio does not.

Here, Acheron (i.e. the lake) marks the entrance to Avernus (i.e. the underworld), whereas in 12.121–129 it is the other way around. This illustrates the exchangeability of terms for specific geographic features in this part of Campania and the underworld; both Avernus and Acheron can be used to refer to the lake, the infernal river or the underworld itself.

Pliny has a similar description of the lake at Nat. 3.61 Acherusia palus Cumis vicina.

399 His mind is eager to know immediately the ages that are yet to come.

For Scipio’s desire to learn the future in which he will end the war, Silius imitates Lucan’s phrase for portents which foretell the beginning of (civil) war (Luc. 2.6 noscant venturas ... clades) and for the feeling of dread when the confrontation is nigh (Luc. 6.414–415 cunctos belli praesaga futuri / mens agitat, “each mind is troubled by a sense of future war”); the last phrase forms the introduction to Sextus’ consultation of Erictho and the subsequent necromancy. For venturos, cf. A. 6.66 praescia venturi, of the Sibyl whom Aeneas visits and who will also be consulted by Scipio.

For the line ending, cf. the Sibyl’s sad tale at Ov. Met. 14.139 excidit, ut peterem iuvenes quoque protinus annos, “but I forgot to ask that those years might be perpetually young”. Here, the sense of protinus is different: ‘immediately’ (with noscere).
sic ad Cymaeam, quae tum sub nomine Phoebi
Autonoe tripodas sacros antrumque tenebat,
fert gressus iuvenis consultaque pectoris aegri
pandit et adspectus orat contingere patrum.
nec cunctata diu vates ‘mactare repostis
mos umbris’ inquit ‘consueta piacula nigras
sub lucem pudes reclusaeque abdere terrae
manantem iugulis spirantum caede cruorem.
tunc populos tibi regna suos pallentia mittent.
cetera quae poscis maiori vate canentur.
namque tibi Elysio repetita oracula campo
eliciam veterisque dabo inter sacra Sibyllae
cernere fatidicam Phoebei pectoris umbram.
vade age et a medio cum se nox umida cursu
flexerit, ad fauces vicini castus Averni
duc praedicta sacra et duro placamina Diti;
mella simul tectum et puri fer dona Lyaei.

So Scipio goes to the Cumaean priestess, Autonoe, who at that time held the
sacred tripod and the cave in Apollo’s name; the youth reveals the resolve of his mourning
heart and asks to meet his relatives.

Cymaeam I.e. the priestess residing in the cave of Cumae, near Puteoli. The adjective
Cymaeus is derived from Cyme, the metropolis of Cumae on Euboea; it is used in the sense
‘of (Italian) Cumae’ also at 498, 9.57–58, Hyg. Fab. 128.1.1 and V.Fl. 1.5 (where some
editions have Cumaeus), in all cases in connection with the Sibyl. The slightly more
frequent Cumaeus is only used in reference to Campanian Cumae and also exclusively in
relation to the Sibyl. Our line is the only instance where the adjective is nominalized. The
town itself is spelled Cyme only in Silius (8.531, 11.288 and 13.494) and Statius (Silv.
4.3.65 and 5.3.168). The Roman spelling Cumae is common in Latin poetry (e.g. Hor. Ep.
1.15.11, Stat. Silv. 4.3.114), but Silius does not use it.

sub nomine Phoebi Litt. “on authority of Phoebus”, i.e. as Apollo’s priestess. The phrase echoes the line ending in Verg. A. 6.70 de nomine Phoebi, where Aeneas promises a
temple to the god if the Sibyl will aid him.

Autonoe Also the name of a daughter of Cadmus, the mother of Actaeon. Silius
continues Vergil’s practice, who gave the Sibyl a Greek name (cf. A. 6.36 Deiphobe);
compare also Lucan’s Phemonoe (5.126; cf. Spaltenstein), a Pythia (or, since she shared her
name with the first of her order, the Pythia; see Van Dam ad Stat. Silv. 2.2.39) and thus
another priestess of Apollo. The ancient Sibyl who is Scipio’s guide in the second half of
the book (doubtlessly the one from the Aeneid) is not named.

The Greek root of the name may pun on the fact that the figure of Autonoe is the poet’s
own creation (αὐτός and νοέω). She has a metapoetic significance for Silius’ inheritance of
the literary tradition in the Nekyia which will follow. Autonoe, whose very name recalls
Lucan’s Phemonoe, will guide Scipio to summon Vergil’s Sibyl, who in turn will show him
the ghost of Homer, the creator of the literary underworld (see n.790–791 haec cuncta).
That Autonoe, guardian of the Sibylline tripods (the mark of a divinely inspired vates), represents Silius’ poetic claim is supported by the words of his close contemporary Valerius Flaccus, who at the opening of his poem invokes Phoebus to aid him si Cumaeae mihi conscia vatis / stat casta cortina domo (1.5–6), “if there stands in a pure home the tripod that shares the secrets of the Cymaean prophetess”, and by Statius’ introduction of Phemonoe in Stat. Silv. 2.2.39 in her quality of inventor of hexametric poetry (see Van Dam ad loc.).

Contrary to what is commonly assumed, Silius nowhere says that Autonoe is a Sibyl herself. She is a vates (404, 417, 422, 436), but the title Sibylla is used to distinguish the ancient prophetess at 411, 444 and 488. Unlike Vergil’s priestess, Autonoe does not tell the future; cf. 8.531 quondam fatorum conscia Cyme, with the implication that the oracle is now silent (cf. perhaps Stat. Silv. 4.3.65 quieta Cyme), and Parke 1988: 80–81 “no literary sources suggest that there was any oracle-centre in use [in Cumae] after the city fell under Roman control. [...] it is reasonable to suppose that the oracle ceased at the time when Cumae was captured by the Campanians [in 421 BC]”. Another difference is that Vergil’s Deiphobe is priestess of Apollo and Trivia (A. 6.35), whereas Autonoe only serves Apollo and, having not been initiated in the secrets of the underworld like the Vergilian Sibyl, will not guide Scipio through the underworld.

tripodas sacros antrumque tenebat The antrum is described at A. 6.42ff. For the tripods, which Vergil does not mention, Silius was inspired by Lucan’s narrative of Appius’ visit to the Delphic Pythia; cf. Luc. 5.81 regna Themis tripodasque teneret (cf. also 5.84 sacris ... antris), of Themis ‘holding sway’ in Delphi until Apollo took over. Here, Autonoe guards the cave and the tripods, Phoebus’ traditional attributes, as the representative of the god.

iuvenis For Scipio being defined as iuvenis in the Punica, see n.385–386.

consulta ... pandit Cf. A. 6.151 consulta petis; the sense of consulta is different (‘resolve’ here, ‘guidance’ in Vergil), but both refer to the hero’s consultation of the priestess. Scipio’s wish to know the future (399) is here not made explicit, but even so the Sibyl seems to refer to it in 410 repetita oracula and 412 fatidicam.

adspectus orat contingere patrum This very concise phrase is a reminiscence of Aeneas’ wish in A. 6.106–109 unum oro: ... ire ad conspectum cari genitoris et ora contingat, “One thing I pray: ... be it granted me to pass into my dear father’s sight and presence”. There are two possible interpretations of the syntax here: i) contingere is “be granted” (as in Vergil) and adspectus (“sight”; OLD s.v. 1b) is the subject of the AcI, hence “that the sight of his kin be granted to him”; ii) contingere is “to touch” (with his view) with adspectus (“the appearance of his kin”; cf. 15.182 and OLD s.v. 6) as its object. The second interpretation of contingere is certainly correct in two parallel passages; cf. 506 patrios visu contingere manes and Stat. Silv. 5.3.275 fas mihi sic patrios contingere vultus, “let me be permitted to touch my father’s face” (see Gibson ad loc.). For this passage, see the Appendix.

For patrum, see n.394 on parentum.

404–407 The priestess does not hesitate long and says: “The rule is to sacrifice to the buried dead the accustomed offering, black sheep, before the first light and to collect during the slaughter in the opened ground the blood streaming from the throats of the still breathing victims.
nec cunctata diu The phrase shows Autonoe’s readiness to comply with Scipio’s request, and thus its acceptability. Reitz (1982: 23 n.1) suggests a contrast with Ov. *Met.* 14.106–107, where the Sibyl thinks long (*diu ... moratum*) before complying with Aeneas’ request.

repostis umbris A succinct way of saying ‘the shades of the buried dead’; cf. 445–446 *inhumata ... umbra*, Verg. *A.* 4.34 *manis ... sepultos*, Luc. 9.151 *inhumatos ... manes*. Those who are buried need to drink blood to regain their memory (as they had been allowed to cross the Styx and had drunk from the river Lethe) and thus be able to know Scipio and have speech with him (cf. Hom. *Od.* 11.153ff., where Anticleia recognizes her son Odysseus only after drinking the blood, and 11.390); the unburied dead, however, can speak without tasting it (cf. 447–448 *cui datur ... sanguine non tacto solitas effundere voces*). Only Teiresias is able to speak to Odysseus before drinking the blood (*Od.* 11.90ff.), but this does not refute the system (*pace* Spaltenstein) but is rather the exception that proves the rule; Teiresias’ special position as the only one who had been allowed to retain his mind is explained at *Od.* 10.493ff. For Homer’s (and Silius’) ‘laxity’ in later parts of the *Nekyia*, see n.447–448 *sanguine non tacto*.

mos There are two layers to this word. First and foremost, it is (together with *consueta*) an intertextual signpost; Scipio will follow in the footsteps of Odysseus and Aeneas and *mos* is the literary ‘tradition’ (cf. esp. Verg. *A.* 6.153 *duc nigras pecudes; ea prima piacula sunt*). The word naturally also has a meaning on a purely textual level. Duff’s “customary” is too permissive; tradition has made this kind of sacrifice a religious rule, especially when indicated by the Sibyl herself. For *mos* in the context of sacrifice, cf. e.g. Deiphobe’s instruction to Aeneas *nunc grege de intacto septem mactare iuvencos / praestiterit, totidem lectas ex more bidentis* (*A.* 6.38–39).

nigras ... pecudes Any animal offered to the underworld gods or the shades must be black, just as any sacrifice for the celestial gods was as a rule pure white (see *RE* 18.1A.594.6ff., Radke 1936: 23–30 and n.115–116 *candore*). Scipio will offer a black bull to Pluto in 429–430; the colour of the other victims is probably black as well. In this he is preceded by Odysseus (cf. *Od.* 11.33), Aeneas (*A.* 5.736, 6.153, 243) and Teiresias (Stat. *Theb.* 4.445–446). Cf. also the sacrifice to Hecate at 1.119–120, to Pluto and Proserpina at 8.116–120, and Lucr. 3.52–53, Verg. *G.* 4.546, *A.* 5.97 (to the shade of Anchises), V.Max. 2.4.5. For the phrase, see n.413 *duc*.

sub lucem In Vergil, the Sibyl leads Aeneas into the underworld *primi sub limina solis et ortus* (*A.* 6.225) “just before the rays and dawning of the early sun”. The use of *sub* is the same, but ‘just before the light’ here means rather ‘before the night begins to grow lighter again’, i.e. in the dead of night, as follows from 413 and 420 (midnight). Aeneas’ *katabasis* took place during the day, while Scipio’s *nekyia* is a nocturnal affair, just like Odysseus’ *Totenschau* (cf. Hom. *Od.* 11.12). In Homer, there is no sense of urgency; Silius’ Sibyl, however, warns Scipio at 808 that he should hurry *ne cunctantem lux alma vocaret*. This motif, too, is adopted (with a change of day to night) from the *Aeneid*, where the Sibyl admonishes the hero that he should not waste time, for night is approaching (*A.* 6.539; see n.807–808). Aeneas’ allotted time in the underworld is traditionally understood to be one full day (cf. Norden *ad A.* 6.893ff., Williams *ad A.* 6.537). By contrast, a *nekyia* is performed during the night (when the ghosts may rise to the surface), lasting from midnight

reclusae ... terrae For the procedure that Scipio is to follow, cf. Circe’s instructions to Odysseus at Hom. Od. 10.515–520; the hero was to dig a hole measuring one by one cubit, pour out libations of honey and milk, wine and water around it (cf. 416 and 434 mella super Bacchique et lactis honorem with n.) and cut the throats of a pair of black sheep—and, as emerges from the actual sacrifice at Od. 11.35–36, to collect their blood in the hole itself. The same actions are performed in Tiresias’ necromancy in Sen. Oed. 550ff. and Stat. Theb. 4.451–454 (see n.427b–429a ferroque cavare refossam ... humum for echoes of both); cf. also Hor. Serm. 1.8.28–29 cruor in fossam confusus, ut inde manis elicercnt, animas responsa daturas, “the blood was all poured into a trench, that therefrom they might draw the sprites, souls that would give them answers” (of two witches), Ov. Met. 7.243ff. and V.Fl. 1.735.

For recludere for ‘dig the earth open’, cf. Verg. G. 2.423, Tac. Ann. 2.25.3 and in the context of human burial 479–480 reclusa nudos Garamantes harena infodiunt and Hor. Carm. 2.18.32–34 aequa tellus pauperi recluditur regumque pueris, “the earth is opened equally for the poor and for the sons of princes”.

abdere Not ‘bury in’ (as that implies covering the hole), but rather ‘let flow in’; the dead need to be able to drink the blood. For abdo with a dative cf. Verg. A. 2.553, Sen. Tro. 48.

manantem iugulis spirantum ... cruorem The animals are killed by cutting their throats, so that their life force is still in the blood as it leaves the body and can be used to ‘revitalize’ the dead. The fact that the victim is still alive is also emphasized at Tiresias’ necromancy (Sen. Oed. 558, Stat. Theb. 4.444, 4.466) and other sacrifices or auguries at Verg. A. 4.63–64 pecudumque reclusis pectoribus inhians spirantia consult exta, “gazing into the open breasts of victims, [Dido] consults the quivering entrails” (imitated by Silius at 1.119ff.), 12.213–214 and Stat. Theb. 6.220 and 12.68. Silius’ line roughly translates Hom. Od. 11.35–36 τὰ δὲ μῆλα λαβὼν ἀπεδειροτόμησα ἐς βόθρον, ῥέε δ’ αἷμα κελαινεφές, “I took the sheep and cut their throats over the pit, and the dark-steaming blood flowed” (cf. Juhnke 1972: 281); κελαινεφές, ‘dark-steaming’, suggests that the blood is still warm, a notion taken up by spirantum.

408 Then the pallid realm will send its inhabitants to you.

The shades’ arrival directly follows the sacrifice; cf. Hom. Od. 10.529–530, 11.36–37.

regna ... pallentia Cf. the same phrase (in both cases for the underworld) at Aetna 78 and (singular) Sil. 3.483; cf. 11.472 pallida regna. The epithet (‘bloodless’), though normal of the dying and the dead (cf. e.g. Hor. Carm. 1.4.13 pallida Mors, Verg. A. 4.26, 10.822), derives special significance from the blood offering. See also n.560–561 nigrum pandens Mors lurida rictum.


409 The other things that you ask will be revealed by a greater seer.

For Silius’ use of two priestesses as a means to allude to various intertextual models, including Homer’s Teiresias and Vergil’s Sibyl, see Intr. 494–516.
quae poscis maiori vate canentur Autonoe refers to Scipio’s wish to know the future (399). The intertext is Helenus’ counsel to Aeneas at A. 3.456–457 adeas vatem precibus oracula poscas: ipsa canat vocemque volens atque ora resolvat, “visit the prophetess and with prayers plead that she herself chant the oracles, and graciously open her lips in speech”. In this epic, the same Vergilian Sibyl, who has the gift of prophecy (412 fatidicam), will speak again. This line and the following clearly have a metapoetic layer, with several words suggesting Silius’ “evocation of his literary past” (Hardie 2004: 151–152); cf. maiori (“older” but also “greater”, a homage to Silius’ great predecessor), the ambiguous verb canentur (the activity of prophets and poets, both vates), repetita oracula (“the oracle that is brought back”, i.e. from the underworld, but also “that repeats the Aeneid”), veteris (“of old” / “long-lived” / “of my predecessor”) and umbram (“ghost”, but also the shade of Vergil in which Silius stands). Cf. also 799 maiores ... umbras, on the “older shades” of the older and greater poet Homer. Note that we should not understand such homage as disparagement by Silius of his own poetry.

Both quae poscis and repetita are probably also a reminiscence of the Sibyl’s assurance to Aeneas in Ov. Met. 14.110 that he will receive what he has asked for (potiere petitis), viz. to see the underworld and the ghost of his father.

410–412 For I will summon for you an oracle sought from the Elysian field and will allow you to see at your sacrifice the prophesying shade of the ancient Sibyl whose body is possessed by Phoebus.

Elysio ... campo The shade of the ancient Sibyl shares the Elysian fields with Aeneas’ father Anchises, who has a similar role of giving prophesy in the Aeneid (cf. Reitz 1982: 16).


veteris ... Sibyllae The first sense here is “the Sibyl of old”, but Spaltenstein is probably right in seeing this as a reference to the legendary old age of the Sibyl (cf. A. 6.321 longaeva sacerdos; see his note 13,410 for other parallels). In Ovid, the Sibyl tells Aeneas that she has lived for 700 years and still must endure another 300 years, in which she will slowly wither away until nothing is left (Petronius give a variant ending with his famous “Sibyl in a bottle”, Sat. 48). Silius seems to have followed Ovid’s version (Deremetz 2004: 77–78 and 2005: 119; see n.490b–492a ipse negarit plus novisse deus for a possible echo); Vergil’s Sibyl died between the visits of Aeneas and Scipio. For the metapoetic layer, see n.409 quae poscis maiori vate canentur.

inter sacra ‘At your sacrifice’.

fatidicam Phoebei pectoris umbram Presumably, Phoebei pectoris (litt. “of Phoebeic breast”, hence “whose breast is possessed by Phoebus”) is a qualitative genitive with umbram. Alternatively, we may regard (with Duff) the genitive as a complement with fatidicam (“who declares the mind of Apollo”), but I have found no other instance of fatidicus with a genitive. Spaltenstein’s suggestion “l’ombre (qui est comme le) ‘pectus’ de Phoebus” seems unnatural. For Apollo taking possession of the body of the prophesying
Notes to 381–416

413–416 Go then and when dewy night has turned past the middle of her course, you must be purified and bring the prescribed offerings, appeasements to implacable Dis, to the chasm of nearby Avernus; take also honey with you and an offering of pure wine.”

vade age A typically Vergilian phrase, used both to begin (A. 4.223 and 5.548) and end (A. 3.462) an exhorting speech; it is imitated in Epic. Drusi 250, Ilias 114, V.Fl. 2.127 and Stat. Silv. 3.4.35.

a medio ... se nox umida cursu flexerit The metaphor of the chariot of the night (see n.299–301). At the first turning point (meta), a race in the circus was half-way; the second was the finish. Here, the half-way turning point is obviously midnight (cf. also 420).

nox umida is another Vergilian collocation (always in this position); cf. with the same metaphor A. 5.738 torquet medios Nox umida cursus, “dewy Night wheels her midway course”, 5.835–836 iamque fere medium caeli Nox umida metam / contigerat, “And now dewy Night had just reached its mid-goal in heaven”; for the phrase, cf. also A. 2.8, 3.198, 11.201, Ov. Fast. 2.635, 6.472, Met. 2.143, 11.607, Stat. Theb. 10.1.

ad fauces vicini ... Averni Cf. Verg. A. 6.201 ubi venere ad fauces grave olentis Averni, “when they came to the jaws of Avernum”, where Aeneas finds the golden bough (cf. also Sen. Pha. 1201 pallidi fauces Averni). The fauces are not the entrance to the lake from the south (a passage that can hardly be called a gorge or pass), but rather the cave near the shore of lake Avernus where Scipio will find the priestess (423 Stygio ... in antro); cf. 12.126–128 vicina palus ... caecas ... fauces laxat, which refers to this fissure, the entrance of the underworld (also Avernus; cf. 397 and Spaltenstein). For the fauces see also Austin ad Verg. l.c. The lake and the adjoining cave are on the other side of the ridge east of Cumae, hence vicini.

castus Scipio needs to purify himself before making the sacrifice; Spaltenstein compares the same use of castus at V.Fl. 3.424. For castus in a religious setting, cf. also e.g. (with duc praedicta sacra) Verg. A. 8.665–666 castae ducebant sacra per urbem pilentis matres in mollibus, “in cushioned carriages chaste matrons moved through the city in solemn progress”.

duc Cf. Verg. A. 6.153 duc nigras pecudes, ea prima piacula sunto, “Lead black cattle; be these your first peace offerings”, part of the Sibyl’s instructions to Aeneas; cf. also here 405–406 nigros ... pecudes and 418 piacula.

duro placamina Diti A verbal reminiscence of Verg. A. 12.199 duri sacraria Ditis, “the shrines of cruel Dis”. The word placamina suggests Dis’ common epithet implacabilis (cf. Sen. Oed. 395–396 Ditis implacabile numen, “Dis the implacable”, Culex 271, Petr. 124.251; cf. also Hor. Carm. 2.14.6–7 places iliacrimabilem Plutona, “to appease Pluto, who has no tears”). The ruler of the underworld has to be appeased because Scipio wants to summon the inhabitants of his realm.

mella ... puri ... dona Lyaei Scipio is instructed to bring honey and wine as well, which will be poured in a libation over the sacrifices, along with milk (434). Odysseus received the same instructions (with the addition of a libation of water) by Circe at Od. 10.518–520; there, the liquids are mentioned directly after the instruction to dig a hole, whereas here it is almost an afterthought. Cf. also Tiresias’ libation of wine, milk and honey along with the
blood offering at Stat. *Theb.* 4.452–454 *Bacchi latices et munera verni lactis et Actaeos imbres suadumque cruorem / manibus,* “lavish draughts of Bacchus [...] and gifts of vernal milk and Attic rain and blood persuasive to spirits”. Milk and honey were thought to be the nutriments of souls (so Usener, “Milch und Honig”, *Rh.Mus.* 57 [1902], p. 182), and therefore a standard ingredient in offerings to the dead. Cf. also Ov. *Met.* 7.246–247 (honey and milk) and Sen. *Oed.* 565–567 (milk and wine). Milk and wine are offered to the deceased Scipios again in 16.308.

*Lyaeus* is metonymical for ‘wine’ (cf. the same use of *Bacchus* in 434 and Stat. *Theb.* l.c.). *dona Lyaei* probably means “offering of wine” (cf. Statius’ *munera ... lactis,* “offering of milk”), but with a play on the common description of wine as “gift of Bacchus”; cf. 7.748 *munera grata Lyaei* and 11.285 *Bacchi munera*, 11.414 *Bacchi dona*, Sen. *Oed.* 324 *libata Bacchi dona* (again Tiresias’ libation). For *Lyaeus* as ‘wine’, cf. e.g. Verg. *A.* 1.686, Prop. 2.33b.35, Ov. *Fast.* 5.521. For the metonymical use of *Bacchus* and *Lyaeus* in the *Punica*, cf. 3.370, 3.423, 6.138, 11.302, 13.273, 14.24 and 16.308 (for wine), and 1.237, 3.395, 5.465, 14.204 and 15.177 (for the vine). In classical literature, the name *Lyaeus* is found most often in Ovid (10 times), Silius (14), Statius (14) and Martial (8).

*simul tecum ... fer* For the diction, cf. Sen. *Med.* 269–270 *letales simul tecum aufer herbas,* “take your deadly herbs with you”.

223
417–493 The sacrifice to the dead; conversation with the shade of Appius Claudius

At midnight, Scipio meets Autonoe at the entrance to the underworld. Under her guidance he sacrifices to the infernal gods. At the approach of the shades, the priestess exhorts him to keep them away from the blood until the ancient Sibyl arrives. She points out the ghost of an unburied friend, Appius Claudius, who complains to Scipio that his family is slow in cremating his body, since they wish to observe vain rites. Scipio promises to see to it and proceeds to list foreign funeral rites. Autonoe cuts their conversation short, as the Sibyl approaches, and declares that she will now leave and perform the rest of the sacrifices.

The intertextuality with multiple poetic models at once (chief among them *Odyssey* 11 and *Aeneid* 6), which was discussed in Intr. 381–416, continues in the rest of the *Nekyia*. Scipio’s preparation and journey to lake Avernus echo those of Aeneas (see nn.417–418 and 424–426). The blood offering at the entrance to the underworld is a Homeric feature, but the invocation of the infernal gods and the sacrifices accompanying it go back to *Aeneid* 6; the same passage also has echoes of the necromantic scenes in Seneca, Lucan and Statius (see nn.427b–434). As in the *Odyssey*, the sacrifice goes on during the *nekyia* (n.492b–493 pecudes imponere flammis); another reminiscence of Homer is the arrival of the shades directly after the blood offering. The fact that their approach is described by Autonoe rather than by the narrator has a parallel in Statius’ *Thebaid* 4, where Manto describes the scene for her blind father Tiresias (*Theb*. 4.553–578). Yet another Homeric feature is the need to keep all shades away from the blood while waiting for the ghost of the seer (see n.441b–444). The seer herself is of course Vergilian—it is the *umbra* of his Sibyl who will guide Scipio, as she once guided Aeneas. Among the first shades that are identified are monsters, similar to Aeneas’ experience in the vestibule of Hades. Directly after the hero has drawn his sword, he encounters the shade of an unburied friend, a sequence which finds a parallel in both Homer and Vergil.

The first shade to approach Scipio is that of Appius Claudius, who laments that he has not yet received a funeral. For this figure, too, Silius drew upon various models. Before going into the obvious parallelism with Homer’s Elpenor and Vergil’s Palinurus, let us consider the name of the ghost. Appius Claudius Pulcher (*RE* 3.2846.41ff. n° 293; cf. 466 *gens ... pulcherrima Clausi*) had been co-commander with Fulvius at the siege of Capua (see n.452b–453a), and Livy’s report that he died at or just after the end of the siege (26.16.1, 26.33.4) made him a fine candidate for this role of *inhumata umbra* (445–446). Silius seems to have blended the man with his first century descendant of the same name

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1 The second half of this passage, including the striking catalogue of foreign burial rites, has drawn the attention of several scholars; cf. in the last fifty years, apart from the discussion in e.g. Kfüel 1979 and Reitz 1982, the articles by Bassett (1963), Devallet (1990), Laudizi (1991) and recently Van der Keur (2013).
2 For possible echoes of the sacrifice to the dead in V.Fl. *Arg.* 3, see Intr. 381–416 with fnn.8 and 9.
3 Cf. Juhnke (1972: 283) with caution “Erinnerung an die statianische Ausformung ist nicht auszuschließen”.
5 Hom. *Od*. 11.48–51, Verg. *A*. 6.290–339. Cf. Reitz 1982: 34, who rightly points out that in Vergil, the meeting with Palinurus is narrated only after the Sibyl has illuminated “das Wesen der *inhumata turba* (6.325)”, whereas in both Homer and Silius the encounter with the unburied friend begins without much introduction.
(n° 297, the elder brother of Clodius), who features in two texts that are relevant to this passage. In *Tusc.* 1.37, Cicero notes that his friend Appius Claudius practised necromancy; Cicero mentions him along with Homer’s *Nekyia* and the popular poetic notion that phantoms may be evoked from Acheron at lake Avernus by a blood offering, all as examples of irrational views on the existence of the soul after death. The same Claudius also figures in Lucan’s *Bellum Civile* 5, where he consults the Delphic Pythia to learn whether he will die in the upcoming battle at Pharsalus. The influence of Lucan’s passage is clear also in other respects. It is a nice touch that Silius has made the forebear of this late Republic champion of the traditional ways of divination, who dabbled in necromancy, the first ghost to meet Scipio in his own *Nekyia*. His very presence seems to assert the right of poetry to expound the views condemned by Cicero; the philosophical implications of his meeting with Scipio will be discussed below.

It has often been observed that the figure of Appius Claudius corresponds to Homer’s Elpenor and Vergil’s Palinurus (and to a certain extent also Misenus). All three bemoan their lack of a funeral. The structural correspondences stand out (cf. Devallet 1990: 155):

i) the hero speaks first;
ii) the shade of the friend replies
   a) describing the circumstances of his demise and
   b) making his request;
iii) a reply is made to the request (in Vergil by the Sibyl, in Homer and Silius by the hero).

Scipio’s opening question is modelled primarily after that of Aeneas; like Vergil’s hero, he justifies his question since he cannot comprehend his presence in the underworld. In his response, Appius devotes much fewer lines to the explanation of his presence than Palinurus or Elpenor, since Scipio already knew he had been wounded. It is in his request that Appius differs from his literary predecessors. Contrary to Elpenor and Palinurus, he has

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6 Bassett 1963: 78; *contra*, Reitz 1982: 41. This follows a principle that Silius uses many times in his epic, where characters from the Hannibalic war adumbrate (or contrast with) their namesakes from the final days of the Republic; cf. n.364–366 *Lanuvio generate ... Milo*.

7 For the quote from an earlier poet which Cicero cites in this context, see n.419–422a *portae ostia Tartareae*.

8 Lucan’s Pythia Phemonoe corresponds to Silius’ Autonoe and (to a lesser extent) the ancient Sibyl; as Lucan foretells, the first century Appius Claudius will die and be buried in Euboea, far from Rome like his ancestor here (cf. 462 *per longum*); cf. Bassett 1963: 83. See for correspondences with Lucan nn.382–384 *permiscens tristia laetis*, 400–403 on Autonoe and on *tripodas sacros antrumque tenebat*, 427–429a *arcanus murmur anhelans*, 490b–492a *veri fecunda sacerdos*.

9 For characters from earlier literature reappearing in a different capacity, cf. also the Sibyl, who after her role as priestess of the dead in Vergil here reappears as an *umbra* on the other side of death, and in contemporary poetry the figure of Tiresias, who is summoned as a shade by Homer’s Odysseus, but is the one performing an evocation himself in Seneca’s *Oedipus* and Statius’ *Thebaid*.

10 Or: Appius had no place in the rational debate which Cicero envisages, but is at home in the world of epic.

11 Aeneas accuses Apollo of deceiving him with a false prophecy, since the god had foretold that Palinurus would reach Italy alive (*A*. 6.343–346). For Scipio’s justification, see n.452b–453a. Odysseus, by contrast, merely asks Elpenor how it can be that he arrived sooner in the underworld by foot than he himself by ship; the reason for the question is there formulated as part of the question itself.

12 Like Palinurus, Appius thinks back with longing to the light of the living; cf. *A*. 6.363 *per caeli iucundum lumen et auras*, Sil. 13.458 *gratos Phaethontis equos*. 

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**Intertext:**

Elpenor and Palinurus
no doubt that he will be buried, 14 but complains that his family delays the cremation until his body will be brought all the way to the ancestral tomb; it is not the lack of a tomb, but vain ceremonies which stand between him and entering the underworld. 15 In this respect, his request is very similar to that of another Homeric hero, Patroclus, whose ghost appears to Achilles and appeals him to bury him, even though the funeral is already planned. 16 Scipio also does not simply agree to the request, like Odysseus, but answers Appius’ condemnation of *vani ritus* with a catalogue of various burial rites. The poet develops the particular narrative element of longing for a funeral in Homer and Vergil into a more general discussion of the need of burial and especially of burial ceremony. 17

Palinurus is not the only figure from Aeneas’ *katabasis* who may be compared to Silius’ Appius; the encounter with Deiphobus (A. 6.494–547) can also be seen as a model for this passage. Scipio’s address already establishes the correspondence. 18 In several respects, Silius has inverted Vergilian elements. Aeneas, forced to leave his *patria*, could not bury Deiphobus and instead erected an empty tomb for him (505 *tumulum ... inanem*). Appius complains that his family seeks to return him to the ancestral tomb and to perform ‘vain rites’ (460 *vanos ritus*); *tumulis ... paternis* plays on *patria*, just as *vanos* alludes to the other meaning of *inanis*, ‘idle’. Whereas in the *Aeneid* it is the ghost (Deiphobus) who asks the hero (Aeneas) what fate (A. 6.531 *qui ... casus*) brought him to the nether world, here it is the other way around. 19 In both encounters, the conversation is cut short by the priestess, in the *Aeneid* because of the need to press on to Elysium (where Aeneas will learn of the future), in the *Punica* because of the arrival of the Sibyl (who will similarly instruct Scipio about his future). That Silius has here also drawn upon the Deiphobus scene reflects Appius’ different status; rather than a subordinate (like Elpenor/Palinurus), he was an equal and friend of Scipio, just as Deiphobus was to Aeneas. 20 Silius’ scene thus draws on several scenes in *Odyssey* 11 and *Aeneid* 6 at once, a practice which we find also in the rest of the *Nekyia* (see e.g. Intr. 705–761). 21

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14 Elpenor beseeches Odysseus to return to Aiaia and bury him, to which the hero agrees; Palinurus, likewise concerned for the lack of a grave, requests to be allowed to cross the Styx without having been buried, a blasphemy for which he is reprimanded by the Sibyl, who proceeds to console him with the prospect of a burial by the neighbouring peoples and the fact that the land will carry his name.

15 Cf. 460 *vanos ritus ... et sollemnia vulgi*.

16 Hom. *Il.* 23.69ff. Cf. Ettig (1890–1891: 378 n.4), who draws attention to the echo of Patroclus’ request in line 465; see n.463–465 *daque vago portas quamprimum Acherontis adire*. For the relevance of Patroclus as a model, see below.

17 Palinurus is promised to receive a burial, *sollemnia* (A. 6.380), a word which Appius uses with scorn of the vain ceremonies surrounding funerals (see fn.15 above).

18 Cf. A. 6.500 *Deiphobe armipotens, genus alto a sanguine Teucri*, of which the first part is imitated at 450 *dux maxime* and the second at 466 *gens o veteris pulcherrima Claudi*.

19 A. 6.531–532 *te qui vivum casus ... attulerint ~ 450–451 quinam te, qui casus ... fessae eripuit patriae?* Note that Vergil had also inverted his model Homer, where Odysseus asks the ghost of Agamemnon what fate had befallen him (Hom. *Od.* 11.397–403). Another phrase in Deiphobus’ question (A. 6.533 *qua te fortuna fatigat*) returns in Scipio’s reply to Appius’ request that he will see to his funeral *quamquam non parva fatigent* (467). Lastly, the phrase introducing Appius’ reply (457 *contra quae ductor*) picks up A. 6.544 *Deiphobus contra*.

20 Cf. Reitz 1982: 36, who does not, however, make the comparison with Deiphobus.

21 The conversation with Deiphobus is imitated again both in the encounter with Scipio’s father (650–704) and that with Paulus (705–716).
Scipio’s catalogue of exotic burial rites

The most conspicuous aspect of the encounter with Appius, and the one in which Silius most obviously differs from his Homeric and Vergilian models, is Scipio’s curious reply to his interlocutor’s request for a swift funeral. Scipio readily agrees and then launches into a catalogue of different funerary customs from around the known world:

1) the Iberians leave the bodies to the vultures;
2) the Hyrcanians feed them to the dogs;
3) the Egyptians put the corpses in a stone coffin and have them at their feasts;
4) the people from Pontus remove the brains and embalm the bodies;
5) the Nasamones commit their dead to the sea;
6) the Garamantes bury them naked in the sand;
7) the Celts make gilded goblets out of skulls;
8) the Athenians cremate those who have fallen for their country in a communal fire;
9) the Scythians hang the dead in trees and leave them to rot.

The passage may be read on various levels. We might see the catalogue as an example of Silius’ self-presentation as poeta doctus; the customs described often match the accounts of ancient geographers and historians. But to leave it at that would do the poet little justice; indeed, the passage is explicitly embedded into the narrative with namque (468). The nature of the connection is a subject of debate, however.

Many have suspected the catalogue to have a deeper level of meaning, an ethical or philosophical message. In philosophical writings, we find similar lists of different customs or modes of burial; scholars have frequently compared Lucr. 3.870–893 and especially Cic. Tusc. 1.108. Such lists serve to illustrate the point that burial ceremony is irrelevant to the dead. Silius’ often-claimed Stoic inclinations have been adduced to argue a similar interpretation of our passage. On a basic level, that is quite plausible; given Silius’ insistence that all people come to the underworld after death (524ff.), we may suppose that the divergence in burial method is of little account. Appius brands funerary ceremonies as ‘idle rites’ and Scipio indicates his agreement with his assessment by listing exotic, sometimes opposite, customs. It becomes more problematic when critics seek to credit Silius with a ‘Stoic statement’ here, a philosophical discussion of the irrelevance of the

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22 Cf. e.g. Nicol 1936: 14–16, Devallet 1990: 157–158; see also nn.471–487. For some scholars, the passage is nothing more than a vain display of erudition and an object of condemnation and ridicule; Bassett 1963: 74 quotes Ernesti’s acid remarks.

23 At 3.888–893, Lucretius mentions devouring by animals, cremation, wax encasing, exposure to the elements and inhumation. Cicero lists foreign “errors”: the Egyptian practice is embalming, the Persians’ is wax encasing, the Magi allow their dead to be torn by wild animals, the Hyrcanians by public and private dogs. Bassett (1963: 77–78) strongly argues for Ciceronian influence by pointing to three shared elements with Tusc. 1.104–108: i) a quote from Anaxagoras agrees with Appius’ wish to be cremated without first being brought home (see n.459b–462 portet tumulis ... membra paternis), ii) Cicero observes the errors in poetry, including apparitions asking for a funeral and iii) the list of foreign practices. While there may certainly be said something against his claim that these correspondences “cogently illustrate Ciceronian influence” (as regards the catalogue, there are virtually no verbal echoes, and only two of the nationalities and only one of the practices agree), some connection is likely.


25 These include practices which in earlier epic constitute the lack of proper burial; Kißel (1979: 166–167) contrasts Palinurus’ complaint that his body is prey to the waves and thus is not buried (Verg. A. 6.362) with the Nasamones’ custom of sea-burial.
manner of burial, or even of burial as such. Silius’ reception of earlier philosophical treatises is more subtle than simple agreement. A few important points should be raised:

i) If Silius had followed the Stoic tenets to their full extent—if burial was completely irrelevant to the soul—Appius’ request would be ridiculous; furthermore, the Stoics also rejected the concept of necromancy, which goes against the entire setting of this catalogue, Scipio’s *Nekyia*. This is not a Stoic’s alternative to the Homeric and Vergilian renderings.

ii) The message of the catalogue is that the manner of burial is irrelevant, but rather than being the main point of the exchange between Appius and Scipio, it is auxiliary to the real point: it matters not how bodies are buried, but that it is done. Appius requests not merely to be buried—he asks to be buried *as soon as possible*. The catalogue should thus not be seen as a philosophical consolation (to replace the consolatory words of Vergil’s Sibyl to Palinurus), but as an argument (cf. *namque*) to support Scipio’s readiness to make the care for his friend a priority.

The main point is thus not a philosophical one (the manner of burial is irrelevant) but an ethical one (the duty towards the dead is to bury them). The passage is primarily important for the characterization of Scipio as an epic hero, who can display his *humanitas* and *pietas* by giving Appius a swift funeral. The catalogue of foreign rites serves to contrast his behaviour with that of other epic characters. In a recent article (Van der Keur 2013), I have discussed the literary resonances in this passage and have suggested that Silius here picks up one of the main themes of the *Thebaid* of his contemporary Statius: the refusal to bury the corpses of the Argives, leading up to the intervention by the Athenian king Theseus who restores order by granting burial. Scipio’s catalogue is reminiscent of the various ways in which the Argive corpses are ‘alternatively buried’ through the course of the epic as the result of the ban on cremation by Eteocles and later Creon. To deny burial is morally reprehensible and the trademark of a tyrant (cf. also Lucan’s Caesar in *Bellum Civile* 7), to grant burial is the duty of a hero (such as Theseus). But Scipio is not only characterized as an epic hero in relation to the work of others; the scene also suggests a contrast with the Carthaginian antagonists, and especially Hannibal. Contrary to other

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28 *pace* Devallet 1990: 155 “Silius, en bon stoïcien, consolait Appius en lui montrant que ces pratiques sont sans importance aux yeux du sage” and 156 “Appius doit voir cesser son inquiétude”.
29 Laudizi 1991: 6, who notes that Silius contrasts the *lenta cura* of Appius’ family (459–460) with Scipio’s promise that his friend’s burial will be *curarum prior* (468).
30 In the views of Kißel (1979: 166) and Laudizi (1991: 15–16) the passage also shows that Scipio has developed a mental detachment from death (contrasting with 388–394), but death as such is not under discussion here.
31 Apart from the catalogue itself, there are other echoes of *Thebaid* 12; see Van der Keur 2013: 328–331 and also Intr. 381–416 (with fn.10), nn.457–459a *averti*, 463–465 *putres artus*, 468b–470 *discrimen servat ... variatque ... sententia discors*, 484–485.
32 For the connection between our passage and Luc. 7.797–846, see Bassett 1963: 85, Reitz 1982: 42 and Van der Keur 2013: 338–339. Lucan’s Caesar refuses to cremate the bodies of the Pompeians after the battle of Pharsalus; the poet shows that with this behaviour, Caesar achieves nothing, since Nature will take care of the bodies even if he will not (Lucan refers first to decomposition and then to the Stoic belief in the conflagration at the end of the world). As Ripoll (1998a: 298–299) argues, both Lucan and Statius express that, even if objectively on the eschatological level burial is irrelevant, on the subjective level of ethics it is all-important—a sentiment which Silius here shares.
33 Half of the peoples mentioned in the catalogue would be in Hannibal’s army. The first practice Scipio mentions, bodies eaten by vultures, is described at 3.342–343 for the Celtiberians (cf. Reitz 1982: 38 n.1); the last practice,
epic tyrants, the Punic general does bury his enemies, but he does so not out of *pietas*, but lust for glory. Scipio, on the other hand, shows the right mindset and makes the cremation of Appius a priority in recognition of his duty.

In the comparison with the requests of Elpenor and Palinurus above, we observed the parallel with the apparition of Patroclus to Achilles in *Iliad* 23. The allusion is not fortuitous. Scipio’s encounter with Appius anticipates the role he will take up in the later books of the epic, when he will set out to avenge the deaths of his father and uncle and see to their burial. They are Scipio’s Patroclus, whose deaths herald his prominence in the rest of the epic, for whom Scipio grieves like Achilles and whose funeral and games are held in the penultimate book of the epic, as in Homer. The epic role of the elder Scipio and his brother will be explored in Intr. 650–704. The encounter with Appius thus not only prepares for the *Nekyia* which is to come, but also sets the tone for the characterization of Scipio as an epic hero.

### Analysis of the presentation of 417–493

The passage opens with a transitional sentence (417–418) which both looks back to Autonoe’s words (418 *monstrata piacula* picks up 405 *consueta piacula*) and anticipates the sacrifice (418 *apparat*). The next lines (419–420) provide the temporal setting for the beginning of the *Nekyia* (midnight) and explicitly marks the transition of time between 418 and 419. In the remainder of the book, the only other (vague) indication of time will be at 807–808, with a hint at the approaching daylight. The temporal setting of 418–419 serves as the orientation of the story of the sacrifice. Scipio’s actions are narrated in present tense. In the first part of the narrative (421–423), the narrative tempo is high; only with the narration of the sacrifice does the pace slacken, as each part of the offering is described by a single verb (*urget*, *iubet*, *caeditur*, *procumbunt*, *fundunt*); from 435, with the presentation of the conversation in direct speech (as opposed to indirect speech at 427–429), we have truly arrived at the ‘natural’ tempo of ‘live’ report. This mode of narration is the predominant one in the *Nekyia* and is only briefly interrupted by short interludes of other ‘modes’ at the main turning points.

After rising at midnight, Scipio heads to the entrance of the underworld, where the Sibyl was already present (as is expressed by the imperfect). Through the use of subordinate clauses at 422b–423 and 424–426, the description of this entrance is woven syntactically

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56 For a short discussion of the temporal setting of the *Nekyia*, see n.404–407 *sub lucem*.

57 The verbs *consurgit* and *pergit* cover quite a long period, as does, perhaps, *inducit* (see n.427–429a *inducit iuvenem* for the journey into the underworld).

58 I.e. 615–620 (where the narrator fills in background information about Pomponia; after the Sibyl’s description of the underworld, the meeting with Pomponia is the first of several conversations), 806–808 (a break in the temporal continuity with a switch to the perfect tense to stress the beginning of a new passage) and 894–895 (where the *Nekyia* episode is rounded off with narratorial perfects).
Introduction to 417–493

into the main narrative, whereas Vergil in his corresponding lines 6.237–241 interrupts his narrative for a short ekphrasis (237 spelunca alta fuit etc).\textsuperscript{39} This contributes to the continuous advancement of the narrative; the narrator does not seem to pause before he can begin his account of Scipio’s Nekyia (see also on the tempo above). Note, however, the spondaic character of 424–426; as we enter the underworld with Scipio, the words themselves slow down, perhaps to mark the majesty of the place, or the murkiness. In the next lines, the narration of the sacrifice is full of speed again, both through the Sibyl’s urgings (cf. ocius 428) and through the dactyls at 428–430a, with the uncommon bucolic diaeresis. The description of the offering has formal variation;\textsuperscript{40} the first part is presented as an instruction (427b–429a, urget and iubet), the next described in the passive (caeditur, the subject being the sacrificial animals, the agents the sacrificers) and the final two elements with active verbs, of which the first has the animal as its subject (433 procumbunt) and the last the sacrificers (434 fundunt).\textsuperscript{41}

Rather than the narrator, it is Autonoe who describes the coming of the shades.\textsuperscript{42} Her speech functions as the transition from the sacrifice to the meeting with the first shade, Appius.\textsuperscript{43} At mid-speech, the beginning of a new episode is marked (445 interea),\textsuperscript{44} but the speech is nevertheless a coherent unity. Autonoe’s description of the coming of the shades is framed by two admonitions to Scipio (435–436a and 441b–442).\textsuperscript{45} Her next command, to fend off all coming shades (443–444), follows naturally on her admonition to Scipio to draw his sword, but also leads to the introduction of the one shade that does not need to be kept from the blood (Appius’), since he may speak to Scipio without drinking (448 sanguine non tacto). Appius’ arrival thus allows for the explanation of Autonoe’s command at 443–444, which softens the impression of a break in the speech. Furthermore, 445 cerne picks up the earlier cerno (436) and ecce (438); Autonoe both describes and introduces Appius here. With the transition between two separate scenes (the offering and the first encounter of the Nekyia) that is being made within a speech, Autonoe’s lines are a good example of Silius’ fluid narrative technique throughout the Nekyia.\textsuperscript{46}

The general structure of the conversation of Scipio and Appius has been outlined in Intr. 417–493 above. Scipio inquires after the reason for Appius’ demise and gives two justifications for his question at 452–456 (see n.452b–453a). Reitz (1982: 35–36) remarks upon the solemn tone of Scipio’s words, pointing to the elegant turn of phrase in 453b and the alliteration of V and M in 452–456. The first half of Appius’ reply assumes the same tone, and also picks up other elements in Scipio’s words.\textsuperscript{47} In the second half, a new subject

\textsuperscript{39} Reitz 1982: 27.
\textsuperscript{40} Cf. Reitz 1982: 29.
\textsuperscript{41} On the identity of the sacrificers, see n.492b–493 comitante tuorum ... globo.
\textsuperscript{42} As mentioned in Intr. 417–493, this move is very similar to Statius’ in his Thebaid 4.519ff., where Manto describes the opening of Hades to her blind father Tiresias; see Intr. 494–516 for Autonoe and Manto. For the dramatic structure of Autonoe’s description in 436b–441a, see n.439b–441a iam cuncta videbis.
\textsuperscript{43} Reitz 1982: 34.
\textsuperscript{44} The use of a typical marker of narrative structure such as interea underscores the conspicuous narrative function of the speech.
\textsuperscript{45} These two admonitions are actually the one admonition by Vergil’s Sibyl at A. 6.260–261 cut in two.
\textsuperscript{46} Cf. e.g. also the transition to the ancient Sibyl at the end of this passage, or the introduction of Pomponia at 613–614.
\textsuperscript{47} 457 fesso ~ 450 fessae; 458 lux ~ 453 lux.
is broached with *sed* (459): the observation of vain funeral rites by Appius’ relatives, leading to his request for Scipio’s intervention to see to his swift cremation. Scipio responds to the second half of Appius’ words in reverse order. He answers first at 466–468a Appius’ plea and explains his ready promise *(namque)* by referring to the subject Appius had mentioned *(ista ... sententia*, i.e. “the opinion on this theme you broached”), the vanity of observing a specific burial ceremony; he underlines his (unvoiced) agreement by listing nine foreign practices.

Just as Autonoe’s first speech at 435ff. formed the transition between two sections of this passage, so her last speech at 489–493 rounds off the conversation and introduces the next shade, that of the ancient Sibyl. Just as before, the transition is fluent, since the reason Autonoe gives for putting an end to the colloquy is precisely the arrival of the other Sibyl (already at 488 *umbra veniente Sibyllae*). Autonoe’s remark at 492–493 that she will tend to the rest of the sacrifices with the help of Scipio’s companions harks back to the sacrificial scene at 427–434 and thus frames the conversation with Appius in a ring composition. Conversely, her words about the ancient Sibyl *(veri fecunda sacerdos)* anticipate the latter’s description at 494 as *gravida arcanis*. Like the first speech, Autonoe’s second one thus also both looks back and forward at the same time.

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48 Such a reverse order in an answering speech may also be observed at 523ff. (where in answer to Scipio’s double request, 521–522 *manesque silentum enumera* and 522 *Stygiaeque aperi formidinis aulam*, the Sibyl first describes the underworld at and then identifies the shades) and the replies of Pomponia (see An. 615–649), the elder Scipio (see An. 650–704) and Hamilcar (see An. 705–761).

49 For the structure of this catalogue, see n.471–487.

50 The transition is supported by the intertextuality in 488 *talia dum memorant*, which echoes Statius’ *Theb. 4.579*, the end of Manto’s speech; in both cases the phrase marks the transition from the guidance by an aiding priestess (Manto / Autonoe) to the prominence of the seer (Tiresias / the ancient Sibyl).

51 In this respect, the scene is much different from the correspondent one in Vergil, where the Sibyl’s admonition to make haste at *A. 6.539–543* and Deiphobus’ reply and departure at 544–547 form the end to the scene; the following one starts afresh with a new subject *(548 respicit Aeneas subito...)*, the description of the Tartarus.
417–423
hoc alacer monitu et promissae nomine vatis
apparat occulto monstrata piacula coepto.
inde ubi nox iussam procedens contigit horam
et spatia aequarunt tenebras transacta futuras,
consurgit stratis pergitque ad turbida portae
ostia Tartareae, penitus quis abdita vates
promissa implerat Stygioque sedebat in antro.

417–418 Enthused by this counsel and by the name of the prophetess who has been promised to come, he prepares the prescribed sacrifices for his nocturnal enterprise.

Silius imitates Vergil’s short line on Aeneas’ preparations at A. 6.236 his actis propere exsequitur praecepta Sibyllae (see also n.424–426 for the continuation of the allusion).

alacer The adjective (17 times in Punica) describes Fulvius at 112 and 138, and Scipio also at 648 and 17.48; it stresses their eagerness and activity, a characteristic of several Roman generals in the last books of the epic. Reitz (1982: 25) sees a contrast with Scipio’s idle mourning in 388ff.

The construction with an ablative causae seems a first century innovation, by analogy with e.g. laetus + abl. (cf. Verg. A. 8.617 tanto laetus honore); cf. also Tac. Ann. 4.49 successu noctis alacres, 11.18, 15.12, Fron. Str. 2.5.36, Apul. Met. 3.29 and Claud. 15.472.

promissae nomine vatis A striking formulation, since Autonoe has not mentioned the name of the ancient Sibyl at all in 404ff. Still, any reader will know that it is Deiphobe, Aeneas’ guide in Aeneid 6; whether Silius supposed Scipio to know her by name is irrelevant. The recurring diction in 422–423 vates promissa implerat seems to have no special significance.

occulto ... coepto Presumably, occultus is simply ‘(in the) dark’, referring to the nightly hour of the sacrifice. An alternative interpretation is “secret enterprise” (cf. Duff), but the reason for this secrecy is unclear. Reitz (1982: 25) suggests a parallel with A.R. 3.1031, where Medea instructs Jason to prepare his offering alone; it emerges at 492, however, that Scipio was not alone at all.

monstrata piacula Picks up 405 consueta piacula (Reitz 1982: 25). The phrase is taken from Verg. A. 4.635–637 dic ... et pecudes secum et monstrata piacula ducat (cf. here 406 pecudes, 415–416 duc ... tecum), Dido’s instructions to Anna regarding her pretended sacrifice to Dis. It is imitated again by Prudentius (c.Symm. 1.523).

419–422a Then, when the progressing night has reached the appointed hour and the time of darkness that has passed has equalled that which is yet to come, he rises from his bed and heads to the murky entrance to the underworld, ....

For this nocturnal expedition, cf. V.Fl. 3.417–421, where Mopsus sets off in the middle of the night (mediis ... horis, cf. 419 horam and 420 aequarunt) to purify himself in preparation for the sacrifice to the shades of the dead that will be made soon after. For the parallels with Argonautica 3, see Intr. 381–416 with fnn.8 and 9.

The diction is inspired by Vergil’s expression for similar midnightly risings at A. 3.512–513 necdum orbem medium Nox Horis acta subibat: haud segnis strato surgit Palinurus and A. 8.407–415 inde ubi prima quies medio iam Noctis abactae curriculo expulerat somnum ... Ignipotens ... mollibus e stratis ... surgit.
inde ubi A typical line opening in epic from Lucretius on, though primarily used by Lucretius, Vergil and Silius (each 7 times), and to a lesser extent Valerius Flaccus (3).

nox ... contigit horam Since the hour in question is actually midnight, this is probably a play on the common metaphor for the chariot of the night touching the meta, the half-way point, at midnight; cf. Verg. A. 5.835–836 iamque fere medium caeli Nox umida metam / contigerat. For the metaphor, see nn.299–301 stringebant tenebrae metas and 413–416 a medio ... se nox umida cursu flexerit. Reitz (1982: 26) rightly notes that Silius can afford to be brief when his readers recall the Vergilian formulae in A. 5.721, 5.835 and 6.535–536.

iussam ... horam Cf. 413 a medio cum se nox umida cursu flexerit, i.e. midnight.

spatia aequarunt tenebras transacta futuras The phrase goes back to Ov. Met. 10.174–175 iamque fere medius Titan venientis et actae / noctis erat spatioque pari distabat utrique, “And now Titan was about midway ’twixt the coming and the banished night, standing at equal distance from both extremes” (which actually refers to noon being exactly between two nights), with a close correspondence at the semantic level: spatia < spatio, aequarunt < pari, tenebras < noctis, transacta < actae and futuras < venientis. Such phraseology is more common in poetic descriptions of the equinox (when night and day are equal in length); cf. e.g. Verg. G. 1.208–209 Libra die somnique pares ubi fecerit horas, “When the Balance makes the hours of daytime and sleep equal”.

turbida ‘dark’ rather than ‘squalid’, although the latter sense cannot be excluded in view of lake Avernus’ reputation for foulness (cf. 425–426 acerbam ... paludem); Reitz (1982: 26) suggests the adjective harks back to both squalentem and stagnans in 398. She observes that both senses are used for the underworld in Aeneid 6: ‘squalid’ at A. 6.296–297 turbidus hic caeno ... gurges, ‘dark’ at 6.534 tristis sine sole domos, loca turbida. For this darkness, Spaltenstein also compares the description of the entrance at A. 6.238 lacu nigro nemorumque tenebris; see for that description also n.424–426.

portae ostia Tartareae For ostia (also at 587 ostia Ditis), cf. Verg. G. 4.467 Taenarias ... fauces, alta ostia Ditis, A. 6.109 and A. 8.667 Tartareas ... sedes, alta ostia Ditis; cf. the singular at Pl. Trin. 525 Acheruntis ostium, Sen. Tro. 404 and, more importantly, Cic. Tusc. 1.37 unde animae excitantur obscura umbra opertae ex ostio / alto Acheruntis salso sanguine, possibly a quote from a lost play by Ennius, which may be the model for all later passages cited here. The word reminds us that it is at the waters of lacus Avernus (the mouth of the Acheron) that Scipio carries out his nekyia. For the somewhat tautological combination of portae ostia, cf. Stat. Theb. 6.617 longae primus ferit ostia portae; cf. also limina/limen portae at 73, 207, 725 (with nn.).

422b–423 ... where the priestess was hidden deep inside, having fulfilled her promise, and sat in the Stygian cave.

quis abdita vates Like Allecto in Verg. A. 7.570 (quis condita Erynis; our line supports the main mss. there, see Horsfall ad loc.), the Sibyl sits in the crevice that is the entrance to the underworld. On the correspondences with A. 7.568ff., see n.424–426.

424–434

tum qua se primum rupta tellure recludit
invisus caelo specus atque eructat acerbam
Cocyti laxo suspirans ore paludem,
inducit iuvenem ferroque cavare refossam
ocius urget humum atque arcanum murmurs anhelans
ordine mactari pecudes iubet: ater operto
ante omnes taurus regi, tum proxima divae
caeditur Hennaeae casta cervices iuvenca.
inde tibi, Allecto, tibi, numquam laeta Megaera,
corpora lanigerum procumbunt lecta bidentum.
fundunt mella super Bacchique et lactis honorem.

424–426 Then, where the crevice hateful to heaven begins to open through the broken earth and fuming with its mouth agape spits out the acrid swamp of the Cocytus, ...

In these and the preceding lines, Silius has reworked Vergil’s lines on the entrance of Hades as viewed by Aeneas when he enters it (A. 6.237–241):

"Then where the crevice hateful to heaven begins to open through the broken earth and fuming with its mouth agape spits out the acrid swamp of the Cocytus, ...

In these and the preceding lines, Silius has reworked Vergil’s lines on the entrance of Hades as viewed by Aeneas when he enters it (A. 6.237–241):

spelunca alta fuit vastaque immanis hiatu,
scripea, tuta lacu nigro nemorumque tenebris,
quam super haud ullae poterant impune volantes
tendere iter pennis: talis sese halitus atris
faucibus effundens supera ad convexa ferebat.

“A deep cave there was, yawning wide and vast, of jagged rock, and sheltered by dark lake and woodland gloom, over which no flying creature could safely wing their way; such a vapour from those black jaws was wafted to the vaulted sky”

The crevice (spelunca ~ 425 specus) with its gaping mouth (vasto ... hiatu ~ 426 laxo ...) is dark (nigro ~ 421 turbida) and breathes unhealthy fumes (halitus ... effundens ~ 425–426 acerbam ... suspirans ... paludem). The structure of the lines clearly hints at this passage from Aeneid 6; the diction, however, echoes other Vergilian passages portraying an opening to the underworld (cf. Reitz 1982: 27). The phrases penitus quis abdita vates (422), se ... rupta tellure recludit (424) and invisus caelo specus (425) are reminiscent of A. 7.568–571 hic specus horrendum et saevi spiracula Ditis / monstrantur, ruptoque ingen Acheronte vorago / pestiferas aperit fauces, quis condita Erinys, / invisum numen, terras caelumque levabat, “Here is shown an awful cavern, and a breathing place of savage Dis; and a vast gorge, from which Acheron bursts forth, opens its pestilential jaws. In these the Fury, abhorred deity, hid, relieving earth and heaven” and A. 8.243ff. non secus ac siqva penitus vi terra dehiscens / infernas reseret sedes et regna recludat / pallida, dis invisa, “just as if, through some force, the earth, gaping open deep below, were to unlock the infernal abodes and disclose the pallid realms abhorred by the gods”. Furthermore, eructat acerbam Cocyti ... paludem (425–426) picks up the description of river Acheron at A. 6.296–297 turbidus hic caeno vastaque voragine gurges aestuat atque ommem Cocyto eructat harenam, “Here, thick with mire and of fathomless flood, a whirlpool seethes and belches into Cocytus all its sand” (a passage imitated again at 572; see n.571–573).

For the short length of the description and the way in which it is incorporated in the narrative of the Sibyl’s actions, see An. 417–493.
Notes to 417–493

se ... recludit The reflexive use of this verb is rare; cf. only Man. 1.40 et natura dedit vires seque ipsa reclusit.

rupta tellure This phrase (or similar ones) is often used for a cleft in the earth which serves as passageway for the shades of the dead (and as such as an excellent entrance to the underworld for others as well); cf. Verg. A. 7.568ff. cited above (Allecto), Sil. 12.126ff. (of the same entrance as here), 14.239–240 (Proserpina), Ov. Met. 13.442 and Sen. Tro. 180 (in both Achilles’ ghost), [Sen.] Oct. 135–136 (Octavia) and 593 (Agrippina’s ghost), Stat. Theb. 11.175 (Polyneices) and perhaps also Petr. 121.100–101 and V.Fl. 7.298–299) and for foul vapours (acerbam ... paludem; cf. 12.135–137).

invisus caelo specus Silius has not followed Vergil in regarding specus as neuter (see Horsfall ad Verg. A. 7.568; invisus has been altered to invisum in some editions, see the app.crit. in Delz). invisus caelo, which is based upon Verg. A. 7.71 invisum numen (of Allecto, not of the underworld itself) and 8.244–245 regna ... pallida, dis invisa, ultimately goes back to Hom. Il. 20.64–65 οἰκία ... / σμερδαλέ᾽ εὐρώεντα, τά τε στυγέουσι θεοί περ, “the dread and dank house [i.e. the underworld] which even the gods loathe”.

acerbat acerbam Cocyti ... paludem Presumably, the lacus Avernus is meant (called a palus at 397 and V.Fl. 6.158), which had a reputation (at least in poetry) for its vile smell. Silius hints at its origin in the underworld through a composite reference to three infernal rivers: the Acheron (eructat, see above), Cocytus and the Styx (A. 6.323 Cocytii stagna alta vides Stygiamque paludem). For a reference to an infernal river in a description of lake Avernus as the entrance to the underworld, cf. A. 6.107 tenebrosa palus Acheronte refuso.

For acerbam, Spaltenstein compares Verg. G. 3.37–38 annem ... severum Cocyti and A. 6.374 annemque severum (of the Styx), but it is rather the smell that must be referred to than the grimness of death, in view of Verg. A. 6.240 halitus, even if the adjective is used to describe a foul odour only here and at V.Fl. 4.493 (cf. Murgatroyd ad loc.). The underworld was typically the source of such stenches (cf. Verg. A. 6.201 inde ubi venere ad fauces grave olentis Averni and V.Fl. l.c. on the foul reek of the Harpies, which they have inherited from their father Avernus), and Silius reiterates the toxic qualities of the river Cocytus in his description of the plague at Syracuse at 14.587 Stygio Cocyi ... odore, “the deadly stench of Cocytus”.


427–429a ... she leads the young man in and urges him to quickly dig a hole with his sword and breathing secret murmurings she commands that the cattle be sacrificed in due order.

inducit iuvenem The exact location of the sacrifice is unclear; the Sibyl leads Scipio through the entrance to Hades, but how far? Homer’s Odysseus performs his nekyia where the infernal rivers flow into the Acheron (Od. 10.513ff.); if we read the Homeric passage through the lens of Verg. A. 6.295ff., that location would be already some way in (pace Reitz 1982: 28). De Luca (1937: 15) thinks that Silius’ allusion to Vergil’s diction there (see n.424–426) suggests that Scipio is also at the shores of the infernal rivers in the region of the unburied dead. Silius does not, however, describe the same thing as Vergil does in A. 6.296–297; the previous lines make clear that this is where the Cocytus comes to the surface, marking the entrance to the underworld (see n.424–426 eructat acerbam Cocyti ... paludem). I agree with Reitz, therefore, that it seems most likely that Scipio has only gone into the underworld a short way and performs his sacrifice in the entrance itself. His inquiry
after the underworld at 519ff. and the absence of references to Scipio as viewer in the subsequent detailed description by the ancient Sibyl (including the infernal rivers) also indicate (albeit not conclusively) that the hero has not proceeded very far in.

**ferroque cavare refossam ... humum** The hole will receive the blood of the sacrificial victims (cf. 406–407) and will serve as a pool for the shades to drink from. Odysseus also dug the pit for his blood offering with his sword (Hom. *Od*. 11.24–25; cf. also V.Fl. 3.425). In their respective *nykia* descriptions, Seneca and Statius merely say that a hole was made (Sen. *Oed*. 550 tum effossa tellus; Stat. *Theb*. 4.451 tellure cavata); it seems likely that Silius has adopted cavare from Statius and refossam from Seneca’s *effossa*.

**arcanum murmur anhelans** Unintelligible murmurings are a typical element of mysticism and magical rites (see Reitz 1982: 29 n.2 and Spaltenstein for examples). For *anhelans*, cf. (with Baudnik 1906: 30) Verg. *A*. 6.48 pectus anhelum, of the Sibyl. The diction may have been adopted from Lucan’s portrayal of the Thessalian witch Ericktho at 6.568–569 gelidis infudit murmura labris arcanumque nefas Stygias mandavit ad umbras,

“[she] pours mumbles into icy lips and sends a secret outrage to the Stygian shades” and his description of the Pythia Phemonoe anhelo clara meatu murmura, “with loud mutters from the panting channel” (5.191–192; cf. Bassett 1963: 83–84; note the contrast clara ~ arcanum); see also Intr. 417–493. For arcanum murmur, cf. also Stat. *Ach*. 1.380–381 and Prud. *Apoth*. 477–478 nil agit arcanum murmur, nil Thessala prosunt carmina, turbatos revocat nulla hostia manes, “Nothing is accomplished by unintelligible murmurung, of no avail are Thessalian magical chants, no sacrifice calls back the disturbed shades”.


**ordine** In a ritual, all details should be attended to (and Silius proceeds to narrate each step explicitly in 429–434); Duff’s “in due order” is accurate. Silius’ emphasis on this is conspicuous, since he reverses the traditional order of invocation (“curiusement” Spaltenstein), on which see the foll.n.

**429b–433** Before all others a black bull for the hidden king, then immediately after a chaste cow is slain for the goddess of Henna. Subsequently for you, Allecto, and you, ever grim Megaera, select specimens of woolly sheep fall down.

The sacrifices Scipio makes are very similar to Aeneas’ at Verg. *A*. 6.249–254, albeit in reverse order (cf. Reitz 1982: 30). After the Sibyl’s invocation of Hecate, Aeneas offers a black-fleeced lamb to the mother of the Eumenides (Nox) and her sister (Sleep), then a barren heifer to Proserpina, and finally the entrails of bulls to the Stygian lord. Silius varies after his usual fashion through synonyms and redistribution of characteristics and syntax. He renders Vergil’s *Stygio regi as operto ... regi* and also ascribes the black colour (Verg. atri velleris; Sil. ater) to the first victim (in his case the bull) and thus by implication to all animals; sterilem ... vaccam returns as casta cervice iuvencia (possibly with a further play on Vergil’s casta ... *Proserpina* at *A*. 6.402; see also n.545–546). The apostrophe (6.251 tibi, Proserpina) has been transferred to the Furies and doubled (tibi, Allecto, tibi ... Megaera). Finally, while Vergil names the mother of the Furies and her sister, Silius has the Furies themselves, yet also, like his model, two sisters, and also as the recipients of sheep.

The *Nekyia* in Seneca’s *Oedipus*, Lucan’s *Bellum Civile* and Statius’ *Thebaid* also include invocations of deities. Seneca refers to, but does not name, Dis and Cerberus (*Oed.*
The deities in the two epicists go back to Vergil. Statius mentions various altars to Hecate, the Furies, Dis and Proserpina (Theb. 4.456–460). Lucan, as usual reacting against the Aeneid, shows Erictho’s defiance of the infernal gods (6.730–744); like Statius, he follows more or less Vergil’s order in naming the various deities, viz. the Furies, Hecate and Erebus, Proserpina and Dis. The reverse order in our lines is thus innovative.

What is absent is a general offering (cf. Reitz 1982: 30). In Homer, the libation and offering of black sheep is made to all the shades, and Odysseus promises other sacrifices will be made upon his return to Ithaca. The Vergilian Sibyl consecrates the hairs of four black cows and makes a wine offering prior to Aeneas’ sacrifices to the individual deities. Here, the various libations and sacrifices are combined into one single offering, of which parts are devoted to particular gods.

In the Odyssey (11.44–47) and Aeneid (6.253–254) the victims are immolated; that is here delayed until the arrival of the Sibyl’s ghost (see n.493 pecudes imponere flammis).

The black colour is fitting for a sacrifice to an infernal deity; see n.404–407 nigras ... pecudes. Dis is himself called black in Verg. A. 6.127 atri ... Ditis, Stat. Theb. 2.49 nigrique iovis, Sil. 8.116. [Sen.] Her.O. 1705. For the association of the colour with death and the underworld, see André 1949: 47, 51.

‘The hidden king’. Reitz (1982: 30 n.2) suggests that Silius combines the names Stygius rex (Verg. A. 6.252) and Dis opertus (Luc. 6.514); Spaltenstein compares Ilias 723 Ditis ... opaci. The adjective opertus is used for the underworld in Verg. A. 6.140 telluris operta, Stat. Theb. 4.520 telluris opertae; cf. also V.Fl. 1.735 Phlegethontis operti (in another evocation scene). Lastly, cf. Luc. 5.187–188 consultor operti Castalia tellure dei (i.e. Apollo; see Intr. 417–493 for this consultation of the Pythia as an intertext).

For the phrase in a context of ‘privileged’ deities, see n.83b–85 ante omnes.

The goddess of Henna is of course Proserpina, who had been abducted by Dis near Henna on Sicily. The epithet Hennaeus is rare, occurring only 15 times in Latin poetry (and none after the Flavians), seven of which can be found in Punica. Of these 15, five are applied to Proserpina, viz. Luc. 6.740 (Erictho’s speech, the only instance where it is nominalised) and the rest in the Punica (1.93, 7.689, 14.245 and here).

casta cervice iuvenca A barren heifer, which Aeneas also sacrificed (Verg. A. 6.251 sterilemque tibi, Proserpina, vaccam) and Odysseus promised to offer (Hom. Od. 11.30 =10.522 στεῖρα βοῦν; there to the shades themselves); cf. also Stat. Silv. 4.4.91 tura dedit flammis et virginis exta iuvencae. That is, of course, if in our line casta cervice should be interpreted as ‘barren’, rather than ii) ‘chaste’, ‘not having been serviced’ (“unmated” Duff) or iii) ‘hallowed’, ‘religiously acceptable’ (so, apparently, TLL 3.565.69) or even iv) ‘not having been yoked’ (Miniconi-Devallet “qui n’a jamais subi le joug”). Arguments in favour of the last meaning are the use of cervice (Spaltenstein) and the correspondence with Verg. G. 4.540 = 4.551 intacta ... cervice iuvencas, the offering of Aristaeus (Reitz); Dausqueius also adduces the offerings in e.g. Hom. Il. 6.93–94 δυοκαίδεκα βοῦς ... / ἢνις ἥκεστας, “twelve sleek heifers that have not felt the goad”, A.R. 4.1186 ἀεργηλὴν ἐτι πόρτιν, “a heifer not yet put to work”, Ov. Fast. 1.83 colla rudes operum ... iuvenci, 3.375–376 iuvenca quae dederat nulli colla premenda iugo, Sen. Oed. 299–300. Animals which had never borne a yoke would be very acceptable as offerings. Silius’ phrase is probably designed to accommodate multiple meanings; cervice hints at the fact that the heifer had
never had to bear a yoke, while casta also alludes to the more specific phrases in Homer and Vergil in relation to the special requirements of an offering of a sterile heifer to the infernal gods, particularly to casta Proserpina. Horsfall ad Verg. l.c. notes that sterilis indicates both ‘has not borne’ and ‘cannot bear’ (the senses ii and i above); Servius comments on the heifer for Proserpina: deae congruam, numquam enitenti, while Donatus explains: infecundum animal, quod ab inferis nihil possit exoriri.

tibi, Allecto, tibi, ... Megaera In poetry, sudden apostrophe is common in a sacrificial context; see n.135–137 mactat, diva, tibi. Here, the apostrophe is modelled after Verg. A. 6.251 (see the above n.).

Just as Vergil’s Sibyl addresses the mother of the Furies and her sister, so does Silius name two sisters. His choice to name two Furies may also have been influenced by Luc. 6.730 Tisiphone vocisque meae secura Megaera (where Megaera also takes second position, with an epithet), the first deities addressed by Erictho. For the invocation of the Furies at a nekyia, Reitz (1982: 30) also compares Stat. Theb. 4.456–457.

numquam laeta Megaera This agrees with Statius’ epithets for this Fury in Theb. 1.712 and 4.636 (torva) and 3.641 (hilarem, ‘laughing ominously’, hardly laeta). There may be an etymological play on μεγαίρω, ‘grudge’.

corpora lanigerum procumbunt lecta bidentum The list of invocations is concluded with a golden line (or ‘silver line’ as some would say, since substantives and adjectives can be found on both sides of the verb); see n.254–255. The phrase for ‘sheep’ is exceptionally periphrastic. corpora bidentum is not ‘lifeless sheep’, but rather a mere poetical paraphrase for bidentes (see n. 353b–360 on corpora ... captiva); cf. Verg. A. 11.197 multa boum ... mactantur corpora and Juv. Sat. 12.115–117 mactare vovebit de grege servorum magna et pulcherrima quaeeque corpora. On top of this, Silius uses two defining epithets (lanigerum and bidentum) to express the meaning ‘sheep’, which is only paralleled in Verg. A. 7.92–93 Latinus centum lanigeras mactabat rite bidentis. Finally, the sheep are said to be select (lecta), which is a well known epithet from Verg. A. 4.57 mactant lectas de more bidentis (sim. A. 6.39 and 8.544); lectas bidentes is also imitated in V.Fl. 3.431 (Jason’s expiatory offering to the dead, see Intr. 381–416 fn.9) and Cypr. Num. 643. For procumbunt, I have not found any parallels in a similar context of sacrifice, but cf. V.Fl. 3.438 procumbere (of the Argonauts), immediately followed by 3.439 tunc piceae mactantur oves.

Sheep are called bidens when they are in their second year and they “acquire their first two permanent teeth, which stand out prominently among the surviving milk-teeth” (Fordyce ad Verg. A. 7.92–93); see Henry ad A. 4.57 and Kugener 1930. The term is not exclusive to sheep, but lanigerum leaves no room for doubt.

434 On top they pour honey and tributes of wine and milk.

From Homer on, wine, milk, honey and blood were the standard ingredients of a sacrifice to the shades. Odysseus (Hom. Od. 11.27–28) poured a libation first of melikreton (a mixture of honey and milk), then wine and finally water around the hole filled with blood. Such blood offerings in Latin poetry often include a libation of at least wine and milk (Aeneas’ offering to Anchises at Verg. A. 5.77–78; Medea’s magic to revive Aeson at Ov. Met. 7.246–248; the nekyiai of Tiresias at Sen. Oed. 563–567 and Stat. Theb. 4.452–453; at V.Fl. 5.192–193 Jason offers only wine to the shade of Phrixus). Honey is mentioned less often (Stat. Theb. 6.209, together with wine and milk poured on the pyre of Opheltes).
Reitz (1982: 31) observes that in Homer and Statius (and also in Vergil), the libation precedes the sacrifices; here, it is placed at the end, as in Seneca (Oed. 563–568).

**Bacchique et lactis honorem** The (common) metonymical use of *Bacchus* for ‘wine’ is also found in most of the other sacrificial scenes cited above; cf. Verg. A. 5.77, Sen. Oed. 566, V.Fl. 5.192, Stat. Theb. 4.452. For *honorem*, cf. V.Fl. 1.735–736 *in scrobibus crur et largus Phlegethontis operti stagnat honos*, of the blood offering of Alcimede and Aeson. Spaltenstein compares also Verg. A. 1.49, 3.118 and Sil. 7.750 for this use of *honour* to refer to the substance being offered.

The construction of *honour* with a genitive is somewhat rare; parallels can be found at Tib. 1.7.53 *turis –es* (cf. Prop. 4.6.5, Ov. Met. 10.681 and 14.128), 4.409 *micae ... salientis –em*; *TLL* 6.3.2924.83ff. cites also Aug. Civ. 18.19 *sacrificiorum*. Cf. also (with a different meaning of *honour*) Ov. Fast. 4.85 *mensis –em* and V.Fl. 6.145 *mellis honor*.

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435–444

‘s*ta, iuvenis, faciemque Erebo quae surgit ab omni’ 435

*exclamat vates ‘patere. accedentia cerno

Tartara et ante oculos adsistere tertia regna.\n
ecce ruunt variae species et quicquid ab ipso

natum hominum extinctumque chao est. iam cuncta videbis,

Cyclopes Scyllamque et pastos membra virorum 440

Odrysiae telluris equos. contende tueri

eductumque tene vagina interritus ense

quaecumque ante animae tendent potare cruorem

disice, dum castae procedat imago Sibyllae.

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435–436a ‘Stand firm, young man, and endure the sight which emerges from all of Erebus,’ the priestess cries.

Autonoe’s exhortation alludes to the Sibyl’s words at A. 6.261 *nunc animis opus, Aenea, nunc pectore firme* (also with a vocative). Silius has doubled this appeal (cf. Spaltenstein and Reitz 1982: 32); see also n.442 on *interitus*.

*faciemque ... quae surgit* Cf. the same phrase (with a very different sense) at Verg. A. 6.103–104 *non uta laborum, o virgo, nova mi facies inopinave surgit*, just prior to Aeneas’ request to visit the underworld. The collocation is not found outside these two passages. In addition, the diction may have been informed by Luc. 6.738 *faciemque Erebi mutare vetabo*, Erictho’s speech to the infernal gods.

*exclamat vates* Also at 874. Cf. Verg. A. 6.259 *conclamat vates*, also directly after Aeneas’ sacrifice; the Sibyl’s admonition to Aeneas follows two lines later.

436b–437 ‘I see Tartarus approaching and the third realm lining up before our eyes.

The description of the arrival of the shades as related by Autonoe parallels Manto’s similar description at Stat. Theb. 4.519ff. for the benefit of her blind father; a depiction of the underworld, such as the one Manto begins with, is saved for the ancient Sibyl (cf. Reitz 1982: 32). Juhnke (1972: 283 n.211) criticises the description for being artificial and lacking power, but I agree with Reitz that this is undeserved: “Silius erreicht durch den Übergang vom Autorbericht zur direkten Rede Lebhaftigkeit und Aufhorchen des Lesers”.

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Tartara Only the neuter plural is used in the Punica (plus the adjective Tartareus). Here, as often, it signifies the whole of the underworld (tautologically with tertia regna).

tertia regna ‘The third realm’, i.e. the underworld, referring either to the tradition that when the three divine brothers divided the world between them, Jupiter drew the first lot, Neptune the second and Pluto the third, or to the one that Pluto was the third of the sons of Saturn (Hom. Il. 15.187–188). For the phrase, cf. 8.116, Ov. Fast. 4.584, [Tib.] 3.5.21, and also Ov. Met. 5.368 triplexis ... fortuna novissima regni (perhaps also 5.372 pars tertiae mundi), Sen. Her.F. 609–610 tertiae sortis loca and 833 tertiae regem ... sortis and perhaps, if tertia be kept there, Ov. Tr. 2.53 per mare, per terras, per tertia numina iuro. See Bömer ad Ov. Fast. 4.584 and Fitch ad Sen. Her.F. 599.

438–439a Look, various apparitions rush forward, along with all of mankind that has been born and has died since Chaos itself:

variae species The same phrase is used at Verg. A. 5.822 for the diverse throng of Neptune’s retinue (which also includes ‘monsters’, 822 immania cete, ‘huge whales’); cf. also G. 4.406 (the shapes of Proteus) and Sil. 17.278 (the varied loot of Hannibal drifting in the sea, probably also going back to Vergil’s line in the Aeneid).

quicquid ... natum hominum extinctumque The entrance to Hades must have become very crowded indeed; it will be pointed out to Scipio at 757–761 that the numbers of the dead are infinite. For the phrase, cf. 527–529a with n.

ab ipso ... chao ipso (adopted by Delz) is Summers’ conjecture for imo in o. In the mss. reading, ab imo chao refers to the underworld itself (‘from the depths of the void’) from which the ghosts are emerging, which would have a parallel in Stat. Theb. 4.520 panditur Elysium chaos; the word order seems to preclude, however, that the phrase be taken with ruunt, and a temporal interpretation of ab ... chao (the era before creation; cf. Spaltenstein) to go with quicquid ... natum hominum extinctumque is far more likely. For this use of Chaos, cf. Verg. G. 4.347 aque Chao densos divom numerabat amores and Ov. Ibis 83–84 denique ab antiquo divi veteresque novique in nostrum cuncti tempus adeste chao. In such an interpretation, we would expect an adjective to stress the temporal distance of Chaos; imo cannot convey this sense (i.e. Duff “primal Chaos”; the TLL does not attest the meaning ‘first’ or ‘ancient’ for imus; its temporal use is rather ‘last’), but the emphatic ipso can (‘since the very Creation’).

439b–441a You will soon see them all, the Cyclopes and Scylla and the horses of Thracian soil that once fed on human limbs.

iam cuncta videbis The mss. have videbat (read by Delz and Miniconi-Devalllet), making this an interjection by the narrator, for which Ov. Met. 13.870 nam cuncta videbam is a parallel. It seems preferable, however, to read Ruperti’s conjecture videbis (cf. Duff, Reitz; cf. also similar line endings at Ov. Tr. 1.1.93 and Juv. 14.245), in which case this hemistich is part of Autonoe’s speech. Reitz’ observation on the resulting narrative structure (1982: 33) is a compelling argument; she notes that Autonoe distinguishes three phases of perception, by commenting upon i) what is arriving (accedentia cerno Tartara), ii) what is present (ecce ruunt) and iii) what will come (iam cuncta videbis), and concludes “Damit erhält die Beschreibung ein dramatisch fortschreitendes Element.” At Verg. A. 6.290ff., Aeneas is said to draw his sword in fear after several monsters have been
described; in view of that passage it is logical that the admonition to Scipio to unsheathe his sword directly follows the announcement that monsters will come soon.

Cyclopas Scyllamque et ... equos Silius presents dead monsters before all others, just as Vergil’s Aeneas encounters first a cabinet of horrors at the entrance of Hades (A. 6.273ff.; cf. Spaltenstein); cf. also Sen. Oed. 586ff. (also at the beginning) and Stat. Theb. 4.533–535. Silius has a second monster exhibition at 587ff. which more clearly alludes to Vergil’s (see nn.581–587a and 587b–590); here, only Scylla is copied from Vergil’s catalogue. videbis anticipates the later catalogue (cf. Reitz 1982: 33).

The three groups of monsters mentioned here share an appetite for human flesh; unsurprisingly, they are among the first to rush towards the blood of the victims. The other significance of these monsters is that Scipio beholds the same horrors as the heroes he is modelled on. Both Aeneas and Odysseus escaped from the Cyclopes and Scylla (which are bracketed together for this reason at Verg. A. 1.200–202; cf. also Prop. 3.12.26ff., Hor. Ars 145 and Culex 330ff.), whereas Diomedes’ man-eating horses recall Hercules (cf. their image on Hercules’ temple at Gades, 3.38); all of these heroes saw the shades of the dead later in their careers.

The presence of these monsters in the underworld makes clear that for the most part, the mythical world (including its terrors) is no more, except for some lingering presences like the deified Anna in book 8; cf. e.g. the reference to the monster Geryones in 200ff. in past tenses. From the old times, only the gods remain (occasionally giving aid in battle), and the monsters have been banished to the fringes and to flashbacks. The relevance of these mythological nightmares lies in the analogy that they allow for Silius’ historical epic: Scipio’s confrontation with these infernal horrors parallels the war that he must wage with Hannibal. See Intr. 179–255 (on Geryones), n.591–594 (Hannibal paralleling the Giants).

pastos membra virorum ... equos These horses, property of the Thracian Diomedes (see foll. n.), were fed the flesh of their masters’ guests; in his eighth work, Hercules killed Diomedes and either killed the horses as well or fed Diomedes’ body to them, thereby curing them of their unnatural appetite. For these horses eating human flesh, cf. Eur. Her. 380–385, Eur. Aльc. 494, Ov. Met. 9.194–195, Ep. 9.67–68, 9.89–90, Ibis 401–402, Hyg. Fab. 30.9, Mela 2.29, Stat. Theb. 6.486–487 (the same horses, cf. 6.348) and more Greek parallels in Parroni ad Mela l.c. Other Latin references to Diomedes’ horses can be found at Sil. 3.38, Lucr. 5.29–30 (said to breathe fire, probably a play on Eur. Aльc. 493), Eleg. in Maec. 1.84, Plin. Nat. 4.42 (perhaps also indirectly in 25.94), Gel. 3.9.2.

The Greek authors invariably give the horses’ gender as female (αἱ ἵπποι); so also Ovid at Ep. 9.68 and 90, but not at Met. 9.194 and Ibis 402. All other Latin writers, including Silius, use the (probably) generic equi (though Hyginus makes them definitely male, giving them the male names Podargus, Lampon, Xanthus and Dirus).

For pastus + obj., cf. Verg. A. 2.471 coluber mala gramina pastus and Mart. 13.89.2; other instances of pastus in the Punica go with the more usual ablative (9.603, 13.582 and 597, 14.421, 15.517, 17.448).

Odrysiae telluris Diomedes, the owner of the man-eating horses, was king of Thrace. The Odrysae were a prominent tribe in Thrace (Plin. Nat. 4.40, RE 17.2.1900.67ff.), and as such the derivative was coined by Ovid to denote ‘Thracian’ (cf. e.g. Met. 6.490, 13.554) in which he was followed by Seneca, the three Flavian epicists and Martial; Stat. Theb. 12.156
Notes to 417–493

*Odrysiique famem stabuli,* “the hunger of the Odrysian stable”, also refers to the horses of Diomedes. For the adjective, cf. also 4.431 and 7.570.

441b–444 *Make an effort to face them and hold your sword unsheathed without fear. Drive away any ghosts trying to drink the blood, until the ghost of the holy Sibyl steps forward.*

The same instruction to keep the other shades at bay with a sword is given to Odysseus by Circe at Hom. *Od.* 10.535–537 (cf. *Od.* 11.48–50 and 88–89, Juhnke 1972: 283); since Autonoe guides Scipio herself, such admonitions were not needed beforehand. Aeneas, too, is told to draw his weapon at Verg. *A.* 6.260–261, and to follow the Sibyl into the underworld; at 6.290ff., he draws his sword (again?) to fend off the dreadful monsters in Hades’ vestibule, but he is told by the Sibyl that they are only shallow images of their former beings (Austin *ad A.* 6.260 explains that with her earlier admonition to unsheathe his sword the Sibyl meant Aeneas to “feel protected”, to draw courage from his sword; for the futility of using weapons against phantoms, cf. perhaps also Bacch. 5.81 ταΰσιον προΐει, “shoot in vain”). Apparently Silius rather wished to return to Homer’s view that blades do dispel shades.

**eductumque ... vagina ... ensem** Cf. the Sibyl’s order at Verg. *A.* 6.260 *tuque invade viam vaginaque eripe ferrum* (with both *vagina* and *ferrum* in the same respective positions). The verb *educere* is somewhat prosaic, meaning ‘draw’ (of a weapon) also at Cic. *Inv.* 2.5.14 and 2.5.15, *Cat.* 3.6, *Mil.* 29, *Att.* 4.3.3, Caes. *Gal.* 5.44.8 and Sall. *Cat.* 51.36; see also *TLL* 5.2.120.7ff. for post-Flavian instances. For the more poetic *ducere* (still far more infrequent than *stringere*), cf. 8.339 *dum vagina ducitur ensis*, 9.314, Verg. *A.* 12.378, Ov. *Fast.* 4.929, Sen. *Oed.* 936, Pers. 5.4 (but see Kißel *ad loc.*).

**interritus** Silius’ short rendering of Vergil’s *A.* 6.261 *nunc animis opus, Aenea, nunc pectore firmo* (also imitated at 435 *sta, iuvenis, faciemque ... patere*, cf. Spaltenstein *ad 435* and Reitz 1982: 32). The adjective is fairly frequent in Silius (8 instances versus 10 in the rest of classical Latin poetry: Verg. 4, Ov. 4, Luc. 1, V.Fl. 1), and always in this metrical *sedes*; cf. 4.604, 5.90, 6.247, 10.497, 13.177, 15.796 and 16.238.

**castae ... imago Sybillae** The shade of the ancient Sibyl (presumably the one who was Aeneas’ guide in *Aeneid* 6, Deiphobe), foretold to come at 411–412.

The same Sibyl is also called *casta* at Verg. *A.* 5.735 (and Mart. 14.114). As Spaltenstein observes, the epithet possibly references the story of Apollo’s courtship of the Sibyl (told by Ovid at *Met.* 14.132ff.). She spurned the god, remaining unmarried (*Met.* 14.142 *innuba*) for the rest of her 1000-year life. The story is also alluded to at 491–492 (see n.490b–492a *ipse negarit plus novisse deus*).


445–448

interea cerne, ut gressus inhumata citatos

fert umbra et properat tecum coniungere dicta,
cui datur ante atros absumpti corporis ignes sanguine non tacto solitas effundere voces.’

445–446 Meanwhile, look how that ghost of an unburied man approaches with rapid steps and hastens to speak with you...

For the parallels for this meeting (most notably Elpenor in *Odyssey* 11 and Palinurus in *Aeneid* 6), see Intr. 417–493.

cerne Probably Silius’ rendering of Vergil’s *ecce* at the beginning of the scene with Palinurus in *A. 6.337* (cf. *ecce* at 438), but cf. also cernis in Verg. *l.c.* in the foll.n. Just as the Sibyl described the coming of the shades at 436ff. (see n.), so it is she instead of the narrator who here points out the traditional first shade to come, that of the unburied friend.

inhumata ... umbra Silius’ Autonoe uses the same adjective as Vergil’s Sibyl to refer to the unburied dead; cf. Verg. *A. 6.325 haec omnis, quam cernis, inops inhumataque turba est*. For the conciseness of the phrase (‘unburied shade’ for ‘shades of an unburied person’), cf. 404–405 *repostis ... umbris* (with n.), Luc. 9.151 *inhumatos ... manes*.

tecum coniungere dicta A unique collocation, for which the model was probably Catul. 64.331 *languidulosque paret tecum coniungere somnos* (similar line structure and verb).

447–448 ... for whom it remains possible, before the black fires have consumed his body, to speak with you as he was wont without drinking the blood.

datur ... solitas effundere voces A close parallel to Anchises’ hopes at Verg. *A. 6.688–689 datur ora tueri, nate, tua et notas audire et reddere voces?* Cf. also *A. 6.499* (Aeneas to the shade of Deiphobus) *notis ... vocibus*.

The expression *effundere voces* (*TLL* 5.2.223.77ff.) is as old as Enn. *inc.* 553 (Skutsch); cf. 710 *cui contra tales effundit Scipio voces* (with n.), 3.696, 8.166–167, 9.305–306, 14.214–215 and (with *fundere*) 4.526.

ante atros absumpti corporis ignes A striking expression for the more natural *ante absumptum corpus atris ignibus*.

The reference to cremation (also 461) contrasts somewhat with the preceding *inhumata* in 445 (yet a Roman funeral usually involved both cremation and then entombment of the urn), but the import is obviously that those who have not received the last honours are unable to cross the Styx, have therefore not drunk from the river Lethe and so retain their speech (see also n. 404–407 *repostis ... umbris*).


For *absumpti corporis*, cf. Ov. *Pont.* 3.2.28 *cum cinis absumpto corpore factus ero* and Sen. *Tro.* 1176–1177 *non ignis meos absumpsit artus* (also of cremation). The verb is commonly used for fire consuming something (but in poetry cf. only Ov. *Tr.* 5.12.61 *scriptos absumimus igne libellos*); see *TLL* 1.218.10ff.

sanguine non tacto Like unburied Elpenor at Hom. *Od.* 11.51ff., this shade has no need
to drink of the blood which returns speech to other shades. Silius has followed the tradition that the dead have lost their voice (see Spaltenstein for several parallels), and makes explicit what is only implicit in the *Odyssey* (Reitz 1982: 34). In Homer, it appears that the dead need to regain not merely articulate speech, but their minds and faculty of recognition (Antikleia only recognizes her son Odysseus after tasting the blood); the notion of the need to drink is maintained by Homer for a while (cf. 11.153, 228, 390) but is then omitted (cf. Achilles at 11.471 and Herakles at 11.615) and once even suppressed for artistic reasons (Aias stands apart, knowing Odysseus apparently without drinking). The tradition that Silius adheres to is more logical, though; for why would some ghosts press forward, if they did not recognize the one that made the blood offering? Silius is fairly consistent in having the ghosts drink first; it is mentioned at 495 (the ancient Sibyl), 621 (Pomponia), 706 (Paulus), 736 (Hamilcar). The only ‘lapse’ is Scipio’s conversation with his father and uncle, when he rushes to them as soon as he sees them; there (as with Homer’s Aias) consistency is abandoned for obvious poetic reasons (cf. further the conversation with Alexander, where drinking is simply not mentioned). For a recent discussion of the nature of the shades and the significance of the draught of blood in *Odyssey* 11, see Heath 2005.

449–456

adspicit et subito turbatus Scipio visu
‘quinam te, qui casus,’ ait ‘dux maxime, fessae
eripuit patriae, cum tales horrida poscant
bella viros? nec enim dextra concesserit ulli
Appius aut astu. decimum lux rettulit ortum,
ut te, cum Capua remearemus, vulnera vidi
mulcentem, hoc uno maestum, quod adire neQUIRES
saucius ad muros et Martis honore careres.’

449 Scipio looks at the shade and moved by the sudden sight says...

subito turbatus ... visu At a similar point in *Aeneid* 6, after the catalogue of the horrors in the entrance and before the conversation with Palinurus, Aeneas is troubled by the sights around him, Verg. *A*. 6.290 *subita trepidus formidine* (note the similar order); Scipio’s sudden perplexity may be Silius’ rendering of this element in Vergil. For the phrasing, we should rather compare *A*. 6.710–712 *horrescit visu subito*, “Aeneas is perplexed by the sudden sight” (also the model for 831, see n.). Cf. other ‘sudden sights’ at 14.165 *subito adspectu et noto conterritus ore* (another recognition of a familiar person) and 15.182 *hac adspectu turbatum* (the apparition of Scipio’s father to his son).

450–452a ‘What misfortune snatched you away, great leader, from our worn down homeland, at a time when horrid war requires men like you?

Scipio’s question corresponds to Aeneas’ address to Palinurus at *A*. 6.341–342 *quis te, Palinure, deorum / eripuit nobis* (Laudizi 1991: 5). Here, Vergil’s *nobis* is replaced with *patriae*, portraying once again Scipio as a true patriot. The alteration may have been prompted by Seneca’s very similar *sententia* at *Ep*. 91.8 *potest te patriae, potest patriam tibi casus eripere* (also with *casus*). The diction is also reminiscent of another meeting in Aeneas’ *katabasis*, viz. Deiphobus’ question to Aeneas *sed te qui vivum casus ... attulerint* (*A*. 6.531–532, see also Intr.
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**fessae** Rome is spent with the years of warfare, during which most of its best men (cf. *tales ... viros*) were killed in the battles of Trebia, lake Trasimene and Cannae. The adjective draws attention to the fact that Rome could ill afford to lose more. The word is picked up by Appius in his first sentence in 457.

**eripuit** Cf. the verb in the same sense and position at 626–627 *cui [= mihi] te cum prima subiret / eripuit sine honore dies* and at 5.588–589 *quinam ... dolor ... quemve ira deorum / eripuit nobis?*, which is modelled even more closely after *A. 6.341–342* cited above (and with a nice twist: Hannibal inquires not after the identity of the god who killed the man, but of the deceased himself). For *eripere* of death ‘snatching away’, see *TLL 5.2.793.58ff.*; cf. 1.183 and 15.547–548 *erepto ... Marcello.*

**horrida ... bella** A common combination since Verg. *A. 6.86–87 bella, horrida bella [...] cerno* and 7.41–44 *dicam horrida bella* (Fordyce *ad loc.* suggests that it may be an Ennian *iunctura*). Vergil uses it to refer to the ‘Iliadic half’ of his epic; likewise we find the phrase in Statius’ *Nekyia* (*Theb.* 4.601–602 *bella horrida nobis, atque iterum Tydeus*) in a preview of the coming war, and presumably we should interpret the two instances in *Thebaid* 6 (457, of the horse race, and 864–865, in a simile during the wrestling match) also as prefigurations. Similarly, Silius has *horrida bella* at the start of his epic (1.630, the plea of the Saguntines to the Roman senate) to mark the beginning of war. If this tendency is significant, the placement of the phrase here in the *Nekyia* (even when said by Scipio himself) suggests that from here (that is, from book 13) a new part of the war / epic begins; for this concept, see *Gen.* intr. § 5.1. The only other instances of the phrase are Stat. *Silv.* 3.3.170–171 (a retrospective) and [Sen.] *Oct.* 775–776 and Juv. 14.241–243 (both also beginnings of war).

**poscant bella** For the same idea of war ‘needing men’, cf. Verg. *A. 11.379 bella manus poscunt* and Sen. *Her.F.* 638 *me bella poscunt*. (*TLL 10.2.79.68–70* cites also Quint. *Inst.* 12.3.5 *omnium, quae pugna poscit*, but that passage is different.)

**452b–453a** Clearly, Appius would yield to none either in strength or cunning.

Only here, after 8 lines, do we learn that the ‘unburied shade’ is Appius Claudius, who has not figured until now in the *Punica*. As Livy notes (26.1.2, 5.8, 8.7, 13.15, 15.1), he shared the command over the siege at Capua with Fulvius. Apparently, Silius had no wish to complicate his story and only mentioned the more active of the two as the Roman commander in his narration of the siege in the beginning of this book (Appius is mentioned, however, in Hannibal’s recollection of the siege of Capua at 17.300). Appius died from a wound at the end of the siege or just after; Livy is not certain when exactly, as his sources vary on this point (cf. 26.16.1 *mortuum Ap. Claudium sub deditionem Capuae quidam tradunt*). Recently deceased Appius was the prime candidate to fulfil the role of unburied person in Silius’ *Nekyia*, on par with Homer’s Elpenor and Vergil’s Palinurus and Misenus, as Scipio was unaware of his death and will see to his last honours.

Like Odysseus, Scipio is surprised to see a former comrade in arms among the shades. In this and the following sentence he explains his shocked question; (i) Appius surpassed most others (‘all’ in epic exaggeration) in warfare and would have been hard to kill; (ii) he was wounded, but not grievously, since he was only sad over loss of glory, not of his life. Like Elpenor (who fell from a roof), Appius died of a most un-epic thing: a mere wound.
enim (translated as ‘clearly’) marks the statement as a mutually acknowledged fact which justifies Scipio’s question (i.e. ‘this needs to be asked, since anyone knows that you are skilled at warfare and your death is therefore unexpected’); for enim as a consensus particle and its interactional function to explain a communicative move, see Kroon 1995: 183–195.

dextra concesserit uli ... aut astu Cf. the description of Xanthippus at 6.307–310 iam Martem scire atque astus adiungere ferro [...] haud isti [...] cederet Hannibali, “in the art of war, in combining the sword with stratagem, [...] he was not inferior to yonder Hannibal”. For concedo + abl. + dat., TLL 4.9.79ff. cites Quad. hist. 7 is et genere et vi et virtute bellica nemini concedebat, Cic. Deiot. 28, Ciris 104–105 and a few later instances.

453b–456 Daylight has brought ten dawns since I saw you upon my departure from Capua tending your wounds; you were saddened only by the fact that you, wounded as you were, could not go to the walls and thus were denied glory in war.

decimum lux rettulit ortum I.e. the tenth day has come. For the expression, cf. Hor. Carm. 4.2.58 tertium lunae referentis ortum (with a close correspondence of structure); for ortum referre, cf. also Calp. Ecl. 4.54 qualemque ferat sol aureus ortum, “and what kind of sunrise a golden sunset promises the husbandman” (tr. Keene). In Spaltenstein’s view, the explicit reference indicates that Silius follows an established tradition, but the chronology is easily explained from intertextuality with Ovid; see n.457–459a proxima ... lux.

vulnera ... mulcere Appius had been wounded during the siege of Capua (Liv. 26.6.5; see n.452b–453a). For vulnera mulcere, cf. Ov. l.c. at n.457–459a proxima lux. Silius uses the same expression at 5.368 and 6.91–92; it is found nowhere else. See TLL 8.1562.30ff. and 8.1563.39ff. for this ‘medicinal’ sense of mulcere.

hoc uno maestum Appius grieves only for a lost chance at glory, i.e. not for pain or impending death. For the (rather rhetorical) phrase hoc uno (very frequent in Seneca’s letters), cf. Ov. Met. 2.98 deprecor hoc unum.

adire ... ad muros The verb can carry overtones of aggression, ‘attack’ (9.272, TLL 1.618.1ff, 8ff.), but with muros (or oppida or sim.) the sense is usually only ‘approach’ or ‘visit’, as at 15.241 (in view of tacite) and 15.306, Liv. 24.1.5, 43.9.3 (but cf. Sil. 16.678 Troia adire moenia), so it may be a neutral statement, ‘go to the siege of the walls’ (and participate in it, of course).

Spaltenstein strangely misinterprets these lines, saying that muros cannot logically refer to Capua, as its fall had been described in 381; he suggests and rejects that muros might be a reference to Rome, where Appius would not be able to hold a triumph. But surely ten days ago, the siege of Capua still lasted. It is perhaps somewhat illogical that Scipio would not have seen the commander after Capua had fallen, but that would be an irrelevant detail.

maestum, quod ... Martis honore careres With an ingenuous adaption, Silius re-uses Vergil’s description of two unburied companions of Aeneas at Verg. A. 6.333–334 cernit ibi maestos et mortis honore carentis / Leucaspim et Lyciae ductorem classis Oronten (Norden ad loc. compares the prose version in Cic. Sen. 75 honore sepulturae carere); while Appius longed for more Martis honor in life, now he only wishes mortis honor.

For Martis honore, cf. 13.365 Gradivi cape victor honorem (with n.) and 10.399 dammarunt Martis honores (i.e. the crests of their helmets, a slightly different sense). The expression is unique to the Punica.
contra quae ductor: ‘fesso mihi proxima tandem lux gratos Phaethontis equos avertit et atris aeternum demisit aquis. sed lenta meorum dum vanos ritus cura et sollemnia vulgi exsequitur, cessat flammis imponere corpus, ut portet tumulis per longum membra paternis. quod te per nostri Martis precor aemula facta, arce quae putres artus medicamina servant daque vago portas quamprimum Acherontis adire.’

457–459a To this the general answers: ‘Last day finally took away the welcome sight of the sun’s horses from me on my sickbed and sent me forever to the dark rivers.

contra quae ductor Cf. 696, 3.503–505 contra quae ductor (i.e. Hannibal) and 9.542 (there with respondet); for the short hemistich with the ellipse of a verb, cf. Verg. A. 6.544 Deiphobus contra (see Intr. 417–493 fn.19) and Sil. 2.493; see also TLL 1.743.30–35.

proxima ... lux ‘Last day’, ‘yesterday’. The expression is used by Ovid in his Fasti for ‘next day’ (1.637, 2.475, 5.725); cf. also Sil. 10.333, V.Max. 1.7.3, Curt. 4.11.21, Apul. Met. 8.16, TLL 10.2.13.2036.35ff.; so also Duff here, “it was only one day later”, in which case Appius has been dead for nine days, since Scipio last saw him ten days ago (cf. 453). It seems best, however, to read proxima lux here as ‘yesterday’ instead (as in Petr. 115.15; TLL 10.2.13.2037.61ff.). Firstly, tandem suggests that Appius’ death did not follow immediately. A second reason is the intertextuality with Ovid’s Fasti 5.379–414, the death of the centaur Chiron. As a poisoned arrow pierced his foot, Chiron treated his wound (5.402 varia volnera mulcet ope, cf. here 454–455 vulnera ... mulcentem; there are no other parallels outside the Punica), but to no avail; he died after nine days (5.413 nona dies aderat). Likewise, Appius died on the ninth day after Scipio saw him treating his wounds. It may or may not be relevant that Chiron was accompanied while nursing his wounds by the young Achilles, one of the role models for Scipio (for the significance of Achilles trained by Chiron for the education of Scipio, see Ripoll 2001a: 101, Gärtner 2003, Marks 2005: 124–125). While it is true that Appius does not yet have cause to complain of his relatives’ tardiness in burying him if he has been in the underworld for only one day instead of nine, he seems concerned not so much with the time that has already passed as with the long wait that is still in store: his relatives plan to bring his body back all the way (462 per longum) to the ancestral tomb first.

If Silius’ Appius has arrived in the underworld only one day earlier, this makes him comparable in yet another respect to Elpenor (as Odysseus had to sail for one day to reach the land of the Cimmerians, Od. 11.11); Vergil is not as specific on Palinurus.

While the use of lux for ‘day’ is common (cf. the passages cited, TLL 7.2.1911.26ff.), it is striking here at 458; the next ‘daylight’ took away the ‘Sun’ from Appius?

gratos Phaethontis equos A reference to the chariot of the Sun (for the same metaphor applied to the night, see n.299–301, 413–416, 419–422a). To see the sun is to live (and reversely, cf. Verg. A. 6.534 sine sole domos, of the underworld). Palinurus professes a similar view at A. 6.363 per caeli iucundum lumen. For the same sentiment, cf. 2.234 heu blandum caeli lumen and 16.73–74 heu dulcia caeli lumina.

Phaethon does not refer to Phoebus’ son who crashed his father’s chariot, but is rather a
name for the Sun himself (OLD 2 and RE 19.2.1508.32ff., cf. Homer’s Ἡέλιος φαέθων, Il. 11.736, Od. 5.480, 11.17, 22.388); cf. Verg. A. 5.104–105 nonamque ... / Aurora Phaethontis equi iam ... vehebant, “and now the steeds of Phaëthon ushered in the ninth Dawn”, and also Sen. Med. 827, V.Fl. 3.213, Sil. 6.3, 11.367 postera lux Phaethontis equos proferre parabat, Mart. 3.67.5 and Phaethontius at Sil. 7.206, 10.110 and 10.540.


aeternum Bassett (1963: 81) points to the use of this word as an adverb at Verg. A. 6.401 and 617 for Cerberus and Theseus doing forever the same thing in the underworld, its double use in Aeneas’ farewell to Pallas at A. 11.97–98 salve aeternum ... aeternumque vale (for the parallels with Aeneid 11, see n.459b–462), and as an adjective in the references to the burials of Misenus and Palinurus in A. 6.235 and 381. Cf. also Stat. Theb. 4.420, of the unchanging darkness of the grove where Tiresias performs his nekyia.

For the use of this form as an adverb, ‘for eternity’, see also TLL 1.1147.74ff. Normally, this adverb qualifies the verb itself; for parallels to its use here for a finite act with lasting consequences, cf. 2.366–367 nec te, patria inclita, dedam aeternum famulam (Delz reads dudum, transmitted in ὦ, but that leaves 2.367 awkward; cf. Reeve 1989: 217) and perhaps Stat. Theb. 9.52 aeternumque fugatus; cf. also Verg. A. 11.97–98 cited above.

459b–462 But the tardy care of my family, while observing vain rites and the people’s ceremonies, is slow to place my corpse on the pyre, in order to bring the body all the way to the ancestral tomb.

Appius, unlike Elpenor and Palinurus, does not complain that he has not been buried, but that it is taking so long. His relatives do not cremate him outright but first want to transport his corpse back to Rome, in a display of vain ceremony. He has no need for all the usual rites and pomp; he just wants to be burned, so he can cross the Styx. Ettig (1890–1891: 378 n.4) rightly compares Patroclus’ request to Achilles at Hom. Il. 23.69ff. (see n.463–465 daque vago portas quamprimum Acherontis adire).

Silius’ version responds to that of his literary predecessors. Elpenor explicitly requested that a tombstone be erected for future commemoration and that his oar be placed on his grave (Od. 11.75–78); Palinurus was conciliated by the Sibyl’s prophecy that he receive a tomb and funerary offerings (A. 6.379–380 tumulo sollemnia mittent), and that the land would be named after him (6.383 gaudet cognomine terrae). Appius expresses his lack of care for such sollemnia (the vain rites of the superstitious plebs, vulgi); this Roman takes a
more practical or even Stoic view on burial. We may compare Seneca’s death as described by Tacitus in *Ann.* 15.64.4 *sine ullo funeris sollemni crematur.* Appius’ gruff and amusing request may thus have a philosophical background; for a discussion, see Intr. 417–493.

Bassett (1963: 77) thinks that Appius contrasts two forms of burial, cremation and inhumation, and prefers the former, but in fact the only method under discussion is cremation; the lines refer to the two elements in a traditional Roman funeral, cremation and then entombment of the ashes (Reitz 1982: 36 and 41, Laudizi 1991: 9). Appius’ primary wish is to be cremated *as soon as possible* and not to wait until the body has arrived at the tomb to perform *vanos ritus.* It is this element which Scipio picks up at 468 with *namque* for his discussion of the more exotic funeral rites in 470ff.: all ceremony surrounding the funeral, including Roman ones (*pace* Devallet 1990: 159), is vain and futile.


*vulgi* is “dépréciatif” (Spaltenstein), but more importantly, it marks the contrast between the philosophical view expressed here and the popular belief regarding the afterlife and the way in which corpses should be treated against which Cicero agitates in *Tusc.* 1 (cf. 1.111 *quibus volgo opinantur*); in 1.37, Cicero denounces poetry which misleads the people with its flawed representations of the afterlife. For Cicero’s influence, see Intr. 417–493 fn.23.

*flammis imponere* The expression is first found at *A.* 6.252–253, there for sacrificial offerings, just as here at 492–493 (see n.); for cremation of human bodies, cf. *impositique rogis iuvenes* at Verg. *G.* 4.477 and *A.* 6.306. Cf. also Luc. 2.170 *vetitisque imponere flammis* and V.Fl. 5.30–31 *imposuere rogo.*

*portet tumulis ... membra paternis* Appius will be buried in his ancestral tomb. For *porto* in this context, cf. Ov. *Ep.* 15.116 *portet ad exstructos corpus inane rogos* and (+ dat.) Epic.Drusi 125 *tumulo portaris et igni.* For *tumulis ... paternis* we may compare Ov. *Tr.* 4.3.45 *et cinis in tumulo positus iacuisset avito,* with the same positions. Silius says *membra* for ‘corpse’ in a similar context of burial also at 3.439–440 *tumulo tum membra reponit supremum illacrimans.*

For the journey home against Appius’ wishes, Bassett (1963: 77–78) compares *Tusc.* 1.104, where Cicero quotes the philosopher Anaxagoras for saying that after his death, his body does not need to be carried home for burial, since the road to Hades is equally long from everywhere.

*per longum* ‘Far away’, an expression that is not found outside the *Punica* until Late Latin. Silius uses it both for spatial distance (1.469, 10.206, 15.785, 17.473; *TLL* 7.2.1642.62ff.) and length of time (2.465, 12.295; *TLL* 7.2.1643.23ff.). Here, it is the first
(cf. *portet*), although the underlying notion is of course also that it all takes too long to Appius’ taste (a similar ambiguity of space and time is found at 15.785).

463–465 *What I beg from you by our rival deeds in war: keep away the ointments that would preserve my rotting limbs and allow my wandering spirit to enter the gates of Acheron as soon as possible.*

*quod te per ... precor* Palinurus’ appeal begins in the same way (so already Baudnik 1906: 32): *quod te per caeli iucundum lumen et auras, per genitorem oro, per spes surgentis Iuli* (Verg. *A. A. 6.363–364*, where *per* is also followed by a genitive). The same line opening is found at *A. 2.141* and *Hor. Ep. 1.7.94* (also entreaties).


*noster Martis ... aemula facta* Unlike Elpenor and Palinurus, who plead by the loved ones of Odysseus and Aeneas (*Od. A. 11.67–68* Penelope, Laërtes and Telemachos; *A. 6.364* Anchises and Iulus), Appius asks Scipio to help him in remembrance of their friendly rivalry in battle. He does not have the same relationship with Scipio as Elpenor with Odysseus, or Palinurus with Aeneas; his status is that of friend and equal, not that of subordinate (cf. Reitz 1982: 36).

In this respect, Appius should rather be compared to Deiphobus in *A. 6.694ff*, and several references to that passage support this view. See for a detailed discussion Intr. 417–493.

*noster Mars* is here ‘our war effort’; the phrase has a different sense at 1.640 (‘war with us’), *Verg. A. A. 12.187* and *Hor. Carm. 3.5.24* (‘our army’). There seems to be no relation to the saying *Marte nostro*, ‘on our own’, ‘under our own power’ (see Otto *Sprichwörter* s.v. *Mars, Cic. Off. 3.7.34 ut dicitur Marte nostro*).

*putres artus* Appius’ body will be treated to last the long journey to Rome to be cremated there; cf. Stat. *Theb. 12.138–139 putresque arcans roribus artus ambrosiaeque rigat sucis*, where Iris is charged with preserving the bodies of the Argive leaders, similarly for future cremation. The difference is that in the *Thebaid*, the bodies are preserved in order to allow a future proper burial, whereas here preservation means delay. For this intertext, see Intr. 417–493.

*daque vago portas quamprimum Acherontis adire* The notion that the unburied dead are unable to enter the underworld is elaborated in *Verg. A. 6.322–330*. Silius alludes to the ultimate literary source in *Hom. Il. 23.69ff.*, where the ghost of Patroclus urges Achilles to make haste with his burial, as he cannot enter Hades before it is done. Ettig (1890–1891: 378 n.4) has observed that Appius’ appeal is very similar in phrasing to Patroclus’ in *Il. 23.71 θάπτε μόνον τάχιστα πύλας Ἀιδών περῆσο, “Bury me with all speed, let me pass inside the gates of Hades”*; see Intr. 417–493 for the relevance of the intertext.

*adire* is also found at *A. 6.375* and *6.534* in the meetings with Palinurus and Deiphobus, respectively (both models for Appius). There may be some truth to Bassett’s observation (1963: 82) that *adeo “seems almost to be a technical term for going to the underworld”*; cf. also e.g. *Verg. G. 4.469, Ov. Trist. 1.5a.20, Culex 373, [Sen.] Her.O. 1062.*

For *vago*, Spaltenstein cites the correspondent phrase at *A. 6.329 centum errant annos* (of the unburied dead). The Acheron stands for the underworld in general, as often (cf. 1.94, 2.367, 2.536, 14.329; *TLL* 1.390.57ff.).
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466–487
tunc iuvenis: ‘gens o veteris pulcherrima Clausi, haud ulla ante tuam, quamquam non parva fatigent, curarum prior exstiterit. namque ista per omnes eexitum versat populos variatque iacentem exsequias tumuli et cinerum sententia discors. tellure, ut perhibent, is mos antiquus Hibera: regia cum lucem posuerunt membra, probatum est Hycranis adhibere canes. Aegyptia tellus claudit odorato post funus stantia saxo corpora et a mensis exsanguem separat umram. exhausto instituit Pontus vacare cerebro ora virum et longum medicata reponit in aevum. quid, qui reclusa nudos Garamantes harena infodient? quid, qui saevo sepelire profundo examinos mandant Libycis Nasamones in oris? at Celtae vacui capitis circumdare gaudent ossa, nefas, auro ac mensis ea pociila servant. Cecropidae ob patriam Mavortis sorte peremptos decrevere simul communibus urere flammis. at gente in Scythica suffixa cadaveris truncis lenta dies sepelit putri liquentia tabo.’

466–468a Then the young man replies: ‘Finest descendant of Clausus of old, no other concern will take priority over the care for you, even though no small matters trouble me.

gens ... veteris pulcherrima Clausi As a member of gens Claudia, Appius traced his descent back to Attus Clausus, a man who left his native Sabine people for Rome and who was called Appius Claudius henceforth; cf. Liv. 2.16, 4.3.14, 10.8.6, Tac. Ann. 4.9.2, 11.24.1, 12.25.2, Suet. Tib. 1.1. Clausus was introduced into epic in Verg. A. 7.706ff. as one of Attus Clausus’ forebears; here, vetus (‘of old’, because of Appius’ ancient lineage) corresponds to A. 7.706 Sabinorum prisco de sanguine (cf. also Verg. G. 2.532 veteres ... Sabini). Silius names him again as ancestor of C. Claudius Nero at 8.412 Therapnaeo a sanguine Clausi and 15.547 Clausorum decus, and of Claudia Quinta at 17.33 priscus ab origine nomen (cf. Ov. Fast. 4.305).

Appius’ epithet pulcherrimus is a play on his cognomen, Pulcher. For the connection with another Appius Claudius Pulcher, Cicero’s contemporary, see Intr. 417–493.

The phrase corresponds to Aeneas’ address to the shade of Deiphobus at A. 6.500 genus alto a sanguine Teucris: Deiphobus is one of the models for Appius.

gens is here ‘descendant’, ‘offspring’ (OLD s.v. 7; TLL 6.2.1846.28–34); cf. Verg. A. 10.228 deum gens, Aenea, which Silius imitates at 862 ille deum gens (see n.); cf. also Sil. 2.185, 7.35 and 7.637. TLL cites also A. 11.305, but there gens probably relates to all Trojans.

tuam I.e. curam. We may interpret the possessive pronoun either as subjective (‘the concern that occupies you’) or objective (‘the concern I have for you’), but it does not really influence the interpretation: Scipio makes Appius’ concern his own and will see to
his cremation. A different interpretation is proposed by Devallet (1990: 156), who thinks that Scipio merely expresses that he, too, is not indifferent to the various methods of burial (to paraphrase: “I share this preoccupation of yours with the question of proper funeral rites”); the scholar adduces the tradition that the gens Cornelia had a custom of inhumation rather than cremation); this view is implausible because i) extitterit, a future tense, is ill fit to refer to Scipio’s present beliefs and ii) the catalogue which follows would merely be an exposition of Scipio’s knowledge of the irrelevancy of the manner of burial, which is scant consolation for unburied Appius. The phrase must entail a promise on Scipio’s part that Appius’ concern will be dealt with.

quamquam non parva fatigent / curarum prior This remark which Scipio adds is striking in comparison with Odysseus’ simple assertion τοι, ὦ δύστηνε, τελευτήσω τε καὶ ἔρξω, “All this, unhappy man, will I perform and do” (Od. 11.80). Non parva refers to the war, and Scipio’s future role as main protagonist of the final books of the epic. It is a part of Scipio’s characterisation (fides and pietas) that he will give prominence to the duty to his friend. There is also an interesting echo of Hannibal’s motivation at 3.61–63 multa fatigant, / curarum prima exercet subducere bello / consortem thalami parvumque sub ubere natum, “...he had much to trouble him. His first anxiety was to remove from war the sharer of his bed and their little son, an infant at his mother’s breast.” The Carthaginian general was about to begin his march to Italy, but first took care of his wife and son. The parallel may be significant as it connects scenes which illustrate the literary roles of both leaders. The scene which follows in book 3 casts Hannibal in the role of Hector, since 3.61–157 alludes to Hector’s farewell to Andromache (cf. Juhnke 1972: 193–196). Scipio, on the other hand, will play the Achillean part of ütor in later books, a role which is anticipated in this scene through Appius’ adoption of the role of Patroclus requesting burial from his friend (see n.463–465 daque vago portas quamprimum Acherontis adire).

The epic deeds of the hero (non parva) are paralleled by Silius’ own poetic exploits; cf. the pastoral digression at 7.163ff. quamquam magna incepta vocent, “though called away by my great theme”. Our phrase may be a similar metapoetic signpost, since here the heroic plot is also momentarily interrupted by a (didactic) excursus.


468b–470 For this different opinion regarding burial and cremation keeps a distinction between all peoples by varying the method of funeral of the deceased.

The subject of the sentence is ista ... sententia discors; i.e. opinion on what constitutes proper funeral rites differs across the world and local burial methods vary accordingly. Spaltenstein rightly notes that the demonstrative ista refers to Appius’ words (“that which you spoke of”), but I do not agree that we should supply cura from tuam [curam] in the previous sentence; it goes more logically with sententia, which then governs the tautology discrimen servat and variat. Scipio effectively agrees with Appius’ rejection of his family’s vanos ritus on the ground (cf. namque) that all around the world, people have disparate funeral rites; since all people go the underworld (cf. 525, 527–530, Reitz 1982: 42), it is implied that the manner of the rites is irrelevant and that the true duty of the living is to bury as soon as possible. That his entire catalogue supports this rejection of the wrong views of Appius’ family also shows in the use of the strong connector at twice in the
catalogue (482 and 486); this may be a trace of the interactional function at commonly has in dialogue, viz. to mark an objection or refutation (see Kroon 1995: 335–350). For a detailed discussion of the catalogue of foreign funerary rites that Scipio discusses in 471–487 and its philosophical and literary background, see the last part of Intr. 417–493.

**discrimen servat ... variatque ... sententia discors** The difference between the various funeral practices is strongly emphasized (also stylistically; Reitz 1982: 37 draws attention to the chiastic alliteration in *discrimen servat ... sententia discors*). The diction parallels that in Stat. *Theb.* 12.173–174 *continuo discors vario sententia motu scinditur*, where the wives of the Argive leaders disagree as to where they should go to plead for their husbands’ burial (cf. Bassett 1963: 88). The intertext and the wealth of other correspondences with the *Thebaid* in Sil. 13.381–487 are discussed in Van der Keur 2013; see also Intr. 417–493 and the Appendix.

The sense of *discrimen servat* is the same as in Lucr. 5.923–924 *omnes foedere naturae certo discrimina servant*, “all [plants/things] by fixed law of nature preserve their distinctions”; see for the phrase *TLL* 5.1.1356.74–75.

**tumuli et cinerum** To be taken together with *sententia* as the subject of the sentence. Presumably, *tumuli* refers to interment and *cinerum* to cremation, as the two elements of a Roman funeral; other passages where the two words are found together also relate to the entombment of an urn (e.g. 2.264–266, Ov. *Fast.* 3.547, Tr. 4.3.45, Sen. *Tro.* 648).

### 471–485 The catalogue of foreign burial practices

Silius has carefully ordered his list of foreign rites, as is manifest from the parallelism, alternation and *variatio* on various levels—in composition, syntax and content (see also Reitz 1982: 37–39):

i) Five out of the nine customs described receive two lines, but this rhythm is broken by the breaks at mid-verse at 474 (between second and third custom) and 480 (between fifth and sixth custom; together, they occupy only three lines).

ii) The poet alternates between the names of countries (e.g. 471 *tellure Hibera*) and of their peoples (e.g. 474 *Hyrcanis*); the ethnographical names are in oblique case with the first, second and ninth custom, whereas they are in nominative case with the rest.

iii) In all even items in the list and at every four lines, we find a verb signifying ‘institution’: 473 *probatum est*, 477 *instituit*, 481 *mandant*, 485 *decrevere*.

iv) It is deftly done that with so many funerary customs described, the only word for ‘bury’ to occur twice is *sepelire* (480, 487) and, at that, for practices that would usually not be called ‘burial’ in the physical sense: the Nasamones’ funeral at sea and the Scythians’ custom of exposure to the elements.

v) As regards content, the first six customs are presented in pairs: the Iberians and Hyrcanians leave their dead to the vultures and dogs, beasts that are commonly mentioned together (cf. Reitz 1982: 38); the Egyptian and Pontic people both embalm their dead; the Garamantes and Nasamones bury directly into the world, the first in the earth, the last in the sea.

vi) A link between the second and third pair is the contrast between land and sea: in 479–481, this is literal; in 474–478, through verbal play (*Aegyptia tellus ~ Pontus/pontus*).

vii) The seventh practice, Celtic skull goblets, harks back to the Pontic practice to empty the skulls of their brain (477 *vacuare*, 482 *vacui*) and to the feasts of the Egyptians (476 *mensis*, 483 *mensis*), but in a totally different light and with wholly different intentions. The custom itself is ascribed by Herodotus to the Scythians, last in the list (see n.482–483).
viii) The last two (cremation and decay) are also paired at Luc. 7.809–810, where the poet asks for a joint cremation, but concludes that it matters not whether a pyre or decay consumes the body (tabesne cadavera solvat an rogus, haud refert; for the relevance of the Lucanian intertext, see Van der Keur 2013: 338–339).

ix) The catalogue is also a ring composition, since it both begins and ends with bodies left on the field; leaving bodies for the wild beasts and to rot on the ground are two options that are paired in Stat. Theb. 12.97–99 (for which see Van der Keur 2013: 331–332).

471–472 It is said that in the Iberian land this ancient custom exists: the foul vulture eats the lifeless bodies.

The same custom is described in more detail at 3.341–343 (only of the Celtiberians); the bodies of those who have died in battle are left to be eaten by the vultures, so that their souls will rise up to the gods in heaven. At 2.268–269, the body of the Saguntine Theron is left by the Numidians to the Iberian vultures, too, but there as the insult that is common in epic since Homer (e.g. Il. 1.5, 22.354). The custom is reported also at Aelian. Anim. 10.22, of the Vaccæi, a tribe in NW Spain, with the same reference to fallen warriors; cf. Nicol 1936: 14, Thompson 1936: 84 s.v. γύψ, Spaltenstein. Similar customs of leaving the dead to the vultures are reported for Indian peoples at Strab. 15.1.62 (Taxiloi) and Diod.Sic. 17.5.2 (Oreitai); see RAC s.v. ‘Geier’.

tellure ... Hibera The usual way for Silius to refer to Spain; rather than writing Hibernia (only rarely found in literature; Silius uses the alternative Hispania only once, at 13.695), he uses the geographical adjective with tellus (so here, 15.642 and 16.90), terra (1.287, 3.176, 10.219–220, 11.609, 13.382, 13.510 Hiberiæs, 15.153, 15.194, 15.414, 15.792, 16.24, 16.245, 16.657), campus (15.399–400), ora (17.636) or litus (5.271, 16.216).

This practice of using a (mostly) geographical adjective with a generic noun for ‘land’ to refer to a particular country is very common in Silius; with tellus, 33 instances can be found (cf. lines 9, 59, 441, 474 and 674), with terra (singular or plural) 28 instances (cf. line 382). Vergil often uses a derivative of a proper name instead (e.g. G. 4.462 Mavortia tellus, A. 4.275 Romanaque tellus; cf. earlier Enn. Ann. 1.25 Saturnia terra); the construction with a geographical adjective is mainly popular with Ovid (33 instances; e.g. Met. 1.515 Delphica tellus, Pont. 3.1.7 Pontica tellus), Lucan (15) and Silius.

ut perhibent An Alexandrian footnote (see Hinds 1998: 1–3) to allude to unnamed ‘sources’, often poetic models (cf. the same phrase at 1.85 in an allusion to Aeneid 4). For the historical sources of the catalogue, see the various nn. below; for poetic sources, see Intr. 417–493.

exanima ... corpora A common combination, both in prose and poetry, often of unburied bodies; cf. Lucr. 6.705–706, Verg. A. 1.483–484 (Hektor), 6.149 (Misenus), 11.30–31 (Pallas). A relevant parallel from Statius’ Thebaid is 9.158 exanimes socios inhumaque corpora Graium (same sedes) of Hippomedon guarding Tydeus’ corpse from the Thebans who had just before been described as incestarum avium (Theb. 9.28; cf. obscenus vultur).

obscenus ... vultur The carrion bird is obscenus because it eats rotting flesh; cf. other instances of obscenus for ‘foul birds’ in Plin. Nat. 10.86.2 obscena ... pastu avis (the hoopoe), Verg. A. 3.241 (the Harpies), Sen. Med. 732. The adjective sometimes carries the overtone ‘ill-omened’ because of the connection of carrion eaters with death (cf. Verg. G. 1.470–471, A. 3.262, 12.876), but this seems not to be the case here.
When the bodies of kings lay down their lives, the Hyrcanians prefer to send for the dogs.

Hyrcania was the region at the southern end of the Caspian Sea, a province of the Zoroastrian Parthians. Their religion proscribed that human bodies be eaten by dogs and vultures, because dead bodies were unclean and would pollute the soil if they were buried (for the same reason cremation was forbidden, as fire was seen as a god and it would not do to offer unclean gifts to the gods). The first mention of the practice of ‘burial by dog’ in western literature is in Hdt. 1.140 (on the Persians and the Magi, the priests of Zoroastrianism); the same passage also relates that what was left of the body after it had been eaten away was buried in wax (again to prevent pollution of the earth). To this, Cicero (Tusc. 1.108) adds that in Hyrcania the lowly people are eaten by public dogs, and that the rich keep their own dogs for this purpose. Nicol also quotes Stob. 4.55.11 ἔλεγεν ὁ Διογένης ὅτι ἂν μὲν κύνες αὐτὸν σπαράξωσιν, Ὑρκανία ἔσται ἡ ταφή, “Diogenes said that the dogs would tear him apart, the Hyrcanian way of burial”.

The Iberians and the Zoroastrians thus shared a custom of burial by exposure (or: excarnation), but with a wholly different philosophy; the first sought to honour their fallen warriors by allowing their souls to rise to heaven, whereas the last wanted to prevent the perfection of nature from being polluted.

The Iberians may also be paired with the Hyrcanians because Hiberes was the name of a neighbouring tribe south of the Caucasus, and the ambiguity of Hibera tellus (see OLD s.v. Hiberus) thus suggests the connection.

The land of Egypt encloses corpses standing upright in a perfumed sarcophagus and does not keep a bloodless ghost away from their meals.

The best known aspect of the Egyptian burial ritual is mummification, which involved the removal of bodily organs (cf. 477–478, the lines on Pontus) and embalment (odorato presumably reflects the use of fragrant oils in the embalming process; cf. Spaltenstein). The poet focuses primarily on other Egyptian peculiarities: i) the bodies are placed upright in their sarcophagi (cf. Hdt. 2.86); ii) the custom of the skeleton at the feast, which is described at Hdt. 2.78, involving not a human body, but a wooden replica of one. At the end of a feast a man would go round and show the guests a coffin containing this wooden body, saying that they should enjoy themselves while still alive, because they would look like this after death. In the course of the centuries the story may have become garbled (and there is of course no guarantee that Herodotus’ own story is not a misrepresentation as well), and a real body took the place of the wooden one; cf. also Lucian. de luctu 21. For the custom, Reitz (1982: 38 n.3) also compares Hdt. 3.24 (of the Ethiopians), Diod. 1.128 and Petr. 34.

Aegyptia tellus See n.471–472 tellure ... Hibera.

claudit odorato ... saxo Literally, the bodies are buried in a stone, that is, a sarcophagus. For claudere as ‘bury’, cf. Luc. 8.787–789 ossa ... congestaque in unum parva
**Clausit Humo**, of the burial of Pompey Magnus’ remains on Egyptian soil (his grave is also adorned with a *saxum*, 8.790). Cf. also Luc. 9.409 and *TLL* 3.1304.25ff.


**A mensis exsanguem haud separat umbram** The phrase might refer to gifts of food buried with the body (but that would hardly be conspicuous) or simply mean that the Egyptians kept their dead in their houses (cf. Cic. *Tusc*. 1.108 *condiunt Aegyptii mortuos et eos servant domi*); the explicit mention of *mensae*, however, makes it more likely that Silius intends an anecdotal allusion to the story of the ‘skeleton at the feast’ (see above), with the implicit innovation in *exsanguis umbra* that the deceased is not just physically, but also spiritually present (i.e. as a ghost). For the phrase, cf. also Verg. *A*. 6.401, Ov. *Met*. 4.443 (also 10.41 *exsangues ... animae*), *Ibis* 142, *Stat. Theb*. 1.308.

**477–478** Pontus has established the custom of emptying a man’s head of its brain and buries it embalmed for long eternity.

The practices of embalmment and extraction of the brain are best known from Egypt. Nicol (1936: 15) and Devallet (1990: 157) adduce Hdt. 2.104, where the people living at the Black Sea (the ‘Colchians’) are said to have descended from the Egyptians, which may account for Silius’ attribution of the same customs to them (even if, as Spaltenstein rightly objects, Herodotus only names the shared practice of circumcision). For the emphasis on long-term preservation, Wezel (1873: 59, quoted by Bassett 1963: 76) compares Cicero’s list of foreign funerary rites at *Tusc*. 1.108 which includes the Persian practice to encase their dead in wax ut *quam maxime permaneant diuturna corpora*.

For the word play of *Aegyptia tellus* and *Pontus*, see n.471–487 vi).

**Exhausto ... cerebro** Either governed by *vacuare* to signify the thing removed, resulting in a tautological expression (“they empty the skulls of their removed brains”; for such an abl., *OLD* *vacuare* 1a cites *Stat. Theb*. 5.187 and [Quint.] *Decl*. 4.11 *sanguine membra vacuata*), or an ablative absolute (“by removing the brain, they empty the skulls”). Blomgren (1938: 21 n.2) cites this line along other examples of tautology, but the second interpretation seems to be supported by a correspondence with Lucan’s discussion of the Egyptian practice (cf. Luc. 8.689 *raptoque cerebro*, an ablative absolute) in relation to the treatment of Pompey’s severed head; see n.474b–476 *claudit ... odorato saxo* for another reference to the fate of Pompey’s body.

**Ora virum** At the line opening, this phrase recalls the grisly heads at the doorposts of the monster Cacus at Verg. *A*. 8.196–197 *foribusque adfixa superbis / ora virum tristi pendebant pallida tabo*, which puts the Pontic practice in a far more macabre light.


**Reponit** ‘To lay to rest’ (*OLD* s.v. 10b); cf. 404–405 *repostis ... umbris*; the prefix re-does not imply a notion of repetition (‘put back’) with this meaning.

**Longum ... in aevum** For the phrase (“to last for long eternity”), cf. Hor. *Ep*. 1.3.8 *bella quis et paces longum diffundit in aevum* (imitated at Luc. 1.448) and other (‘shorter’) parallels in *TLL* 1.1168.67–69.

**479–481** What to say of the Garamantes, who inter their dead naked in the opened sand? What of the Nasamones on the shores of Libya, who prescribe to bury the lifeless in the savage sea?
The Garamantes were an African people living in the Saharan desert in modern-day Libya. The Nasamones were a neighbouring tribe, located on the southern shores of the two Syrtes. Both races bury (cf. 480 infodiunt and sepelire) directly into the world; land burial and sea burial are contrasted by the two questions (thus also Reitz 1982: 38).


reclusa ... harena For recludere in the sense ‘to dig a hole’, ‘open’, see n.404–407 reclusae ... terrae.

nudos That is, without a coffin or other encasing (such as the wax the Persians used), comparable to the custom ascribed to the Colchians in A.R. 3.205–209, who hang the corpses of males in trees (cf. here 486–487) and bury those of females in the ground. nudos probably reflects i) that the bodies were buried without clothes and ii) more in general the habit of the African tribes not to wear any clothes at all in their daily lives, a sign of their primitive nature. Lucan often stresses this point; cf. Luc. 4.334 nudi Garamantes, 4.682, 6.309 nec Juba Marmaricas nudus pressisset harenas, 9.439–440 Nasamon ... nudus. Garamantes and Nasamones are both called paupers, possibly because of their nudity (Sen. Phaed. 68, Luc. 4.696 and 9.458); cf. for the lack of civilisation ascribed to them also Luc. 9.512 inculti Garamantes, Sil. 9.219–220 barbaricus ... Nasamon, 11.180 semihomines ... Nasamones.

mandant Since mandare terrae is ‘to bury’ (cf. 6.30, 10.524 socium mandari corpora terrae, “[Hannibal ordered] the bodies of his soldiers to be buried”, Verg. A. 9.214, 11.22, TLL 8.261.66ff.), a similar construction with saevo ... profundo seems logical; hence, Duff translates “commit .. to the cruel sea for burial”. An objection to this reading is that mandare + dat. elsewhere goes with a gerundive of purpose (cf. Verg. A. 3.49–51 Polydorum ... Priamus ... mandarat alendum Threicio regi) rather than an infinitive. The presence of sepelire rather suggests interpreting mandare as ‘to order’, ‘prescribe’ and taking profundo as an ablative of place (while a play on the expression discussed above may still be intended); for mandare in this sense with inf., see LHSz 2.345–346. This interpretation fits in well with the observation on ‘institution’ verbs at n.471–487 iii).

Nasamones Attributed with living of pillaging shipwrecks in the Syrtis at 1.408–409, 3.320–321 and (without explicit naming) 17.634; cf. Curt. 4.7.19 gens Syrtica, navigiorum spoliis quaestuosa, Luc. 9.440–441 and 443–444. This dependence on the sea was probably the basis for this maritime funeral (not attested elsewhere for the Nasamones); Strabo (quoted by Nicol 1936: 15, Devallet 1990: 158) ascribes the practice to two Ethiopian peoples, the Chelonophagi (16.4.14) and those living in Meroe (17.2.3). Herodotus relates another anecdotal custom for the Nasamones themselves, viz. that they interred their dead in a crouched position (4.190; cf. also 4.172).

Spaltenstein suggests that saevo alludes to the Syrtis’ reputation for wrecking ships. The epithet may also be explained from intertextuality with Stat. Theb. 9.387, where the nymph Ismenis emerges from the saevo profundo to bury her son Crenaeus, one of several warriors who have found their deaths in the water (see Van der Keur 2013: 336).

482–483 But the Celts like to overlay – o horror – the bones of an emptied skull with gold and keep them as drinking vessels for their meals.

In 216 BC, the consul elect L. Postumius Albinus was killed by the Boii in northern Italy; his head was emptied and gilded, to be used as a sacrificial vessel and pocculum by the
priests (Liv. 23.24.12). This explains the attribution to the Celts (cf. Reitz 1982: 38 n. 4, Devallet 1990: 158). Herodotus ascribes the same custom to the Scythians (4.65; only the skulls of archenemies, and only gilded by the rich) and their neighbours the Issedonians (4.26; the skulls were gilded, but there is no mention of them being used as cups); cf. also (with Spaltenstein, Devallet 1990: 158) Strabo 7.3.6 on the Scythians, Plin. Nat. 7.12 of the Anthropophagi and Flor. 1.39.2 on the Thracians (also with dead enemies).

For the recurrence of certain words from other customs, see n.471–485 vii).

at See n.468b–470.

circumdare ... auro For this verb in the meaning ‘gild’, see TLL 3.1129.43ff.

ossa For os of the skull, cf. Ov. Met. 5.292 and 12.252 discussisque ossibus oris.

nefas This is the only exotic practice to be explicitly condemned. In view of the relevance of Statius’ Thebaid for this catalogue, we might compare Tydeus’ act of gnawing at the head of Melanippus at the end of Thebaid 8, which is likewise rejected as nefandus (9.18) and scelus (8.761; 12.119); see Van der Keur 2013: 335. Silius uses such an interjection also at 4.766–767 flagrantibus aris infandum dictu! parvos imponere natos, “to offer up their young children – horrible to tell – upon fiery altars” (of another ‘despicable’ foreign practice); cf. also 11.231 horrendum. For the use of nefas in parenthesis for a strong moral condemnation of the action described, cf. 841–843 immane nefas, Verg. A. 8.687–688, Luc. 2.507, Sen. Tro. 1086, Stat. Theb. 12.83–84.

484–485 The Athenians have decreed to burn those who have fallen in war for their country together in communal flames.

The Greeks interred as well as cremated, but it was in cremating that they had a custom few others shared; Herodotus (3.38) tells that Darius once contrasted the Greek practice of cremation with that of the Kallatian Indians of eating their dead. In their own view, the Romans were late in adopting cremation; they used to bury rather than burn, cf. Plin. Nat. 7.187.1 ipsum cremare apud Romanos non fuit veteris instituti: terra condebantur. Thestress on the Athenians (Cecropidae) may refer to their custom of giving their war heroes a state funeral (cf. e.g. Pericles’ funeral speech at Thuc. 2.34; Spaltenstein cites Plato Menex. 234c). The use of the specific word Cecropidae may also point to an epic intertext, namely Thebaid 12, in which Theseus makes war on Thebes to ensure that the fallen Argives receive proper cremation; the references to Athenian involvement in a joint cremation of these warriors are marked three times by the keyword Cecropius / Cecropidae (Theb. 9.518, 12.163, 12.570; see Van der Keur 2013: 331).

Cecropidae The descendants of Cecrops, the first king of Athens; thus, the Athenians. The word is first used in Latin by Vergil at A. 6.660 hic manus ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi (of the Trojan blessed dead) and sim. A. 7.181–182 (of Latinus’ ancestors).

ob patriam For this phrase, cf. only Verg. A. 6.660 hic manus ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi (of the Trojan blessed dead) and sim. A. 7.181–182 (of Latinus’ ancestors).

Mavortis sorte peremptos A clear echo of Verg. A. 11.110 examinis et Martis sorte peremptis, also of burial for those fallen in battle. Martis / Mavortis sors is not found elsewhere. Bassett compares the very similar phrases at Lucr. 3.1089 morte perempti (conj. for forte; cf. also Lucr. 1.114 morte dirempta) and Verg. A. 6.163 indigna morte peremptum (Misenus). See also 532 Gradivi sorte. For Mavors as ‘war’, see n.16b–18.
Notes to 417–493

**communibus urere flammis** The same line ending *urere flammis* at Verg. *G.* 1.85, *A.* 2.37 and Luc. 1.591. The words recur in Lucan’s plea for a communal cremation for the fallen Republicans at Pharsalus: *unum da gentibus ignem, non interpositis urantur corpora flammis* (7.804–805); see Intr. 417–493 fn.32. For *communes flammæ*, cf. V.Max. 5.5.4 *seque super corpus fratris prostratum communibus flammis cremandum tradidit*, the joint cremation of two brothers.

486–487 **But with the Scythian people slow time buries the carcasses which are fixed on trees and are decomposing with putrid decay.**

In antiquity, the practice of tree-burial is attested, not for the Scythians, but for the neighbouring Colchians; it involved hanging the dead body (sewn in a leather sack, according to some sources) in a tree or wooden scaffold, where it was left to rot and dry out; cf. *A.R.* 3.205–209 and (with Nicol 1936: 16) *Ael. V.H.* 4.1, *Stob.* 4.55.15. Apparently, in our days this practice is still in vogue with some North American Indians, with the Naga in India, certain Aboriginal tribes in Australia and the primitive Balinese. In some cultures, after a given amount of time (e.g. a year) the remains of the body are interred.

Reitz (1982: 39 with n.3) suggests that the custom is attributed to the Scythians for their reputation of barbarism, and notes the reminiscence of *Sil.* 1.153–154, where the barbaric tyrant Hasdrubal crucifies the Iberian leader Tagus and leaves him to rot.


at See n.468b–470.

**suffixa cadavera truncis** A reminiscence of *Ov. Ib.* 515–516 *Astacidaeque modo defixa cadavera trunco, / digna feris, hominis sit caput esca tuum*, “And like that of the son of Astacus may your carcass be fixed to a tree, fit for beasts, may your head be food for a man.” (Some editions have *decisa cadavere trunco*, but Silius’ imitation suggests that *defixa* in ω is the better reading; cf. Ellis 1896: 185, *La Penna* 1957 *ad loc.*). *Ovid* refers to the death of Melanippus (*A斯塔cides*), whose brains were eaten by Tydeus, a famous literary instance of cannibalism described more in detail at the end of *Statius’ Thebaid* 8.

**lenta dies** Fittingly, time is named as the means of burial (*sepelit*); the corpse would decompose by exposure to the elements, but also simply by rotting away (cf. *tabo*). The collocation is unique; for the use of *dies*, cf. *Verg. A.* 6.475 *donec longa dies ... exemit labem* (of the purification of the souls in Elysium) and *Stat. Theb.* 12.99 *humus alma diesque resolvet* (decomposition of the Argive corpses). For *lenta* see the n. below.

**putri liquantia tabo** Common diction for corporeal decay since *Lucr.* 3.553 *liquantur ... tabe* (although both words are disputed); for *liquor* in this sense, see *TLL* 7.2.1491.4ff., *Ov. Met.* 2.807–808 *lentaque miserrima tabe liquitur* (figurative of Aglauros’ jealousy). The adjective *lentus* (here qualifying *dies*) is common with *tabes/tabum*; cf. *Liv.* 7.22.4, *Man.* 1.880–881, [Quint.] *Decl.* 6.3, 6.22 and Silius’ own phrase at 2.463–464—like Ovid’s phrase on the rot consuming living bodies.

Silius usually has *tabum; tabes* is only used at 6.159 and 17.450. For *putri ... tabo*, cf.
the decomposing corpses of unburied cattle at Verg. G. 3.556–557 *aggerat ipsis in stabulis turpi dilapsa cadavera tabo*; *turpi* resembles the sound and sense of its anagram *putri*.

### 488–493

*talia dum memorant, umbra veniente Sibyllae* 488

Autonoe ‘finem hic’ inquit ‘sermonibus adde alternis. haec, haec, veri fecunda sacerdos, cui tantum patuit rerum, quantum ipse negarit plus novisse deus. me iam comitante tuorum tempus abire globo et pecudes imponere flammis.’

488–489a *While they discuss such matters, Autonoe says (since the Sibyl’s shade approaches):* ...

**talia dum memorant** At Stat. *Theb.* 4.579, the line opening *talia dum* closes Manto’s speech, after which Tiresias takes over; compare this with Autonoe’s departure in favour of the Sibyl. Another intertext is Ov. *Met.* 14.154 *talia convexum per iter memorante Sibylla*, which closes Aeneas’ visit to the underworld and his meeting with the Cumaean Sibyl; here, the echoing diction marks the begin of Scipio’s encounter with both.

The phrase is Ennian (cf. *Ann.* 1.35 *talia tum memorat*); for anaphoric use (with *dum*) similar to our line, cf. 15.752, Ov. *Met.* 10.209 *talia dum vero membrantur Apollinis ore*.

489b–490a *Put an end now to your conversation.*

Autonoe cuts the conversation short, just like Vergil’s Sibyl did when Aeneas was speaking with the shade of Deiphobus; *sermonibus alternis* picks up *A.* 6.535 *hac vice sermonum* (cf. Spaltenstein; for the meeting with Deiphobus as an intertext, see Intr. 417–493). Here, the reason is the approach of a more important shade; in the *Aeneid*, the Sibyl reminds Aeneas of their limited time and the need to press on to Elysium, where he will meet his father. In both cases, the hero is guided to the shade from whom he will learn his future. Silius imitates the admonishment again, differently, at 755–757a and 807–808; see nn.

**finem ... adde** The combination is rare; cf. 15.68 *finisque est addita dictis* (also of speech) and Man. 5.326–328 *Orpheus ... addidit ... morti denique finem*. With *dare*, cf. 361, Verg. *A.* 6.76 *finem dedit ore loquendi*, *TLL* 6.1.796.65–66; cf. also Plaut. *Asin.* 605 *sermoni iam finem face tuo*, Plin. *Paneg.* 24.3 *finemque sermoni ... facit* and Ov. *Met.* 4.389 *finis erat dictis*.


490b–492a *This, this is the priestess rich in truth, to whom so much of the world is known that even Apollo would profess not to know more.*

**haec, haec ... sacerdos** This seems a metapoetic play on *A.* 6.791 *hic vir, hic est* (cf. again at 763 *hic ille est*); instead of the great political leader which Vergil projects in Aeneas’ future, Silius exalts the great Vergilian literary figure in the past of the literary tradition he is working in.
**veri fecunda sacerdos** The same praise is sung of Amphiaras in Stat. *Theb.* 8.171 *fecundaque pectora veri.* Cf. also the phrases for Apollo and Phemonoe in Luc. 5.198 *potens veri Paean* and 5.222–223 *tum pectore verum fugit;* for Phemonoe, see n.400–403 *Autonoe.* For *fecundus* with a genitive, see *KS* 2.1.441.

**cui ... patuit** For this use of *patère* (‘be (easily) known’) with a dative, see *TLL* 10.1.662.64–65.

**ipse negarit plus novisse deus** A verbal play on Ovid’s story of the Sibyl who was granted a long lifespan, but not eternal youth (*Met.* 14.134ff.); there, she sighs that when she will have reached great age and will have become very shrunken indeed, *Phoebus quoque forsitam ipse vel non cognoscet vel dilexisse negabit* (150–151), “Phoebus himself, perchance, will either gaze unknowing on me or will deny that he ever loved me”. The phrase *nego novisse* is otherwise limited to Plautus (*Epid.* 700, *Men.* 634, 750, *Mer.* 767, *Mos.* 1079), where the object is always a *person* rather than a *thing*. For another play on Ovid’s story, where Silius has also kept the words but altered the sense, see n.399.

**492b–493** *It is now time for me to leave, together with the throng of your followers, and to lay the sacrificial animals on the flames.*

**comitante tuorum ... globo** This is the first, and only, mention of companions; surely, these are the men whom Scipio returns to at 895 (*socios ... revisit*). The source must be *Odyssey* 11, where a loyal band of followers performs sacrifices while the hero meets the dead (see n. *pecudes imponere flammis* below). With Vergil, the presence of others at the sacrifice is implied at *A.* 6.248–249 *supponunt alii cultros* and perhaps 6.258–259 *procul, o procul este, profani* (it is possible that in our text, the plural *fundunt* at 434 indicates the same). The attendance of these companions makes sense in Odysseus’ case (who brings his crew), but is not as implicitly given for Aeneas (normally only accompanied by his *fidus Achates*) and rather surprising in Scipio’s case (and yet, *someone* had to bring all those bulls and sheep...). Reitz (1982: 43) suggests the companions were not mentioned before because they had no function until now; she also observes that the departure of not only Autonoe, but also these (not aforementioned) companions, emphasises his utter loneliness.

**pecudes imponere flammis** A clear allusion to Verg. *A.* 6.252–253 *solida imponit taurorum viscera flammis,* a sacrifice made by Aeneas himself, after which he leaves his companions, instead of the reverse. Here, the situation is much more similar to that in the *Odyssey.* After the libation and the arrival of the shades, Odysseus bids his men to flay and burn the sheep of which the blood was taken, and to pray to Hades and Persephone (*Od.* 11.44–47), as he was instructed to do by Circe (10.531–534). Silius has combined the Homeric and Vergilian settings in that the hero performs his *nekyia* just beyond the entrance to the underworld (like Odysseus) but must leave his companions outside (like Aeneas).

For the phrase *imponere flammis,* see also n.459b–462 *flammis imponere corpus.*
The shade of the ancient Sibyl of Cumae arrives and drinks of the blood. She remarks that while she was still alive, she already spoke of Scipio, but the Romans were not careful enough in collecting her sayings. She then prophesies to Scipio that he will be victorious in Spain, avenging his father; Jupiter will drive Hannibal back to Africa to be conquered by the young Roman. But in the end, Rome will turn hostile on him and he will live in exile.

The seer’s speech previews much of the remainder of the epic—Scipio’s victories in Spain (books 15–16) and final triumph at Zama (book 17). Internal prolepsis is a common function of epic prophetic speech, especially the oracles gained from necromancy. Homer’s Teiresias foretells Odysseus’ voyage in the form of warnings and predicts his homecoming and the death of the suitors. Another obvious parallel is the speech by Vergil’s Sibyl to Aeneas, which immediately precedes his katabasis; her words are a veritable table of contents for the second half of the poem, with a stress on the ‘Iliadic’ elements of the war in Latium. Likewise, the corpse reanimated by Lucan’s Erictho foretells (in a much more veiled way) the events of the later books of the Bellum Civile (6.802–820). At Stat. Theb. 4.637–644, the ghost of Laius anticipates the highlights of the second half of the poem by alluding to the deaths of several Argive heroes and Creon’s refusal to bury their bodies.

Unlike most of these prophets, the Sibyl also looks beyond the scope of the poem with Scipio’s exile (external prolepsis). The prophecy to Scipio, at the beginning of the Nekyia, has its counterpart in the prophecy of Hannibal’s fate after the Roman victory (a fully external prolepsis) which closes book 13. Similarly in the Aeneid, Deiphobe’s prophetic speech (an internal prolepsis) and Anchises’ parade of heroes (external) enclose the katabasis.

The prophecy to Scipio interacts with two prophecies to other leaders in the Punica. The first of these is the famous scene in book 1 where (in a decidedly infernal setting) young Hannibal swears an oath to be the eternal enemy of Rome, followed by a haruspicy (1.125–137) in which Hannibal’s victories are foretold, up to his attack on Rome and Jupiter’s defence. Juno prevented his eventual defeat to be visible and limited Hannibal’s vision of the future, which spans only the first twelve books of the Punica. By contrast, the Sibyl’s oracle to Scipio, which spans the remainder of the epic, does not spare him the negative side of his future (his exile). Fittingly, Scipio as Hannibal’s victor receives not merely a similar prediction of his future, but a more accurate one.

1 Cf. also Phineus, who tells Jason of the dangers of his voyage at A.R. 2.316–407 and its Roman counterpart V.Fl. 4.561–620; we may also compare Helenus’ description to Aeneas at Verg. A. 3.381–460.
2 Note also that Statius in Theb. 4.601 echoes Vergil’s reference to the war in the second part of the epic at A. 6.86 horrida bella (cf. A. 7.41); see n.450–452a horrida ... bella.
3 Homer’s Teiresias also describes an event (a ritual of reconciliation) which falls outside the plot of the Odyssey. For Lucan, it is impossible to determine which prophesied events would have been narrated in the Bellum Civile itself; it seems likely that the deaths of Caesar and Sextus Pompey, at the very least, would be beyond its narrative scope.
The other contrast that is being made is one between the saviour of Rome—Scipio—and the Roman who almost brought his city to ruin—Varro. On the eve of the battle of Cannae, Varro’s co-commander Paulus tells him that his deeds were similarly foretold in the Sibylline prophecies. Varro ignored such prophecies; Scipio should not (n.500b–502). Varro boasted that he would end the war at Cannae, but it is Scipio who will really win the decisive battles. Finally, in a strange reversal of fates, Varro is forgiven (10.605–639), but Scipio is prosecuted.

Varro heard from his colleague that he had been foretold by the Sibyl; Scipio hears the same thing from the sage herself. Silius is not the only poet to employ the Sibyl in this way. The Sibyl of Cumae also features in Statius’ *Silv.* 4.3 (on the *via Domitiana*); there, she addresses Domitian himself, proclaiming that she foretold his coming. The parallel, that both Scipio and Domitian were foretold by the Sibyl(s) of their respective poets, is significant since Silius’ hero is in many ways cast as a proto-princeps, and may even be seen as a paradigm for emperor Domitian (see Intr. 850b–895, Gen.intr. § 4.3.3 and 6). The relation between *Silvae* 4.3 and the *Punica* will be explored in the Appendix.

**The two priestesses**

With the arrival of the shade of the ancient Sibyl, the priestess Autonoe leaves Scipio’s presence and the poem. At this point, a short discussion of the dichotomy of guiding figures is in order, a dichotomy which is also present in the *Odyssey* (Kirke and Teiresias) and the *Aeneid* (the Sibyl and Anchises), and later also in Dante’s *Divina Commedia*.

Vergil’s Sibyl performs two functions; she is priestess of both Apollo and Hecate (Verg. *A.* 6.35 *Phoebi Triviaeque sacerdos*). According to Varro (*apud* Lact. *Inst.Div.* 1.6.8), the ancient world boasted ten Sibyls, three of whom were based in Italy: the Cimmerian, Cumaean and Tiburtine Sibyl, respectively; some have argued that Vergil combined two of these Sibyls (the Cimmerian, guardian of the underworld, and the Cumaean, prophetess of the Sibylline Books) into one. A different approach is to speak of a fusion of two literary functions—those of the seer and of the guide through the underworld. It is clear, at any rate, that Silius with his two priestesses (Autonoe and the ancient Sibyl) has not simply reversed Vergil’s move by distinguishing between the two roles again. The ancient Sibyl is as much subterranean guide as oracle. Autonoe, on the other hand, is never identified as a Sibyl, but merely as priestess of Phoebus; she is successor to Vergil’s Sibyl, but the oracle
is silent. If we want to ascribe a specific (literary) role to Autonoe, it is that of instructor. She finds herself in the company of Homer’s Kirke, who instructs Odysseus regarding his route to Hades and his blood offering (but does not accompany him), Lucan’s Erichtho in Bellum Civile 6 (who performs the summoning ritual herself), Mopsus in Valerius’ Argonautica 3 (when he prepares Jason for a ritual to appease—rather than summon—the Cyzican ghosts), and of course again the Vergilian Sibyl, with her famous instructions regarding the golden bough. In the Aeneid, Deiphobe instructs and guides Aeneas until he finds his father Anchises in Elysium, who thereafter takes over the roles of guide and oracle; Silius has adopted a similar course, and has promoted Vergil’s Sibyl to the role of the ghost whose wisdom is sought in the underworld.

A last parallel for Silius’ two priestesses may be found in Statius’ Thebaid 4, where Tiresias performs a nekyia with the help of his daughter Manto. There are several analogies between Statius’ Manto and Silius’ Autonoe: both play second fiddle to the sage (Tiresias / the ancient Sibyl), both describe the coming of the ghosts, and their role is then taken over by their more illustrious colleague, with the same phrase in both texts. For both Flavian epics, an attractive interpretation might be that the role reserved for the younger priestess who defers to the older sage, represents the poetic claim which each Flavian poet has staked out to a place in the literary tradition, symbolizing his place next to the older and established poets (Tiresias ~ Homer and Greek tragedy; the Sibyl ~ Vergil); the theme of successorship is present both in Manto, with her filial relationship to Tiresias, and in Autonoe, who now guards the sacred cave and tripods of Cumae.

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14 See n.400–403.
15 The prophecy itself is, as in all necromantic scenes, given by a shade; Lucan has allotted the role of oracle to the Pythia Phemonoe in book 5 (see Intr. 417–493 with fn.8).
16 Valerius also has a Nekyia with a prophesying ghost at the end of book 1, while the role of seer is allotted to Phineus in book 4 (who is blind, like Teiresias; cf. also his epithet fatidicus at V.Fl. 4.425, which Silius applies to the ancient Sibyl at 412, and n.503–504 disce tua [fata]).
17 Manto was a probable companion to Tiresias from the Greek tragedians on, and in Seneca’s Oedipus she has a role during the haruspicy which precedes the nekyia; Statius’ innovation lies in the larger role he allotted to Manto during the nekyia itself.
18 13.435ff.; cf. Stat. Theb. 4.519ff.; in Homer, the narrator gives the description. The correspondence was also observed by Juhnke; see Intr. 417–493 fn.3.
19 13.488 talia dum memorant, Stat. Theb. 4.579 talia dum patri canit interemerata sacerdos. An important difference is, of course, that Autonoe makes way for the ancient Sibyl and leaves when her predecessor arrives, whereas Manto and Tiresias are both present throughout Statius’ Nekyia.
20 See nn.400–403 Autonoe and 409 quae poscis maiori vate canentur. The literary presence of Manto is established by Statius when he compares her spells at Theb. 4.550–551 to those of Medea (the heroine of Valerius Flaccus) and of Circe (which draws attention to the fact that in Homer, it is Circe who guides Odysseus to Tiresias). Although it is still hard to determine the relative chronology of Statius’ and Silius’ epic endeavours, the fact stands that the presence of a younger priestess in Thebaid 4 is logical (see fn.17 above), whereas it has to be explained in the case of the Punic. It is very well possible that Silius drew inspiration from Statius’ way of self-representation and adapted it into a claim to be Vergil’s epic successor.
Analysis of the presentation of 494–516

The last passage ended with the words of Autonoe; the narrator now focuses on the ancient Sibyl. The new passage is closely connected to the last, not only because the Sibyl’s coming was already indicated at 488, but also because gravida arcanis (494) parallels veri fecunda sacerdos (490). The Sibyl’s arrival is not narrated (merely announced at 488), and with the postquam-clause the narrator passes swiftly over her drinking the blood of the victims, reducing the narrated time between the scenes to a minimum (‘maintaining momentum’, so to speak); later in the Nekyia, the drinking of the blood is also relegated to a subordinate clause (621, 734) or participle construction (706). There are no real time lapses in the Nekyia. The dialogue with the shade of Appius Claudius covers the time between the blood offering and the arrival of this first shade from the underworld itself; in later scenes, the next shade is already waiting (615 Pomponia; 705 Paulus; 717 the other Roman generals) or coming forward (650 the Scipios) at the transition between scenes.

The Sibyl’s speech can be divided into two parts (cf. Reitz 1982: 44–45): i) the reference to Scipio’s presence in the Sibylline prophecies (498–502) and ii) the prophecy, which starts with some preliminary remarks (503–506), followed by the prediction itself (507–515).22

The words on the Sibylline prophecies start with a short setting (497 cum) with imperfect tenses, which provides a temporal background to the pivotal event which the Sibyl relates in 499–500 (tum)—the foretelling of Scipio, expressed with solemn spondees. In the next lines she passes judgement over other, later events; contrary to what would be expected (500 sed), proper care was not given to the oracles, a critique which is explained (501 enim) in the next lines. These few lines serve a twofold function: the importance of Scipio is emphasized, since he was foretold by the Sibyl, and it is explained why he still needed to hear this oracle from the mouth of the Sibyl herself (a favour also granted to Scipio’s literary predecessor Aeneas). In addition, the point is made that due heed should be given to the signs of the gods.

The particles verum age (see n.503–504) mark the next topic, the prophecy itself. The Sibyl first states her intent (disce) to prophesy and the reason (503 quoniam, 505 namque) for it: she knows why Scipio has come. The actual prophecy begins without further marking with a symmetrically constructed line (507). The many enjambments (and conspicuous caesurae, such as 511 capiere || nec ante) make the prophecy a strong self-contained unit, consisting of many short blocks (4 or 5 words each) flowing over the lines.

The development of the finite verbs in the prophecy deserves our attention. The first half of the nine lines has second-person, the last part third-person verbs; especially carebit in 515 is conspicuous after capiere (511) and tibi (514), and presents the last part of the

21 The particle at indicates that the ‘camera’ now swings to another character/discourse topic (see also An. 179–255 fn.36); with the arrival of the ancient Sibyl, here the main part of the Nekyia begins. See Gen.intr. § 3.3 and Intr. 517–614.

22 For the frequency of tu and tuus throughout the speech (stressing Scipio’s importance for Rome’s fate), see n.505–506 tibi ... properatum ... petere.

23 These perfects are not part of a narrative sequence, but are rather comments about the past made from the ‘here and now’ of the speaker (i.e. the Sibyl’s conversation with Scipio).

24 See n.507–510 iii). Lines 507 and 510 also counterbalance each other (victor ... Hibero ~ Hiberiacis victa).

25 Some mss. read carebis, but it is more easily explained if the line is meant to be ambiguous; see n.514b–515 decus hoc.
prophecy as spoken about, rather than to Scipio, possibly as a comment on the Sibyl’s part (either in general or to Rome, the *iniquae urbis*). It is striking that, syntactically and semantically, Scipio becomes more passive (starting, literally, with 511 *capiere*) over the lines, being chosen by the assembly as consul, then the beneficiary of Jupiter’s contribution to Rome’s victory in 514 and finally only referred to in the third person as the one whose banishment will bring shame upon Rome. He has gone a long way from his moment of glory in 507 *ulcisceris*!\(^{26}\) In 515, the marked pronouns *haec* and *hoc* indicate the victory and the victor, contrasting with the undeserved ‘banishment’.

When the Sibyl has finished speaking (516 *sic vates*), she starts to turn around, preparing to leave again to the underworld. The imperfect *vertebat* indicates that she is in the process of doing so, when Scipio replies.

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\(^{26}\) The last phrase, *patriaque domoque carebit*, raises a contrast with Scipio’s presentation elsewhere as avenger, *ultor patriaeque domusque* (16.593); see n. 514b–515.
**Notes to 494–516**

**494–502**

at *gravida arcanis* Cymes anus *attigit ore*

*postquam sacrificum delibavitque cruorem,*

in *deus egregiae vultus intenta iuventae*

‘aetherea fruerer cum luce, haud segniter’ *inquit*

*Cymaeo populis vox nostra sonabat in antro.*

tum te permixtum saeclis rebusque futuris

Aeneadum cecini. sed non sat digna mearum 500

cura tuis vocum. nec enim conquirere dicta

aut servare fuit proavis sollertia vestris.

**494–495** *Now, the ancient lady of Cumae (fountain of mysteries), when she has touched the sacrificial blood with her lips and tasted it, …*

- **at** The particle marks the shift from Autonoe to the ancient Sibyl.

- **gravida arcanis** Picks up 490 *veri fecunda.* This use of *gravidus* is striking. Unless we interpret the phrase as ‘pregnant with mysteries’ (a play on the Sibyl’s chastity?), *gravidus* must be taken as ‘laden with’, for which the *TLL* cites only non-living parallels (this passage is erroneously listed under *de rebus*); cf. 110 *gravida armato ... vinea dorso*, ‘a mantlet laden with armed back’ (i.e. laden with soldiers).


- **Cymes anus** The Sibyl, as in Ov. *Fast. 4.158 Cumaeam ... anum.* The reference to Cumae just before the prophecy to Scipio recalls Vergil’s *Cymaea Sibylla* (*A. 6.98*)—signifying of course the same Sibyl—preceding her oracular words to Aeneas. For Cyme (the only spelling used in the *Punica*) see n.400–403 *Cymaeam.*

  - Like *veteris* in 411 (see n.), *anus* refers to the proverbial old age of the Sibyl.

- **attigit ore .... sacrificum delibavitque cruorem** The choice of words recalls several phrases where (like here) someone is the first to drink, of which the second and third are particularly relevant:

  1. The line ending *attigit ore* (494) is also found in Verg. *A. 1.737* (and not elsewhere): Dido is the first to taste the wine at the banquet.

  2. The rare word *sacrificus* (here used in the sense ‘sacrificial’, ‘of the sacrifice’; cf. 3.27 *sacrificam ... vestem* and *OLD s.v. 2*) is also used in Stat. *Theb. 4.552* (same case and *sedes*), there with *parentem* (‘performing the sacrifice’, cf. *OLD sacrificus* 1); in the next line, Manto reports to Tiresias that the first to drink of the blood is Cadmus.

  3. *delibavitque cruorem* may be modelled upon V.Fl. 1.740 *libato ... sanguine,* where Cretheus’ shade drinks the sacrificial blood and delivers his speech to Aeson and Alcimede.

- **postquam** The conjunction is quite often postponed, giving up its first position in the clause to a topical phrase (see *KS 2.2.614–615,* Pinkster 1990: 170; for the *Punica*, Blomgren 1938: 22–23 also cites 2.188, 7.159, 8.84, 12.337, 14.42 and 15.488), but its significant delay here has far fewer parallels; cf. e.g. *A. 12.604, Ov. Met. 6.549, 10.11, 15.641, V.Fl. 8.92.*

**496** *… gazing intently upon the exquisite charm of his youthfulness, she says …*

  Youthful beauty characterizes the gods and the epic heroes they have fathered. The line
recalls especially Vergil’s Turnus (A. 7.473 *deus egregium formae ... atque iuventae*) and Aeneas (A. 4.150 *tantum egregio deus entet ore*); cf. also V.Fl. 1.113–114 Graiae ... *iuventae ... deus*. Thus subtly portrayed as an epic hero, Scipio shows his divine parentage (fully disclosed at 637–647), which entitles him to the same kind of *katabasis* (and, one presumes, the same kind of prophecy) that Aeneas had (cf. Verg. A. 6.123 *et mi genus ab Iove summo*).

**vultus intenta** *vultus* is here retained accusative. At Met. 14.106, Ovid also adds a detail of the Sibyl’s gaze, but there she looks at the ground (*vultum tellure moratum*) before addressing Aeneas; for another adaptation of that line, see n.404–407 nec cunctata diu.

497–498 “When I enjoyed the light of heaven, my voice was not idle and spoke to the nations in my Cumaean cave.

The argument developed here and in the following lines is that if the Romans had been more careful with the prophecies the Sibyl had uttered in her lifetime, Scipio would not now need to come to see her shade for an oracle, since (the pivotal statement) he himself was foretold. The Sibyl’s speech here presumably reacts to two intertexts:

i) In Verg. A. 3.445–451, Helenus warns Aeneas against the Sibyl’s habit of writing her prophecies on leaves, allowing the wind to disorder them, without taking care to put them back together; Aeneas therefore asks her to prophesy to him directly (A. 6.76 *ipsa canas oro*). Both in Vergil and in Silius the hero receives an oracle directly from the Sibyl, in the *Aeneid* because of her own lack of care to assemble her sayings (3.451 *nec ... iungere carmina curat*), in the *Punica* because of the Romans’ lack of care to collect them (501 *nec ... conquirere dicta cura*). Vergil’s Aeneas promises to build a temple to house the Sibyl’s oracles and mystic utterances (A. 6.72 *tuas sortis arcanaque fata / dicta*) and to appoint chosen men (a reference to the *duumviri sacris faciundis* who guarded the Sibylline books and who were the only ones allowed to consult them); Silius’ Sibyl, by contrast, grumbles that little has come of this promised care for her *dicta*. For another reading of this complaint that the Romans have proven lacking in *cura* for the voice of the Sibyl since her appearance in the *Aeneid*, see the Appendix.

ii) In Luc. 5.137–138, the Pythia Phemonoe responds to Appius, who has come seeking knowledge of the future, that the Delphic oracle is silent, possible because *farique sat est arcana futura / carmina longaevae vobis commissa Sibyllae*, “it is enough that future secrets are told in the ancient Sibyl’s prophecies, entrusted to your race” (note Silius’ similar diction: *sat ~ 500 satis; arcana ~ 494 arcans; futura ~ 499 rebus futuris; longaeva ~ 494 anus*). Silius adopts Lucan’s notion that the Sibylline prophecies should have been enough (incidentally, in the *Punica* the Cumaean oracle is silent as well, as is implied at 8.531 *quondam fatorum conscia Cyme*).

**Cymaeo ... in antro** Silius recalls the parent scene in the *Aeneid* (6.98–99) *Cymaeas Sibyllas / horrendas canit ambages antroque remugit*, “the Cumaean Sibyl chants [...] her dread enigmas and booms from the cavern”. Cf. also *Cymaeam* and *antrum* at 400–401 (Scipio’s visit to Autonoe, with the same model).

**vox nostra sonabat** Another reference to Lucan’s Phemonoe (see above), as she utters her prophecy to Appius: 5.193 *extremaeque sonant ... voces*, “and finally, ... the sound of speech”.

499–500a *Then I sang of you, among all the centuries and future deeds of the sons of Aeneas.*
Notes to 494–516

**te permixtum** The *OLD* (*permisceo* 3) cites this line for ‘involve’, ‘embroil’ (with *rebus futuris*?), but the sense of *permixtum* must be that Scipio’s coming was one thing foretold ‘among the rest of the prophecies’. The construction is with the dative, *saeclis rebusque futuris* (*TLL* 10.1.1545.6). For *permixtus* used of persons (‘together with’, ‘in the midst of’, ‘among’), cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 4.16, A. 10.238, 11.634 (horses), Juv. 8.173–174.

Silius establishes an intratextual link with 9.57–59, where the Sibyl is said to have predicted Varro and his madness, *cecinit* Cymaea ... *haec ... vates et te ... tuosque vulgavit ... furores*, “the priestess of Cumae foretold these things ... and ... proclaimed ... you and your madness”; she foretold both the man who nearly caused Rome’s destruction in the war against Hannibal and the man who would save the city. On Varro and Scipio, see Intr. 494–516.

**rebusque futuris Aeneadum** The descendants of Aeneas in a broader sense, i.e. the Romans. The words are modelled upon Vergil’s description of another prophetess, Carmentis, at *A.* 8.340–341 *cecinit quae prima futuros Aeneadas magnos*, “who first foretold the greatness of Aeneas’ sons” (Carmentis’ epithet *fatidica* is also given to the Sibyl in 412).

It has been suggested that Silius’ (Vergilian) Sibyl ‘learned’ of these future events from Anchises at the end of *Aeneid* 6, where in the long line of future Romans he also showed the two Scipios (*A.* 6.842–843 *duo fulmina belli, Scipiadas*; Deremetz 2004: 79; cf. Spaltenstein). We may also argue that the Sibyl, as Vergil’s creation, represents Vergil himself (cf. n.400–403 for Autonoe as representative of Silius’ poetic claim); ‘I sang’ would then be ‘Vergil sang’.

**500b–502** But your people did not show proper care for my words; for your ancestors did not have the sense to collect and preserve my sayings.

These lines have often been seen as a reference to the famous story of king Tarquinius Superbus (or Priscus, according to Varro), who only wanted to buy the Sibyl’s prophecies for the steep price she asked after she had burned six of the nine scrolls containing them (cf. Ernesti *ad loc.*, Juhnke 1972: 285, Reitz 1982: 45 n.4); cf. e.g. Varro *apud* Lact. *Div.Inst.* 1.6.8, Plin. *Nat.* 13.88, Gell. 1.19, Serv. *ad A.* 6.672. But the diction (cura, *conquirere*) suggests (also) a link to the Sibyl’s habit to write her prophecies on leaves, allowing the wind to disorder them (see n.497–498). Her lack of care to recollect them is here attributed to the Romans. This transposition adds a moral touch to the Sibyl’s words (cf. Spaltenstein); humans should pay more heed to prophecies and signs of the gods. For the contrast that is thus being made between Scipio and others such as Varro, see Intr. 494–516.

The Sibylline prophecies feature again in the expulsion of Hannibal from Italy in book 17; see n.511–514a *cuncta fugavit in Libyam bella*.

**sat digna** ‘worthy enough’, hence ‘proper’. An uncommon combination in poetry; cf. 6.344–345, Verg. *A.* 3.318–319, Luc. 9.1101, V.Fl. 1.768–769 and Mart. 11.80.4. Possibly *mearam ... vocum* is governed by *digna* (for the construction with a genitive instead of ablative see *TLL* 5.1.1147.30ff.), but more probably it is genitive of object with cura.

**conquirere ... aut servare fuit ... sollertia** The infinitive generally replaces a genitive gerund when it is dependent “nicht vom einzelnen Subst., sondern vom ganzen Ausdruck bzw. dem in ihm liegenden Verbalbegriff” (*LHSz* 2.351); *nec sollertia fuit + dat.* approaches the meaning of ‘*nequeunt*’ or ‘*nesciunt*’, to which an infinitive is a common complement.

Notes to 494–516

503–506  
verum age discer, puer, quoniam cognoscere cordi est,  
iam tua deque tuis pendentia Dardana fatis.  
hinc petere et patris visu contingere manes.  

503–504  
Well then, since you long to know it, boy, learn now your destiny and Rome’s which depends on yours.  

verum age  
This is the first of three important speeches in the Nekyia marked by these particles. The second time is at 634, when Pomponia is about to reveal to Scipio that he is the son of Jupiter (also with disce in 636, and also with a reason given); the third at 666, to mark the elder Scipio’s advice to his son. Cf. also the remaining instance in the Punica at 7.310 (with percipe, ‘hear’ and also a reason for the speech that is introduced by quoniam). As in the other five passages in Latin literature where verum age is found (Verg. A. 11.587, 12.832, Hor. Ep. 2.1.214, V.Fl. 2.565 and 8.41), the particles mark that the speaker has now reached the more important part of the speech and asks for action on the part of his audience, but only with Silius does this action relate to the conversation itself (i.e. listening, or speaking at 666). Elsewhere (most frequently in Lucretius) nunc age is used for this purpose.

cognoscere cordi est  
Scipio’s education is the prime reason for the Nekyia; by facing the dead and learning the lessons they may teach, he will be able to pursue his destiny. The frequency of the verb cognoscere is a sign of the emphasis on this educational aspect (Augoustakis 2010c: 216 n.38); cf. 613, 720, 732 and 807.

The expression cordi esse is infrequent with an infinitive (first attested at Catul. 4.2–3); I found 17 instances in classical Latin (6 of which in Col. RR, 2 in [Col.] Arb.); Silius has 3 (also at 734–735 and 5.97). He uses the expression without an infinitive at 271, 7.320, 9.204, 15.350 and 16.648.

disce ... tua [fata]  
Cf. Anchises at Verg. A. 6.759 te tua fata docebo. Cf. also V.Fl. 4.557 fata locosque tibi ... expediam rerumque vias finemque docebo, “I will set forth to thee ... thy destiny and the places thou shalt visit, and show thee the train and issue of events”, where Phineus gives an oracle to Jason concerning the remainder of his voyage; for Phineus and the Sibyl, see Intr. 494–516 fnn.1 and 16.

deque tuis pendentia ... fatis  
The same imagery is used in English, ‘to depend upon’. The construction of pendere with de is rare and mostly used for the more literal ‘depend from’ (pendere used figuratively commonly goes with ex, see TLL 10.1.1039ff.). Other instances with figurative use of pendere de are Ov. Trist. 2.217 de te pendentem ... orbem (of emperor Augustus), Apul. Met. 7.10 and perhaps Hor. Epist. 1.1.105 de te pendentis ... amici.

Just as the Sibyl is the counterpart of Anchises showing the fata, so is Scipio similar to Aeneas in that the fata of his homeland rest upon his own (the use of Dardanus is instrumental to establishing the connection); cf. Verg. A. 6.66–67 non indebita posco regna meis fatis, “I ask no realm unpledged by my fate”; cf. also Pompey at Luc. 5.47–49 senatus ... Magno fatum patriaeque suumque imposuit, “the Senate ... imposed on Magnus his country’s fate and his own”. In Aeneas’ case this fate concerns the establishment of this homeland, in Scipio’s its salvation, in Pompey’s its downfall.
505–506 For I see that you have been eager to seek a prophecy of your life here and to catch sight of the ghost of your father.

The Sibyl states Scipio’s two main reasons for his *Nekyia*, given separately in 395–396 and 399. She already knows why he has come (cf. similarly Teiresias in *Od*. 11.100ff.).

tibi ... properatum ... petere The dative *tibi* is both the beneficiary of *petere* (“seek for yourself”) and agent of *properatum* (“there has been acted with haste by you”). The dative of agent has been attested with a past participle since Plautus, a construction that is used more freely in poetry (cf. in this book lines 9, 73, 673–674, 685 and perhaps 410).

The artificiality of the construction with a neuter participle gives emphasis to *tibi* (more so than with an accusative cum infinitive *te properare*), reinforcing the central position of Scipio in this introduction; cf. 499 *te*, 501 *tuis*, 504 *tua* (and *tuis*), always the second word in the line. Compare the abundance of *tu* and *tuus* in the prophecy to Aeneas (Verg. *A*. 6.88, 91, 95 and 96). Paulus’ ‘prophetic’ speech to Varro (see n.499–500a *te permixtum* and Intr. 494–516), counterpart to this prophecy to Scipio, has the same emphatic use of *tu* and *tuus* (9.58, 60, 64). Cf. also the many apostrophes in the Sibyl’s speech at Tib. 2.5.39–64 (39–44 *Aeneas*, 48 *Turnus*, 51 *Ilia*, 57 *Roma*) and the corpse’s prophecy in Luc. 6.787 and 6.791.

cerno First-person *cerno*, found in prophecies at 1.126 and 1.137 (the augury to Hannibal), 3.701 (cf. also 4.411), Verg. *A*. 6.87 (Deiphobe), Ov. *Met*. 15.444 and V.Fl. 1.226, is here used rather in the sentence that precedes the prophecy. Unlike the prophets in the passages cited, who are possessed by a god or consult entrails and for whom *cerno* thus suggests a vision, the ancient Sibyl possesses the knowledge of the future (like all the consulted dead in the literary tradition) and thus rather speaks from memory (cf. her Statian counterpart in *Silv*. 4.3.145 *vidi*).


patrios visu contingere manes Cf. 403 *adspectus orat contingere patrum*; see the note there for the correspondence with Stat. *Silv*. 5.3.275 *patrios contingere vultus*. For *contingere visu*, cf. only Gell. 7.8.2 *ut eam ne oculis quidem suis contingieret*, “in order that he might not touch her even with his eyes” (with a contrast with actual touching).

patrios ... manes is modelled on Ov. *Met*. 14.105–106 *ut manes adeat per Avernus paternos / orat*, “[Aeneas] prayed that he might pass down through Avernus’ realm and see his father’s shade”, Ovid’s account of Aeneas’ visit to the Sibyl, which in turn echoes (*orat*) Verg. *A*. 6.106–109 *unum oro: ... ire ad conspectum cari genitoris et ora contingat* (see also n.400–403).

507–516 armifero victor patrem ulcisceris Hibero,
creditus ante annos Martem, ferroque resolves
gaudia Poenorum et missum laetabere bello
Triumphant, you will avenge your father upon the warlike Iberians, entrusted with the war before your age, and with the sword you will end the happy days of the Punics; and when Carthage will have been conquered on Iberian soil, you will rejoice in that omen for the war.

The Sibyl here anticipates Scipio’s victories in Spain (15.214–285, 399–492), including the conquest of New Carthage.

While the general meaning of the lines is easily understood, the grammatical structure is less clear; the main problems are the syntactic status and interpretation of armifero ... Hibero (507) and creditus (508):

i) Hiberus can be either “an Iberian” or “the Ebro”. In the latter case, the phrase should be understood as an ablative of place, with the river standing for the country, which is not impossible (cf. 9.195 diti ... Hibero for “rich Iberia”; cf. also e.g. Verg. G. 1.509 movet Euphrates ... bellum, Stat. Silv. 1.4.89 Rhenum rebellem). The adjective armifer is far more frequently used of peoples, however (see n. below); if we accept the first interpretation (“Iberians”, with the individual representing the nation), the phrase must be dependent upon ulcisceris, i.e. “in victory, you will avenge your father upon the warlike Iberians”. The construction ulcisci aliquem aliquo is not given in the OLD, but we may compare Ov. Met. 9.407–408 ultusque parente parentem natus erit, “and his son shall avenge parent on parent”. The alternative proposed by Gärtner (2009: 89) to read armifero victo (for victor) ... Hibero as an ablative absolute is unconvincing, both for euphonic reasons (Blomgren 1938: 44 n.2.) and because this would result in too exact parallelism in 510 victa Carthagine.

ii) The next phrase, creditus ante annos Martem, is more difficult. We might suppose a use of credere with a double accusative (“entrusted with the war”), perhaps by analogy with verbs like rogare (cf. e.g. Cic. Ver. 1.44 sententiam rogatus), or with Greek, in which with some verbs the indirect object can be made subject and the object is retained (so OLD s.v. 1c; a highly comparable passage cited in KG 1.125.7 is Th. 1.126 οἱ τῶν Ἀθηναίων ἐπιτετραμμένοι τὴν φυλακήν, “the Athenians who had been charged with guarding [the suppliants]”). Reading Marti (some mss., adopted by Miniconi-Devallet) is no solution, since a dative results in an unwanted meaning. credere Marti is “let partake in the war” (cf. Verg. A. 11.153), while Scipio has been fighting for years. The intended meaning must be that he is given command (i.e. the war is entrusted to him, not he to the war; cf. 16.652 puerò male credita bella, where Scipio looks back upon this command).

iii) To solve both problems, Blomgren (1938: 42–46) proposes to take creditus ante annos with the previous line, to which Hibero would be indirect object, “committed to the warlike Iberians”, and to take Martem with resolves (coordinated with gaudia by –que). This is an elegant and simple solution (cf. Reitz 1982: 46 n.1; see also below on resolves.
gaudia Poenorum), but two objections must be made: a) 507 is stylistically a self-contained line (armifero ... Hibero flanks victor ... ulcisceris flanking patrem), and drawing creditus in would destroy this symmetry; b) Martem ... resolves is “end the war”, but Scipio’s victory in Spain is only the prelude to his triumph over Carthage. I must conclude that Martem is indeed governed by creditus.

For the construction of missum laetabere bello omen Hiberiacis victa Carthagine terris, see below on laetabere.

armifero ‘Warlike’, an Ovidian word (far less frequent than the more universal armiger), used also by Seneca and Statius, and rarely in late Latin. It is commonly used as an epithet of peoples (1.324, 4.45, 15.172, Ov. Am. 2.5, Her. 2.84, Met. 9.645, Sen. Pha. 909, Stat. Theb. 5.654) or, rarely, modifies a geographical noun (cf. Ov. Her. 2.84 Thracen).

victor ... Hibero ... Hiberiacis victa The victory in Iberia surrounds these lines in ring composition. For victor, cf. 15.492 Hasdrubalis spolium Gradivo Scipio victor.

patrem ulcisceris The elder Publius Scipio and his brother Gnaeus fell in battle in Spain; see Intr. 650–705 and n.382–384 geminos ... Scipiadas. By defeating the Carthaginian armies there, Scipio will avenge them; cf. 15.10–11 patrios patruique piare optantem manes, “eager to appease the spirits of his father and uncle”, 15.443–444 (when Scipio kills his first enemy in his Spanish campaign) prima hostia vobis, sacrati manes, vobis iacet, “Ye sacred ghosts ... your first victim has bit the dust”, 16.593 ultor patriaeque domusque (see n.514b–515 patriaque domoque carebit), “avenging his country and kinsmen”. For this Achillean role of ultor, see Intr. 650–704.

creditus ante annos Like Ascanius, Scipio is a commander before his age (24 years old); cf. Verg. A. 9.310–311 pulcher Iulus, ante annos animunque gerens curamque virilem, “fair Iulus, with a man’s mind and a spirit beyond his years”. Scipio’s youthful success is also emphasized at 4.426–427 annos transcendere factis molitur and 16.655–658.

resolves gaudia Poenorum The gaudia that Scipio will bring to an end are i) in general, the happy string of victories over the Romans that the Carthaginians enjoyed (including their defeat of the Scipio’s) and their boasting of it, and ii) more specifically, the festivities that are interrupted at the arrival of Scipio’s army at 15.416ff. (cf. 419–420 laetus ... ductor / festa ... agitabat gaudia, “Hasdrubal ... made merry and kept high holiday”).

For resolves, cf. 8.274–275 quae prima dies ostenderit hostem et patrum regna et Poenorum bella resolvet, “The first day that reveals the enemy to your view will end the tyranny of the Senate and the war with Carthage”; what was idle boasting for Varro will become reality at Scipio’s hands. See Intr. 494–516 for this contrast. If, as Blomgren proposes, Martem is to be read in parataxis with gaudia, the verb would have a double object here as well (and Martem corresponds to bella); but see the objections in iii) above.

laetabere A fine contrast with resolves gaudia Poenorum. The verb probably governs missum omen [esse]; for the ellipse of esse TLL 7.2.881.7 compares 7.62 occisos laetere. Alternatively, it goes with victa Carthagine (with victa used dominantly, ‘rejoice in the conquering of Carthage’; TLL 7.2.880.19ff. has many similar ablative constructions), with missum bello omen as a loose apposition to the ablative absolute; this leaves missum a bit awkward, however. Or is missum ... omen perhaps nominative, and an apposition to Scipio
himself (“you, sent to the war as an omen, will rejoice in the conquest of Carthage”)? Cf. 15.442, where Scipio’s spear kills an enemy when the Romans face a Punic army in Spain for the first time, an act which both armies take as an omen (15.442).

Delz suspects *missum* (“*an uisum?”*); but Scipio’s victory in Spain is granted by the gods, and as such is an omen for the outcome of the war. This omen counterbalances the one on the eve of the battle of Cannae (cf. 9.178–179 *ta lia venturae mittebant omina pugnae Ausonii superis*), forming yet another contrast with the exploits of Varro (see the prev.n.).

**omen ... victa Carthagine** That is, the conquest of New Carthage (Cartagena) in Spain will foreshadow the fall of its metropolis.

**Hiberiacis** This unique form is a lengthening of the slightly more common *Hibēricus* (first attested at Hor. *Epod.* 4.3), to allow for the use of the plural ablative.

**511–514a** Thereafter, you will be chosen for a higher command, and Jupiter will not withdraw his aid before he has banished all war to Libya and himself has brought the Punic leader to you to be conquered.

These lines anticipate Hannibal’s departure from Italy and the final battle in book 17. Reitz (1982: 47) compares 3.590–592, where Jupiter predicts Scipio’s victory (there *ipse* refers to Scipio).

**maius ad imperium** ‘A higher command’, viz. the consulship and leadership over the army that will invade Africa and end the war, instead of the command in only the Spanish theatre of war. Cf. 16.590 *ad maiora iubent praesagi tendere vates*, “the prophets, foretelling the future, bade Scipio hope for greater things to come”. See also n.514b–515 *patriaque domoque carebit*.

**capiere** ‘you will be chosen’, ‘elected’; cf. *TLL* 3.335.31ff. In this sense the verb usually goes with a double accusative; the construction with *ad* (‘for’) seems unique.

**nec ante ... quam** The temporal condition adds a touch of oracular flavour; Vergil uses the same construction in Celaeno’s prophecy at *A*. 3.255–257 *non ante datam cingetis moenibus urbem, quam vos dira fames [...] subigat [...] absumere mensas*, “you shall not gird with walls your promised city until dread hunger [...] force[s] you to [...] devour your very tables!”; cf. also the narrator’s ‘prophecy’ at Sil. 11.128–129 *non ante suos Capua ad suffragia mittet, quam Carthago suos*, “Capua shall not send voters to Rome before Carthage sends them also”. The Sibyl’s prophecy is positive, showing Jupiter’s continued devotion to ending the war, but also implies that after that, the god’s favour will end; and that it does end is shown by Scipio’s retirement, foretold in the next lines.

**cuncta fugarit in Libyam bella** A striking phrase (with no real parallel in classical literature); the military sense of *fugare* (‘drive off’) is applied to the object *bella*. Jupiter intervenes on behalf of Rome (cf. Apollo’s prophecy at 12.334–335 *ille trucem belli nubem saevasque procellas in Libyam violentus aget*, “His power will drive the angry cloud and fierce storms of war away to Libya”, which is also a reference to Jupiter’s defence of Rome with thunderstorms at the end of book 12). The Sibyl’s words are fulfilled in book 17, where it is indeed suggested that the gods evict Hannibal from Italy; as is narrated at 17.1–47, the Romans bring the cult of Magna Mater (Cybele) to Rome in the form of the great black stone from Pessinos, so instructed by a Sibylline prophecy (see n.500b–502) *hostis ut Ausoniis decedeter advena terris* (17.1), “in order to dislodge an invader from Italian soil”.

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It is implied that by acquiring this talisman, the Romans have enlisted the aid of the gods, who dispel Hannibal to Africa. Jupiter is here also connected to Scipio’s victory since he is his father (see n.496), which is explicated by Pomponia at 635–647.

vincendum duxerit ‘bring him to be conquered’; after verbs like mittere and ducere the accusative of the gerundive has a final sense (cf. LHSz 2.379). tibi is thus dative of agent, but also the beneficiary of duxerit—Hannibal will be ‘brought’ to Africa, where Scipio will already be waiting to defeat him.

514b–515 Shame on the hostile city, for this gem will hereafter lose his homeland and home.

In 185, Scipio retired to Liternum following accusations of corruption (see Liv. 38.50.4–53.7); while he was not found guilty (or rather, the trials were never finished), this retirement can be seen as a sort of voluntary exile (patriaque domoque carens). With iniquae, Silius has introduced an ambiguity, however. Usually, the ‘hostile city’ of the Punica is Carthage; its leader Hannibal, having done so much for his city (and called patriae deus at 17.197; see below), faced opposition in the Carthaginian senate and also went into voluntary exile in 195 when the Romans demanded him from Carthage; cf. 2.702 patriis proiectus ab oris (and its counterpart at 13.288 non illi domus ... manebit; see n.284–286a) and the prophecy of his exile at 13.874ff. The reader is thus reminded that Scipio and Hannibal shared the same fate, a point also made by Livy at 38.50.7 (who adds that Rome was more ungrateful than Carthage).

decus hoc Often used of persons (an “ornament” to their family or nation; cf. the long list in TLL 5.1.243.6ff.), but particularly so in the Punica. Scipio also gets this title at 666 (see n.) and 15.184, but Hannibal even more often (3.71, 10.88, 11.603 and 17.197). See in book 13 also lines 30, 384 and 821.

Gärtner (2009: 89–90) wants to eliminate the double demonstrative (quod post haec decus hoc) and proposes post <tale> decus ... carebis. Both haec and hoc are present in both mss. branches, however, while the reading carebis in some later mss. of one branch is to be explained by the omission of haec in δ, which led to the addition of tu in the derived mss. and the change of person. The use of the third person carebit adds to the ambiguity / parallelism between Scipio and Hannibal (note also that decus hoc could theoretically refer either to tibi or to Sidonium ... rectorem, just as the urbis iniquae could be either Rome or Carthage), and is defensible on stylistic grounds, for which see An. 494–516. The marked pronouns strongly emphasize both the victory (haec) and the victor (hoc), contrasting with the fate of banishment.

patriaque domoque carebit A marked contrast with 16.593 ultor patriaeque domusque, after the Spanish victory, when the first part of the prophecy was fulfilled. For that passage, see also n.511–514a maius ad imperium. The words are Ovid’s, who frequently refers to his own exile in such phrases; cf. Ov. Pont. 4.4.7 domo patriaque carens oculisque meorum, Trist. 3.7.45 patria caream vobisque domoque and (with patria only) 1.5b.39, 3.11.16, 4.6.19, 4.9.12 and 5.10.47.

516 So spoke the prophetess and she was turning her steps towards the dark lake.

Having delivered her prophecy, the Sibyl prepares to leave again (similarly, Laius goes away directly after his ominous words at Stat. Theb. 4.644–645). The prophecy is only the
first part of the *Nekyia*, however, and Scipio asks the Sibyl to stay a little longer to tell about the underworld; likewise, Aeneas asks the Sibyl how to visit the underworld after her oracle (cf. also Odysseus’ request to Teiresias for a short instruction in conversing with the other shades). Reitz (1982: 49) notes that the line adds to the dramatic effect of the scene—the Sibyl had almost returned without describing the underworld and acting as guide to Scipio.

*sic vates* The same line opening (not found elsewhere) is used at 16.132 after the prophecy to Masinissa, Scipio’s great African ally.

*lacus ... atros* The Avernian lake, that is, the entrance to the underworld. For *ater* of the infernal waters, see n.457–459a *atris ... aquis.*
The Sibyl describes the underworld to Scipio. There is a vast field where all mortals go after death. It is surrounded by ten gates, each for a specific group of souls. There is also a chasm and the infernal rivers: Phlegethon, Cocytus, Styx, Acheron and a fifth river of tears. At the entrance of the underworld personified abstractions and monsters of myth reside, and a great yew tree houses birds of ill omen. There Dis himself sits in judgement over tyrants. 

Like most of Vergil’s successors, Silius chose the form of a Nekyia rather than a Katabasis for his underworld episode. By consequence, his hero Scipio cannot travel through Hades, encountering the wonders of that realm along the way. Vergil himself provided a suitable model for incorporating a portrayal of parts of Hades that are not visited: at A. 6.566ff., his Sibyl describes Tartarus to Aeneas. Since Aeneas may never set foot in Tartarus, we learn of it through the words of the Sibyl, who was once guided there by Hecate. Silius reappplies this method to his description of the entire underworld, alluding to Vergil at every corner.

Another major intertext for our passage is Theseus’ description of the underworld in Sen. Her.F. 662ff. Like Silius, Seneca opens with the vastness of the underworld and the topos that all mankind will go down below (Her.F. 666–674); he speaks of a campus (Her.F. 720) and an adjoining porta regni, which return here in altered form at 530ff. (see the discussion below). Seneca also mentions the rivers of Hades, but in two stages: the Lethe and the Cocytus form the background for the ill-omened birds, the yew tree and the personified abstractions, elements which Silius narrates in reverse order; the Styx and the Acheron flow near the palace of Dis, in front of which the god sits and receives the new ghosts. Close by, shades of tyrants are judged (Her.F. 737–747; cf. 601–612); the punishments such tyrants receive in Silius’ lines 609–611 reflect those of the traditional sinners of myth at Her.F. 750–759.

Besides these two models, Silius has also adopted many elements from various nekyiai and katabaseis; these intertexts include (but are not limited to) Ov. Met. 4.432ff., 10.1ff., Luc. 6.642ff., V.Fl. 1.827ff., Stat. Theb. 1.88ff., 4.520ff., 8.1ff.; there are also several parallels with Stat. Silv. 5.3 and 5.5.

It is worth noting that, unlike Vergil, Silius describes only a part of the underworld, namely its ‘reception area’ (the central field, 530 campus) with three liminal features: the tribunal of Dis (and the monsters) at the entrance (579–604), beyond that the rivers (562–578), and surrounding it the various gates leading further into the underworld (531–561). Silius starts with the description of the outer features (those which are furthest away from the entrance), the gates, and ends with those closest to the entrance, the throne of Dis and its surroundings.

1 Cf. Klaassen 2010: 121; see also An. 517–614 below.
2 Reitz 1982: 74; the three elements narrated at Her.F. 679–696 are here described at 597–600, 595–596 and 581–587, respectively. The mythological monsters (a standard ingredient of infernal descriptions since Lucr. 3 and Tib. 1.3.67ff., and especially since Verg. A. 6.285–289), of which Silius has a short catalogue at 587–590, are mentioned by Seneca at Her.F. 778–781 in the context of Cerberus (783ff.), the object of Hercules’ katabasis. Here, Cerberus is mentioned last and prominently receives four lines; see n.591–594.
4 See for other echoes also nn.542–544 vasta patet populous, 547–549 est iter and 560–561 nigrum pandens Mors lurida rictum.
5 Many of these poetic models for Silius’ description are discussed at length in Reitz 1982: 49–89 and Billerbeck 1983; see also Spaltenstein, Brugnoli 1994: 338–340 and Klaassen 2010: 120–123.
The topography and layout of Silius’ underworld will be discussed more fully in An. 517–614. The sections below will elaborate the background and sources for various elements of Silius’ underworld—the gates, the rivers and the judgement of the tyrants; the last section will discuss the significance of the description for the poem and for its addressee Scipio.

The field and the ten gates

The motif of the gate(s) to the underworld, suggesting the liminality of the transition to the nether world, is present in almost every representation of Hades. The great number of Silius’ gateways is striking, but finds its match in Ovid’s *katabasis* of Juno (*Met.* 4.432ff.), which features an enormous subterranean city with a thousand gates; the place is vast and will suffice to house any number of people. Silius similarly expands upon the vastness of the infernal *campus* at 526–530 and immediately after describes the ten gates (not a thousand, but still far more than in most accounts).

It is worth noting, however, that the gates in Silius’ underworld are not passageways from the upper world to the underworld; new souls rather arrive at the huge field, which serves as an antechamber from where the various gates lead to specific parts of the underworld. Such a distinction between different destinations in the afterlife ultimately goes back to Plato’s myth of Er, who is said to have witnessed the souls of the recently dead being led to a great field (*Rep.* 614ε λειμῶνα, cf. 530 *campus*), where there were four openings or gateways (614c), two leading to heaven (one being the entrance, one the exit) and similarly two openings into the earth. In Latin literature, the gates of Heaven (Elysium) and Hell (Tartarus), accessed from within the underworld, are famously depicted in Vergil’s *Aeneid* 6; Valerius Flaccus has two similar gates (one for the majority, one for the virtuous) at 1.833ff.

Silius’ reception of Vergil’s and Seneca’s catalogues of personifications, monsters and birds is discussed in detail in the individual notes.


8 Silius echoes Ovid’s *capax* (4.439) and *omnes animas locus accipit* (4.441) at 529–530 *capitque campus iners*. For the topical vastness of the underworld, see also nn.524b–530.

9 This point has not been recognized by earlier scholars, who simply assumed that the gates would lead into “the underworld” (with which they equate the *campus*), necessitating a distinction between the ten gates; cf. e.g. Reitz (1982: 58), who discriminates between the first eight gates (“die in die Unterwelt hineinführen”) and the last two (“die aus ihr heraus ins Elysium führen”); cf. also Maubert 1928: 148 “les huit premières « portes » sont des secteurs de ce *campus*”. In my interpretation, all ten gates lead away from the central *campus*, each to a different region of the underworld. A number of arguments can be made: i) the distinction between various groups of souls would not be very useful if they would all come together in the same space; ii) the gates and the rivers, both images for liminality, emphasize the field’s quality of antechamber, or temporary reception area; iii) since the Sibyl starts with describing the field, we would expect the gates to ‘bring’ (*ducere* or sim.) the ghosts there if the gates would lead onto the field; instead, they are said to ‘receive’ ghosts (531 *receptat*, 541 *rapit*, 543 *patet*, 545 *reseratur*), which suggests (since this is narrated in the context of the *campus* of 530) that they lead to places further beyond; iv) the field is the central part of the underworld (526 *in medio*) and therefore not the entire realm. The gates surrounding it lead to separate, outlying areas. The same depictions in Plato and Vergil of gates *within* the underworld leading to distinct regions may serve as parallels. Of these distinct regions, Elysium is not part of our world, but neither is Plato’s Heaven (cf. also Verg. *A.* 6.640–641).

10 Plato does not explain how one arrives at this field (he only says that Er “made a journey”, 614β πορεύεσθαι, and then reached the field)—and neither does Silius (529–530 *descendunt cuncta, capitque campus*).

11 The difference with Plato’s depiction is that in Vergil, the majority of souls resides in the fields beyond the Styx; only the most wicked or virtuous go from there through the gates of Tartarus and Elysium, respectively.

12 As Billerbeck (1983: 330 with n.15) notes, Silius emulates both Valerius Flaccus (by increasing the number of gates) and Ovid (by describing the gates in detail). Cf. also Vergil’s two gates for the Dreams at *A.* 6.893ff. These
It was observed above that Silius only describes the ‘reception area’ of the underworld; yet from the ‘viewpoint’ of this central place, he covers also the other parts of the underworld through describing their gates, which are each reserved for a specific group of souls. It has often been observed that these various groups of souls reflect the different fields and regions which Aeneas encounters during his *katabasis*:\(^{13}\) the shipwrecked sailors at the Styx (gate 5), those who have died prematurely and the women at the *Lugentes Campi* (7 and 8), the warriors (1), the sinners in Tartarus (6), the blessed in Elysium (1, 4 and 9) and those who eventually return to the earth (10). The other gates are also based in various ways upon Vergil’s oeuvre (see the individual nn.).

The classification of spirits, which has its ultimate origin in Hom. *Od.* 11.38–41,\(^ {14}\) is also present in the gates of Silius’ contemporary Valerius Flaccus; his first gate is for the majority, rabble and rulers alike, while the second opens only for a few groups of different kinds of people—war heroes, righteous benefactors of mankind and chaste priests, in imitation of Vergil’s blessed at *A.* 6.660–664. We should also again compare Plato’s myth of Er, albeit that there the image is reversed; at the end of their stay in the nether realm, the shades choose a destiny for their *new* life, ranging from animal to famous tyrant to unknown commoner.\(^ {15}\)

Generally speaking, the order of the gates is also the order in which the spirits will come later in the book (*after* Scipio’s mother and father): first the warriors arrive (Paulus and the other heroes of the Punic war and before, 705–751), then the law-givers (752–754), poets (Homer, with the epic heroes, 778–805), the women, some good (806–820, cf. gate 7; gate 8 perhaps anticipates the maiden Virginia), some punished (831–849; cf. gate 6), and finally those who will be reincarnated (850–867). While this does not hold for all meetings,\(^ {16}\) the catalogue of gates may thus be viewed as a rough index for the remainder of the *Nekyia*.\(^ {17}\)

**The infernal rivers**

The rivers of the underworld were first presented as a group at Hom. *Od.* 10.513–515; Circe names the Pyrphlegethon, Kokytos, Styx and Acheron, the same order which Silius here uses. Many authors have since written on the nature and substance of these rivers;\(^ {18}\) in

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13 See the bibliography at fn.12.

14 Homer lists brides, bachelors and old men, innocent girls and fallen warriors.

15 For the Lethe and reincarnation in both Plato and Vergil and their treatment by Silius, see nn.558–559. See for Plato’s text also fn.22. Another reincarnation myth is told in the *Phaedrus*; at 248c–e, Plato lists nine different destinies or professions which lie in store for the soul (cf. the first nine gates here), depending on how much of the ‘true world’ it had seen, with ‘philosopher’ being the destiny of the first of the nine groups, and ‘tyrant’ the last. This ‘true world’ lies beyond the dome of heaven. For a possible hint at this destination for the soul, see n.552b–555 *nec Stygio in regno, caeli nec posta sub axe, verum ultra Oceanum.*

16 E.g. Alexander and Croesus (obviously not *ruricoli*) are encountered after the lawgivers; also, various shades throughout the *Nekyia* dwell in Elysium (703, 778).


18 For Greek, cf. e.g. the extensive description at Plat. *Phd.* 112e–113c. In the next passage (113d–114b), Plato explains how each soul, according to the way it has lived, must go to a specific river to be purified or punished; compare the description of the various gates here which immediately precedes that of the rivers.
Latin, Vergil was as always authoritative on the subject, and it is not surprising that Silius’
diction is largely based upon Vergil’s. Vergil mentioned each river separately, in the order
in which Aeneas encountered them during his journey, and thus avoided a catalogue; Silius
reverses Vergil’s de-cataloguing effort and composes another catalogue. 19

This catalogue plays with the literary tradition. The first river, the Phlegethon, is
described in fairly traditional phrases as a torrent of fire, but in the depiction of the other
rivers, Silius has shifted some of the usual characteristics. The Cocytus is now a raging
river, not the swamp it is elsewhere (cf. 425–426); it is not composed of tears, like its name
would suggest, but of blood (the tears are transposed to the unnamed fifth river). Similarly,
Silius’ Styx has traits of the Phlegethon and is sulphurous like Statius’ Cocytus; the
Acheron is tristior, echoing Vergil’s epithet tristis for the Styx. 20 Such transferral of
characteristics is also found with other poets, such as Vergil, Seneca and Statius (n.568–
570).

The judgment in the underworld

Like Vergil, who differentiates between Minos, the final judge of the unjustly condemned
(A. 6.431ff.) and Rhadamanthus, the judge of the sinners in Tartarus (6.566ff.), Silius
doubles the motif of the infernal court. 21 He splits the groups passing through Valerius
Flaccus’ first gate (1.834): common people (543 populo, cf. V.Fl. populos) are judged by
Rhadamanthus (542–544), while the kings (602 regum, cf. V.Fl. reges) are subjected to the
verdict of Dis himself. The court for these tyrants has, as the description’s final image, a
prominent position. A similar order and prominence is found in Seneca’s Hercules Furens,
where the tyrants and their punishments are also placed apart at the end of the description. 22

Some have connected the tyrants of 601–612 to Domitian, claiming that these lines
contain open criticism of his reign, and that this book could thus only have been published
under Nerva. 23 This overstates the case, however, given the topical treatment of the subject
of tyrants in underworld descriptions since Plato, the most recent being Seneca’s. 24 That is
not to say that these lines have no contemporary resonance; the Sibyl’s moralizing words
on tyranny are addressed to an internal audience, Scipio, but also to an “audience beyond
Scipio”. 25 To understand the impact of Silius’ message, we should connect the passage to

19 As Reitz (1982: 52) notes, the bulk of the Sibyl’s description consists of catalogues, the only exceptions being
523–525, 526–530, 560–561 and 601–612. For Silius’ reversal of other poets’ efforts in particularizing general
notions of the underworld, see An. 517–614.
20 Cf. also on its coldness, n.571–573 gelidam.
21 Billerbeck 1983: 335.
22 For the judgement of the tyrants, we may also again compare Plato’s myth of Er, where among those receiving
the most severe punishment, the majority are tyrants (Rep. 615c–d). Cf. also Seneca’s Apocolocyntosis, in which
Claudius’ victims plead against him before Aeacus, the judge of the underworld, just as here the tyrants’ victims
may finally speak out before judge Dis; see also Billerbeck 1983: 336 n.31. The scene as a whole has also much in
24 Wistrand (1956: 47–49) argues that if it was safe for Seneca to write his Hercules Furens under Nero, Silius
could have done a similar thing under Domitian. Modern scholarship dates Seneca’s play prior to Nero’s reign,
however, in view of its echoes in the Apocolocyntosis; see e.g. Fitch 1987: 50–53, Dingel 2009: 122–124. For the
dating of Punica 13, see Gen.intr. § 6.
25 Tipping 2010b: 183, who observes similar resonances in Silius’ primary models, Vergil’s description of crimes
against society at A. 6.608–624 (with its hints at contemporary figures and events; see Austin ad loc., Leigh 1996:
the rest of the epic. Here, the connection with the *Hercules Furens* is again important. Billerbeck (1983: 336) notes that in Seneca, the tyrants’ fate has a direct relation to the plot (foreshadowing what will befall Lycus, who is at that time being killed by Hercules). It is strange, therefore, that she thinks that Silius only follows Seneca in this respect “um Vergil zu variieren”. Silius’ description of Hades relates to his entire poem as well, as will be argued presently.

Interpretation of the Sibyl’s description

Viewing Silius’ portrayal of the underworld as mere decoration or at best innovative reception of a traditional motif ignores both the setting in which it is placed and its addressee, and the nature of the intertextuality. There are at least two lessons that may be learned by Scipio, both related to his own situation and the Punic war in general. Firstly, the underworld reflects the war on the surface (an interpretation supported by the intertexts of the various descriptions); facing the horrors of the underworld thus teaches Scipio how to face Hannibal. Secondly, learning the fate which awaits the living after their death should influence and strengthen the Roman hero.

I will start with the intertextuality which suggests that the horrible war on the surface is similar to the horrors of the realm below. In the description, a few evocative images leap to the eye. Death (*Mors*) stalks the ten gates with hungry jaws (560–561), Cerberus and the Furies drink from the Acheron (574–576), the hell hound has broken its bonds and roams through the infernal realm (591–594), and before the throne of Dis [*letiféri tyranni* stand at trial (601–612). As will be shown in the notes, these images are suggestive of sinister passages from Seneca, Statius and Silius’ own *Punica* in which infernal horrors are set loose on earth; these monsters personify the calamities which cause human suffering. At the beginning of Seneca’s *Oedipus*, numerous monsters from Hell are said to walk the streets of Thebes—an image for the horrors of the pestilence. The rivers of the underworld are said to mingle with the waters of Thebes (*Oed.* 162–163), Death has opened its black jaws wide (164–165) and the rumour goes that Cerberus has broken its bonds and now wanders the Theban fields (171–173)—all images that return here. Perhaps we should also compare *Oed.* 129–130 *turbae tumulos petenti / non satis septem patuere portae*, of the seven gates of Thebes being too small for all the people that are carried to their tombs, with the ten gates of the underworld that here receive the dead (cf. especially 543 *vasta patet populo*).
Likewise, in Statius’ *Thebaid*, the beginning of civil war is couched in infernal imagery, when the Fury Tisiphone hastens to the upper world to sow dissent between Eteocles and Polynices; several of her characteristics are echoed here.

These motifs find a parallel in the beginning of the *Punica*. Most of the second half of book 2 imitates the plot of the *Hercules Furens*. Juno calls Tisiphone from Hell to drive the inhabitants of Saguntum (the city of Hercules!) mad, inciting them to kill themselves. Death stalks the city with wide-opened jaws, together with the other personified evils (2.548ff.). With the epilogue (2.696–698), the narrator suggests that like Hercules, the Saguntines are not punished for killing their families and themselves, but rather honoured for their deeds of loyalty; *siderea* (2.696) even suggests the deification which Hercules received.

The imagery in book 2 shows that with his siege of Saguntum and the subsequent march on Rome, Hannibal has unleashed Hell on earth; the infernal monsters represent the suffering caused by his war. In Seneca and Statius, Hell repeatedly breaks loose on earth; the horrors of the *Oedipus* return in Statius. Silius, on the other hand, suggests in the course of his epic a closure to the theme of the underworld set loose upon earth. His representation implies that these horrors do not eternally haunt the earth; the personifications and other monsters are now safely in the underworld. Silius’ catalogue of monsters ends with Cerberus, who is feared by even the Furies when broken loose, until he is contained by a thousand chains; the intertext for the chaining of Cerberus (593–594) is Seneca’s play in which Hercules braves the underworld to put the beast in chains. Likewise, Scipio here faces the dead to learn how to defeat his adversary. It may be no coincidence that both in the *Oedipus* and the *Thebaid* a *nekyia* is performed to ascertain the best course of action. Subduing monsters is the work of a hero; this suggests that the infernal war that Hannibal has started can also be overcome—by the addressee of this description, Scipio. The first lesson the *Nekyia* imparts is that Hannibal, for all his infernal connections, can be stopped.

Secondly, it is plausibly also Hannibal who forms the model for the tyrants at 601–612 (see n.612 *letiferis ... tyrannis*). The implicit lesson of the description of the gates and the tyrants’ trial is that eventually all deeds will be judged and rewarded or punished accordingly. As in the crossroads episode of book 15, where Scipio must choose between

\[\text{Practical lesson: Hell can be contained}\]

\[\text{Hannibal as punished tyrant}\]

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28 She is suffused in *venenum* and *sanies* (1.106–107; cf. here 571) and carries a snaky whip (1.113 *vivo ... verberat hydro*; cf. 611); she always shuttles between the upper and lower worlds, like *Mors* here goes between the gates (1.102; cf. 561) and the snakes on her hair had just been drinking from the sulphurous Cocytus (1.91; cf. 570 *sulphura* and 574–576). The motif of a Fury starting war is of course inspired by Vergil’s Allecto in *Aeneid* 7.

29 See for the link between Hannibal’s war (evocative of gigantomachy) and Hell also extensively n.591–594.

30 Immediately before, Seneca focuses on the ghosts of the monsters which Hercules had slain and which now fear his presence in the underworld (*Her.F.* 778–781; cf. especially 778 *Centauri truces ~ 590 here*). Cf. also Seneca’s *Oedipus*, who had saved Thebes from the bloody-mouthed Sphinx and would even have faced the Giants (*Oed.* 90–94); the shades of these monsters here keep the Centaurs company (589–590).The defeat of these monsters by Hercules and Oedipus parallels Scipio’s future victory over Hannibal. It is important to note that none of the possibly problematic connotations of Hercules’ capture of Cerberus in Seneca (i.e. breaking the boundaries between underworld and upper world; see Fitch 1987: 19–20, 33–35) are present here. On the contrary, after being chained the hell-hound is returned to his righteous place in the nether realm, namely barking at the shades; note that *latrans* (594) picks up Verg. *A.* 6.400–401 *licet ingens tanitor antro / aeternum latrans exsanguis terraeat umbras* (where the Sibyl asserts that Aeneas will *not* be like Hercules and lead Cerberus away). For the positive evaluation of Hercules in the *Punica* (as opposed to Seneca’s Hercules), see Intr. 762–805.

31 At the end of book 7, Minucius praises Fabius for his rescue from Hannibal in terms of a return from death; Littlewood (*ad* 7.732 and 741) observes the parallels with the *katabasis* of Fabius’ ancestor Hercules.
Virtus and Voluptas, the hero is taught that each decision has its consequences. He also sees that wickedness, and in particular Hannibal’s *Punica fides*, will meet its judge in the afterlife. Together with the preceding prophecy of Scipio’s future, the passage counterbalances the words on Hannibal’s fate at the end of the *Nekyia*. Scipio has seen that there is no forgiveness in the underworld and that each will get his due reward (869ff.), and asks what punishment lies in store for Hannibal (872–873); in her answer, the Sibyl only speaks about the end of the Carthaginian’s life on earth, for the reader already knows the fate of such a tyrant in the afterlife.

The moral lesson is twofold. Firstly, Scipio can now wage his just war against Hannibal, strengthened by the knowledge that his opponent will receive his due. Secondly, he knows he must avoid tyranny himself. If we want to interpret the moralizing conclusion which follows the tyrants’ punishments in relation to Domitian, we should take it as a warning or instruction to be a Scipio rather than a Hannibal.

**Analysis of the presentation of 517–614**

A characteristic feature of Silius’ *Nekyia* is the fluid transition from one passage to another within a single speech; here, we find this narrative technique twice, both at the beginning (519) and the end (613). At both places, the transition is marked by *sed te*, which makes the description of the underworld a clear and separate unit. The particle *sed* is an important divisional marker throughout the *Nekyia*, separating its six main ‘units’ since the arrival of the Sibyl.  

- 494–516: prophecy about Scipio’s future
- 517–612: description of the underworld
- 613–804: encounter with the shades (1): from Scipio’s contemporaries to the age of myth
- 805–849: encounter with the shades (2): Roman women, virtuous and vicious
- 850–869: future Roman leaders
- 869–893: prophecy about Hannibal’s future

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32 The same point underlies Plato’s story of Er, upon which various elements of Silius’ underworld seem to be based (see above) and which concludes a dialogue on the nature of justice.

33 Moreover, the reader will also see the intratextuality of the venomous river Acheron with Hannibal’s own end and the poisoned cups of the Capuans earlier in book 13 (see nn.571–573 and 612 *letiferis ... tyrannis*).

34 For the warning to Scipio, see n.605 *sceptris fulsisse superbis*.

35 For Scipio as the ideal princeps and a model for Domitian to aspire to, see Marks 2005: 242–244, 281–283.

36 Cf. 445, 490, 850, 869; compare also 732. See also An. 417–493.

37 The first *te* refers to the Sibyl, who must disclose the underworld to Scipio; the second *te* is Scipio himself, who from 613 on must assume a more ‘active’ role by meeting his mother and the other souls.

38 Lesser transitions are also marked by *sed at* 720 and 798; see also An. 762–805 fn.41.

39 The opening sequence at 517–522—from i) the prophecy on Scipio to ii) the underworld description, which culminates in the punishment of tyrants—has a clear parallel in the sequence at 868–873—from i) the future Roman leaders and their punishment to ii) the prophecy on Hannibal; the second pair of passages both parallels and mirrors this first pair. See for a full discussion An. 850b–895.

40 The beginning of the first narrative ‘unit’ (494–516) and of the main part of the *Nekyia* as a whole is marked by *at*; see Intr. 494–516 fn.21.
The predominant tense in the description is the present. Silius’ Sibyl does not describe to Scipio what she sees (as Manto does at Stat. Theb. 4.519–535),\(^{41}\) but rather gives a generalized depiction of the underworld from memory (like her Vergilian alter ego at A. 6.562–627 and Theseus at Sen. Her.F. 662–758);\(^{42}\) these presents should be interpreted as ‘universal’, that is, the description is not bound to a specific time frame.\(^{43}\) Most of the description is in the form of catalogues,\(^{44}\) an enumeration of places and creatures without internal dynamic (i.e. nothing ‘happens’, they are merely listed). Interspersed we find a number of images, however, which do display such an internal dynamic: descriptions of recurrent events which are narrated once but are supposed to take place continuously. The last of them, 601–611 (the judgement of the tyrants), even has an internal chronology; first different, simultaneous aspects of the trial are described at 601–608 (judge: cognoscit; accused: stant, piget, vellent; torturers: errant; accusers: insultant, queruntur), then the next stage (the punishments) is marked with tunc (609). It is significant that in nearly all cases, these generalized images are based upon a specific event in one of Silius’ poetic models for his Nekyia.\(^{45}\) Silius’ predecessors allowed their characters to witness common events in the underworld, thereby creating a particular scene (that which is viewed) out of a general state-of-affairs; our poet has reversed the process by re-generalizing these particulars. By doing so, it is important to stress, he still evokes the original contexts in which the underworld is being viewed; in other words, the images of recurrent events serve to give the description the appearance of a guided tour.\(^{46}\) It remains an ‘armchair’ tour, however; there are no deictic markers in the description and Scipio is not addressed as a viewer.\(^{47}\)

\(^{41}\) Cf. also Creon’s vivid recollection in present tenses of Tiresias’ nekyia at Sen. Oed. 548ff.

\(^{42}\) Vergil’s Sibyl describes the Tartarus to Aeneas; she had once been guided there by Hecate. The Sibyl refers to her visual experience in past tenses (e.g. A. 6.582 vidi, 6.596 cernere erat), but most of the description itself, which is also valid at the time of her answer to Aeneas (and for all eternity!), is in present tenses.

\(^{43}\) Similarly all perfect tenses in the passage (which are otherwise rare in universal statements), most of which are found in the catalogue of the ten gates, do not refer to a specific past, but instead to a defining feat in the past for the ghosts involved; e.g. 533 qui leges posuere, “(all souls) who (during their lifetimes) laid down laws” (cf. the perfects at Verg. A. 6.608–624). Cf. also the simile at 24–29 and the perfect perrupit (24), which refers to a (non-particular) event that is always anterior to the universal situation in the simile; see An. 1–29 with fn.21.

\(^{44}\) See above fn.19.

\(^{45}\) i) 524 volitant and 555 potat ~ A. 6.706 volabant and 6.715 potant (Aeneas witnesses the souls in Elysium); ii) 560–561, Death stalks the ten gates ~ Sen. Oed. 164–165 (Death in Thebes); iii) 574–576 Cerberus and the Furies drink from the Acheron ~ Stat. Theb. 1.89–91 (Tisiphone allows her snakes to drink from the Cocytus before going to Thebes); iv) 580 territ ~ A. 6.401 (Cerberus terrifies the shades, also universal); v) 591–594, Cerberus sometimes broken loose ~ Sen. Oed. 171–173 (the hound roams about Thebes) and Her.F. 812 (its capture by Hercules); vi) 600 saevit, the yew tree resounding with bird cries ~ the same universal description at Sen. Her.F. 687–688 genit ... resonat; vii) 601–611 the tyrants are tried by Dis ~ Sen. Her.F. 721–747 (similar, also universal), but also Stat. Theb. 8.21ff. (Amphiaras crashing into the underworld when Dis is sitting in judgement).

\(^{46}\) Similarly, the Sibyl’s description at A. 6.562–627 allows Aeneas and the reader to experience the Tartarus through her eyes, and Theseus’ description at Sen. Her.F. 662–758 lets us witness the nether realm through which Hercules had to travel to fetch Cerberus.

\(^{47}\) hic is used often and throughout the description, but its use is anaphoric, not deictic. In most cases, the pronoun serves to connect a new item to the previous one, which is a common function of hic in catalogues (see Kroon forthc.); cf. 542 finitima huic, 547 hinc, 556 hinc, 571 tristior his, 583 hinc, 584 hinc, and also the use of the spatial adverb hic to position a monster in a previously described location (591 Cerberus hic ... peragrat, 597 hic dirae volucres). At 560 and 601, hic has a summarizing function (560–561 has ... vias: all the gates of 531–559 combined; 601 has inter formas: the personifications and monsters of 579–600); it has a similar function at 574
Given this ‘tour’ aspect, the topography of Silius’ underworld is surprisingly obscure; specific markers such as *in medio* (526), *per atria* (579) and *dextra* (595) are made empty by being connected to vague ones, such as *tum* in 562 (‘adjacent’?). After a general image of Hades as the dark house of the innumerable souls (524–525), the description then focuses on the central part, a huge field (526 *in medio vastum ... inane*, 530 *campus*), where all souls enter. A possible interpretation of the movement of the remainder of the description is from periphery to centre, or farthest to nearest: first the gates surrounding the realm (which lead to separate places that are not described, bar the Elysian fields), then the rivers (which must be within the space enclosed by the gates), and then the entrance to the field, which houses the abstractions and other monsters.48 The infernal court (where the tyrants stand on trial), which is located among the monsters and thus also in the vestibule of the underworld, is described in somewhat clearer terms; there is a dais on which the judge sits (602 *suggestu*), and the Furies hover around the accused (604 *circum*).49 This clear localization is abandoned at 609, when the Sibyl moves on to the penalties; the location of these punishments is not mentioned at all. If this interpretation of the sequence gates – rivers – monsters (starting farthest away and moving closer) is correct, the order of Silius’ description would invert Vergil’s, whose Aeneas first encounters the monsters in the vestibule, then arrives at the Styx and the other rivers and finally sees the gates of Tartarus and Elysium.

The description opens at 524–525 with the opposition of the infinite number of souls and the one house (the underworld) which takes them all; this opposition is elaborated in the next lines (526–530). A frequent stylistic device in the description, especially in this first part, is the chiasmus; see n.524b–525a and 527–529a. This is even discernible at a macro level: the Sibyl answers Scipio’s requests of 521–522 in reverse, since she first gives a description of the underworld (522b) and then will point out significant ghosts (521b–522a) from 613 onwards.50 For other chiastic structures, cf. also 574–576, 591–594 and 606–608.

The catalogue of the ten gates has an intricate structure.51 There are two complementary structuring elements. Firstly, the alternation of ordinals and particles suggest an arrangement of two sets of four (1–4: *una, altera, tertia*, concluded by *exin*; 5–8: *proxima, finitima, septima*, concluded by *hinc*) and, separately, the two last gates (the ninth is

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48 A clear illustration of the difficulty of reading the infernal layout is the location of the river of tears at 577–578. *ultimus* may be purely an ordinal (‘last’), but it can also be topographical (‘farthest’). If it rises before the entrance to the underworld (578 *ante aulam*), how can it be ‘farthest away’? Otherwise, we must either take the gate referred to at 578 as unrelated to the *atria* of 579 (but that would be an awkward sequence) or assume that the monsters are not stationed near the entrance of the underworld (as in Vergil), but at another gate farther in.

49 If Silius here follows Seneca’s rendering, which the verbal echoes suggests, this vestibule belongs to the palace of Dis, which serves as the entrance to the underworld (here, to the *campus*); cf. *Her.F.* 716–720. The *aula* (578) is interpreted as the palace of Dis also by Duff and Reitz (1982: 71 n.3).

50 See n.519–522. As Reitz (1982: 49) points out, the Sibyl’s answer picks up some of Scipio’s words; *aperi* (522) is balanced by *recludis* in the next line and *Stygiae ... formidinis* (522) by *non optanda* (523). It is also likely that *enumera* (522) is echoed at 525 with *innumeris*.

introduced with *tum*, while the tenth closes the list with *extrema*). The first four groups together reflect all aspects of human civilization (Reitz 1982: 60), while the second four recall the groups of unhappy shades in Vergil’s *Aeneid* 6.52 Secondly, the syntactical structures suggest a division of 3–2–3–2: the first three have relative clauses and are governed by *recepta* (531); the fourth and fifth also feature relative clauses, but these are subject and object respectively of their own verbs; with the sixth to eight gates the souls in question are dative complement to the verbs; with the last two, one sentence describes the gate, while another is devoted to its users (the transition to the second sentence is marked with *hic* and *hac*, respectively). By fusing these arrangements, the poet varies his catalogue in structure.53 Towards the end, more and more ornamental and expressive imagery is used (e.g. 543b–544, 546, 550–552a). In both of the arrangements discussed above and in the number of lines, the ninth gate stands apart from the preceding ones (also literally, 550 *seducta loco*). The division is probably a reminiscence of the two gates in V.Fl. 1.833–840 (see Intr. 517–614), of which the first (verbally alluded to at 531 and 543) is for most people, but the second only for a select few.54 At 560, *has* marks a final remark on all gates together; with *tum* (562) the transition to the next section is made.

The infernal rivers are similarly catalogued. The markers are more diverse, however; the second to fifth rivers are introduced by a topographical adjunct (*parte alia*), discourse particle (*at*), comparative (*tristior his*) and ordinal (*ultimus*), respectively.55 Each river has its own sentence, and all but the last are named. The metre often supports the sense; wild rivers are described with dactyls (564, 569b, 571–572a), sluggish streams with spondees (568, 570 and especially 573); it will be observed that the description of some streams are both dactylic and spondaic, which reflects the image given here of rivers flowing into a swamp (see n.571–573). At 578, a tricolon closes the catalogue; note the alliteration of A and the I-sounds.

The lists of *monstra* are framed by acoustic elements, not only at a semantic level (580 *murmure*, 600 *stridoribus*),56 but also through alliteration and assonance (at 579–580 a mixture of harsh sounds—Q/C, X and T—and vague murmurs—M and O; 598 and 600 are dominated by S- and I-sounds).57 The three connected catalogues of *monstra* in 579–587a, 587b–594 and 595–600 have a marked rhythmic sequence:58 judging by the number of words or lines devoted to each *monstrum*, the catalogue of personifications slows down towards the end, while the subsequent list of mythological monsters starts slowly and then increases in tempo (culminating in 590 with three groups), after which Cerberus significantly receives four lines. After the extended descriptions of Cerberus and of the yew tree, the last catalogue ends with fast rhythm again with four *dirae volucres* in three lines

52 Shipwrecked people ~ the Trojans at the Styx (*A. 6.333–336*); the sinning *populus* ~ the souls in Tartarus (*A. 6.566–627*); the woman and infants ~ the souls in and near the *Lugentes Campi* (*A. 6.426–449*).

53 An additional means of variation is the number of lines attributed to each gate. Most have two lines, the fourth, sixth and eighth have three lines, the ninth six and the tenth four.

54 Rather than a division between gates leading into and out of the underworld, *pace* Maubert (1928: 147) and Reitz (1982: 59); see fn.9.

55 For *ultimus* see fn.48 above.


57 Sound is used to a lesser extent in the catalogue of rivers (565 *resonans*, 567 *furit*, 572 *cum murmure*, possibly 577 *erumpit*; cf. also the rumbling U-sounds in 570).

58 Reitz 1982: 75.
(597–599). As a whole, the rhythm of the entire list of *monstra* thus undulates from fast to slow to fast again. There are few textual markers in these catalogues; the description of Cerberus is set apart by *hic* (591), the yew tree is connected topographically with *dextra* (595) and the birds for their part are linked to it with *hic* (597). The next section starts with a recapitulation of all *monstra* (601 *has inter formas*).

At 609–611, after the judgement of the tyrants, a new catalogue of penalties seems to start; this expectation is swiftly dashed, however, at 612 with the summarizing *talia*. Line 612 is both in content (a moralizing statement) and form (a golden line) a conclusion to the tyrants’ punishment and to the description as a whole.

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60 The short list does anticipate the longer description of punished females at 831–849.
517–522

Then the young man says: ‘Whatever harsher lot of life will be given to me, I will take up the struggle, if at least my heart is free of guilt.

These words have justly been compared with Aeneas’ (already quite Stoic) reaction to the Sibyl’s prophecy in *A*. 6.103–105, where he says that all the labours she described were known to him and thought over in his heart; all the more brave is Scipio then, who resigns himself to his fate without question even if it has only just been revealed to him (cf. Reitz 1982: 47)! Marks (2005: 202) observes that Scipio’s unwavering service to his country, even in the knowledge that he will be exiled by those he defends, makes him comparable to Camillus (cf. Livy, who notes Rome’s ingratitude in both cases: Liv. 5.32.9 *civitati ingratae*, 38.50.7 *Romam ingratiorem*); for Camillus as a model, see n.721–723 *Camillum*.

culpa ... pectora cessent Probably a reference to the trials against Scipio in 185 BC (see n.514b–515), in which he was accused of taking bribes from Antiochus III of Syria and thus of betraying his country. After hearing the Sibyl’s words on his retirement, young Scipio is not so much concerned with his own retirement as with remaining pure of heart; he hopes for the innocence of his later historical self. Earlier in the epic Scipio prevented his fellow Romans from settling in Veii (thus again imitating Camillus, Liv. 5.50–54; see above), and made them swear loyalty to their country, thereby averting the guilt of treason; cf. the very similar phrase at 10.448 *purgent pectora culpa*, “so [they] cleansed their hearts of guilt”. Cf. also the opposite phrase at Stat. *Theb*. 5.57–58 *nec pectora culpa nostra vacant*.

519–522 But I ask you, famous maiden, since the purpose of your life has been to assist mankind with its labours, to stay your steps a little longer and to list the shades of the silent dead for me and reveal the dread halls of the underworld.

Scipio’s inquiry will be answered in reverse order; the Sibyl will first describe the infernal realm (*Stygiae aperi formidinis aulam*) at 523–612 and then identify the ghosts that have come to the blood offering at 613–867 (*manesque silentum enumera*); cf. Reitz 1982: 49. With the diction, Silius alludes to four important passages in *Aeneid* 6:

i) the position of Scipio’s question suggests the connection with Aeneas’ request to visit the underworld at *A*. 6.106–109, which also follows the hero’s reaction to the prophecy by the Sibyl (see the prev.n.); Aeneas asks (106 *unum oro*), since (106 *quando*) the entrance to the underworld is close by, to be allowed to see his father’s shade, if the Sibyl will show the way and disclose (109 *pandas*, cf. here 522 *aperi*) the realm for him.

ii) *manes silentum* is an allusion to Vergil’s invocation of the gods of the underworld at the beginning of Aeneas’ *katabasis* in *A*. 6.264–267 which opens with *di, quibus imperium est animarum, umbraeque silentes*, “You gods, who hold the domain of spirits! You voiceless shades!” The echo suggests that the *nekyia* here truly begins, with the Sibyl’s
description of the underworld and the conversations with the shades which follow, akin to Aeneas’ journey through the nether realm.

iii) *enumera* echoes Anchises’ words at *A. 6.717* *iampridem hanc prolem cupid enumerare meorum*; the Sibyl will perform the same role as Vergil’s Achises and identify many of the shades, including some that are yet to live on earth (850–877). The verb is used again at 852. (Cf. similar diction, applied very differently, at Stat. *Theb.* 4.528–529 *Mors ... dominoque silentes annumerat populos.*)

iv) With *inclita virgo*, Silius refers to the passage where the Vergilian Sibyl had given a long description. Aeneas addresses the Sibyl three times as *virgo*, and always when making a request: at *A. 6.104* when he replies to her prophecy (see at i) above), at 6.318 when he asks about the shades at the Styx and at 6.560 when he inquires about the region of Tartarus. This last question elicits the Sibyl’s lengthy description of Tartarus, which she opens by addressing Aeneas as *dux inclute Teucrum* (6.562; cf. also the opening of that line *tum vates* and here at 517 *tum iuvenis*). The title *inclita virgo* thus combines both addresses and notifies the reader that a description will follow; in addition, Silius pays homage to Vergil by giving the title *inclita* not to the hero (his own creation), transferring it to the priestess (Vergil’s creation) instead.

**labores humanos iuvisse** The Sibyl aided mankind in her role as intermediary between gods and men, by voicing the divine messages from which humans could profit (these words presumbably pick up the reference to the Sibylline books in 497–502). This role-in-between is reflected by the diction: *vitae* refers to her as a mortal, whereas *labores humanos iuvisse* casts her almost as a beneficient deity (cf. Aeneas to the Sibyl at Ov. *Met.* 14.124 *numinis instar eris semper mihi*). For the diction in this appeal, Spaltenstein adduces Verg. *A. 5.688–689* *siquid pietas antiqua labores respicit humanos*, Aeneas’ appeal to Jupiter to extinguish the fire on his ships.

**siste ... gressum** This picks up 516 *gressumque ... vertebat*. The phrase is unique, but seems a clear reminiscence of Aeneas’ appeal to Dido’s shade at Verg. *A. 6.465* *siste gradum* (cf. also *pedem sistere* at Pl. *Mil.* 344 and Ov. *Rem.* 80). Unlike Dido, the Sibyl stays.

**silentum** A common word for the shades (see OLD s.v. 2). The poet hints at the silence of the dead at 448. *silentes* or *silentum* in the final position of the line is also found in several of the models for Silius’ *Nekyia* (Verg. *A. 6.264*, 6.432, Sen. *Her.F.* 848, Luc. 6.513, V.Fl. 1.750, Stat. *Theb.* 4.528). Spaltenstein typifies the tautological *manesque silentum* as a Silian mannerism, but cf. Ov. *Fast.* 4.483 *animas ... silentum* and Met. 15.797 *umbrasque silentum*.

**Stygiaeque aperi formidinis aulam** *aperi* has a metaphorical sense (‘disclose’, ‘explain’), but the word plays on a more literal opening of the underworld in other texts. In Statius’ *Nekyia*, Tiresias requests that the halls of the dead be opened (4.473–477 *formidabile regnum ... solvite ... loca muta*), which eventually happens (4.520 *panditur Elysium chaos*). Similarly, cf. *recludere* at 523 (echoing *aperi*) and the actual opening of Hades at Verg. *A. 8.243–245* *terra dehiscens infernas reseret sedes et regna recludat pallida* (cf. its use at 13.424 and 864).

For *aula* of the underworld, see line 578, 2.552 and 2.671; cf. also TLL 2.1456.72ff. Here, it is probably an echo of V.Fl. 1.828 *Tartarei ... aula patris*, ‘the palace of the
Notes to 517–614

Tartarean father’, the opening of Valerius’ description of the underworld, which features two gates (cf. Silius’ ten at 531ff.); see Intr. 517–614 and n.531b–532 qua rum una receptat.

The collocation Stygia formido is also found at Luc. 7.770, where the battlefield of Pharsalus is compared to the underworld.

523–530
annuit illa quidem, sed ‘non optanda recludis regna:’ ait ‘hic tenebras habitant volitantque per umbras innumeri quondam populi. domus omnibus una. in medio vastum late se tendit inane; huc, quicquid terrae, quicquid freta et igneus aer nutritiv primo mundi genitalis ab aevo, mors communis agit; descendunt cuncta, capitque campus iners, quantum interiit restatque futurum.

523–524a Although she agrees, she says: ‘You disclose a realm that is not desirable.

The opening lines of the description echo the beginning of Orpheus’ katabasis in Ov. Met. 10; cf. for annuit illa quidem the very similar phrase at Met. 10.4–5 adfuit ille quidem, sed nec sollemnia verba nec laetos vultus nec felix attulit omen (of Hymenaeus attending the wedding of Orpheus and Eurydice), and for non optanda ... regna Ovid’s inamoenaque regna (10.15). For other echoes, see nn. 527–529a quicquid terrae, quicquid freta et igneus aer nutritiv, 547–549 versasque ad funera taedas passis virginibus, 613–614 non tardis passibus.

non optanda ... regna Cf. Verg. A. 6.135 insano .. indulgere labori, the Sibyl’s reply to Aeneas’ request to enter the underworld (Spaltenstein). It is a common topos that Hades is not a desirable place; cf. Teiresias’ address to Odysseus, “Why hast thou left the light of the sun and come hither to behold the dead and a region where is no joy?” (Od. 11.94 ἀτερπέα χώρον), and Achilles’ statement that he would rather be a lowly hireling on earth than king of the dead (Od. 11.489–491; cf. also Verg. A. 6.436–437). For the phrase, cf. also Stat. Theb. 1.89–90 and (with inamabilis) Verg. G. 4.479, A. 6.438, Ov. Met. 4.477 and 14.590; for the characterisation of the underworld and its denizens through negations, see Bömer ad Ov. Met. 10.15. For the notion that the hero seeks (knowledge of) a place which is not at all desirable, cf. perhaps also Verg. A. 6.86 sed non et venisse volent (the Trojans arriving in long-sought Latium, only to find another war there).

recludis regna Picks up aperi at 522 (Reitz 1982: 49). Scipio ‘opens up’ the underworld with his question; usually, the verb is rather used for the speaker who discloses information (OLD s.v. 5; cf. Sil. 1.19).

524b–525a Here the countless peoples that once were dwell in the darkness and flit through the shadows; this one space houses them all.

These lines are artfully constructed. The two nearly synonymic phrases of 524 are arranged chiastically, with the rhyming verbs habitant and volitant in the middle. una (525) contrasts with its neighbour omnibus, but also with innumer i at the head of the line. innumer i may also respond to Scipio’s enumera at 522. Spaltenstein rightly adduces (with 529–530 descendunt cuncta, capitque campus) Ov. Met. 4.441–442 sic omnes animas locus
accipit ille, nec ulli exiguus populo est and Sen. Her.F. 667 pandit omnibus populis iter; see Intr. 517–614.

tenebras ... per umbras As Reitz (1982: 53–54) observes, this reference to the darkness of Hades at the start of the description alludes to the beginning of the downward journey in both the Aeneid and Seneca’s Her.F.; cf. A. 6.268 ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram and Her.F. 668 non caeca tenebris incipit primo via (suggesting the darkness of the rest).


quondam For its use as a quasi-adjective (with innumerī populi), see OLD s.v. 1a.

domus omnibus una The phrase probably stresses the enormity of the halls of the dead, large enough to house innumerī populi (rather than reiterating the topos ‘after death, all men will be equal’, pace Reitz 1982: 54). This powerful construction with a single substantive and the opposition of omnibus and unus is first seen at Verg. G. 4.184 omnibus una quies operum, labor omnibus unus (of the bees; Silius may have been inspired by Verg. A. 6.707, following the line cited under volitant ... innumerī ... populi, where the shades are compared to bees); cf. also Verg. A. 5.616, 10.201, Ov. Met. 2.13, Man. 3.313, Sil. 11.530 and 16.278.

For domus of the underworld, cf. Verg. A. 6.269 (see also n.526 inane), Ov. Met. 10.34 haec est domus ultima and V.Fl. 1.812–813 Stygiasque ... domos.

526 In the middle, an enormous void extends widely.

Silius puts great emphasis on the vastness of the underworld with vastum and late, along with other ‘infinity-phrases’ such as innumerī (525), quicquid ... quicquid (527), primo ... ab aëvo (528), cuncta (529) and quantum interiit restatque futurum (530).

se tendit For the sense ‘extend’, ‘reach’ (in a direction) usually only intransitive tendere is used; with se, cf. Lucr. 5.481 and Sil. 1.211 (cf. also 12.512 and, differently, Ciris 216).

inane ‘void’, ‘open space’, used as a noun for the underworld also at 649, Luc. 6.731, Stat. Theb. 4.477 and 8.85, and as a plural also at 1.97 and 14.244. Vergil uses the same word (as an adjective) in the first lines of Aeneas’ katabasis, Verg. A. 6.268–269 ibant ... perque domos Ditis vacuas et inania regna (cf. 525 domus; see for the same intertext n.524b–525a tenebras ... per umbras); cf. also (with Reitz 1982: 54) Sen. Her.F. 683 ampla vacuis spatia laxantur locus. For inanis of the underworld, cf. Ov. Fast. 4.600, Met. 11.670, 12.522, 12.619, Luc. 9.101, Sen. Thy. 1009, Stat. Theb. 8.100 and Ach. 1.133.

527–529a Here a common death brings all that has been produced by the earth, the sea and fiery air since the first days of the world in creation.

This picks up (with several synonyms) 438–439 quicquid ab imo naturam hominum extinctumque chao est, there only of humans, here of all mortal beings. Lines 527–528 are couched in philosophical phrases, with the reference to the four elements from which all mortal life is created and to the dawn of the world; the wording suggests Lucretius and Ovid’s Pythagoras (Met. 15.60ff.).
Notes to 517–614

Lines 527–530 are structured chiastically:

- whatever the world has produced (527–528),
- is taken by a common death (529a);
- one field accepts all (529b–530a)
- that which has died and which will be (530b).

**quicquid terrae, quicquid freta et igneus aer nutrivit** The group of earth, sea and air is common enough (see below), but through the addition of *igneus* to *aer* (elsewhere applied to *aether* at [Tib.] 3.7.22, V.Fl. 1.616 and Sil. 1.135), the poet evokes the four elements earth, water, air and fire.

Billerbeck (1983: 329) compares Sen. Her. F. 870–872 *tibi crescit omne, et quod occasus videt et quod ortus* (parce venturis), *tibi, Mors, paramur*, but an even closer parallel is found earlier in Her. F. (30–33 *quicquid horridum tellus creat quicquid pontus aut aer tulit ... fractum atque domitum est*)—all monsters that the earth, sea and air produced have been sent to Hades by Hercules). For the influence of the Hercules Furens, see Intr. 517–614. As Billerbeck notes, both Silius’ and Seneca’s phrases go back to Ov. Met. 10.18 *in quem* [i.e. Orcum] *reccidimus, quicquid mortale creamur* (see also n.523–524a); for the tricolon of earth, sea and air, cf. similar phrases at Ov. Met. 8.830–831, Luc. 10.155–156, [Sen.] Her. O. 14–15. For the thought and diction in these lines, cf. also Stat. Silv. 2.1.218–219 *quicquid init ortus, finem timet. ibimus omnes, ibimus; immensis urnam quatit Aeacus umbris*.

**primo mundi genitalis ab aevo** The phrase combines two of Lucretius’ references to the beginning of the world, viz. Lucr. 5.548 *prima ... ab origine mundi* (cf. also 5.678, Verg. G. 2.336, Ov. Met. 1.3, Trist. 2.559, Luc. 6.611) and 5.1212 *mundi genitalis origo* (cf. 2.1105, 5.176, 5.324); the collocation of *mundus* and *genitalis* is also found at Ov. Met. 15.239–240 *quattuor aeternus genitalia corpora mundus continet*, the words of Pythagoras.

*genitalis* here (unlike in Ovid, and probably also unlike in Lucretius, see above) goes with *mundus*. The sense may be ‘reproductive’, ‘creating’ (so TLL 6.2.1813.19ff.; cf. Met. 15.239 cited above), applying the generative powers of the four elements (see prev.n.) to the world itself. The primary reference, however, seems to be to the time of the world’s creation (which is the context for the use of *genitalis* in the passages in Lucretius). Since neither TLL nor OLD give any parallels for *genitalis* as ‘newborn’, ‘(recently) created’, the adjective should perhaps be understood with *aevo* by enallage (cf. Lucr. 2.1105 *mundi tempus genitalis*).

The combination *primum aevum* is elsewhere solely used for human youth, most often by Silius and Ovid; cf. 2.428, 2.636, 3.355, 3.605–606, 6.128, 6.425, 10.13, 15.595.

**mors communis** Reitz (1982: 54) points out the contrast between the diversity of the elements and *communis*. For *communis*, cf. *letum commune* at Sil. 6.526 and 16.410 (there rather ‘joint death’).

529b–530 *All things go down below, and a motionless field receives whatever has passed away and what is yet to be.*

For descendunt cuncta, capitque campus, see also n.524b–525a.

**descendunt cuncta** The neuter picks up *quicquid* in the last sentence (cf. also 439 *cuncta videbis*); apparently, not only humans have an afterlife, but *all* mortal beings (cf. the
Elysium for birds in Ov. Am. 2.6.49–58, Stat. Silv. 2.4.8–9). This is not reflected in the rest of the *Nekyia*, however; the ten gates are for various groups of mankind.

descending here means ‘go to the underworld’, as at 708 and 759. Other passages where the verb is used without an adjunct of place (e.g. *ad manes*, Erebo) are Ov. Met. 4.435, 10.21, Luc. 6.552, 6.714 and 6.808. Both Ovidian passages are an intertext (see also Intr. 517–614); at Ov. Met. 4.434 we also find Ἐρέβων ... ἑαυτής (cf. here 530 *campus iners*). Cf. for the verb in poetry also (both of ghosts and of other visitors of Hades) Verg. A. 6.126 (*descensus*), 6.404, 12.648–649, Ov. Met. 10.13, Sen. Pha. 928, Luc. 9.815, Stat. Theb. 9.655, 10.404, 11.464, Silv. 3.3.206, 5.5.41, Sil. 8.145, 17.257.


*iners* is more commonly used of the infernal rivers (cf. Ov. *l.c.* in the prev.n. and Sen. Her.F. 686 Cocytii) or its atmosphere (Luc. 6.649 *aer*). It qualifies the realm itself at Luc. 6.799–800 *regni possessor inertis*; cf. *lucus iners* at Sil. 6.146 (there compared to the underworld) and Stat. Theb. 10.46. Reitz (1982: 54) also compares Sen. Oed. 704–705 *immotus aer haeret et pigro sedet nox atra mundo*; cf. further Stat. Silv. 5.3.271 *pigro ... Averno*. Silius’ *campus*, where all shades rest in idle existence, contrasts with Vergil’s Elysian field, which bustles with activity (*A*. 6.709 *strepit omnis murmure campus*).

**quantum interiit restatque futurum** An expansion of 438–439 *quicquid ... extinctum est*; there is place in the underworld not only for all that has passed away but also for what will live (and die) in the future. There is a slight inconsistency with the notion of reincarnation found at 850ff. (taken from Vergil’s *Aeneid* 6), which would imply that the souls of all future beings are already present, waiting for their return to earth. This probably does not, however, justify interpreting the line as ‘the field takes all that has passed away and is now waiting to be born once more’, since the point here is rather that the *campus* is immense, large enough for all shades of the past and the future.

For *restat* (‘remain to be’), see 612 (there with a gerundive) and *OLD* s.v. 5c.

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531–541

cingunt regna decem portae. quorum una receptat belligeros, dura Građivi sorte creatos, altera, qui leges posueru et deilam iura gentibus et primas fundarunt moenibus urbes.
tertia ruricolas, Ceteris iustissima turba quae venit ad manes et fraudum illaesa veneno.
exin, qui laetas artes vitaeque colendae invenere viam nec dedignanda parenti carmina fuderunt Phoebus, sua limina servant.
proxima, quos venti saevaeque hausere procellae, naufraga porta rapit; sic illam nomine dicunt.
531a Ten gates surround the realm.

These ten gates lead away from the central field (530 campus) of the underworld, each to a different region reserved for a specific group of souls; the last one allows reincarnating souls to return to earth. For the poetic models for these gates, see Intr. 517–614.

The strong connection of gates and field may be taken from Sen. Her.F. 720 haec porta regni, campus hanc circa iacet, where the field lies around the palace of Dis, which is the entrance to the underworld. Silius reverses the image by having his gates surround the field. cingunt picks up Her. F. 716 cingitur (Dis’ palace surrounded by a double moat).

531b–532 One of them receives the warriors, born with the hard lot of war, ...

The warriors are also presented as a group at Hom. Od. 11.40–41 (like ἄνδρες Ἀρηίφατοι there at 41, belligeros is here found in the first position of the verse) and Verg. A. 6.477–478, and attain Elysium at A. 6.660 and V.Fl. 1.836–837.

quarum una receptat With portae (and dura in the next line) this is a direct allusion to V.Fl. 1.833–834 geminae ... portae, quarum altera dura / semper lege patens populos regesque receptat, “the twin doors ...; one, by stern law ever open, receives nations and kings”; Valerius’ second door is only for a select few. Valerius’ phrase is modelled after Vergil’s two gates of dreams; cf. A. 6.893 geminae Somni portae, quarum altera fertur (cf. A. 7.607, with n.540–541 sic illam nomine dicunt). With his first eight gates, Silius differentiates between various groups of mankind (with another echo of Valerius at 543 vasta patet populo), while his ninth gate leads to Elysium, much like Valerius’ second one. See Intr. and An. 517–614.

belligeros See for this word also n.361–363. Its quasi-substantive use here is unique (cf. 535 ruricolas and 552 piorum), although not uncommon for compound adjectives in –fer and –ger (cf. e.g. armiger at 841 and passim, 7.458 aligeris, 8.438 signifer); somewhat comparable is the predicative use of belliger at 3.398, 15.594, Stat. Silv. 4.3.159 and 5.2.33.

dura Gradivi sorte creatos An amalgam of Verg. A. 11.110–111 Martis sorte peremptis (cf. at 384 Mavortis sorte peremptis) and Sen. Thy. 879 o nos dura sorte creatos. In Vergil, Martis sors is “the lot of death in battle”; similarly in Seneca, the chorus wails that they were born only to die in such a way. Therefore, it is best to interpret our phrase as “born with the destiny of death in battle” (cf. Spaltenstein), rather than “born with the lot of a life filled with war”.

533–534 ... another those who have laid down laws and famous decrees for mankind and who have founded walled cities.

This is a reminiscence of Vergil’s lines on Numa, the law-giving king of Rome, primam qui legibus urbes fundabit (Verg. A. 6.810–111), who reigned after the warrior-king Romulus (cf. belligeros, and Romulus’ descent from Mars/Gradivus; cf. also inclita iura and A. 6.781 incluta Roma, of Romulus’ foundation). With the same order, Horace speaks of mankind emerging from a state of eternal war upon learning to communicate and to draw laws in Serm. 1.3.104–105 dehinc absistere bello, oppida coeperunt munire et ponerere leges, using a similar combination of laying down laws and walls (Spaltenstein compares also Hor. Ars 399). The last parallel is Dido, who, as Vergil says (A. 1.507), iura dabat legesque viris (cf. gentibus) after having founded Carthage.

altera altera is also found at V.Fl. 1.833, for which see n.531b–532 quarum una receptat. The word is more rare in a more extensive enumeration such as this one; see n.535–536 tertia.
Notes to 517–614

primas ... urbes Either i) ‘the first cities’, as at Ov. Fast. 4.220 an primis turres urbibus illa dedit? (of Cybele), resulting in a rather small number of dead gaining admission through this gate, or ii), with primas taken predicatively, as at Verg. A. 6.810 (see above), ‘who gave the cities walls for the first time’ (i.e. founded them); the last reading seems preferable.

535–536 A third admits countrymen, the honest people of Ceres who come to the shades uncorrupted by the poison of deceit.

The intertext for these lines is the famous praise of the rural life in Verg. G. 2.458ff. (Reitz 1982: 59–60, Billerbeck 1983: 331; cf. Spaltenstein ad 13,535); in particular, iustissima picks up iustissima tellus (2.460) and Iustitia (2.474) and fraudum illaesæ veneno imitates 2.467 nescia fallere vita (cf. also 2.465 neque ... fucatur lana veneno, while illaesæ may contrast with 2.464 inlusas auro).

tertia The order unus – alter – tertius is common in groups of three (cf. 203–204; TLL 1.1743.69ff.); tertius following alter is rarer in a bigger group (cf. Ov. Met. 6.292ff. una ... altera ... haec ... illa), but the use of ordinal numbers (531 una, here tertia, 545 septima) is easily explained from the Sibyl’s systematic coverage of all ten gates in their proper order.

ruricolas Possibly ‘farmers’ (cf. Cereris ... turba), but also more in general ‘countrymen’, as opposed to the less honest people from the city (cf. Verg. G. 2.461–466 and 495ff., and Plat. Gorg. 525d). A mostly Ovidian word, used 19 times in total in classical literature, it is also found as a substantive in Ov. Am. 3.2.53, Fast. 1.580, 2.628, Met. 15.124 (of an ox), Col. 10.337 and V.Fl. 5.142. For the combination with Ceres, cf. Ov. Am. l.c. ruricolae Cereri teneroque adsurge Baccho and Verg. Ecl. 5.79–80 ut Baccho Cererique, tibi sic vota quotannis agricolae facient.

Cereris iustissima turba The phrase echoes Verg. A. 10.132 Veneris iustissima cura, but there is no need to follow Summers’ suggestion to replace turba here with cura as well.


fraudum illaesæ veneno The honesty of the countrymen, already expressed with iustissima, is stressed by their total lack of poisonous deceit. illaesus here is ‘uncorrupted’ in a mental sense; see TLL 7.1.337.2ff. The closest parallel is 17.31 illaesi ... corporis, ‘a body unstained’, i.e. chaste or pure. For its opposite, cf. Stat. Theb. 1.171–172 cui mens humili laesisse veneno summa, “whose bent it was to harm the highest with lowly venom”.

The phrase fraudum ... veneno is possibly a reminiscence of 7.260 sensit cura sagax Poeni fraudisque veneno aggreditur mentes, “Hannibal, watchful and shrewd, was aware of this, and tried to poison men’s minds by a trick”, his ruse of plundering the whole countryside but for Fabius’ estate, hoping to bring the old dictator into discredit. Both with his trickery and his destruction of the Italian countryside, Hannibal is the “anti-farmer”, the exact opposite of the ideal of Vergil’s Georgics; see n.83b–85 and Intr. 299–347.

537–539 Then those who have invented the joyful arts and a way of living life and who have sung songs not unworthy to father Phoebus have their own gateway.

These lines echo Verg. A. 6.662–663 quique ... Phoebo digna locuti, inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artis, the third group of shades in Elysium (after those who have died
in the service of the country and the chaste priests). Cf.
also V.Fl. 1.838 cui ... studium mortales pellere curas. The reference here is to poets, but possibly
philosophers are included as well, for which see vitae ... colendae viam.

exin For the use of exin(de) in an enumeration, cf. Cic. Arat. 102, 139, 155, 167, 282, 323, 328, Stat. Theb. 2.223 and 6.268, but in those cases there is a temporal aspect present as well, while here there is only spatial progression.

vitae ... colendae viam The expression vitam colere can also simply mean ‘lead one’s life’ (TLL 3.1678.40ff.), but the interpretation ‘enrich life’ seems best here (so also TLL 3.1679.31–41). For the viae vitae as shown by (didactic) poetry, cf. Hor. Ars 403–404 dictae per carmina sortes et vitae monstrata via est.

But the poet seems to think of philosophers as well, for whom thinking about the right ‘way of life’ is the trademark par excellence. Cf. e.g. Lucr. 2.10 viam ... quaerere vitae, Cic. Fin. 5.6.15 cum intellegitur, quid sit et honorum extremum et malorum, inventa vitae via est, Off. 1.32.118 nonnulli tamen ... rectam vitae secuti sunt viam and Sen. Dial. 4.13.2 facilis est ad beatam vitam via; cf. also vivendi via in Cic. Fin. 1.18.57, Off. 1.32.118 and Tusc. 1.1.1 (with artium). With colere, cf. also another philosophical setting at Sen. Epist. 14.14 stoicos ..., qui ... secesserunt ad colendam vitam.


carmina fuderunt ‘they have performed songs’; for the iunctura (also at 10.230), used since Luc. 1.449 and [Sen.] Her.O. 1080, see TLL 6.1.1567.2–4.

sua limina servant For the phrase, cf. Verg. A. 6.575 facies quae limina servet? (of Tisiphone, gatekeeper of Tartarus) and 6.402 casta licet patrui servet Proserpina limen.

540–541 Next, those whom storms and savage winds have swallowed up are taken by the ‘shipwreck’ gate; that is what it is called.

Lacking burial, the shipwrecked form a pitiful group, since they are normally unable to enter the underworld right away. Cf. the shipwrecked Trojan in Verg. A. 6.333ff., but also the simile at Sen. Her.F. 676 ut saepe puppes aestus invitas rapit, which compares the dead being drawn into Hades with sinking ships drawn into the deep.

venti saevaeque hausere procellae The verb haurio is the usual term for ‘engulf’ and is thus commonly used for bodies of water causing shipwrecks (TLL 6.3.2570.83ff.); Silius’ transposition of the action to the winds is novel. There may be a connection with Hannibal’s shipwreck in the first part of Book 17, for which Neptune also summoned ventos im RESque et ... procellas / ... Aeolias (17.240–241; cf. 14.71); cf. Hannibal’s anger at another divine interference, Jupiter’s defence of Rome in Sil. 12.633–634 ventis debesis nimirum hiemisque procellis / unum, Roma, diem. Otherwise, the concurrence of ventus and procella is rare.

naufraga porta Literally, the ‘shipwrecked gate’; the same bold use of epithets (applied to the gate but better suited to those associated with it) is found at Verg. A. 6.563 sceleratum ... limen and Ov. Met. 4.456 sedes scelerata vocatur, and the Vicus Sceleratus in Rome, after Tullia’s crime of driving over her father’s corpse (e.g. Liv. 1.48).

sic illam nomine dicunt Two Vergilian lines that are equally relevant are A. 6.441
Lugentes Campi; sic illos nomine dicunt (part of Vergil’s description of the underworld; Lugentes ~ naufragia) and 7.607 sunt geminae belli portae (sic nomine dicunt) (the gates of Janus’ temple). Vergil’s “Hellenistic turn” (Fordyce) probably should not be taken too seriously as a reference to earlier literature (Austin ad 6.441); in Silius’ case, definitely not, unless it refers to the special use of the epithet by his predecessors (see the prev. n.).

For the expression nomine dicere, ‘to call by name’ (with an abl. of instrument, not to be confused with the abl. of origin, ‘to call after the name of’; cf. Bömer ad Ov. Met. 1.447), cf. also Verg. G. 3.280–281 hippocamenes vero ... nomine dicunt pastores, 4.356, Ov. Fast. 1.590, Met. 2.840, 10.644, Trist. 4.10.60, Luc. 8.609–610, Calp. Ecl. 7.66, and perhaps Mart. 3.1.2 (bordering on ablative of origin); see TLL 5.1.981.45ff., 78ff.

542–549
finitema huic noxa gravido et peccasse fatenti
vasta patet populo: poenas Rhadamanthus in ipso
expetit introitu mortemque exercet inanem.
septima femineis reseratur porta catervis,
umentes ubi casta fovet Proserpina lucos.
infantum hinc gregibus versasque ad funera taedas
passis virginibus turbaeque in limine lucis
est iter extintae et vagitu ianua nota.

542–544 The gate adjoining it stands wide open to the crowd weighed down by guilt and confessing to have done wrong: in its very entrance Rhadamanthus exacts punishment and persecutes the bodiless dead.

Silius follows Vergil, who makes Rhadamanthus the judge of the wicked in Tartarus (see n. below). The words here echo the description at A. 6.566–569:

Cnosius ... Rhadamanthus ...

*castigatque auditque dolos subigitque fateri,
quae quis apud superos, furto laetatus inani,
distulit in seram commissa piacula mortem.*

“The Cretan Rhadamanthus ... chastises, and hears the tales of guilt, exacting confessions of crimes, whenever in the world above any man, rejoicing in vain deceit, has put off atonement for sin until death’s late hour.”

Silius transposes *inanem* from *furto* to *mortem*; the bodiless state of the dead thus reflects the pointlessness of the foul deeds that Vergil observes. *in ipso ... introitu* probably reflects the image in Vergil, where the gates to Tartarus are opened after Rhadamanthus has given his verdict, suggesting he sits close to the entrance (Spaltenstein); for the judgement at the gate we should also compare Plat. Rep. 614d (Reitz 1982: 61); see Intr. 517–614.

noxia gravido ... populo Cf. Ovid’s and Seneca’s phrases for those in Tartarus: *Ib. 174 noxia turba, Her.F. 1222–1223 sonti ... turbae. TLL 6.2.2272.34ff. explains gravido as ‘gravatus’ (‘oppressed’, ‘weighed down’; cf. Luc. 5.735, V.Fl. 5.22); while such a mental interpretation is possible in view of *peccasse fatenti,* we may also consider interpreting the souls as being actually ‘laden’ with sins (much like how in Egyptian mythology—which supposed the hearts of men to be weighted on the scales of justice after death—sinners’ hearts were heavier than those of innocents).
peccasse fatenti For a similar line ending, cf. Prop. 2.25.19, Ov. Am. 3.14.37, Pont. 2.3.33, 4.1.5, Met. 3.718, 7.748 and 11.134.

vasta patet populo This is another reference (see n.531b–532 quarum una receptat) to the first of Valerius Flaccus’ two infernal gates; cf. V.Fl. 1.832–833 dura semper lege patens populos regesse receptat, “[one,] by stern law ever open, receives nations and kings” (which, as Kleywegt notes, is itself a reminiscence of Verg. A. 6.127 noctes atque dies patet atri ianua Ditis). Another intertext is Sen. Her.F. 666–667 ingens vorago faucibus vastis patet latumque pandit omnibus populis populis iter, from Theseus’ description of the underworld.

poenas expetit ‘he exacts punishment’; for this use of expeto, cf. 9.265 cum Furiae expterent poenas (also of divine retribution, as at Cic. Marc. 18, Liv. 1.23.4, 6.29.2 and with petere Lucr. 6.72, Sen. Her.F. 104, Quint. Decl. 326.9) and TLL 5.2.1694.27ff.

Rhadamanthus Son of Jupiter and brother of Minos; because of his wisdom in administering justice in life, he later acted as judge of the dead in the underworld together with his brother (and in some accounts also with Aeacus, another son of Jupiter). He is first mentioned in this function in Plat. Gorg. 523e–524a; see for other instances Roscher s.v. mortemque exercet inanem Duff’s explanation “He inflicts on the dead punishments which they cannot feel” implies that one would not have to fear punishment after death; this is something the narrator does not agree with, however (cf. 601ff. on the fate of tyrants). In Duff’s translation, mortem would be the punishment Rhadamanthus inflicts, comparable to the use of exerceo at Verg. A. 6.542–543 at laeva malorum exercet poenas et ad impia Tartara mittit; cf. TLL 5.2.1376.66ff. But it is better to read mortem ... inanem metonymically as mortuos inanes, the bodiless dead, who are the ones being persecuted (cf. Reitz 1982: 61 n.2, TLL 5.2.1371.82–83; for mortus as mortuos, see TLL 8.1504.41ff.). Cf. the use of exerceo at 2.672 ira [i.e. of Dis] turbatos exercet regia manes, “the monarch’s wrath troubles and vexes the dead” and Verg. A. 6.739–740 exercentur poenis veterumque malorum supplicia expendunt.

545–546 The seventh gate, where chaste Proserpina tends the moist groves, is unbarred for the bands of women. The souls of females are subject to the queen of the underworld, Proserpina; cf. Hom. Od. 11.225–227, where Persephone sends the ghosts of women to Odysseus’ blood offering (cf. 11.213–214), and disperses them again in 11.385–386; and see also on casta ... Prosperpina below. These women had been married (cf. Spaltenstein), unlike the virgins of the next gate, and recall the women of mythology most renowned for their love life or marriage (both in good and bad ways) who are catalogued in Hom. Il. 11.235ff. and Verg. A. 6.445ff.; cf. also Prop. 4.7.57–68, Culex 261ff., Stat. Silv. 5.1.253–257 and see Intr. 806–850a.

femineis ... catervis For the phrase, cf. V.Fl. 4.603 femineas ... catervas (of the Amazons) and Mart. 11.47.1–2. The word caterva is also used of matrons at Verg. A. 11.477, Ov. Met. 12.216, Ciris 143, Stat. Theb. 12.111, Gell. 1.23.10, and of other women-only companies at 10.495 virginas ... catervas (cf. Stat. Ach. 1.603), Stat. Theb. 9.611 Amazoniae ... catervae, Silv. 2.3.8 nympharum tenerae ... catervae, V.Fl. 6.497 (witches), 7.181 (Diana’s retinue).

reseratur The word suggests that the gate is normally closed and is only unbarred when shades of women approach; cf. the second gate in V.Fl. 1.835ff. (immediately after the one
which stands ever open to receive the *populos regesque*; see n.542–544 *vasta patet populo*), which only opens when a virtuous person comes. See also n.550–552a *claustra nitent*.


**casta ... Proserpina** Cf. Hom. *Od*. 11.226 ἄγαυὴ Περσεφόνεια and 1.389 ἄγαυὴ Περσεφόνεια, and Verg. *A*. 6.402 *casta licet patrui servet Proserpina limen* (where the Sibyl tells Charon that Proserpina can go on being a good wife and need not fear abduction by Aeneas). The emphasis lies on true marital chastity; Proserpina’s epithet suggests that all women that enter through this gate have led virtuous lives, remaining *univira* (thus contrasting with some of the women in the catalogue in Verg. *A*. 6.445ff., most pointedly Dido)—perhaps they would otherwise enter through the previous gate.

**fovet** ‘tends’ (cf. TLL 6.1.1220.78ff., which quotes this line for ‘colere, servare, tendere’); Proserpina acts as divine gardener for the infernal greenery.

**547–549** Next is the passage (a door known by the wailing around it) for the droves of infants and for virgins who got funeral torches instead of wedding flames and for the crowd that was snuffed out at life’s doorstep.

Silius here combines two groups, the infants and maidens. For the infants that died at birth, he uses much of the diction of Verg. *A*. 6.426–429:

> continuo auditae voces vagitus et ingens
> infantumque animae flentes, *in limine primo*
> quos dulcis vitae exsortis et ab ubere raptos
> absulit atra dies et funere mersit acerbo

“At one are heard voices and wailing sore—the souls of infants weeping, whom, on the very threshold of the sweet life they shared not, torn from the breast, the black day swept off and plunged in bitter death.”


**in limine lucis** The imagery of birth being life’s threshold, first attested at Lucr. 3.681 *vitae cum limen inimus*, is particularly apt here given the context of gates (additionally, reincarnating souls would also use a gate on the way out, cf. 556ff.). Vergil’s adoption of the motif for the death of young children or infants inspired various poets; cf. Sen. *Her.F*. 1133, Luc. 2.106, Stat. *Theb*. 5.260, 5.535, 7.166 and Silv. 2.1.38 (Van Dam *ad loc.* also compares 2.6.70 and 5.3.72). Cf. also V.Fl. 1.823–824 *primoque rudem sub limine rerum*, of Aeson’s youngest son, who was slain by Pelias’ troops (modelled after Sen. *l.c.* and the end of *Her.F.* in general); Valerius’ description of the underworld follows immediately after.

**versasque ad funera taedas passis virginitus** ‘virgins who got torches that were repurposed for their funeral’, i.e. they should have been wedding torches; these young
women died before marriage. The phrase suggests the story of Eurydice dying on her wedding day, the version that Ovid uses in *Met.* 10.1ff., with a similar detail of a fax ...

lacrimoso stridula fumo (10.6). For Silius’ debt to Ovid’s tale of Orpheus, see n.523–524a.

With *versas taedas* as an echo of *Theb.* 5.71–72 mutus Hymen versaeque faces et frigida iusti cura tori, “Hymen fell silent, his torches reversed; chilled was the care of the lawful couch”, the poet seems to allude to Ovid (whose tale began with Hymen) through Statius as well. For the phrase, Reitz (1982: 62) also compares Sil. 2.184 taedaeque ad funera versusae (of one of Penelope’s suitors who was killed by Odysseus) and Ov. *Her.* 21.172 face pro thalami, fax mihi mortis adest; cf. also *Epic.Drusi* 141–142 quos primum vidi fasces, in funere vidi, et vidi eversos.

For this use of *patrior*, cf. also 2.83 *Veneris iam foedera passae*, “submitted to the bond of wedlock” and Stat. *Sylv.* 5.1.45–47 illa quidem nuptumque prior taedasque marito / passa alio; cf. further n.828–830 nondum passa marem.


**extinctae** ‘deceased’, ‘killed’; cf. 438–439 quicquid ab ipso natum hominum extinctumque chao est. For this use of *exstinguere*, cf. also 1.277 and TLL 5.2.1925.14ff., 1926.42ff.

**vagitu ianua nota** nota with ablative may be ‘known by’, i.e. its function may be recognized by the wailing, or ‘known for’ (for the abl. denoting the cause of fame *OLD* s.v. 6b quotes Ov. *Met.* 1.198, Luc. 2.591, Plin. *Nat.* 4.64 and Tac. *Ann.* 15.53).

**550–555**
tum seducta loco et laxata lucida nocte
claustra nitent, quae secreti per limitis umbram
Elysios ducent campos. hic turba piorum,
nec Stygio in regno, caeli nec posta sub axe,
verum ultra Oceanum sacro contermina fonti
Lethaeos potat latices, oblivia mentis. 550

**550–552a** Then, in a place apart and with its radiance dispersing the darkness, the passage glimmers that leads through the shade of a sequestered path to the Elysian fields.

**seducta loco** The isolated position of the gate is representative of the region to which it leads; as follows from 553–554, the fields of the blessed are not a part of the underworld. A similar emphasis is laid on the division of upper world and underworld at V.Fl. 1.827 rebusque abscisae superinis.

**laxata lucida nocte** Unlike the gloomy underworld, the Elysian fields are a place of light; Spaltenstein compares Verg. *A.* 6.640–641 largior hic campos aether et lumine vestit / purpureo. For *laxare* of darkness, cf. Stat. *Theb.* 12.254 solaque nigrantes laxabit astra tenebras and especially *Sylv.* 5.1.256 *lumine purpureo tristes laxare tenebras* (obviously also modelled upon Verg. *l.c.*), “[Proserpina orders to] thin the gloomy darkness with gleaming light”, an event at every arrival of a chaste and virtuous woman in Elysium; was

300
Statius thinking of Silius’ passage, or rather the other way around (cf. also the correspondent use of *taedas pati* in the same poem; see n.547–549 *versasque ad funera taedas passis virginibus*? See the Appendix for an overview of correspondences with *Silv.* 5.1 and Statius’ other poems.

**claustra nitent** The Elysian gate shines brightly, just as the blessed fields themselves glimmer at Verg. *A.* 6.677 *camposque nitentis* (cf. Stat. *Silv.* 5.3.20 *fulgentes plagas*). We might also compare V.Fl. 1.842–843 *lucet via late igne dei*, of Mercury’s shining light when he brings a righteous shade to Elysium (cf. the collocation of *campos* and *piorum* in 1.843–844).

With *laxata*, a possible intertext is Sen. *Tro.* 430–431 *Stygis profundae claustra et obscuri specus laxantur* (also with *obscuri* referring to the darkness).

Like *reseratur* at 545 (see n.), the word *claustra* suggests that this gate is rarely open, and unlocked only when a ghost arrives worthy to be admitted to Elysium; cf. again the second gate in V.Fl. 1.835ff., the gate to Elysium.

**secreti per limitis umbram** The path leading to the Elysian fields is also secluded. For *per limitis umbram*, compare Vergil’s *per opaca viarum* (*A.* 6.633), of the same road to Elysium. The word *secretus* is applied to the blessed themselves at Verg. *A.* 8.670 *secretosque pios*, and to the fields at V.Fl. 1.750–751 *secretisque ... arvis* (cf. *A.* 6.477–478 *arva ... que ... secreta frequentant*; for Valerius’ passage, see also n.552b–555 on *tura piorum*) and Stat. *Silv.* 5.3.24 *Lethaei secreto in gramine campi* (cf. *Silv.* 2.7.111–112 *reclusi ... Elysii*). Kleywegt ad V.Fl. l.c. gives more parallels.

The construction of the phrase is modelled after Verg. *A.* 3.389 *secreti ad fluminis undam*; cf. also (with *secreti limitis*) Prop. 4.9.59–60 *avia secreti limitis unda*.

The shade of Homer comes to the blood offering along this path, as narrated at 778 *Elysio tendentem limite*.


552b–555 There, not in the Stygian realm, nor placed under the axis of heaven, but beyond Oceanus the crowd of the righteous drinks of the waters of the Lethe (oblivion for the mind) close to its sacred font.

**tura piorum** Cf. V.Fl. 1.750 *pia tura silentum* in Elysium. The words are used with contrast at Luc. 6.789–790 *camposque piorum / poscit tura nocens*, “the guilty multitude demands the fields of the blessed”. The plural genitive *piorum* also refers to the blessed in Elysium at 703 (see n.), 2.698, Verg. *A.* 5.734, Ov. *Met.* 11.62, Luc. 3.12 *sedibus Elysiis campoque ... piorum*, 6.789 *campos piorum*, V.Fl. 1.844 *amoena piorum ... camposque*.

For the accusative of direction without a preposition, cf. 703 and 888; for other examples from the *Punica*, see Blomgren 1938: 6–7.

**nec Stygio in regno, caeli nec posta sub axe, verum ultra Oceanum** The land of the blessed is located neither in the underworld nor in the world above; it exists beyond Oceanus, the stream encircling the *orbis terrarum*. The geographical location of the Elysian fields is discussed by Maubert, who rejects the literal reading that they lie beyond Oceanus...
(1928: 154–158), on the grounds that in earlier literature, such transoceanic regions are dark and depressing (cf. e.g. the land of the Cimmerians at Hom. *Od*. 11.12–19), or actually lie in Oceanus, not beyond (e.g. the land of the Hesperides). He concludes that *ultra Oceanum* must be ‘at the edge of Oceanus’; for this location, Reitz (1982: 64) also compares the placement of Elysium ‘the islands of the blessed’ at Hom. *Od*. 4.563 πείρατα γαῖς and Hes. *Erg*. 171 παρ’ Ὡκέανον. But line 553 seems to preclude this interpretation. The dome of heaven (*caeli*) is itself part of the cosmos enclosed by Oceanus, since the sun (whose trajectory follows the dome) rises and sinks in that stream. Silius thus places Elysium explicitly outside of the cosmos. There may be an interplay with the philosophical notion that after death, the soul moves to a region between *aer* and *aether*; this region is the border between the mortal and immortal world. Cf. e.g. Plato’s *Phaedrus* (see Intr. 517–614 fn.15) and Cicero’s *Somnium Scipionis*; in Latin poetry, cf. Luc. 9.5–9 (with Wick’s note), Stat. *Silv*. 5.3.19–20 *in ardua tendens fulgentesque plagas* (cf. *nitent* here). In the *Punica*, the same representation is found; at 10.587, Paulus’ soul rises *aetherias ... in auras*, and the dead Saguntines, who go to *Elysium et castas sedes ... piorum* (2.698), are addressed as *sidereae ... anae* (2.696–697). Silius’ Elysium seems to be not an (is)land on the other side of Oceanus, but a heavenly region outside of the mortal world (the boundary of which is Oceanus); cf. Ramaglia 1954: 21–22.

Vergil, too, notes that Elysium is not part of our world (it has its own heaven and stars, *A*. 6.640–641); and yet, it is part of the underworld (as in Silius, *pace* Reitz 1982: 63), from where the shades will one day return to the upper world: *magnum caeli ventura sub axem* (*A*. 6.790). Cf. also Statius’ portrayal of the upper and lower worlds at *Theb*. 12.560 *caelique Erebiqute sub axe*, and Valerius’ positioning of the underworld *cardine sub nostro* (1.827).


The shortened form *postus* (from *positus*) is otherwise limited to one instance in Catullus (69.39), a few in Lucretius (1.1059, 3.857, 3.871, 6.965) and later Latin; but cf. the much more frequent *repostus* (since Enn. frag. 23, and found in Lucr., Verg., *Ov.*, *Hor.*, *V.Fl.*, Stat.; in the *Punica*, cf. 3.325, 4.13, 5.38, 5.261, 7.322, 7.507, 11.7, 12.23, 12.639, 13.404 and 15.683). Other such composites are *expostus* (14.114), *impostus* (15.228), *sepostus* (8.375, 17.280), *suppostus* (3.90); see further Neue-Wagener 3.533–534.

*sacro contermina fonti* The sanctity of springs is topical (as the home of nymphs, cf. 8.182), but the font of the Lethe is also sacred for its mysterious qualities. The same epithet is used in Stat. *Theb*. 4.414 *Lethaeaque sacra*, part of Mantò’s description of the underworld. *contermina* is modelled after *Ov. Met*. 4.90 *gelido contermina fonti*; in poetry, the word is mostly Ovidian (also *Fast*. 2.55, *Met*. 1.774, 8.553, 8.620, 15.315 and *Pont*. 4.6.45), and is found as well in Luc. 9.300, Stat. *Theb*. 1.355, 7.402, Sil. 5.510, 8.39, and 17.318.

*Lethaeos potat latices, obivia mentis* A clear allusion to Verg. *A*. 6.714–715 *Lethaei ad fluminis undam securos latices et longa obivia potant*. Spaltenstein observes that through the parataxis, Silius lays an even greater emphasis on the etymological link between *Lethaeos* (λήθη) and *obivia* than Vergil. With *mentis*, the poet follows also Ovid’s description of an hellish poison at *Met*. 4.502 *caecaeque obivia mentis*, which may also refer to the Lethe (cf. the similar use of liquid from the Lethe in Verg. *A*. 5.854 and *V.Fl*. 8.84; the latter passage imitates both Vergil and Ovid).
Vergil and Ovid did not use *oblivio* in any form, since the long –o rendered it incompatible with the hexameter. It had become acceptable to shorten final –o by the time of Lucan (cf. Austin *ad* Verg. *A*. 6.715), who could thus write in imitation of Ovid’s line cited above *oblivio mentis* (Luc. 10.402); Silius also has this form at 11.162 *quae tanta oblivio recti?* (cf. Stat. *Theb.* 8.669 *quae tanta oblivio luctus*?); cf. also Stat. *Theb.* 10.89 (with Williams’ note), *Silv.* 1.4.57 and Juv. 10.204. The poetic form *oblivia* remained more popular, however. Cf. in the *Punica* lines 665 and 851 (with *potant*), and 1.236 *infernae ... oblivia Lethes* (cf. 16.476 *potator aquae sub nomine Lethes*; the reference in both passages is to the Rio Lima, or Limia, in northern Portugal, which was identified with the Lethe in antiquity; cf. *RE* 13.1.671.33ff.), 2.628 and 4.724; cf. also Luc. 3.29 *Lethaeae ... oblivia ripae*.

556–559

*extrema hinc auro fulgens iam lucis honorem sentit et admoto splendent etu sidere lunae.*

hac animae caelum repetunt ac mille peractis oblitae Ditem redeunt in corpora lustris.

556–557 After that, the last gate, shining with gold, already feels the privilege of life and glares as if the body of the moon stands near.

*auro fulgens* The gate shines golden, just like the golden bough Aeneas is to bring to Proserpina at Ov. *Met.* 14.113–114 *auro fulgentem ramum* (cf. Verg. *A*. 6.137). Aeneas needs the golden bough to descend into the underworld; presumably, Silius decided that the shades needed a similarly shining gateway to leave again.

*iann lucis honorem sentit* Cf. Verg. *A*. 6.761 *proxima sorte tenet lucis loca*, “[he] holds by lot of life the most immediate place”, of Silvius, who will be the first to be reincarnated. For *lucis honorem* (‘gift of life’) cf. 7.737 *revocato ad lucis honorem* (of Minucius, saved from death), Sen. *Pha.* 591 *munus ... lucis*, Stat. *Theb*. 1.663–664 *honorem ... vitae*, 3.66 *inhonorae munera lucis* and perhaps Man. 3.59 *lucis honorem*; Sil. 3.147 *lucis honos* is different.

*admoto ... sidere lunae* The message is not that *lunae* suggests a wan light in contrast with the sunlight of the upper world (so Spaltenstein); the poet rather reacts to the simile which opens Vergil’s *katabasis*, where the darkness of the underworld is compared to that of a walk in the forest under a feeble moon (*A*. 6.270 *per incertam lunam sub luce maligna*), whereas here the darkness dissipates as if the moon was shining in full.

*admoto* indicates that the moon stands close by, shining brightly. The phrase is not unlike Stat. *Theb*. 10.370–371 *intendit ... dea ... alnum / sidus et admoto monstravit funera cornu*, where Diana brings the moon closer to illuminate the battlefield. Cf. also the full force of the sun at Ov. *Am.* 2.16.3 *sol licet admoto tellurem sidere findat et Tib.* 2.3.54–55 *comites ... quos India torret / Solis et admotis inficit ignis equis*; the Sun is permanently closer to the southern regions mentioned. Cf. also Verg. *A*. 6.640–641 *largior hic campos aether et lumine vestit / purpureo*; the sky in Elysium is bigger, possibly because it is closer.

*sidus* is used for every heavenly body, including the moon; for *sidere lunae*, cf. Ciris 37–38 (with Lyne’s note), Man. 2.90 and Plin. *Nat*. 2.41.
558–559 Through this gate the souls go back to the light of heaven and after five thousand years return to mortal bodies with no recollection of Hades.

These lines do not hint at a ‘celestial Elysium’ (cf. caelum), even more exalted than that behind the previous gate (pace Maubert 1928: 158–159). corpora clearly hints at reincarnation, and Silius closely follows Aeneas’ question at A. 6.719–721 anne aliquas ad caelum hinc ire putandum est sublimis animas iterumque ad tarda reverti corpora?, “must we think that any souls pass aloft from here to the world above and return a second time to bodily fetters?”, and especially Anchises’ answer at A. 6.748–751:

ubi mille rotam volvere per annos,

Lethaeum ad fluvium deus evocat agmine magno,

scilicet immemores supera ut convexa revisant

rursus, et incipient in corpora velle reverti.

“When they have rolled time’s wheel through a thousand years, the god summons [the shades] in vast throng to Lethe’s river, so that, their memories effaced, they may once more revisit the vault above and conceive the desire of return to the body.”

Vergil’s second passage is the model for most elements: i) caelum repetunt picks up supera revisant (and A. 6.719 ad caelum ... ire), ii) mille annos is replaced by mille lustris, iii) immemores inspired oblitae Ditem and iv) in corpora reverti returns as redeunt in corpora.

In Plato’s story of Er in Rep. 614b–621b, both souls coming from Hell (excepting the most wicked) and Heaven may return to a body. In Vergil’s version, the souls go through a sort of Purgatory before coming to Elysium (A. 6.739ff.); the most spotless souls will remain there until the time has come round (A. 6.745 perfecto temporis orbe, i.e. after the Platonic “Great Year”, several thousands of earth years) and they will have returned to being entirely spotless. The others will stay for a thousand years in anticipation of their eventual rebirth; the fates of those in Tartarus are unclear. Just prior to rebirth, the souls drink from the Lethe (Plat. Rep. 621a, Verg. A. 6.749), in order to forget both their lives and the fact that they have been dead. Silius picks up the lasts element with oblitae Ditem, but does not specify who is eligible for reincarnation—thus presumably all shades can eventually return to life.

caelum repetunt Cf. Ov. Met. 5.530 repetet Proserpina caelum, of Proserpina being allowed to leave the underworld provided she has not eaten anything from there. Here, caelum is not heaven, home of the deities, but rather ‘light of heaven’, i.e. life on the surface, as in A. 6.719 cited above (see the discussion in Reitz 1982: 65).

mille peractis ... lustris The 5000 years that the shades spend in the underworld before being reborn is much longer than Plato’s and Vergil’s period of a thousand years (Rep. 615a, cf. Phaedr. 249a; Verg. A. 6.748). In Plato, the souls are freed from the cycle of reincarnation and may return to heaven after ten cycles of a thousand years (and those who consistently choose the lot of philosopher after three such cycles; Phaedr. 249a–b); Vergil may hint at this longer period (see on the Great Year above). Perhaps Silius has averaged the two periods of 1000 and 10,000 years. It is clear, at any rate, that with such a long interval before reincarnation, no Roman would be a reincarnated Greek.

The phrase seems to be modelled after Ov. Ib. 1 lustris bis ... quinque peractis and Trist. 4.8.33 decem lustris ... peractis (where Ovid refers to his own age of 50), while mille lustris echoes Vergil’s mille annos.
redeunt in corpora Lucretius uses the same phrase of atoms forming new bodies (rather than ‘returning to bodies’) at 1.248–249. Cf. also Vergil cited above.

560–561 has passim nigrum pandens Mors lurida rictum itque reditque vias et portis omnibus errat.

560–561 Sallow Death, with its black jaws opened wide, goes up and down these paths and roams around all the gates.

With a ring composition, Mors frames the description of the gates, being named both in 529 and here (cf. Reitz 1982: 65); the personification anticipates those at 581ff.

Both has ... vias and portis omnibus refer to the ten gates and the paths they give access to.

nigrum pandens Mors lurida rictum In book 2, when Tisiphone and other beings from Hell have been set loose on Saguntum, Death is portrayed in a similar fashion: Mors graditur, vasto cava pandens guttura rictu, casuroque inhiat populo (2.548), “Opening wide his hollow jaws, Death stalked about and gaped for the doomed citizens”. Both there and here, Mors receives a more elaborate description than other such personified evils (which follow directly at 2.549ff., but here only at 581ff.; see n.581–587a), unlike the Vergilian model, where Letum is one of the crowd of abstractions at the entrance to the underworld (A. 6.277).

For nigrum ... rictum, see below on itque reditque vias.

With rictum, Death is compared to a predator. Silius uses the word often for the jaws of lions and tigers (2.157, 2.195, 4.335, 10.244, 10.297; cf. the Sphinx at 13.589), or of particularly savage humans (4.250 Crixus, 5.440, Othrys, 6.53 cannibalistic Laevinus, 11.220 Hannibal). Seneca applies the word to another infernal monster: Her.F. 691 Famesque maesta tabido rictu iacet. In the same play, Seneca has a very similar line on Death at 555 Mors avidis pallida dentibus; with pandens, cf. also Oed. 164–165 Mors atra avidos oris hiatus pandit. The imagery of death or the god of the underworld as a devouring predator is well established (Billerbeck 1983: 331 with n.19; Spaltenstein refers to Roscher 3.1.1436.42ff.: “uralt is die derb realistische Vorstellung von dem die Verstorbenen schmausenden Unterweltsgod”); cf. e.g. Tib. 1.3.65 rapax mors, Hor. Carm. 2.18.30 rapaci Orci and Statius’ description of lethal autumn (very similar to Silius’ Mors) at Silv. 2.1.217 imbrifero pallens Autumnus hiatu (with Van Dam’s note on hiatus mortis). Finally, cf. also 1 Peter 5:8 “Your opponent, the devil, is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour”.


itque reditque vias ‘goes up and down the paths’; the phrase is derived from Verg. A. 6.121–122 si fratrem Pollux alterna morte redemit / itque reditque viam totiens, of Castor and Pollux each travelling to the underworld every half year to take the other’s place. In imitation, Statius applied the expression in Theb. 1.102 to Tisiphone, who continuously
shuttles between Thebes and the underworld (cf. Reitz 1982: 66 n.1). The black jaws are another feature in common between Silius’ *Mors* and Statius’ *Tisiphone*; cf. *Theb.* 1.107–108 *atro ore* and here *nigrum ... rictum* (Spaltenstein). The sense of the phrase in our line approaches that at V.Fl. 1.725, of Pelias pacing up and down in his palace contriving death for Jason’s family; the end of *Argonautica* 1 is another important intertext for our passage (see Intr. 517–614).

For *itque reditque*, cf. also Tib. 2.6.46, Ov. *Her.* 15.118, *Trist.* 5.7a.14 (also with *vias*), V.Fl. 8.331, Stat. *Theb.* 8.49 (of Mercury shuttling between the upper and lower worlds), Mart. 1.48.2 and 6.10.8 (with *vias*); see also Heuvel’s note ad *Theb.* 1.102 for similar phrases.

562–578

*tum iacet in spatium sine corpore pigra vorago limosique lacus. large exundantibus urit ripas saevus aquis Phlegethon et turbine anhelo flammerum resonans saxosa incendia torquet.

parte alia torrens Cocytos sanguinis atri verticibus furit et spumanti gurgite fertur. at magnis semper divis regique deorum iurari dignata palus picis horrida rivo fumiferum volvit Styx inter sulphura limum.

tristior his Acheron sanie crassoque veneno aestuat et gelidam eructans cum murmure harenam descendit nigra lentus per stagna palude. hanc potat saniem non uno Cerberus ore, haec et Tisiphones sunt pocula, et atra Megaera hinc sitit, ac nullo rabies restinguitur haustu. ultimus erumpit lacrimarum fontibus amnis ante aulam atque aditus et inexorabile limen.

562–563a Next there lies, stretching to the distance, a sluggish chasm without substance, a slimy pool.

This swampy chasm is probably the basin into which the five rivers described hereafter flow (see Intr. 517–614). It is unclear how their relative position should be visualised, but presumably the chasm and rivers are all part of the same central, liminal space which is enclosed by the ten gates. The waters of the underworld are traditionally muddy and stagnant, and thus unwholesome (see below on *piger*). For the diction in these lines, we might compare Seneca’s description of the murky pool at which Tiresias performed his blood offering at *Oed.* 547 *limosa pigrum circumit fontem palus*; cf. also Stat. *Theb.* 8.17 *regemunt pigrique lacus ustaeque paludes*, another reference to the infernal waters combined (*pigri* suggests the Styx and *ustae* the fiery Phlegethon). Finally, the two elements ‘sluggish’ or ‘stagnant’ and ‘swampy’ are also found at Verg. *A.* 6.323 *Cocyti stagna alta vides Stygiamque paludem.*

*iacet* Both ‘lie’, ‘are positioned’ with *in spatium* (see n. below) and ‘lies motionless’, ‘stagnant’ with *pigra vorago*, as at Sen. *Her.F.* 686 *palus inertis foeda Cocyti iacet.*
**in spatiun** ‘stretching far’; cf. 322–323 refusis in spatiun immensum campis, Liv. 7.10.10 and Man. 2.673; cf. also Ov. Met. 11.176 trahit in spatiun, of Apollo stretching Mida’s ears.

**sine corpore** ‘bodiless’, i.e. ‘without substance’ (Reitz 1982: 68), rather than “with no creature to be seen” (Duff) or “sans forme définie” (Spaltenstein); the underworld’s scenery is as ghostlike as its inhabitants (cf. 560 lurida). The phrase is used of shades at Verg. A. 6.292 and Ov. Met. 4.443 (cf. also Cic. Tusc. 1.37), and of Scipio’s image created by Juno at 17.528.

For the use of *sine* with a substantive as an attribute, see LHSz 2.428, where it is compared to Greek adjectives with ἄ-; *sine corpore* is thus a quasi-synonym of *incorporeus*. Silius is fond of the construction; cf. also 4 *sine nomine rivum* and 582 *sine sanguine Pallor*.

**pigra vorago limosique lacus** Vergil used the word *vorago* solely for the infernal waters (a ‘chasm filled with water’; A. 6.296 of the Cocytus, 7.569, 9.105 = 10.114 of the Styx). Of later authors, only Silius applies the word in this way (also at 12.127). Alternatively, it may refer to the underworld in general, combining Sen. Her.F. 666 *ingens vorago faucibus vastis patet* (based upon Verg. A. 7.569, imitated at Sil. 5.617–618) and 704–705 *pigro ... mundo* (cf. n.530 *campus iners*).

The epithet *pigra* (‘sluggish’, perhaps ‘viscous’) is applied to the infernal waters at Stat. Theb. 8.17, to the Styx at Sen. Thy. 665 and Avernus at Theb. 11.588 and Silv. 5.3.271 (cf. TLL 10.1.2.2109.27ff.); compare also *iners* of the Cocytus at Sen. Her.F. 686 and 869–870, and of Styx at Ov. Met. 4.434. Cf. also 398 *stagnans Acherusius umor*.

*limosique lacus* is taken from Verg. A. 2.135–136 *limosoe lacu* (Sinon’s hideout). With *vorago*, cf. Stat. Silv. 1.1.66–67 *sacra vorago / famosique lacus* (lacus Curtius). I have read *limosi lacus* here as another reference to the chasm (taking –*que* as exepegetic, as in Statius), i.e. ‘a chasm with slimy waters’.

563b–565 *The violent Phlegethon burns its banks with wide overflowing waters and rolls burning masses of rock, resounding with whirling discharges of flame.*

For his depiction of the fiery river, Silius was inspired by Vergil’s and Statius’ lines on the Phlegethon (see below on *resonans saxosa incendia torquet*) and by Luc. 6.662–663 *ripamque sonantem ignibus* (Reitz 1982: 69), but also by various descriptions of volcanoes. All eruptions of lava were considered offshoots of the Phlegethon (Plat. Phaed. 113b). The model for most poetic volcano descriptions in Latin is Verg. G. 1.472–473 *vidimus undantem ruptis fornacibus Aetnam, / flammarumque globos liquefactaque volvere saxa*; Silius’ debt here is obvious. The poet compares Etna to the Phlegethon at 14.61–63 with very similar phrasing, *resonans* may hint metapoetically at the echoes of various poetic intertexts; see the nn. below.

In the *Aeneid* (6.550–551), the Phlegethon surrounds Tartarus (cf. Sen. Pha. 1226–1227, Thy. 73, 1017–1018); similarly in the *Punica*, the fiery river is a place of punishment for the sinners (Tullia at 835–836, Hannibal at 871–872). The river also kindled the torches brandished by Tisiphone (2.610) and Diana (12.713–714), who likewise act against ‘sinners’.

**exundantibus ... aquis** An arresting phrase, since these ‘overflowing waters’ are lava or fire; note also the oxymoron *urit ... aquis*. Elsewhere, *exundare* is used for the fires of Etna.

**urit ripas** Cf. Stat. *Silv*. 2.1.186 *adusta litora* with Van Dam’s observation on the etymological pun (*uro* = φλέγω).


*anhelus* refers to blasts of fire or hot air (i.e. the fire ‘pants’, or ‘emits hot blasts’; cf. *OLD* s.v. 2a). Presumably, these emissions are the balls of flame (*turbine*); therefore, either i) *anhelo* goes with *Phlegethon* by enallage or (most likely) ii) *anhelo* is dominant (‘a pant’, thus ‘blast’, ‘discharge’) and *turbine* is quasi-adjectival (‘whirling’; cf. for a similar pair of dominant adjective and adjectival noun e.g. Verg. *Ecl*. 1.52 *frigus* ... *opacum*, ‘cool shade’). For the use of *anhelus* for blazing heat, cf. also 5.513 cited above, 17.97, Stat. *Theb*. 5.87 (of volcanoes), and *anhelare* at Verg. *A*. 8.421 *fornacibus ignis anhelat*, Stat. *Theb*. 4.470. Its two senses ‘blazing’ and ‘panting’ are combined into ‘fiery breath’ (of monsters) at Ov. *Fast*. 4.492, *Her*. 12.15 and Sil. 12.144.

**resonans saxosa incendia torquet** Vergil writes *Phlegethon, torquetque sonantia saxa* (*A*. 6.551); in imitation, Statius has *Phlegethon incendia volvit* (*Theb*. 4.523). Silius combines the words in both lines, transferring the sound (sonantia, cf. also Luc. cited above) to the river itself with *resonans*, and merging Vergil’s *saxa* and Statius’ *incendia*. For similar phrases, cf. of Etna Verg. *G*. 1.473 *liquefactaque volvere saxa* and *Aetna* 2, and of Vesuvius (compared to Etna) Stat. *Silv*. 4.4.80; cf. also *V.Fl*. 7.571–572 (the fire-breathing bulls of Colchis).

At Sen. *Her.F*. 715, it is the river Acheron that is rolling stones.

For the poetic transferral of *saxosus* (‘rocky’, normally used of a landscape or sim.) to *incendia*, cf. 6.337 *saxosis latebris* (“a hiding place in the rocks”) and Stat. *Theb*. 4.808–809 *saxosum ... murmur* (“sound made by rocks” or “on the rocks”); but cf. also e.g. 181 *saxeus imber*. As with *turbine anhelo* (see above), the adjective is dominant (it is the rocks that are burning, rather than the fire that is ‘rocky’).

**566–567** In another part the fast-running Cocytus rages with whirlpools of dark blood and flows with foaming eddies.

Secondly, the Cocytus is here a raging torrent; the diction recalls descriptions of swift mountain streams, as at Verg. A. 2.496–498 spumeus amnis / exit oppositasque evicit gurgite moles, / fertur in arva furens, 10.603–604 torrentis aquae vel turbinis atri / more furens, Sil. 4.640–641 furit unda sonoris verticibus, ... torrens and 17.121–123 ceu turbidus amnis ... ripas spumanti gurgite laxat (cf. also 4.520–524). In contrast, many other writers depict this infernal river as a sluggish morass; cf. e.g. Verg. A. 6.323 Cocyi stagna, G. 4.478–479, Hor. Carm. 2.14.17–18, Sen. Her.F. 636 and 869–870, [Sen.] Her.O. 1963 and, notably, our lines 425–426 acerbam Cocyti ... paludem (cf. 14.586–587). A similar inconsistency regarding the nature of this river exists between Statius’ Theb. 8.29 lacrimis ... tumentes and Theb. 1.91, where the Cocytus has sulphureas ... undas.

Vergil gives the Cocytus the epithet ater at A. 6.132, which perhaps made Silius think of his description of a black raging torrent at 10.603–604 (above); blood would then be a suitably dark substance (cf. Spaltenstein). At the battle of Cannae, blood also flowed in torrents; cf. 9.365–366 turbine nigro sanguinis exundat torrens (with 563 exundantibus and 564 turbine).

**parte alia** This phrase is mainly found in two settings. The first is battlefield narratives, when the narrator turns to another part of the field. The other use, to which our line belongs, is in extensive catalogues or descriptions (some of which ekphraseis) to mark a next element; cf. 2.426 (Hannibal’s shield), 12.716 (the gods on Rome’s hills), Verg. A. 1.474 (the temple relief in Carthage), 8.433 (the Cyclopes’ activities), 8.682 (Aeneas’ shield), V.Fl. 1.140 (paintings of the Argo), Stat. Theb. 6.283 (imagines at Opheltes’ funeral).


**Cocytos** For the Greek spelling, cf. Hor. Carm. 2.14.18 (with ater) and Stat. Theb. 1.90 Cocyton and 8.30 (in Statius’ list of infernal rivers). Both Silius and Statius elsewhere only use the Latin genitive Cocyi; cf. in the Punic line 426, 596, 12.117 and 14.587.


**568–570** But the swampy Styx, always deemed worthy for the great deities and the king of the gods to swear by, rough with a stream of pitch, meanders its mud through sulphurous fumes.

Traditionally, the Styx is the river that the gods swear by and a swamp. Silius combines these two characteristics with two others regarding its composition of pitch and sulphur. The first ingredient goes back to Verg. A. 9.104–105 (= A. 10.113–114) Stygii per flumina fratris, per pice torrentis atraque voragine ripas, “by the waters of his Stygian brother, by the banks that seethe with pitch in the black swirling abyss”. For sulphur, cf. Stat. Theb. 1.91 on the Cocytus; the substance rises from the underworld at Sil. 12.133–134 (the Phlegraean fields).

Several words suggest that Silius’ Styx is cast in the mould of the Phlegethon and thus on fire: i) pitch and sulphur are both inflammable substances, and the mud is called
fumiferum, all which may suggest a burning Styx; ii) it is not impossible that torrens in Verg. l.c. (and in Ovid, see on picis horrida rivo) actually comes from torreo, ‘scorch’ (cf. Vergil’s torrentis … ripas and Silius’ urit ripas at 563–564); those passages are themselves modelled partially upon the description of the Phlegethon in Aeneid 6 (see Conington-Nettleship ad A. 9.105); iii) fumiferum … volvit probably echoes Stat. Theb. 4.523 fumidus atra vadis Phlegethon incendia volvit (the Styx is mentioned in the next line).

For such a transferral of characteristics from one infernal river to another between two poets, cf. Stat. Theb. 7.782 rapidae cursum Stygis (modelled after A. 6.550 rapidus … amnis, … Phlegethon; cf. Smolenaars ad loc.), Silv. 2.1.187–188, where Charon’s river (normally the Styx) has scorched banks (suggesting the Phlegethon), and Intr. 517–614. Cf. also 11.473 flammis Acheronta sonantem and Spaltenstein ad 13,568 for other flaming rivers in Hades.

regique deorum –que repeats one god with emphasis: “the great gods and their king in particular” (cf. OLD s.v. –que 9b, “proceeding from the general to the specific”). The reference to Jupiter is made because he makes the oaths by the Styx at Verg. A. 9.104–105 and 10.113–114 (cited above), and also at A. 12.816–817, where he calls an oath by the river the one binding law for the superis … divis (cf. here magnis divis). Silius thus hints at his intertexts.

iurari dignata palus iurare is here ‘swear by’ (TLL 7.2.675.46ff.); the phrase is an elaboration of the reference to the Styx in Ov. Met. 2.46 dis iuranda palus. Cf. also Verg. A. 6.323–324 Stygi amque paludem, di cuius iurare timent et fallere numen, Sen. Her.F. 712 hunc iurant dei. That the gods swear by the Styx is a recurrent topic since Hom. Il. 15.36, and semper probably reflects this (Spaltenstein); thus, dignata does not form a contrast with Vergil’s timent, but is rather a nod to tradition.


picis horrida rivo The Styx is called a river of pitch only at Verg. l.c., although its dark colour (which this substance marks, cf. Harrison ad A. 10.114) is commented upon more often. With horrida (‘rough’, ‘turbulent’), Silius picks up Vergil’s torrentis both in sound and sense; as in the Aeneid, the notion of turbulence conflicts both with the viscosity of the pitch (see Harrison) and with palus. For Styx as a torrent, cf. also Ov. Met. 3.291 and Stat. Theb. 7.782 (see above). As with the Acheron, the contradiction is removed if we interpret Silius’ Styx as a rapid stream flowing into a sluggish swamp. Alternatively, horrida is ‘rough’, i.e. with filth (cf. limum); compare A. 6.296 turbidus … caeno, on the Acheron.

fumiferum A rare adjective, attested only at Verg. A. 8.255, 9.522, Luc. 7.193, Ilias 599 and Stat. Theb. 8.466, in most cases of fire; Lucan uses it for a hot sulphur spring (cf. inter sulphura). The use of this type of adjective (–fer) might have been suggested by Stat. Theb. 1.57 umbrifero Styx livida fundo, but a more important intertext would be Theb. 4.523, for which see the general n. above.

571–573 More ghastly than these, the Acheron swirls with pus and thick venom, and noisily disgorging its chilly sand, it sluggishly descends with its black stream along stagnant waters.

Line 572 echoes Vergil’s depiction of the Acheron at A. 6.296–297 turbidus hic caeno vastaque voragine gurges / aestuat atque omnem Cocyo eructat harenam; the notion of turbulence is also present at Sen. Her.F. 714–715 tumultu rapitur ingenti ferox ... Acheron.
Silius here also seems to think of a wild river (cf. *cum murmure*, also used at 4.641 to describe the raging Trebia), apparently discharging into a sluggish morass (573), like Vergil’s Acheron flows into the swampy Cocytus. The presumed model for Homer’s infernal streams, the river Acheron in Epirus, also starts as a wild mountain river and then flows into a swampy lake, the λίμνη Ἀχερούσια (*RE* 1.217.34ff., Roscher s.v.). *per stagna* presumably indicates that the Acheron eventually moves so slow that it appears to be stagnant. The Acheron’s changing nature is reflected by the metre: 571–572 are mostly dactylic (with elision occurring twice in 572), suggesting swiftness, whereas 573 is spondeic (and opens with *descendit*, three long syllables), reproducing its sluggishness.

Vergil’s verb *eructat* (and perhaps Silius’ too) may in turn hint at Apollonius Rhodius’ description of the river Acheron in Mariandynia (A.R. 2.743–745), which disorges (ἀνερεύγεται, cf. *eructans*) its waters into the Black Sea; Apollonius stresses the noise (2.740–743; cf. *cum murmure*) and the chill of the breeze straight from Hades (2.737 πηγυλίς; cf. *gelidam*).

**tristior his** As an epithet, *tristis* is applied to the Styx at Verg. *A.* 6.638 (cf. Sen. *Thy.* 665, *Ag.* 608; cf. *Ag.* 12), with an etymological hint at στυγερός (cf. Bartelink 1965: 82; a similar play is possible here, since the ancients derived the name Acheron from ὀχος, ‘pain’, ‘grief’; cf. Melan. and Lycymn. *apud* Stob. 1.50, Wachsmuth p.418, and Suidas s.v. Ἀχέρων, Bartelink 1965: 83). The comparative, which connects the Acheron to the first three rivers, may be interpreted as a metaphorical statement; Silius’ Acheron surpasses even Vergil’s Styx (and the other rivers). It stresses the importance of this river of poison (whose description is the most extensive), as is fitting in a book in which poison plays such a large role: a Fury administered poison (albeit *Stygian* poison, 294) to the Capuans, an adumbration of Hannibal’s fate which closes the book (892). For the comparative, see also on *sanie crassoque veneno*.

**Acheron** In pre-Vergilian Latin poetry, the name (spelled as *Acheruns*, of Etruscan origin) only refers to the underworld as a whole; this usage is still found in later literature, with the spelling *Acheron* (in the *Punica*, cf. line 465, 1.94, 2.367, 2.536 and 14.243). While in Greek its use as a river in the underworld is as old as Homer (*Od.* 10.513), in Latin the first clear use of the name as a reference to the river is as late as Cicero (*Nat.* 3.43 and *Tusc.* 1.10); Vergil popularized this practice (*A.* 6.295ff.; cf. 6.107 and 7.569–570). Silius, like the other post-Vergilian poets, uses the Greek spelling (with the accusative – *onta* at 1.94, 2.367, 2.536 and 11.473); the nominative *Acheron* is only used since Seneca.

**sanie crassoque veneno** Cf. Stat. *Theb.* 1.106–107 suffusa veneno tenditur ac sanie glisceit cutis, “suffused with venom, her skin stretches and swells with matter”, a description of Tisiphone, who here drinks from the poisonous Acheron (575); see Intr. 517–614 with fn.28. The collocation goes back to Verg. *A.* 2.221 *perfusus sanie vittas atroque veneno* (Laocoon attacked by the twin serpents; cf. also Luc. 6.457 and 9.795 (there also of snakes), and Reitz 1982: 70 n.3 on *venenum* and *fel*.

*crasso veneno* is taken from another part of Lucan’s snake catalogue, 9.702–703 *plenior huc sanguis et crassi gutta veneni / decidit*; note the similar structure, with a comparative at the start of the line, followed by *huc* and the subject, and the verb in enjambment.

**gelidam** The epithet allows for a marked contrast between the fires of the Phlegethon (and the Styx, see n.568–570) and the chill of this river, but is in contradiction with 11.473.
flammis Acheronta sonantem; Delz is inclined to adopt Schader’s calidam. Coldness is not often a feature of infernal rivers in poetry (cf. the Styx at Hes. Th. 786 ψυχρόν; cf. Vitr. 8.3.16 frigidissimi umores; the Cocytus is called ψυχρότατος in Suidas s.v. Έλυσιον πεδίον), but cf. on Apollonius Rhodius’ Acheron above. The Acheron’s flames at 11.473 are not a definite argument against gelidam; indeed, they are themselves borrowed from the Phlegethon and are another illustration of Silius’ practice witnessed throughout this catalogue: he freely shuffles the characteristics of the rivers (see Intr. 517–614).

574–576 This pus Cerberus drinks with more than one mouth, this is also Tisiphone’s drink, and here black Megaera remains thirsty, and with no draught her fury is quenched.

Usually, the hell-hound and the Furies are portrayed as the producers of poison and as causes of suffering. Silius here effectively reverses the picture, while retaining through intertextuality their image of bringers of agony; see the individual nn. below.

The lines display a chiastic structure; non uno ... ore counterbalances nullo haustu, with the names of the two Furies in between. To this, anaphora is added, with the last element—hinc sitit—contrasting with the previous two.

potat saniem non uno ore Cerberus Cf. Horace’s description of the hell-hound at Carm. 3.11.17–20 Cerberus ... saniesque manet ore trilingui. Nisbet-Rudd ad loc. point out that in Horace, Cerberus produces the poison himself, just as at Ov. Met. 4.501 oris Cerberei spumae, which refers to a poison brought to the upper world by Tisiphone; the Fury’s snakes also produce sanies (Met. 4.494). The link between Hell’s watch hound and the two Furies here is that they all supply hellish poison and enjoy drinking it.

For non uno ore, a reference to Cerberus’ three heads, cf. also Verg. A. 6.417 latratu ... trifauci, Hor. Carm. 2.19.31–32 trilingui ore, Ov. Met. 4.450 tria ... ora and the very similar phrases at Sen. Ag. 860–861 nec ullo ... ore, Stat. Silv. 2.1.184 nec terno ... ore, 5.3.59–60 nec ... omni ore, 5.3.279 nullo ... ore; here, the negation rather expresses ‘not one, but three’.

Tisiphones sunt pocula The phrase is ambiguous, which is probably intended; the first meaning (in line with the clauses on Cerberus and Megaera) is that this is what Tisiphone normally drinks, the second that this is the drink she serves. For the first meaning and this use of pocula in general, cf. Verg. G. 3.529 pocula sunt fonts liquidi; for Tisiphone, compare Stat. Theb. 1.90–91, where she allows the snakes on her head to drink from the Cocytus (Reitz 1982: 71, Billerbeck 1983: 332, Spaltenstein), and 1.106 cited at n.571–573 sanie crassoque veneno. For the second, cf. V.Fl. 1.816–817 nigro fumantia pocula tabo / contigit ipsa ... Furiarum maxima (cf. Tisiphone) and the poisonous pocula at our lines 294–295 and 892.

hinc sitit A compressed phrase, probably short for ‘even after drinking from this river, she is still thirsty’, that is, her thirst cannot be slaked (as is natural for a true avenging Fury), which is explained in the rest of 576. Duff reads Blass’ conjecture hanc (‘she thirsts for this’), which is grammatically possible (cf. 12.264 non hunc sitiens ... cruorem); but the connection with the remainder of the line is less natural with Duff’s interpretation (he therefore also reads at instead of ac). That this use of hinc has no apparent parallels does not necessitate conjecturing it away, especially since Silius seems to aim at variation here (hanc, haec, hinc, each at the beginning of its line), which would be undone by reading hanc.
rabies restinguitur The verb is aptly chosen, since it may refer to thirst being quenched (Verg. Ecl. 5.47 sitim restinguere rivo, Cic. Fin. 2.3.9, Col. 11.3.9) and to the fires of fury being extinguished (cf. of passion Lucr. 4.1087—with rabies at 1083—and Cic. Phil. 5.25; cf. also fiurem exstinguere at Cic. Phil. 6.18). A Fury’s fury is never over.

577–578 The last stream erupts with a spring of tears before the hall and its entrance and the implacable doorstep.

Silius adds a fifth river to the familiar four, not the Lethe as is common (which is here situated in Elysium, cf. 555), but an unnamed stream of tears, another substance fitting the grim underworld (see n.566–567 above on the Cocytus). The place where the spring bursts forth is significant, and to be connected with inexorabile at 578. Spaltenstein rightly argues that it rises at the entrance of the underworld; he suggests that we might envisage the living to come and cry, unable to retrieve their lost ones. But the crying is more likely done by the dying (at Death’s doorstep) or the dead (recently arrived at the entrance of the underworld) themselves. If the reference is to the dying, it is likely that Silius plays with a physical and a metaphorical interpretation of Death’s doorstep; people cry when confronted with impending death (the limen mortis), but fate is inexorable (cf. Sen. Dial. 11.4.1: tears are of no avail against fate). If the phrase refers to crying ghosts, these dead wish in vain to be able to live again, but Death is implacable; cf. Verg. A. 6.425 irremeabilis undae.

lacrimarum ... amnis At Ov. Met. 11.47–48, rivers are said to be swollen with their own tears in mourning for Orpheus’ Eurydice. Byblis along with her tears turns into a river at Met. 9.656 ... Byblis, et umectat lacrimarum gramina rivo (cf. 9.664 vertitur in fontem), a line that is metrically nearly identical to ours. The same fate befalls Egeria at Met. 15.547–551. Cf. also comparisons of streaming tears to rivers at Ov. Her. 8.62 and 64, Fast. 2.820, Epic.Drus. 225, [Quint.] Decl. 6.4 and Statius’ simile at Theb. 11.193ff (with Venini’s note).

ante aulam atque aditus et ... limen At Verg. A. 6.635–636, Aeneas approaches the gate of Elysium (635 aditus), purifies himself with water (supposedly of the spring Silius has here invented) and leaves the golden bough at the doorstep (636 in limine). Apparently, here the gate to the underworld as a whole (aula, cf. 522) is meant.

inexorabile In poetry, this word is used of unyielding fate and approaching death at Verg. G. 2.491, Stat. Theb. 6.48 and Silv. 3.3.172 (cf. Silv. 1.4.1); cf. also Sen. Ep. 16.5 and 101.7, and (of infernal justice) Cic. Tusc. 1.10 inexorables iudices, Minos et Rhadamantus.

Silius has a similar tricolon at 16.97 et Notus et Boreas et inexorabilis Auster.

579–594

quanta cohors omni stabulante per atria monstro 
excubat et manes permixto murmure terret!

Luctus edax Maciesque, malis comes addita Morbis, 
et Maeror pastus fletu et sine sanguine Pallor 
Curaeque Insidiaque atque hinc querubunda Senectus, 
hinc angens utraque manu sua guttura Livor 
et, deforme malum ac sceleri proclivis, Egestas

Errorque infido pressu et Discordia gaudens
permiscere fretum caelo. sedet ostia Ditis
centenis suetus Briareus recludere palmis  
et Sphinx virgineos rictus infecta cruore  
Scyllaque Centaurique truces umbraeque Gigantum.  

Cerberus hic ruptis peragrat cum Tartara vinclis,  
non ipsa Allecto, non feta furore Megaera  
audet adire ferum, dum fractus mille catenis  
viperea latrans circumligat ilia cauda.  

579–580 What legion keeps vigil there, with every kind of monster stabled in those halls,  
and terrifies the shades with their mixed cries!  

These lines are intertextual with several passages that give characteristics of the hell-hound  
Cerberus, which here apply to all monsters dwelling in Dis’ entrance hall; see the notes.  

quanta cohors Cf. V.Fl. 6.111–113, where Caspian war hounds are compared to  
Cerberus: *ruit agmine nigro latratuque cohors, quanto sonat horrida Ditis ianua*, “the troop  
rushes on in black array and with baying loud as that which rings at the grim gate of Dis”;  
Silius has the same military term cohors (‘regiment’) and also focuses on terrifying  
presence (cf. V.Fl. 6.111 *terribiles ~ here terret*) and sound.  

omni stabulante per atria monstro The diction recalls Vergil’s catalogue of monsters  
(*monstra ferrarum, A. 6.285*) dwelling in the vestibulum (273; cf. *per atria*) of the  
underworld. The first of these, the Centaurs, are said to be ‘stabled’ there (6.286 *stabulant*;  
to all monsters.  

excubat Possibly a faint echo of Vergil’s *posuere cubilia Curiae (A. 6.274)*, but a more  
obvious intertext is provided by Tib. 1.3.71–72 *Cerberus ... aeratas excubat ante fores*.  
Like cohors and to a lesser extent stabulante, the word evokes a military image; the  
monsters are depicted not as inhabitants, but as sentries (cohors ... excubat recalls passages  
like Verg. A. 9.174–175 *omnis per muros legio ... / excubat*), which adds to the grim  
setting. Cf. Stat. *Theb. 7.47 statio* (‘watch’, ‘sentinel’), of the abstractions guarding the  
house of Mars.  

manes permixto murmure terret This is Cerberus’ pastime at Verg. A. 6.401 *latrans  
exsanguis terreat umbras* (the full lines recur almost verbally at Sil. 3.35–36) and Sen.  
*Her.F. 783 saevus territat umbras Stygius canis* (cf. 793–794). Silius replaces Vergil’s  
latrans with murmure, which better fits the motley crowd; vague noises also intensify the  
place’s terror. For the line ending, cf. V.Fl. 4.239 *rabidoque ita murmurere terret*.  

For permixtus used in this absolute sense (with ‘mingled voices’, i.e. not in unison), cf.  
12.742–743 *permixta voce triumphum Tarpeii clamant Iovis*.  

581–587a Voracious Grief is there and Leanness, companion to malignant Diseases, and  
Sorrow fed by weeping and bloodless Pallor and Anxieties and Guile and here grumpy Old  
Age, there Jealousy strangling its own throat with both hands, and Poverty, deformed evil  
and inclined to crime, and Error with unreliable step and Discord, happy to mix sea with sky.  

Personified abstractions have had a place in poetry since Homer (e.g. *Il. 4.440*) and  
Hesiod (*Th. 211ff.*); since Vergil’s *katabasis*, they are a *topos* in underworld descriptions  
*A. 6.273ff.*, from which six of the twelve personifications are taken (and *Macies and Pallor*

As in Statius (cf. Dewar op.cit.), Silius’ abstractions sometimes play a prominent role as acting deity, notably Fides (2.481–525, 13.281–295). At 2.549–552 and 4.325, the abstractions from Hell aid Hannibal (as Reitz 1982: 74 n.1 observes, the good ones Spes Virtusque ... Pudor are on the Roman side at 4.328–329); in Seneca’s plays and Statius’ Thebaid they also haunt the earth. Here, they have returned to the underworld, suggesting a closure of the theme of hell-on-earth; in the world of the Punica, this may reflect the shift of power in war in favour of the Romans (see Intr. 517–614).

The personifications represent various forms of misery, most of which may constitute a way of dying; for one may pass away through age (Senectus), physical afflictions such as hunger-induced leanness (Macies) and disease (Morbi), mental afflictions like wasting grief (Luctus, Maeror), fear or worries (Curae) or jealousy (Livor), or by the hand of others, be it through a sudden attack (Insidiae, i.e. murder?), war (Discordia) or even execution (if that is what the significance of sceleri proclivis Egestas is). For such catalogues of causes of death, see also Van Dam ad Stat. Sivl. 2.1.213–218 (see for Statius’ personified and deadly Autumn also n.560–561 nigrum pandens Mors lurida rictum).

**Luctus edax** ‘Grief’ is also the first of Vergil’s personified evils in the underworld (A. 6.274), appears halfway in Seneca’s similar catalogues at Her.F. 690–696 and Oed. 590ff., and also opens the lists at Ov. Met. 4.484–485, Stat. Theb. 2.287–288, 10.557–560 and Sil. 2.549–552. Thus the mere positioning of Luctus at the front suggests that a list of abstractions will follow.

The epithet edax is elsewhere applied to Livor, ‘Jealousy’ (e.g. Ov. Am. 1.15.1), which appears later in Silius’ list, or to tempus or vetustas (e.g. Ov. Met. 15.234; cf. Hor. Carm. 3.30.3 imber edax). For its use for grief, compare Hor. Carm. 2.11.17–18 curas edacis; for the image, cf. also Sen. Tro. 1011 lenius luctus lacrimaeque mordent.

**Macies** ‘Leanness’ is a rare personification, found only here, at Hor. Carm. 1.3.30 and at Sen. Oed. 1059–1061, but it is naturally associated with Fames (cf. the description of Fames at Ov. Met. 8.807 auxerat articulos macies) which appears at Verg. A. 6.276 and Sen. Her.F. 691 (cf. Billerbeck 1983: 333); cf. also (with malis comes) Luc. 4.93–94 comes ... magnorum prima malorum ... fames. For macies accompanying diseases, cf. Verg. G. 4.255, [Tib.] 4.4.5.

**comes addita** The idea is possibly taken from Verg. A. 6.278 consanguineus Leti Sopor (Spaltenstein); cf. also Ov. Met. 4.484 Luctus comitatur (Brugnoli 1994: 338 n.29). The expression is used of a personification also at 7.205 Somnus, Bacche, tibi comes additus, and is modelled upon Verg. A. 6.528–529 comes additus una hortator scelerae Aeolides (cf. Petr. 124.267–268, Stat. Theb. 8.184 and, different, Man. 2.884); cf. also V.Fl. 3.387–388 comes una sororum additur (a Fury accompanying the dead).
Morbis I have capitalized the noun (cf. Spaltenstein) because of Morbi at Verg. A. 6.275 (cf. G. 3.67, possibly another personification) and Morbus at Sen. Oed. 1059 (followed by Macies) and Her.F. 694.

Maeror pastus fletu ‘Sorrow’ is another rare deity (elsewhere only at 2.550 and Sen. Thy. 922), and very similar to Luctus in the preceding line; for such ‘tautology’ in these catalogues, cf. the couples Metus & Pavor and Dolor & Luctus at Sen. Her.F. 693–694 and the hard-to-distinguish quadruplets Luctus, Planctus, Maeror and Dolor at 2.549–550.

For Maeror feeding upon tears, Reitz compares Ov. Met. 10.75 cura dolorque animi lacrimaeque alimenta fuere. Cf. also the sentiment at 392 odit solacia luctus and Sen. Thy. 952–953 Maeror lacramas amat assuetas, flendi miseris dira cupido est, “Grief loves her accustomed tears, and to the wretched comes an ominous desire for weeping”.

t sine sanguine Pallor ‘Bloodless Pallor’ is an apt figure in the realm of Hades, where all inhabitants are characterized by lack of blood (cf. 408 regna ... pallentia and 560 Mors lurida with nn.). As a personification, it is found at Ov. Met. 8.790 (living near the house of Fames, cf. Macies here), but cf. also Verg. A. 6.275 pallentes ... Morbi, V.Fl. 2.205 genis pallentibus Irae and Stat. Theb. 7.49 exsanguesque Metus.

sine sanguine usually means ‘without bloodshed’ (cf. 37 and 381). It is here a synonym of exsanguis, ‘bloodless’ (cf. Stat. l.c., Verg. A. 6.400 exsanguis ... umbras); cf. n.562–563 sine corpore. The same sense is found in Ovid, though not of shades (of the living turned white: Am. 1.7.51, Her. 21.215, Met. 7.136, 14.210; of their remains: Met. 5.249, 6.304, 11.736).

Curae ‘Anxieties’ appear second in Vergil’s list (A. 6.274); cf. also personified Cura at Hor. Carm. 2.16.22 and 3.1.40 and Stat. Silv. 1.5.12.

Insidiae ‘Surprise attack’ is one of the companions of Mars at Verg. A. 12.336 Iraeque Insidiaeqe (with Curae here replacing Irae, cf. Reitz 1982: 76) and Stat. Theb. 7.50; Silius here follows its transfer to the underworld at Petr. 124.257.

queribunda Senectus ‘Old Age’ is called tristis at Verg. A. 6.275 (cf. G. 3.67, with n. Morbis above), feebly stumbles on with a stick as the last of the abstractions at Sen. Her.F. 695–696 and is a burden to itself at Oed. 594. For Silius’ ‘grumpy’ (perhaps self-mockery, considering his age at writing this?), cf. Horace’s portrait of an old man at Ars 173–174 difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti se puero.

queribundus is very rare, found only at Cic. Sull. 30, Calp. 5.65 and V.Fl. 7.126; the use of a form ending in –bundus may have been suggested by Calp. Ecl. 7.73 tremebunda senectus.

angens ... sua guttura Livor ‘Jealousy’ does not appear in earlier catalogues (our passage may have inspired its inclusion at Claud. Ruf. 1.32), but it is often personified; cf. e.g. the appearance of Invidia in Ov. Met. 2.760ff. and at Verg. G. 3.37 (as a penalized sinner in the underworld). In most cases, Jealousy is keen on destroying others rather than itself; that Jealousy harms itself is, however, already formulated in Ov. Met. 2.781–782 carpitque et carpitur una suppliciumque suum est (cf. Spaltenstein). For other self-maiming abstractions, cf. Sen. Her.F. 97–98 suumque lambens sanguinem Impietas ... in se semper armatus Furor, Stat. Silv. 2.6.73–77 Rhamnusia ... seseque videndo torsit et invidiae, and perhaps Sil. 2.549–550 (with Spaltenstein’s note).

deforme malum ac sceleri proclivis Egestas An elaboration of Vergil’s epithet turpis for ‘Poverty’ (A. 6.276, echoing Lucr. 3.65; cf. also [Sen.] Oct. 829), to which he adds
(referring to all abstractions) *terribiles visu formae* (cf. *deforme*); Seneca calls it *tristis* in *Thy.* 303 and 924. Silius fleshes out the condemnation by Vergil; poverty is ugly, because it leads to crime, for which Reitz and Spaltenstein compare the abstraction sharing a line with *Egestas* in Vergil, *malesuada Fames*. The same idea is found at Luc. 1.173–174 *quod suasisset egestas, vile nefas* (cf. Cic. *Phil.* 2.62, Mart. 11.87.3).

The phrase *deforme malum* is taken from Ovid, who uses it for *Ira* (*Ars* 3.373); cf. also of *fames* [Quint.] *Decl.* 12.15 *deformissima malorum*.

For *scleri proclivis*, cf. also Luc. 6.147 *pronus ad omne nefas* and [Sen.] *Oct.* 868 *pronom malo animum*. In the sense ‘prone to’, *proclivis* usually goes with *ad* or *in* + acc.; for the dative, *OLD* and *TLL* cite only Phaed. 3.epil.21 *proclivis ... misericordiae* (conj. Scheffer, *ω* *misericordia*), but the construction is presumably by analogy with *pronus*, which commonly goes with a dative.

**Errorque infido gressu** ‘Error’ has a ‘step which cannot be relied upon’, because its feet will lead it astray. It appears as a personification in the underworld at Sen. *Her.F.* 98 (also with *–que* and at the head of the line); cf. also Ov. *Am.* 1.2.35 and *Met.* 12.59 (at Fama’s house). It is also an ‘ingredient’ of Tisiphone’s poison at Ov. *Met.* 4.502 *erroresque vagos*.

*infidus* (‘unstable’, ‘unreliable’) often characterizes men, seas or peace, but its use of feet here seems to have no direct parallels. In *TLL* 7.1.1419.63–64 it is suggested to take it as an enallage with *Error*, but then the significance of *gressu* is unclear and the image of *Error* itself straying would be lost.

**Discordia** Like *Luctus*, ‘Discord’ is another frequent figure in catalogues of personified evils. It is often the last one, as here (cf. Verg. *A.* 6.280, Petr. 124.271, Stat. *Theb.* 2.288, 5.74), though it is not as obviously a closing device as *Luctus* is an opener (Discord is mentioned halfway in Mars’ retinue at *A.* 8.702; cf. V.Fl. 2.204 and Stat. *Theb.* 7.50). Cf. also Sen. *Her.F.* 93 *discordem deam*, the first of the deities that Juno will call from Hades.

At 9.288–289, Discord incites the gods to join the battle at Cannae (thus indeed mingling heaven and earth, see foll. n.); there, the capitalization is suggested by *demens*, which qualifies personified Discord at Verg. *A.* 6.280 and V.Fl. 2.204. Ennius seems to have given Discord a role after the end of the First Punic war, when the daemon re-opens the gates of war (*Ann.* 7.225–226 Skutsch), providing a model for Vergil’s Allecto in *Aeneid* 7; like Silius, Ennius associated Discord with Hades and with mixing the cosmic elements (7.220–221 *corpore Tartarino prognata paluda virago / cui par imber et ignis, spiritus et gravis terra*; for the connections with both the Homeric *Ερίς* and Empedocles’ cosmic force of Strife, *Neîkος*, see Oostenbroek 1977, Skutsch *ad loc.*). For the personification, cf. also Prop. 1.22.5, *Diris* 83, Petr. 124.295, V.Fl. 7.468 and possibly Luc. 6.780.


For Silius, the literal and metaphorical confounding of the cosmos are closely related. The beginning of 587 is much like 15.714 *pelago caelum permiscuit Eurus*, a description of
a furious storm at sea; this literal ‘mingling sea and heaven’ is inspired by Verg. A. 1.133–134 caelum terramque ..., venti, miscere ... audetis? and 5.790–791 maria omnia caelo miscuit, both referring to Juno’s storm that shipwrecked Aeneas (cf. also Sen. Ag. 473–474). Like Discordia here, Juno willingly upset the world’s balance (in order to stop Aeneas). For the expression, cf. also Lucr. 3.842, Liv. 4.3.6, Juv. 2.25–28 and Otto caelum 1.

587b–590 There sits Briareus, wont to open the gates of Dis with his hundred hands, and the Sphinx, her virgin jaws painted red with blood, and Scylla and the savage Centaurs and the Giants’ shades.

The catalogue of personified evils is followed by a parade of dead monsters, based in form and substance upon Vergil’s similar list at A. 6.285–289, there also following upon the personifications. Sen. Her.F. 778–781, Stat. Theb. 4.533–535 and Silv. 5.3.279–282 are similar exhibitions (cf. also Luc. 6.662–665). Compare also Ovid’s enumeration of fictional compound creatures at Trist. 4.7.11ff. (cf. Mart. 10.4), for which see n. Sphinx virgineos rictus infecta cruore. For the significance of the fact that these monsters are now dead, see Intr. 517–614.

The monsters named here are compound creatures, most combining two species: Briareus is a ‘hundred-hander’, the Sphinx is both virgin (virgineos) and lion-like predator (rictus; the juxtaposition emphasises the oxymoron), Scylla half dog (cf. Vergil’s biformes at A. 6.286), the Centaurs half equine and the Giants are regularly said to sport serpentine feet (6.181–182, Trist. 4.7.17 serpentipedesque Gigantas, Luc. 9.656).

sedet Briareus acts as gatekeeper, sitting there like Tisiphone guarding the gate to Tartarus in Vergil (A. 6.555–556 Tisiphoneque sedens ... vestibulum ... servat), Cerberus at Sen. Tro. 403–404 obsidens custos non facili Cerberus ostio or Mors in Statius’ Nekyia (Theb. 4.528).

ostia Ditis See n.419–422a portae ostia Tartareae. Making Briareus with his hundred arms the gatekeeper may have been prompted by the hundred ostia of the Sibyl’s cave (A. 6.43).

centenis ... Briareus ... palmis Briareus is one of the three hekatoncheires, the giants with a hundred arms whom according to Hesiod Zeus appointed as warders of the Titans in Tartarus (Th. 734–735), but whom the Romans usually rank with the Titans; Briareus is presented as a conspirator against Jupiter at Ov. Fast. 3.805–806 (cf. Met. 1.183–184), [Sen.] Her.O. 167 and Stat. Theb. 2.595ff., and Hyginus names him along with the Titans as one of the children of Earth (praef.3; cf. Luc. 4.596). Silius has followed Hesiod’s version by making Briareus the gatekeeper.

Vergil also names him among the monsters at the entrance of the underworld (A. 6.287 centumgeminus Briareus). He is also called Aegaeon (cf. Hom. Il. 1.403); cf. A. 10.565–566 Aegaeon ... cui ... centenasque manus and (in Statius’ Nekyia) Theb. 4.535 angustam centeni Aegaeonis umbram. For the hekatoncheires in Latin literature, cf. also Hor. Carm. 2.17.14, 3.4.69, Ov. Am. 2.1.12, Met. 2.9–10, Trist. 4.7.18.

Sphinx virgineos rictus infecta cruore Silius alludes not to the Sphinx’ famous riddles, but to the penalty for answering wrong; the victim was devoured. The diction echoes victorious Oedipus’ words at Sen. Oed. 92–94 nec Sphinxa ... fugi: cruentos vatis infandae tuli rictus. Through his victory, the Sphinx is now in the underworld (and Oedipus would have faced Giants as well, if needed; cf. Oed. 91 and here 590 umbraeque Gigantum; see Billerbeck 1983: 333 n.25). The sight of the defeated Sphinx and the other monsters is a
lesson for Scipio, who will also have to face and defeat evils; its status as a famous defeated
monster is presumably why Silius included the Sphinx, which appears in none of the other
lists of infernal monsters (but cf. Ov. Trist. 4.7.17).

As at 440–441 (see n.), Silius here presents a monster with an appetite for human flesh
(cf. also 598). The last three words suggest a ravenous animal (10.244–245, Ov. Met.
11.367, Sen. Thy. 734), but cf. also Polyphemus and the giant Laestrygonians (Ov. Met.
14.168, 14.237–238) and Diomedes’ horses (Sen. Ag. 845–847). For rictus, see n.560–561
nigrum pandens Mors lurida rictum. Traditionally, the Sphinx has the winged body of a
lion, while her upper part is human (cf. e.g. Apollod. 3.5.8, Ael. NA 12.7, Auson. Gryph.
40–41, Neue Pauly s.v. Sphinx); strikingly, Seneca and Silius ascribe leonine features
(rictus) to her human part.

The epithet virgineus qualifies several other well-known female monsters; cf. the
Harpies (Verg. A. 3.216, Ov. Met. 7.4), the Sirens (Ov. Met. 5.563) and Scylla ([Tib.] 3.4.89, and with virgo Ov. Trist. 4.7.13, Met. 13.733 and [Quint.] Decl. 12.26).

Scyllaque Centaurique truces These monsters have been paired since Lucr. 4.732 and
5.890–93 as fictional compound creatures (see above). Vergil opens his parade of monstra
with them, as does Statius at Theb. 4.533–534, who places them again in the underworld at
Silv. 5.3.279ff.; cf. also Ov. Trist. 4.7.12 and 14. Seneca applies the same epithet truces
(‘savage’) to the Centaurs in his similar catalogue at Her.F. 778ff. (cf. also Stat. Theb.
6.53). Seneca’s focus on their defeat by Hercules corresponds to the role of these dead
monsters here as parallels for the defeat of Carthage (see Intr. 517–614). For the extreme
ferocity of the Centaurs, cf. Stat. Theb. 4.533–534 inane furentes Centauros (based upon

umbraeque Gigantum The Giants had stormed Olympus in an attempt to overthrow
Jupiter, but were defeated by the gods and Hercules and buried under the ground, now
650). They are named among the infernal horrors at Luc. 6.663–665 and Stat. Theb. 4.534;
cf. also Ov. Trist. 4.7.17. Their place at Sen. Oed. 91 (cf. on the Sphinx above) as a threat
that Oedipus would have removed may also have prompted their inclusion here (Billerbeck

By ending his list with ghosts of giants, Silius follows Vergil (who concluded his list
with forma tricorporis umbrae, Geryon’s shade) and Statius (who ends with Aegaeon’s
umbra at Theb. 4.535).

591–594 When Cerberus wanders here through the Tartarus with his bonds broken, not
even Allecto, not Megaera (though full of wrath) dares approach the savage beast, until,
subdued by a thousand chains, it barks and twines around its lower parts its snaky tail.

The sentence is structured chiastically, with the broken and the new chains in the first
and last clauses and the two Furies in the middle. Of each of the pairs of clauses, the second
clause is longest.

It can be argued that Cerberus roaming free is an image for evil (such as war) scourging
the world, and in the Punica particularly for Hannibal still being free to harass Rome. Two
allusive phrases suggest this (cf. also the nn. below for verbal correspondences with
descriptions of Hannibal):
i) With his broken chains, Cerberus is evocative of other inhabitants of Hades broken loose, such as Catiline at Luc. 6.793–794 *abruptis ... minax fractisque catenis*, the Titan Coeus at V.Fl. 3.225 *vincla Iovis fractaque trahens adamante catenas* and the Giants at Sil. 12.145–146 *minantur rumpere compagem impositam* (cf. also Stat. *Theb.* 8.42ff.). All these figures suggest anarchy and gigantomachy (see the prev. n. on the Giants). In the *Punica*, it is Hannibal who performs his own gigantomachy by climbing the Alps and battling Jupiter before Rome (cf. the reference to Typhoeus at 12.660); see von Albrecht 1964: 32ff., Fucecchi 1990a and 2013, Hardie 1993: 80, Marks 2005: 168–169 with 168 n.18, Klaassen 2010: 111–112.

ii) Infernal monsters set loose symbolize a catastrophic event on earth; cf. the (civil) wars heralded by the advent of a Fury summoned from Hell (Allecto in *Aeneid* 7, Tisiphone in Statius’ *Thebaid* 1; cf. also the opening of Hell at Petr. 124.254ff.) and the Theban pestilence which at Sen. *Oed.* 171–173 is described in terms of Cerberus having broken his bonds and wandering freely (*Taenarii vincla ferri rupisse canem fama et nostris errare locis*). During the siege of Saguntum, Hannibal’s first feat of arms in the *Punica*, Juno sets a Fury and its retinue of infernal monsters upon the Saguntines (2.526ff.; see n.581–587a). Hannibal’s war is from the start connected with Hell (cf. the chthonic deities invoked at 1.94–95 and 1.119–120).

While 591–593 thus serve to establish an analogy between Cerberus’ wanderings and the threat posed by Hannibal, line 594 evokes another intertext. *viperea ... circumligat ilia cauda* closely echoes Sen. *Her.F.* 812 *utrumque cauda pulsat anguifera latus*, part of Seneca’s description of Cerberus being brought in chains from Hell by Hercules (cf. Venini 1992). In the *Punica*, the capture of the hell-hound is depicted on one of the frescoes of Hercules’ temple at Gades; 3.35 *Stygius saevis terrens latratibus umbras* alludes to *Her.F.* 783 *hic saevus umbras territat Stygius canis* (both passages echo Verg. *A.* 6.400–401 *licet ingens ianitor antro aeternum latrans exsanguis terreat umbras*, which implicitly refers to Hercules’ capture of the beast).

Cerberus may break free, and does so regularly (as is implied by *cum*, ‘whenever’); but a hero like Hercules can chain him. While Cerberus’ roaming represents Hannibal’s war, Scipio follows in Hercules’ footsteps and will curb this threat. When Hannibal studies the frescoes at Gades, he fails to see that his role is not that of Hercules, whom he strives to emulate, but that of the monsters defeated by the hero; similarly, he does not grasp the significance for himself when the Phlegraean fields are shown to him where the Giants lie buried, defeated by Hercules. At the end of the epic, triumphant Scipio is compared to Hercules as he conquered the Giants there; cf. 17.649–650. For Scipio as a Herculean figure, see also Intr. 762–805.

**peragrat** For this verb, rarely used in poetry after Lucretius, cf. Verg. *A.* 10.723, of a hungry lion stalking the woodlands in search of prey.

**feta furore** Cf. the very similar diction at 11.203 *multā feta gerens irā praecordia* (of Hannibal). The phrase is based upon Verg. *A.* 1.51 *loca feraentibus austris* (Aeolus’ kingdom). For the ablative, see *TLL* 6.1.640.55ff.; cf. also *gravidus* at 110 and 494 (with nn.).

**audet adire** A reminiscence of Verg. *A.* 5.378–379 *nec quisquam ... / audet adire virum*, of the boxer Dares; cf. also Sil. 12.682–683 *nec ... somnusve frementem / ausus adire virum* (where sleep dares not approach Hannibal).
fractus mille catenis The mss. reading *fractis* may seem defensible in view of the similar constructions at Luc. 6.793–794 and V.Fl. 3.225 cited above; the phrase would either be an elaboration of 591 *ruptis ... vinclis* or, as Spaltenstein argues, refer to numerous extra chains with which it is attempted, in vain, to catch Cerberus; *dum* should then be interpreted as ‘while’. The large number, not even sufficient to contain the beast, suggests its fearsomeness (cf. Hor. *Serm.* 2.3.70–71, where Proteus-like Damosippus will escape a thousand bonds by being slippery). Still, the rest of the sentence speaks against this interpretation; I have therefore followed Delz in printing Damstê’s conjecture *fractus*, “subdued”, and read *dum* as ‘until’. For, as Venini (1992: 246) notes, the detail of the tail twined around Cerberus’ flanks, with its echo of Hercules’ capture of the beast, is suggestive of submission rather than triumphant escape. *ruptis vinclis* is thus counterbalanced by *fractus catenis*; having severed his chains, Cerberus is himself ‘broken’, i.e. subdued, by new ones; for this meaning, cf. also 876 *fractus*, of Hannibal (!).

*viperea ... circumligat ilia cauda* A close echo of Sen. *Her.* F. 812 *utrumque cauda pulsat anguifera latus*; Silius emulates by making Cerberus’ snaky tail not merely ‘hit’ its flanks, but ‘entwine’ them, like a true snake would. Like Seneca, he presents Cerberus’ tail as serpentine (cf. also *Her.* F. 787 and Apollod. 2.5.12); in most renderings, it is rather its mane that bristles with snakes (cf. Sen. *Her.* F. 786, Verg. *A.* 6.419, Tib. 1.3.71, 3.4.87, Hor. *Carm.* 3.11.18, Ov. *Her.* 9.94, *Met.* 10.21, *Culex* 221, Luc. 6.664; see also Roscher 2.1.1126.68–1127.16).


595–600

dextra vasta comas nemorosaque bracchia fundit

taxus Cocyi rigua frondosior unda.

hic dirae volucres pastusque cadavere vultur

et multus bubo ac sparsis strix sanguine pennis

Harpyiaequae fovent nidos atque omnibus haerent
condensae folis; saevit stridoribus arbor.

At the right, a huge yew-tree spreads its foliage and branches which resemble an entire forest, growing more unbramgeous due to the irrigating water of the Cocytus.

This yew is obviously modelled upon Vergil’s infernal elm (the abode of *vana Somnia*), which is described between the list of personified abstractions and the catalogue of mythical beasts at *A.* 6.282–283: *in medio ramos annosaque brachcia pandit / ulmus opaca ingens*. But our lines follow even more closely Seneca’s imitation at *Her.* F. 686–690. There, it is described how at the Cocytus (cf. *Cocyti ... unda*) the *vultur*, *bubo* and *strix* live (cf. 597–600 here); the place is shadowed by the leaves of a yew tree (689–690 *horrent opaca fronde nigrantes comae / taxo imminente*) in which Sleep resides (cf. Vergil’s *Somnia*). Silius has copied the structure of Vergil’s lines, replacing every word with synonyms or equivalent words (retaining only *brachcia*; cf. Brugnoli 1994: 339 n.42); *comas* and *frondosior* and the general setting are modelled upon Seneca’s text, while the birds are now placed in the tree.
Another intertext is Sen. Oed. 530ff., the grove in which Tiresias performed his nekyia. In the middle stands a huge tree (medio stat ingens arbor, echoing Vergil) giving ample shade (cf. nemorosa, frondosior), and a murky pool lies beneath its shadow (cf. Cocyti...unda); the pool is cold (Oed. 546 rigens, perhaps the model for rigua here). Cf. also the towering oak in the gloomy grove of Sen. Thy. 650–656 and the sinister shade in which the other Nekyiai are set at Luc. 6.644–645 (the abode of Erictho) and Stat. Theb. 4.419ff. See also on taxus below.

dextra i.e. to the right of the entrance. The word is the counterpart of Vergil’s in medio; ‘at the right’, also the position for propitious omens, is oxymoronic with the sinister taxus.

comas ... bracchia The phraseology is suggestive of human anatomy, as at Verg. A. 12.209 matre caret posuitque comas et bracchia ferro (of Latinus’ wooden sceptre). The tree is thus rendered as another giant infernal monster, an illusion which holds until the next line.

nemorosa ... frondosior nemorosa (replacing Vergil’s annosa) usually qualifies regions and mountains (‘woody’); its use of a single tree (‘leafy’) is striking (OLD s.v. 2 cites only Plin. Nat. 12.9 platanus ... nemorosa vertice as parallel). Cf. of a giant oak 5.482–483 instar ... nemoris (Spaltenstein), with its dark shade (484 frondosi nigra ... roboris umbra). With the emphasis on the broad foliage, Silius underlines the darkness of the tree’s shade—normally a welcome addition to a locus amoenus, it here only adds to the gloom of the underworld.

taxus Like the cypress, the yew is a symbol of death. Its sap is poisonous; cf. Verg. G. 2.557 (cf. Colum. 9.4; cf. also Ecl. 9.30 and G. 4.47), Stat. Theb. 6.101 (Opheltes’ pyre), Plin. Nat. 16.50 (cf. 24.116) and Suet. Claud. 16.4. Its deadly nature and bleakness associate it with the underworld; yew trees line the way to Hades at Ov. Met. 4.432 and populate the sinister groves at Sen. Thy. 654 (see above), Luc. 3.419 and 6.644–645. In Statius’ Thebaid, Tisiphone carries a torch of yew wood (4.485, 8.9, 11.93–94), and in his Silvae, the poet wears a wreath of yew as a sign of mourning (5.3.8, 5.5.29–30); cf. also the garland of yew worn by the sacrificial bull (thus doomed to the underworld) at V.Fl. 1.777.

rigua ‘Irrigating’; cf. Verg. G. 2.485 rigui ... amnes and OLD s.v. 1a.

597–600 Here birds of ill omen have their nests—the vulture feeding on carcasses and many an eagle owl and the strix with its feathers smeared with blood and the Harpies—and they stick closely packed to every leaf; the tree rages with their shrieking.

Silius imitates Seneca (Her.F. 687–688 hic vultur, illic lucifer bubo gemit / omenque triste resonat infaustae strigis; see n.595–596) and adds the Harpies, transferring them from Vergil’s list of mythical monsters (A. 6.289). Statius has a similar group of birds at Theb. 3.508ff. as bad portents; he names the vultur, accipiter, bubo and strix (cf. 3.510 dirae strident in nube volucres and here 600 stridoribus). The three birds are also grouped at Ov. Am. 1.12.19–20 in connection with an ill-omened piece of wood. At Luc. 6.689, Erictho imitates (along with other animal sounds) the screeches of bubo and strix to bewitch the infernal deities; the body parts of both birds are used for magic at Hor. Ep. 5.20, Ov. Met. 7.269 and Sen. Med. 732–734. Cf. also Boios apud Ant.Lib. 21, where the woman Polyphonte is turned into a στύξ (Latin: strix), an animal that hangs upside down (thus a chthonic creature) and forebodes (civil) war with its nocturnal cries; her sons are turned into an eagle owl (cf. bubo) and vulture (cf. vultur).
dirae volucres As Duff translates, “birds of ill omen”. The vulture is associated with death and corpses (cf. pastusque cadavere); the Harpies, similar to carrion birds in that they eat food others have provided, may fall in the same category, and both they and the vulture are related with punishment (of Phineus and Prometheus / Tityos respectively; see the foll. n.). The two species of owl portended evil for anyone seeing them or hearing their hooting (see the nn. below), and the strix was often portrayed as a vampire, associating it with death. But dirae here also means ‘horrific’ in general (cf. Reitz 1982: 83).

For the phrase, cf. Verg. A. 3.262 (on the Harpies) and 8.235 dirarum nidis domus opportuna volucrum (cf. 599 nidos), of the birds near Cacus’ cave (which provided plenty of carcasses). The bird that eats Prometheus’ liver has the same title at Cic. Tusc. 2.10.24 and V.Fl. 4.79 (cf. 4.68–69 diri vulturis). Cf. also (‘ill-omened’) Luc. 1.558, Stat. Theb. 2.522–523.

pastusque cadavere vultur At all three occurrences of vultur in the Punica, its diet of carrion is stressed (see n.471–472). Its mention in an infernal setting also evokes its other role, however: it is the instrument of the punishment of Tityos, on whose liver it feasts; cf. Verg. A. 6.597–600 and also e.g. Hom. Od. 11.576–579, Ov. Met. 4.457, Sen. Her.F. 756, Stat. Theb. 4.538; cf. also Prometheus’ similar penalty (see the prev. n. and V.Fl. 7.359). The bird represents punishment in the nether world (cf. Juv. 13.51–52, [Sen.] Her.O. 947); together with the Harpies (the tormentors of Phineus), it paves the way for the punished villains at 601ff. For another allusion to Tityos’ punishment, see 839–841 (with n).

multus bubo Seeing or hearing the large eagle owl was regarded an ill omen; cf. Plin. Nat. 10.34 bubo, funebris et maxime abominatus publicis praecipue auspiciis (cf. 10.35, 29.82). It is one of the portents heralding the catastrophe at Cannae in 8.633; cf. also Sen. Her.F. 687 lucifer, and Ov. Met. 5.549–550 venturi nuntia luctus, ignavus bubo, dirum mortalibus omen, 6.431–432, 10.452–453, 15.791, Luc. 5.396, Calp. Ecl. 6.8, Stat. Theb. 3.511–512. See also Thompson 1936: 66–67 (s.v. βύας).

The model passage is probably Verg. A. 4.462–463, where the hooting of the solitary eagle owl bodes ill for Dido (cf. also the Dira that changes into an owl at A. 12.862–864, foreboding Turnus’ death). Vergil’s solaque ... bubo (there fem.) at 4.462 is here picked up with multus; if one owl is terrifying, a colony of them would be so all the more, Silius must have thought.

sparsis strix sanguine pennis The strix, a type of owl (Hesychius s.v. στύξ: = σκώψ, the little horned owl), was thought in popular folklore to live on human flesh and blood, like a vampire, which explains its bloodstained feathers. The Romans stress the strix’ bloodlust; cf. Pl. Ps. 820–821 (striges will disembowel the cruel cooks’ guests), Prop. 4.5.17 (experts on human blood) and Petr. 134.1, but especially Ov. Fast. 6.131–140 (with Bömer’s n.), where Ovid describes in detail how they feed on children by night and compares them explicitly (131–132 non quae Phineia mensis guttura fraudabant) to the Harpies that here follow them; as Reitz 1982: 84 notes, the strix forms a transition between real birds and the Harpies of myth. They are birds of ill omen at Tib. 1.5.52, Prop. 3.6.29, Sen. Her.F. 688 and Stat. Theb. 3.511; for their use in black magic, see the general n. above. See also Thompson 1936: 268 (s.v. στριός).

The marked and harsh S- and I-sounds suggest their infamous shrieking; cf. Ov. Fast. 6.139–140 nominis huius / causa quod horrenda stridere nocte solent (cf. 600 stridoribus).
Harpyiae  The Harpies reside in Hades also in Silius’ primary models, Verg. A. 6.289 and Sen. Her.F. 759 terretique mensas avida Phineas avis (and cf. perhaps also A. 3.215 Stygiis ... undis; Brugnoli 1994: 339 n.46 observes the similar hemiepes at A. 3.312 Harpyiaeque colunt), but not in other authors. For the Harpies as death demons, Reitz compares Hom. Od. 1.241, 14.371 and 20.77.

fovent nidos  For the expression cf. Verg. G. 4.56 progeniem nidosque fovent (the bees); cf. also Ov. Fast. 1.443 and Sen. Ag. 684–685.

omnibus haerent condensae foliis  A close echo of Verg. A. 6.284 foliisque sub omnibus haerent (of the Dreams in the infernal elm, see n.595–596); cf. also Nux 149–150 nec nidos foliis haerere ... videtis. For condensae, cf. Verg. A. 2.517 (same sedes), where Hecuba and her daughters cling closely packed to the altar, like pigeons in a storm.

saevit stridoribus arbor  The tree resounds with the birds’ shrieking. stridere or stridor is used of the bird screeches at Luc. 6.690 and Stat. Theb. 3.510 (see above) and similar birds at Theb. 1.624, of the owlish Dira at Verg. A. 12.869 and the Harpies at V.Fl. 4.498 and Theb. 8.256. It is a sinister sound; other infernal noises are defined with the same words at Verg. A. 6.288 (Hydra), Tib. 1.3.72 (Cerberus), Petr. 122.138 (menacing ghosts) and Stat. Theb. 2.51 (screaming at the entrance to Hades); cf. perhaps also Verg. A. 6.558 (rattling chains of the damned) and 6.573 (the grating gate of Tartarus).

The verb saevit is used in a striking way; the actual agent is not the tree but its occupants. For animal sounds, OLD s.v. 2b cites Verg. A. 5.257 saevitque canum latratus and Sil. 4.97 hinnitus saevit equorum, which are not exact parallels.

For the S- and I-sounds in this line, see above on sparsis strix sanguine pennis.

601–612  has inter formas coniunx Iunonis Avernae suggestu residens cognoscit crimina regum. stant vincti seroque piget sub iudice culpae. circum errant Furiae Poenarumque omnis imago. quam vellent numquam sceptra fulsisse superbis! 605

insultant duro imperio non digna nec aequa ad superos passi manes, quaque ante profari non licitum vivis, tandem permissa queruntur. tunc alius saevis religatur rupe catenis, ast alius subigit saxum contra ardua montis, 610

vipereo domat hunc aeterna Megaera flagello. talia letiferis restant patienda tyrannis.

601–604  Amidst these apparitions the spouse of Avernian Juno thrones on a dais and learns the crimes of kings. They stand fettered and regret too late their guilt before this judge. Around them circle the Furies and every shape of the Punishments.

At Sen. Her.F. 721–722, Dis is portrayed sitting (sedens, cf. here residens) at the gate to receive newly arrived ghosts and compared to Jupiter at 724–725 (cf. coniunx Iunonis Avernae with n. below). Seneca’s description continues with the punishment of tyrants (see n.606–608 below), although there the judges are the usual triad Minos, Rhadamanthus and Aeacus (732 non unus alta sede quaeitoris sedens; cf. here suggestu residens). In Silius’
rendering, Dis is himself sitting in judgement, a tradition as old as e.g. Aesch. Eu. 272 and Supp. 230 (Reitz 1982: 88), and handles only the biggest criminals—tyrants—himself, while Rhadamanthus is assigned to judge the guilty populus (543–544).

There are a few other intertexts. At Stat. Theb. 4.525–527, Manto describes what she sees of the underworld:

\begin{quote}
\textit{ipsam pallentem solio circumque ministras} \\
\textit{funestorum operum Eumenidas Stygiaeque severos} \\
\textit{Iunonis thalamos et torva cubilia cerno.}
\end{quote}

“Himself I see, pale upon his throne and around him the Furies, servants of his deadly works, and the stern bower and grim couch of Stygian Juno.”

Statius’ lines interact with Silius’ description of the Fury Allecto at 2.673–674, who stands before the throne of Dis (\textit{solium}) and deals out punishments (\textit{poenasque ministrat}; cf. Statius’ \textit{ministras}); Silius there calls Dis \textit{Tartareo ... Iovi}, which Statius seems to pick up with his \textit{Stygiae ... Iunonis}. Another intertext is Stat. Theb. 8.21ff., where Dis also sits in judgement (cf. 8.21 sedens). Lines 8.24–25 display clear correspondences:

\begin{quote}
\textit{stant Furiae circum variaeque ex ordine Mortes} \\
\textit{saevaque multisonas exsertat Poena catenas.}
\end{quote}

“That the Furies stand around him [i.e. Dis] and various Deaths in their orders, and cruel Punishment thrusts out her many-jangling chains”

Silius focuses on the royal accused (who are now the subject of \textit{stant} and around whom the Furies hover). It is hard to determine who influenced whom, but Silius seems to emulate Statius with the more vivid \textit{errant} for the Furies.

\textbf{has inter formas} That is, all creatures listed in 579ff., i.e. the personified abstractions, monsters of myth, but especially the \textit{dirae volucres} that evoke the image of punishment (see n.597–600 \textit{pastusque cadavere vultur}). These apparitions at the entrance of the underworld serve as the infernal ruler’s menacing retinue while he judges the dead. For \textit{formas}, cf. Verg. A. 6.277 \textit{terribiles visu formae} (cf. 6.289) and 6.293 \textit{cava sub imagine formae}, but (in view of what follows) perhaps also 6.625–627 \textit{omnis scelerum ... formas, omnia poenarum ... nomina}.

\textbf{coniunx Iunonis Avernae} I.e. Dis, the husband of Proserpina, queen of the nether realm.


\textbf{suggestu residens} Dis’ tribunal is pictured in a very Roman way, with a military or praetor’s dais; cf. Fulvius’ podium at 363 (the only other poetic instance of \textit{suggestus}). See also Fitch \textit{ad Sen. Her.F.} 731–734 for the similarly Roman colouring of the infernal courts in Seneca and Vergil. \textit{residens} marks the god as a figure in authority; cf. Ov. Met. 1.575–576 (of Peneus) \textit{residens ... undis iura dabat nymphisque} and (with \textit{suggestus}) Apul. Met. 3.2 \textit{sublimo suggestu magistratibus residentibus}.


**seroque piget sub iudice culpae** The tyrants repent only when it is too late. sero is probably ablative with iudice here, both because it could use a qualifying adjective and because this line is a rewrite of Verg. A. 6.569 distulit in seram commissa piacula mortem; the sinner will meet a judge eventually in the afterlife. Cf. similarly Sen. Her.F. 728 sera ... iuera (cf. 732 iudicia ... sera), Hor. Carm. 3.11.28–29 seraque fata, Tib. 1.9.4 sera ... Poena.

sub iudice is ‘before the judge’, a fairly common poetical phrase since Ov. Met. 11.156 iudice sub Tmolos, 13.190 and Hor. Ars 78. For piget, see n.605 sceptris fulsisse superbis.

**circum errant** Cf. Verg. A. 2.598–599 quos omnes undique Graiae / circum errant acies (of the Greeks surrounding Aeneas’ house). The parallel suggests the menacing demeanour of the Furies, ready to pounce when a dead king is condemned.

**Poenarumque omnis imago** A reminiscence of both Verg. A. 6.627 omnia poenarum ... nomina (with 6.626 formas), the various punishments in Tartarus which the Sibyl will describe (and which here follow in 609ff.), and A. 2.369 plurima Mortis imago (cf. Stat. Theb. 8.24 variaeque ex ordine Mortes). Spaltenstein also compares 4.436–438 exercitus ... Iarum Eumenidesque simul letique cruenti innumeræ facies and 4.591 mille simul leti facies.

For the personification of ‘Punishments’, cf. 2.551 omnes adsunt Poenae (the last of the abstractions in Tisiphone’s retinue) and Stat. Theb. 8.25. Originally, Ποινή was identified with an avenging Fury (cf. Aesch. Eu. 323, Eur. IT 200; cf. Ov. Met. 8.481 poenarum ... deae triplices ... Eumenides). In later texts, however, the abstractions also figure as separate beings accompanying the Furies; cf. Plb. 23.10.2, Luc. 6.695, Stat. Theb. 12.646, Sil. 14.99–100; cf. also the Poenae at Var. Men. fr. 123 (Astbury), Culex 377 and Stat. Theb. 5.60.

605 *How they wish never to have flashed their haughty sceptres!*

**quam vellent** The theme of ghosts with regrets, along with the diction, is taken from Verg. A. 6.436–437 quam vellent aethere in alto nunc et pauperiem et duros perferre labores (of the suicides regretting their deed), which ultimately goes back to Hom. Od. 11.489–491. For the phrase, cf. also V.Fl. 3.241 (Cyzicus regrets his hunting when Cybele punishes him).

**sceptris fulsisse superbis** The folly of ambition and striving for power is condemned at Lucr. 5.1136–1137, where the former majesty and the sceptrum lie low after the murder of the kings; the bloodied crowns rue the high position they once had (5.1139 lugebat honorem; cf. here 603 piget ... culpae); the victimized people trample what they feared before (5.1140 conculcatur ... ante metutum; cf. 607–608 ante ... non licitum ... queruntur). While Lucretius limits his observation to regicide, Silius notes that even the kings who avoid justice in life will regret their reign after death. For sceptrum superba, cf. also Sen. Ag. 10 (of Agamemnon, soon to be killed) and Tib. 1.9.80 (of a ‘usurper’ of the mistress’ love).

fulsisse may pick up 285–286 fulgentibus ostro ... regnis, also of the limited value of the power of kings (see n. ad loc.; for the parallel, see also n.612 letiferis ... tyrannis below). The verb also suggests Jupiter’s lightning (cf. e.g. Cic. Vat. 20 Iove fulgente); in behaving like tyrants (thus placing themselves far above their people), the kings have usurped the
Notes to 517–614

place of the gods. The phrase *sceptris fulsisse* seems to be an etymological pun; Greek σκῆπτρον is ‘sceptre’, while σκηπτός is ‘thunderbolt’.

Along the same etymological lines, we may connect the phrase to two protagonists of the *Punica*: i) Hannibal, whose family name Barca meant ‘thunderbolt’ (Norden 1926: 333 *ad* Verg. A. 6.842–843; cf. Sil. 15.664 fulmen ... *Carthaginis Hannibal*, 16.625 tanto ... *fulmine belli*); it is Hannibal who is primarily intended with the reference to powerful, ‘flashing’ rulers at 285–286 cited above. For Hannibal as a tyrant and his punishment, see n.612 *letiferis ... tyrannis*. ii) Scipio himself, significantly the addressee of this description; his name *scipio* (‘staff’) is a synonym of *sceptrum*, and in literature he had been styled *fulmen* since Ennius (for Scipio as thunderbolt and sceptre, see Tipping 2007: 234–235; for the etymology of the name *Scipio*, see also n.654–655 *quo stabant Itala regna*). The passage serves as a negative model for the hero to avoid (cf. Kißel 1979: 169, Marks 2005: 137 n.64); as Jupiter’s son (whose parentage is revealed immediately hereafter) Scipio may wield the flashing sceptre with more right, provided he will abstain from tyrannical behaviour.

606–608 The shades of those who in the upper world suffered undeserved and unjust treatment from these rulers’ harsh reign now mock them, and the complaints that they were not allowed to utter before during their lives, the souls now are free to make at last.

In Sen. *Her.F*. 737–742, the deceased victims of tyrants rend the backs of their former masters, but spare those who reigned without bloodshed, who may go to Elysium. Silius focuses solely on the tyrants. Here, the victims rather act as witnesses in court (cf. Reitz 1982: 88; see n.601–602), now allowed to speak aloud; the penalties follow at 609–611. For justice served to innocents in the afterlife, compare Verg. A. 6.430ff., of Minos presiding over a jury of ghosts to hear the case of those that were falsely sentenced to death.

The sentence forms a chiasmus: the actions *insultant* and *queruntur* enclose the past events in two clauses, which are both characterized by a negation, a phrase meaning ‘during life’ and a past participle—*non digna nec aequa ... passi* and *profari non licitum*.

**insultant** Cf. Tisiphone mocking the souls of the guilty at Verg. A. 6.570–571 *sontis ultrix accincta flagello / Tisiphone quatit insultans* (see n.609–611 *vipereo ... flagello*).

**duro imperio** Used of tyrants at Sen. *Oed*. 705, and at *Her.F*. 433 of the commands of the usurper Lycus; the phrase contrasts with the rule of benevolent kings (*Her.F*. 739–741 *quisquis ... incruentum mitis imperium regit*, see above). Cf. also Verg. A. 6.555 *haec Rhadamanthus habet durissima regna*; the judgement in Hades is many times harsher than these kings’ reign!

**non digna nec aequa ... passi** For the phrase, cf. Verg. A. 2.144 *animi non digna ferentis* (Sinon), 12.811 *digna indigna pati* (Juno; cf. Prop. 2.3b.50 *aequa et iniqua ferunt*), Stat. *Theb*. 2.397 *passusque haud digna* (Polynices) and Sil. 11.241 *cur indigna feramus?* (Hannibal); in all cases except the last the subject suffers from the injustice of a superior.

**ad superos** ‘In the upper world’; the words counterbalance *vivis* in the second half of the sentence (see An. 517–614). The phrase is taken from Verg. A. 6.481–482 *multum fleti ad superos ... Dardanidae*. See line 777 for a similar contrast between earthly life and afterlife.

**licitum** The past participle of *licet* is rare in poetry after Plautus and Terence, but not in Silius (cf. 746 and 4.288, 6.422, 7.94, 7.739, 9.412, 14.198, 15.608 and 17.266); see for the
neuter participle also n.155–156a praevetitum. Here, it may be (with tandem) a reminiscence of Verg. A. 8.468 licito tandem sermone frountur (of Aeneas and Euander finally being able to speak to each other), but see also Lucr. l.c. under n.605 sceptris fulisssie superbis.

609–611 Then one is bound to a cliff with savage chains, while another pushes a rock against a steep mountain slope, and Megaera subdues a third one for all eternity with her snaky whip.

The penalties which these kings undergo are normally attributed to the villains of myth. At Her.F. 750ff., after his account of the punishment of tyrants (see n.606–608), Seneca describes the penalties of Ixion, Sisyphus, etc.; Silius has telescoped the two Senecan scenes into one by attributing these penalties to the tyrants. In a similar fashion, Vergil had transferred the mythical punishments to generalized sinners (A. 6.616–617 saxum ingens volvunt alii, radiisque rotarum districti pendent); cf. also [Sen.] Oct. 619–623, where the punishments of a Tantalus, a Sisyphus, a Tityos, an Ixion are prepared for the tyrant Nero.

To be chained to a cliff is the fate of Prometheus (Hes. Th. 523ff.; see on religatur rupe); his punishment (a vulture eating his liver) is shared by Tityos in the underworld (see n.597–600 pastusque cadavere vultur); Billerbeck (1983: 336–337) also compares Vergil’s Catilina (A. 8.668–669 te, Catilina, minaci pendentem scopulo). Sisyphus always pushes his rock up a hill and sees it rolling back (Hom. Od. 11.592ff.; cf. Sen. Her.F. 751). The third penalty (whipping by a Fury), while novel (cf. Reitz 1982: 89), may hint at another traditional sinner, Tantalus, who is compelled by a whip-bearing Fury at Sen. Thy. 96–97; cf. also menacing Tisiphone at A. 6.570–571 (see vipereo ... flagello). Cf. also the tyrant Ardiaeus and others being whipped into submission by infernal beings at Plat. Rep. 616a. For the Furies as the torturers, cf. A. 6.605–606 (of a Fury preventing the punished to eat), V.Fl. 2.192–195 (imitating A. 6.605–606) and Sil. 2.674.

religatur rupe Similar phrases are used for the rock of Prometheus at Sen. Her.F. 1206 rupes ligatum Caspiae corpus trahant and Mart. Spect. 9.1. in Scythica religatus rupe Prometheus (same sedes), whom some located in the underworld (Spaltenstein cites Hor. Carm. 2.13.37, 2.18.35 and Epod. 17.67). For the language, cf. (with catenis) also Luc. 4.451–452 religatque catenas / rupis ab Illyricae scopulis (of chains used to hamper ships).

saxum contra ardua montis The phrase ardua montis, taken from Verg. A. 8.221 and 11.513 (cf. Ov. Met. 8.692 and V.Fl. 3.695), is used in three other passages in the Punica, always for the crossing of the Alps (3.480 Hannibal, 3.497 Hercules, 15.493 Hasdrubal). Since Hannibal is also portrayed as a tyrant (see n. 612 letiferis ... tyrannis below), it seems to be suggested that he will be eternally locked in repeating his feat (crossing the Alps) without ever reaching his goal (conquering Rome).

vipereo ... flagello At Verg. A. 6.570–571 (see n.606–608 insultant; also flagello at the end of the line), Tisiphone wields her whip in her right hand while holding snakes in her left, which may have suggested combining whip and snakes (Spaltenstein). The serpentine nature of the Furies’ whip is pictured also at Sen. Med. 961–962 ingens anguis excusso sonat / tortus flagello (Megaera in the next sentence) and Thy. 96–97, V.Fl. 7.149 ipsum angues, ipsum horrissoni quatit ira flagelli and (with vipereo) Stat. Theb. 7.579–580 has ubi vipereo tactas ter utramque flagello / Eumenis in furias. For the whip as the favoured instrument of the Furies, cf. also 2.616, Ov. Ib. 183 (part of an enumeration of

**domat aeterna Megaera** A reminiscence of Amphitryon’s question in Sen. *Her.F.* 748–749 *impios / supplicia vinclis saeva perpetuis domant?* (cf. also *saevis* and *catenas* at 609) which triggers the description of the familiar sinners and their punishments. The verb *domare* returns at 844 (the punishment of the female sinners). The adjective *aeterna* (replacing an adverb) may be taken from Statius’ imitation of Seneca at *Theb.* 4.475–476 *aeternaque sontum supplicia*; for this quasi-adverbial use in a very similar setting, cf. also Sen. *Her.F.* 756 *praebet volucri Tityos aeternas dapes* and [Sen.] *Her.O.* 1196–1197 *vinctus aeterno miser saxo*. For the eternity of the underworld, see also 459 *aeternum*.

### 612 Such penalties await death-dealing tyrants.


This golden line (see n.254–255) concludes the section on the penalties and the underworld description as a whole.

**letiferis ... tyrannis** The tyrant who will be foremost in Scipio’s mind (and the reader’s, after twelve books of the *Punica*) is Hannibal. The description of his habits and characters at 1.239ff. begins with a reference to him as *Tyrio ... tyranno*, and of the other 12 instances of *tyrannus* in the *Punica*, four refer to Hannibal—2.239, 4.707, 5.202 and 11.31 (the other 8 denote various other enemy kings, three times a τύραννος of Syracuse). The instance in book 11 has as its context Capua’s defection, whose inhabitants are reproached at 13.285–286 for putting too much faith in *fulgentibus ostro ... regnis* (i.e. Hannibal); cf. 605 *fulsisse* with n.

Likewise, *letifer* is an epithet for Hannibal’s actions (1.460, 2.213) or associated with the Carthaginian cause (3.191 of the snake representing Hannibal’s army, 15.429 of Polyphemus on Hasdrubal’s shield) or is used where the Romans taste defeat (10.294 Paulus’ death, 15.367 Marcellus’ death); *contra*, cf. only 7.606 (Fabius).

These lines are thus an adumbration of Hannibal’s fate after death, counterbalancing both the prophecy of Scipio’s own future at 505–515 and that of the end of Hannibal’s life (874–893). The passage is educational for Scipio (and the reader); the way of the tyrant must be avoided. Some have read the line in relation to Domitian; for a short discussion, see Intr. 517–614.

For *letifer* of an animate subject, cf. Luc. 6.92 (Typhon), the snakes at Luc. 9.384, 9.729, Stat. *Theb.* 5.628 and 5.737 and dogs at *Theb.* 6.65. These parallels suggest that a tyrant is a monster, not a human.

**restant patienda** For a similar construction, see 530 *restatque futurum* (with n.). Compare 11.536–537 *restat ... vertenda atque aequanda ... Roma*, *Ter. Pho.* 831 *una mihi res ... restat quae est conficiunda*, Plin. *Nat.* 19.152, 27.1.

### 613–614

*sed te maternos tempus cognoscere vultus,*

*cuius prima venit non tardis passibus umbra.*
613–614 But it is time for you to know the face of your mother, whose shade is the first to come, and not with slow steps.

With *sed* marking contrast to what precedes and *te* in a marked position, the Sibyl makes it quite clear that the description is over and that the next part of the *nekyia* has begun.

*maternos ... cognoscere vultus* Scipio never knew his mother, since she died in childbirth (626ff.). The phrase is an allusion to (and inversion of) V.Fl. 2.2–3 *neque enim patrios cognoscere casus / Iuno sinit*, “for Juno suffered him not to learn his father’s fate”; like Jason, Scipio has now lost both his parents. In the *Argonautica*, Juno prevents Jason from knowing that his father has died lest he abandon his fated task (2.5); to Scipio, by contrast, all will be disclosed in order to prepare him for the ordeals ahead. The emphasis on *cognoscere* suggests more than simply that Scipio will learn what his mother looks like—in addition, the identity of his (real) father will be revealed to him, viz. Jupiter (637ff.; cf. Augoustakis 2010c: 216); see also n.503–504 *cognoscere cordi est*. In the *Punica*, it is Hannibal who, like Valerius’ Jason, must not know everything so that he will proceed on his fated path; cf. 1.137–138 *venientia fata scire ultra vetuit Iuno*.

*tempus* Cf. the Sibyl’s words at Verg. *A*. 6.45–46 *poscere fata tempus*. For *tempus* with an accusative and infinitive, see *OLD* s.v. 8c, *KS* 2.1.695 and *LHSz* 2.349, 351.

*prima* The first of a long series of meetings after the one with the *vates*, like Anticleia at Hom. *Od*. 11.150ff. (who was also already waiting while her son spoke with Teiresias).

*non tardis passibus* Unlike the shade of Orpheus’ Eurydice, who returns to him slowly and still hampered by her wound at Ov. *Met*. 10.49 *incessit passu de vulnere tardo* (see also n.523–524a for other echoes of Orpheus’ *katabasis*). Here, the phrase of course suggests Pomponia’s eagerness to see her son at last. Metapoetically, it may refer to the pace of the narrative and the swiftness of the Sibyl’s survey of the underworld before we turn to Scipio’s encounter with the ghosts.
615–649 Scipio’s mother, Pomponia

The next shade is Pomponia’s. Scipio had been born from her union with Jupiter, whose love Venus had kindled to save Rome from Carthage’s threats. Scipio professes his affection for his mother and laments his fate, that he should lose her on the day he was born. She replies that she holds the same place of honour in Elysium as the mothers of Hercules and the Dioscuri; she tells her son of his high parentage and how Jupiter visited her in the shape of a serpent. Scipio tries to embrace her, but thrice her shade evades him.

The story of Scipio’s birth from Jupiter was known at least since the first century B.C., since it is given by Livy (26.19.6–7) and Oppius and Hyginus (both quoted at Gell. 6.1.1ff.). Both Livy and Gellius tell that while Scipio’s mother was sleeping, a huge snake was seen lying next to her (Livy 26.19.7 even peraepe), which suddenly disappeared when other people arrived; when she became pregnant with Scipio shortly afterward, people believed the mysterious snake had fathered him (Livy 26.19.7 anguis immanis concubitu conceptum).

Livy and Gellius draw the comparison with Alexander the Great, round whose birth a similar story existed; Silius does the same here and more explicitly later in the Nekyia (767–768 Libyci certissima proles Hammonis). Another such story was in circulation pertaining to the conception of Augustus, whose mother had been visited by a snake while sleeping in the temple of Apollo; hence, the god was believed to be his father (Suet. Aug. 94.4, Dio Cass. 45.1.2). It is possible that the attention for Scipio’s birth story among authors writing under Augustus (Livy, Oppius, Hyginus) was not fortuitous; during his rise to power, Octavian would have been well served by the comparison with Scipio (and Alexander). Silius here reverses the parallel; his presentation of Scipio evokes both Alexander and Augustus, which confers upon the hero, by analogy, the status of the model leader. We find such inversion of Augustan propaganda again during Scipio’s meeting with the ghost of Alexander; see Intr. 762–805. For the connection with Augustus see also below.

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1 The story of the serpent is also referred to by Dio Cass. 16.39 and (inc.auct.) vir.illust. 49.1; cf. further Quint. Inst. 2.4.19 de serpente, quo Scipio traditur genitus. While Livy and Gellius do not mention Jupiter as the father, they present the story as an illustration of the popular belief that Scipio was of divine origin, which was fostered by his habit to seek solitude in Jupiter’s shrine on the Capitol before every affair of importance (Livy 26.19.5, Gell. 6.1.6, V.Max. 1.2.2, Dio Cass. 16.39, vir. illust. 49.3); Valerius Maximus, Cassius Dio and the author of De viris illustribus explicitly state that Scipio’s father was believed to be Jupiter.


4 Cf. Lorsch 1997: 799 “the story was either invented or, more probably, revived at about the same time as the story of Atia and the snake became current. This timing suggests the possibility that the two stories were deliberately disseminated to establish a comparison between Augustus and Scipio Africanus.” Livy claims that it already circulated in Scipio’s lifetime, although Polybius does not mention it (cf. Fucecchi 1993: 39 “forse Livio esagera”). For a discussion of the development of the legend around Scipio, see Haywood 1933: 9–29, Walbank 1967.

Silius’ rendering of the story, told from Pomponia’s perspective, leaves no doubt that the serpent should be identified with Jupiter. His account bears much resemblance to Ovid’s multiple descriptions of Jupiter’s amorous exploits, with the deed being typified as a *furtum* (see n.615) and Jupiter approaching his quarry unawares and conquering her by force. Scipio’s descent from Jupiter was already announced by Mars at 4.476 *vera Iovis proles* and remains an important motif until the final line of the poem, Scipio’s moment of victory (17.654 *prolem Tarpei ... Tonantis*; cf. also 15.148, 15.404–405, 16.144). While the type of birth story aligns Scipio with Alexander and Augustus, as observed above, it is important to note that Pomponia is not compared to Olympias (the mother of Alexander), but to the mothers of the demigods Hercules and the Dioscuri (632–633). By analogy, Scipio’s parentage casts him as a hero and as a candidate for a similar apotheosis; in the immediate context, it makes him worthy of entering the underworld and meeting the shades. The rape of a chaste woman by a god, resulting in a son with a pivotal role in Roman history, suggests also a parallel with the Roman demigod, Romulus.

Furthermore, Scipio’s serpentine parentage makes him a worthy opponent of Hannibal, who had been associated earlier in the epic with snakes. At 3.183ff., Hannibal dreams (at the behest of Jupiter) of a destructive serpent which represents the war which he will bring to Italy. In the second half of the epic, this motif is used again, but inverted. For when

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6 Rocca-Serra (1990: 385) draws attention to Scipio’s own assertion of the divine parentage of his model Alexander at 767 *certissima proles*; see also n. ad loc.

7 The Ovidian colour is observed by Barchiesi (2001: 340), who also points out the paradox that the strict Scipio could only become the saviour of Rome due to the power of licentious Venus, who had enamoured Jupiter of Pomponia. The paradox is fully drawn out (and partially resolved) in book 15, when Scipio must choose between Voluptas and Virtus. Voluptas (~ Venus) boasts that she had turned Jupiter into various shapes (15.61–62), and thus implicitly links Scipio to the heroes which Jupiter had fathered when shape-shifted (cf. Marks 2005: 154 n.114, Tipping 2010b: 174–175); Scipio, however, chooses Virtus, whom the same heroes had also followed.

The closest parallel in Ovid for Jupiter’s ‘rape’ appears to be Callisto (*Met. 2.401ff.*, *Fast. 2.155ff*), whom the god approaches while she is asleep at midday (*Met. 2.417–421*; cf. here 637–638) and whom he forcefully embraces (*Met. 2.433 impedit amplexus*; cf. 638–639 *membra ligavit amplexus*) disguised as Diana (*Met. 2.437*); after giving birth to Arcas, she is separated from him, like Pomponia was from Scipio (in Callisto’s case because she was transformed into a bear by Juno). When she sees her son after many years, she recognizes him (*Fast. 2.185 cognosceret, Met. 2.501 cognoscenti similis*) and stands near (*Fast. 2.185 adstittit*); we should compare *cognoscere vultus* at 613 and 622, and perhaps also 615 *adstabat*. Cf. also the very similar use of the words *furtum* (*Met. 2.423, Fast. 2.183; here 615*), *secunda* (*Met. 2.472*; here 615) and *pondus* (*Fast. 2.172*; here 629); see n.615 *secunda Iovis ... furto*. But see also n.637–640a for another passage in the *Fasti* (Mars and Iilia).


10 Compare Aeneas’ words at *A. 6.123 et mi genus ab Iove summo* (cf. Klaassen 2010: 124), but also the parallel with Hercules’ *katabasis*.

11 The parallel was brought to my attention by Marco van der Schuur, who points out that in Ennius’ *Annals*, it is similarly Ilia herself who relates her rape by Mars; see nn.619b–620 *quae ni provisa fuissent* and 637–640a. Romulus is a significant model for Silius’ Scipio, especially as an exemplar of deification (cf. 15.83, 17.651 and Intr. 762–805) and as founder of Scipio’s role as a new ‘founder’ (see n.721–723 *Camillum*).

12 Cf. also the enormous snake which Regulus fought at Bagrada (6.151ff.) and which symbolizes the threat posed by Carthage. Related, but not similar, is the snake which flies from the tumultus of Zacynthus prior to Hannibal’s victory over the city (2.580–591).
Scipio is to be elected as commander of the Spanish forces, a fiery snake is seen gliding through the sky in the direction of Spain (15.138ff.). The omen (followed by thunder) confirms Jupiter’s support, but also picks up his fathering of Scipio in the form of a serpent and inverts the direction of the serpent in Hannibal’s dream.\footnote{This point is not considered by Dietrich (2005: 77 and 84–85), who argues that the negative imagery of the serpent in book 2 (see fn.12) should be brought to bear upon the passage in book 15.}

A comparison with Homer’s and Vergil’s scenes of the hero’s reunion with the shade of his parent sheds more light on this passage’s significance for the plot and the characterization of Scipio. As often in the \textit{Nekyia}, the setting is Homeric. Odysseus’ mother Anticlea (\textit{Od}. 11.152ff.) is the first shade with whom the hero speaks after his conversation with the seer and the scene also ends with a failed embrace (albeit much more elaborated in Homer); in addition, Anticlea similarly speaks of family matters and the circumstances of her death.\footnote{Juhnke 1972: 286, Kißel 1979: 169 n.21, Reitz 1982: 90–91.}

As for the \textit{Aeneid}, it is this scene rather than Scipio’s meeting with his father and uncle which is modelled on Aeneas’ reunion with his father Anchises, despite the fact that Scipio’s original intention was to see his father once more, just as Aeneas came to visit Anchises.\footnote{In some ways, both parents are equally modelled after Anchises; as Klaassen (2010: 123) observes, the failed embrace which is found also in Homer (\textit{Od}. 11.204–208) and Vergil (\textit{A}. 6.700–702) is distributed over the two scenes in the \textit{Punica}, with the triple attempt ending the first (648–649) and the double simile at the beginning of the second (652–653).}

Several verbal echoes from the \textit{Aeneid} align Pomponia with Anchises, drawing attention to their similar function of teacher and motivator.\footnote{See nn.621–623a \textit{admonuit} and \textit{dedit alternos ambobus noscere vultus}, 623b–625 \textit{cara parents}, 634–636 in \textit{caelum ... te atollere factis}, 645–646a \textit{non ultra ducoe vitam}, 646b–647 \textit{quantum gemui} and perhaps also the passages cited in nn.629b–633 \textit{imperio Iovis} and 642b–644.} Just like Anchises, Pomponia prepares her son for his role later in the epic with the information she imparts to him—Scipio is strengthened by the knowledge that Jupiter is his father and thus on his side. His mother goes further, however, than merely disclosing his real parentage; she exhorts him to aim for the sky without fear for the coming battles (634–635). This appeal, with which the story of the snake is introduced, picks up the lines concluding Anchises’ presentation of Augustus (\textit{A}. 6.806–807), as Tipping (2010a: 204) has pointed out. Whereas Aeneas is motivated by the future greatness of Augustus, Scipio is incited by his personal past; he is thus on a par with Vergil’s Augustus. The parallel with Augustus will be explored in n.634–636.\footnote{In addition to their shared birth stories (see above), a third parallel between Scipio and Augustus is drawn in line 620, the background to this scene. The alternative of a Carthaginian victory, which Scipio’s birth was to prevent, counterbalances and evokes the reality of Augustus’ Roman victory over Africa at Actium; Scipio is thus essential for the future (imperial) age of Silius’ present. See n.619b–620 \textit{Sidonia Iliacas nunc virgo accenderet aras}.}

Functionally, the preceding description of the underworld by the Sibyl (524–612) had the same liminal significance as Aeneas’ crossing of the Styx in Vergil; after its conclusion, the inhabitants of the underworld proper present themselves. Pomponia, the first interlocutor after the description, counterbalances the first shade which Aeneas meets, Dido. The Carthaginian queen is, like Pomponia, the only woman in \textit{Aeneid} 6 who is singled out for a conversation; but otherwise there are only contrasts, underscored by a number of significant allusions to \textit{Aeneid} 1 and 4. In Vergil, Dido is urged by her sister Anna to marry Aeneas as a safeguard against her brother’s enmity (\textit{A}. 4.43–44), but she does not know that Venus had already contrived to save the Trojans from \textit{Carthaginian...
threats through her love (\textit{A.} 1.660, 673–674). Here, Silius presents Scipio as the result of a similar plot by Venus to save her Romans from the enmity of Carthage, with combined references to both Vergilian phrases (see n.616–619a). The greatness that Scipio is to seek for himself (\textit{in caelum ... te attollere factis}), as the culmination of the glory of Rome (1.1–2 \textit{caelo se gloria tollit / Aeneadum}), replaces the greatness which Anna envisages for Carthage after Dido’s bond with Aeneas.\textsuperscript{18} In the setting of the underworld, Pomponia thus represents Rome and its promise of greatness, as opposed to Vergil’s Dido, who represents the promise of Carthaginian hostility.\textsuperscript{19} As she motivates Scipio for the future through his past, Scipio’s mother acts as a foil for Dido, whose call for vengeance in the ancient past is what drives Hannibal.\textsuperscript{20}

In addition, intertextual references associate Pomponia with Vergil’s Creusa, whose \textit{umbra} appears to Aeneas at the end of \textit{Aeneid} 2. Creusa was taken from Aeneas by the will of the gods (2.778–779, cf. here 631 \textit{imperio Iovis} and 645–646 \textit{non concessum}), and instead stayed with Cybele (2.788 \textit{magna deum genetrix}; cf. 632–633 \textit{magna ... Alcidae genetrix}) on the Trojan shore (2.788 \textit{his ... oris}; cf. here 631 \textit{Elaysia ... in oras}). Pomponia complains that she could not tell Scipio of his parentage before she died (647 \textit{discessit in auras}), unlike Creusa, who prophesies Aeneas’ future and then departs (2.791 \textit{recessit in auras}); the encounter here finally allows Pomponia to make a similar revelation. In both cases, an unsuccessful embrace ends the scene (see n.648–649). The allusion is significant. Both Creusa and Pomponia exhort the hero not to unduly mourn her fate, but to look to the future and trust in the divine design, in spite of the successes of the enemy.\textsuperscript{21} Notwithstanding the nature of Pomponia’s story as a recollection of past events, the scene thus primarily looks forward to Scipio’s future role and victories, much like Vergil’s \textit{Heldenschau}.\textsuperscript{22}

\section*{Analysis of the presentation of 615–649}

The meeting, which is the focus of this scene, is preceded by some background information. Line 615 forms the transition after the Sibyl’s description; during the last part of that speech Scipio’s mother arrives (cf. 613 \textit{venit}), and the imperfect \textit{adstabat} indicates she is already standing there when the narrator turns to her. The line primes Pomponia as the main topic of this scene and serves as a sort of ‘abstract’ for it by anticipating her story (\textit{lovis ... furto}). A small time lapse occurs between the end of the Sibyl’s speech at 614 and the conversation at 623; the events falling in this time span are summarized in the non-recapitulating setting in 621–622. This time lapse illustrates how the narrator skips or

\textsuperscript{18} See n.634–636 \textit{in caelum ... te attollere factis}. In turn, the hopes of Silius’ Juno for the greatness of Carthage (1.28 \textit{aeternam condere gentem}) are incompatible with the future might of Rome which Vergil sings (\textit{A.} 1.33 \textit{tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem}); see Ganiban 2010: 82.

\textsuperscript{19} For the alignment of Pomponia with Rome, see also Augoustakis 2010c: 218–219.

\textsuperscript{20} For another possible contrast between the two women see n.640–642a \textit{implebat ... languentia lumina somnus}.

\textsuperscript{21} The timing of Creusa’s prophecy, giving hope even when Troy has fallen, is also important. The Trojan war is a major intertext for the Punic War in the epic; Hannibal views himself as a successor to the Greeks battling Troy (see Intr. 30–93). Herein, then, lies a fundamental difference between the epic’s two main heroes. Hannibal remains locked in the past, bound as he is by Dido’s curse (see Intr. 1–29), whereas Scipio is to look forward.

\textsuperscript{22} Besides these Vergilian models, there may be a connection with a similar scene in Lucan. Augoustakis (2011: 198) contrasts Pomponia with Lucan’s Cornelia, who at 9.84–98 similarly exhorts her (step)son Sextus Pompey (with the words of his dead father) to take command and continue a war, but a much less fortunate one.
summarizes elements of the *Nekyia* which are not part of the meetings themselves.\(^{23}\) The lapse is covered (perhaps ‘masked’) by the few lines about Venus’ ploy to save Rome, which forms essential background information.\(^{24}\) The use of perfects rather than pluperfects in these lines (616–619) shows that the information is given not as part of the narrative, but rather as a ‘side-remark’—that is, the lines are not presented in their chronological relation to the rest of the scene, but as a comment on the past (in this case a more distant past than that of the surrounding lines) by the narrator. The same holds for the concluding past counterfactual in 619–620; *nunc* at 620 refers to Silius’ day.\(^{25}\) The narrative proper is resumed at 621 with *ergo*.

After these introductions, the main part of the scene consists of a short speech by Scipio and Pomponia’s reply to him, which responds to many elements in her son’s short outburst, mostly in reverse order. His likening her to a deity anticipates the second half of her reply (637–644, the story of his descent from Jupiter), while the address *cara parens* foreshadows her Anchises-like role, most clearly formulated at 634–636 (see n.). Scipio’s *sine honore* is answered with Pomponia’s reassurance that she now shares the place of honour in Elysium with Alcmena and Leda (629–633). Both speeches end with a complaint about the unfairness of Pomponia’s early demise (626 *quae sors nostra fuit*, 646 *heu quantum gemui*).

In Pomponia’s account of Jupiter’s visit, the temporal markers (*cum*, 640 *tum*) and tenses construct a clear internal chronology, which is put, however, only in a vague general temporal setting (637 *cum medio*, without indication of *which* day). Thus, Silius focuses on the details, which are relevant, rather than on the date, which is not. This seems typical of his technique; compare the Sibyl’s description of the underworld, where highly detailed geographical elements are paired with vague spatial references (see An. 517–614).

The last lines of Pomponia’s speech (645–647) are dissimilar in nature to her narrative preceding it (636–644). The perfect tenses *concessum* and *gemui* (646) seem not to refer to the exact time of her death, but are broader references to the past (comments, not narrative). *non ... concessum* indicates that it was her fate to die in childbirth, a fate that had been established from the beginning of her life. *gemui* may well mean that Pomponia had been saddened over the inability to inform her son of his patronage ever since she died—up to now, when she is finally able to do so.\(^{26}\)

While the meeting with the rest of the family (father Publius and uncle Cnaeus) is essentially an extension of the meeting with the mother, this scene does have a clear end. In the first place the embrace itself is a closural device.\(^{27}\) Furthermore, the scene ends much as it began, with the narrator telling rather than showing the events, as the past tenses indicate (648 *petebat*, 649 *fefellit*). With two such narrated pieces thus framing the centrepiece of the two speeches, this scene is much more a self-contained unit than the previous ones.\(^{28}\)

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23 Cf. e.g. 494–495, 706 and 736, also of blood drinking; see An. 494–516.
24 *Namque* (616) marks the lines as an explanation of 615 *fecunda Iovis ... furto*.
25 At this moment in the story Scipio has not yet saved Rome; see n.619b–620.
26 In the narratological terms of Labov, lines 645–646a form the resolution (the final action with which the story is wrapped up) and 646b–647 the coda (the closing comment which connects the story to the present of its narrator).
27 Cf. A. 2.792–793 (Aeneas leaves Creusa); it marks the last stage of Achilles’ encounter with Patroclus’ ghost and that of Odysseus with Anticlea’s.
28 See An. 517–614 for Silius’ narrative technique of fluid transition between scenes with typifies most of this *Nekyia*. 
615–620
adstatab fecunda Io vis Pomponia furto.
namque ubi cognovit Latio surgentia bella
Po enorum Venus, insidias anteire laborans
Iunonis fusa sensim per pectora patrem
implicuit flamma. quae ni provisa fuissent,
Sidonia Iliacas nunc virgo accenderet aras.

615 Standing near was Pomponia, who had been made pregnant through Jupiter’s secret love.

fecunda Io vis ... furto This picks up Proteus’ prophecy at 7.487, where Scipio is ille in furto genitus, he who will drive Hannibal from Italy and defeat him in Africa. The recurrence of furto here signifies that the promised saviour is ready to do his part. Cf. also 11.291, where the pedigree of Capys and the Trojans in general is traced back to Jupiter’s earlier fur tum with Electra; but clearly Rome can by now boast a closer bond with the supreme god than Capua.

The diction has an Ovidian ring. Many of Jupiter’s escapades are called fur tum in the Metamorphoses; cf. 1.623 (Io), 2.423 (Callisto, also at Fast. 2.183), 3.7 (Europa) and 3.266 (Semele); cf. also Catul. 68.140, Prop. 2.2.4, Stat. Theb. 10.64 and [Sen.] Oct. 763. Likewise, fecunda has the same sense as at Met. 2.472 (‘made pregnant’, ‘child-bearing’), of Callisto; cf. also (differently) Met. 4.698 impl evit fecundo Iuppiter auro (Danae). fecundus with an abl. of means seems unique; cf. the abl. of quantity at Plin. Nat. 11.233 numero so ... partu, Claud. 1.203, Paul.Nol. Carm. 15.87. For Callisto, see Intr. 615–649 fn.7.

fecunda may refer to the story that Scipio’s mother had been barren, until a harmless snake had been found in her bed (see Intr. 615–649); cf. Gell. 6.1.2 matre m eius diu ster ilem existimatam. For problematic aspects of Silius’ narrative, see n.626–627.

Pomponia This is the only attestation of the name of Scipio’s mother, but there is no reason to assume that Silius invented it (as Spaltenstein notes, “bien bourgeois”).

616–619a For when Venus learned of Punic wars rising against Rome, she strove to anticipate Juno’s wiles and ensnared her father with love’s flame, slowly pouring through his chest.

cognovit Knowledge of future events is a key concept in this Nekyia; the recurrence of the verb here connects Scipio’s education to the machinations on the divine plane. For the frequent use of the verb in this book, see n.503–504 cognoscere cordi est.

Latio surgentia bella Po enorum By anticipating the war rising from Car thage, Venus saves Rome; similarly, Fabius’ advice of caution at 1.686 praemeditas ... surgentia bella foreshadows his pivotal role in the defence of Rome. The phrase is taken from Verg. A. 4.43–44 quid bella Ty ro surgentia dicam germanique minas?, where Anna advises Dido to take Aeneas as her husband to bolster Car thage’s defences against Pyg malion’s Tyrian forces; here, Venus seeks to aid Rome against Car thaginian aggression. In Vergil’s passage, Ty ro is ablative of place, while here Latio is d ativus incommodi. For Dido, see also the foll. n.

insidias anteire laborans ... patrem implicuit flamma In Vergil, Venus shields Aeneas from Juno’s Car thaginians by making Dido fall in love with him; here, she protects Rome
by a similar device. *implicuit* echoes Venus’ plotting at *A. 1.660 ossibus implicet ignem* (Spaltenstein, Klaassen 2010: 105 n.17, Tipping 2010b: 167; see also the foll. n.), while the sentence structure more closely resembles *A. 1.673–674 capere ante dolis et cingere flamma reginam meditor* (Venus to Cupid); *capere ante dolis* is here picked up with *insidias anteire* and *reginam* has been replaced by *patrem*. As in the *Aeneid*, Venus’ actions counter those of Juno in the first book of the epic (cf. 1.29–55, her equipping of Hannibal).

**fusa sensim per pectora** Cf. Fides’ strengthening of the Saguntines at 2.515–517 *fusa medullis implicat atque sui flagrantem inspirat amorem* (Spaltenstein) and Pan’s tempering presence at 319–320 *subit intima corda perlabens sensim mitis deus*, but also Venus’ corruption of the Carthaginians at 11.389 *tacitas in pectora ... flammas*. The gods on the Roman side work subtly. For *sensim*, cf. also 22.

**619b–620 If these things had not been foreseen, a Carthaginian maiden would now light the Trojan altars.**

Elsewhere in the epic, Venus’ actions are also influential; cf. 3.557ff. (her plea to Jupiter, followed by his prophecy of Rome’s greatness), 4.675ff. (saving the elder Scipio from the river Trebia), 9.291 (fighting at Cannae), 11.385ff. (weakening the Carthaginians) and also 17.283ff. (where she ‘saves’ Hannibal so that he can be conquered by Scipio). But her foresight in joining Jupiter with Pomponia is critical to the survival of Rome (619–620); this emphasis makes Scipio a central figure.

**quae ni provisa fuissent** Compare Venus’ address to Violentilla at Stat. *Silv.* 1.2.188–193, where she sums up all that divine marriages had done for Rome—her own son Aeneas continued the Trojan line, and Latin marriage strengthened it; but Rome would not have been founded *<ni> Dardana furto cepisset Martem, nec me prohibente, sacerdos* (192–193), a reference to Romulus’ birth from the union of Mars and Rhea Silvia. For the connection with Ilia, see also n.637–640a; in this context, the reference to the Vestal fires and virgins here (*Iliacas*) may also be significant. With Scipio (like Romulus a key figure for Rome), Venus’ power once more provides for the city.

*provisa* is both ‘foreseen’ (cf. *cognovit* in 616) and ‘seen to’.

**Sidonia Iliacas nunc virgo accenderet aras** I.e. the Carthaginians would have taken over the service to Vesta, which symbolizes the eternity of Rome’s power; the implication is that the supremacy of the world would be held forever by Carthage (rather than that after Carthage’s victory all would remain the same, as Cowan [2010: 345] argues). Our line is connected to a network of references to the uncertain outcome of the war, starting at 1.7–8 *quaesitumque diu, qua tandem poneret arce terrarum Fortuna caput*; most of them are phrased as counterfactuals, as here (see Klaassen 2010: 104–105 and Cowan 2010); cf. also 7.36–37 and 17.402–405.

The lines conflate two Augustan passages. Firstly, this alludes (as Spaltenstein notes) to Horace’s claim that he will enjoy fame *dum Capitolium scandet cum tacita virgine pontifex* (*Carm.* 3.30.8–9), i.e. as long as Rome exists—that is, forever. Secondly, the line’s ending and the juxtaposition of contrasting *Sidonia* and *Iliacas* are likely taken from Verg. *A. 3.279–280 votisque incendimus aras, / Actiaque Iliacis celebramus litora ludis*, where Aeneas’ sacrifice and games foreshadow the Actian games commemorating Octavian’s Roman victory over another African enemy. Silius’ lines suggest a grim alternative to this Roman victory, and to Horace’s claim; but for Venus’ intervention resulting in the birth of
Scipio, neither Rome’s future under the principate nor the poetry which celebrates it would have existed. This intimates a connection between (the victories of) Scipio and Augustus, a connection which is elaborated in Pomponia’s speech (see n.634–636 and Intr. 615–649).

*nunc* must refer to Silius’ own time, since in the story time Scipio’s actions had not yet prevented Carthaginian supremacy. Venus’ past actions, or rather Scipio’s victories, thus also have a bearing on Silius’ present. Through Actium, the poet connects Scipio to the emperors of his own time; in addition, the poetic component which is added with the allusion to Horace may well suggest that Scipio’s victory made possible Silius’ own poetry (thereby justifying his choice of subject matter). For the motif of Actium and the relation to Flavian Rome, see Gen.intr. § 4.3.3 and § 6.

621–627

ergo ubi gustatus cruor admonuitque Sibylla
et dedit alternos ambobus noscere vultus,
sic iuvenis prior: ‘o magni mihi numinis instar,
cara parens, quam, te ut nobis vidisse liceret,
optassem Stygiyas vel leto intrare tenebras.
quae sors nostra fuit, cui te cum prima subiret
eripuit sine honore dies et funere carpsit!’

621–623a *So when the blood had been tasted and the Sibyl had prompted them and allowed them to know each other’s faces, the young man thus spoke out first: ...*

Homer’s Antikleia also drinks first after the *vates* (*Od*. 11.151–153; see Intr. 615–649). But while Antikleia recognizes her son Odysseus only after she has drunk (*Od*. 11.152), it is likely that Pomponia needs to drink of the blood merely to regain speech, not recognition. It appears that she already knows Scipio’s identity, since at 614 she is said to rush towards him; but since she had been dead since Scipio’s birth, his face would not be familiar to her. It is the Sibyl who introduces mother and son to each other (*admonuit*, *dedit ... noscere vultus*). That the shades are capable of recognition seems the practice also in the rest of Silius’ *Nekyia*; see n.447–448 *sanguine non tacto*.

Besides Antikleia, compare also Laius in Statius’ *Nekyia*, who (at first) *refrains* from drinking the blood (*Theb*. 4.607 *sanguinis haustus*, cf. *gustatus cruor*); while Pomponia wants to learn the face of her son (*noscere vultus*) and drinks in order to speak to him, Laius does not wish to drink *because* he recognizes his grandson (4.607 *noscit enim vultu*), whom he regards with hate.

*gustatus cruor* For the phrase, cf. 735 *sine gustato det sanguine vocem* (with n.).

*admonuit* “prompted”, further developed with *dedit ... noscere* (and not “inform”, as Duff translates, since Pomponia’s hurried steps would be hard to explain if she did not already know who it was that performed the *nekyia*). The verb echoes *A*. 6.538 *admonuit breviterque adfata Sibylla est*, where it ends, rather than starts, the conversation with Deiphobus. In Vergil, the Sibyl exhorts Aeneas not to tarry, but to press on and find his father Anchises; here, she exhorts Scipio to speak to his mother Pomponia. For the parallel, see also the foll. n.

*dedit alternos ambobus noscere vultus* That is, she introduced them to each other. Spaltenstein accuses Silius of forgetting that Scipio knows his mother since line 614
maternos ... cognoscere vultus, but it seems more plausible that 614 was merely an announcement (note the lack of deictic markers there—the Sibyl does not point Pomponia out), and that the echo alternos ... noscere vultus indicates that the real introduction takes place only now.

noscere vultus echoes Vergil’s venientum discere vultus (A. 6.755), which opens the parade of future Romans. The phrase signifies that Pomponia’s revelation carries the same importance to Scipio as Anchises’ lesson to Aeneas; see Intr. 615–649.

sic iuvenes prior Cf. Scipio addressing Hamilcar first at 737 sic prior increpitat, and Aeneas initiating the conversation with Palinurus at Verg. A. 6.431 sic prior adloquitur (cf. Charon at 6.387) and with Deiphobus at 6.499 notis compellat vocibus ulтро; cf. also Tiresias’ address to Laius at Theb. 4.609–610 sed prolicit ulтро Aonius vates.

623b–625 Beloved parent, equal to a high deity for me, how I would have wished to enter the Stygian darkness even through death, to be allowed to see you.

At 6.416–417, Serranus addresses his dead father Regulus as magni parens ... quo maius numine nobis Tarpeia nec in arce sedet, “noble father ... not less divine to me than even the deity who dwells on the Tarpeian rock”; he had wanted to touch his father’s face (6.420 tangere sacros vultus), just as Scipio wished to see his father (403 adspectus ... contingere patrum). Through Scipio’s similar filial piety, Silius thus establishes a link between the hero of the First Punic war and the victor of the Second. Serranus revered his father as much as Jupiter, but Scipio surpasses that; the link stresses that Scipio’s father is Jupiter.

For Scipio’s claiming he would have died if he could thereby see his mother, cf. Orpheus, who would stay in the underworld with Eurydice, dead, if he could not be reunited with her otherwise (Ov. Met. 10.38–39). Scipio’s mother has not been mentioned before, and earlier he had only professed the wish to see his father; this assertion is, therefore, rather unexpected.

magni mihi numinis instar Scipio venerates his mother, just as Aeneas reveres the Sibyl who has guided him through the underworld at Ov. Met. 14.124 numinis instar eris semper mihi. The phrase is fairly common (the exact same words as here are used at Ov. Am. 3.11.47 and Mart. 7.12.11; cf. also Priapea 40.4 and Stat. Theb. 10.361), which makes Augoustakis’ argument (2010c: 218) that Silius alludes to Luc. 1.199–200 summique numinis instar / Roma doubtful.

The phrase anticipates Pomponia’s revelation that Scipio’s other parent actually is a god.

cara parens At Verg. A. 5.747, Aeneas sets out to act upon cari praecerta parentis, i.e. his father’s exhortation to visit him in the underworld (likewise, Anchises had addressed Aeneas as care nate in 5.725). Picking up on this, Ovid has his Sibyl promise to Aeneas at Met. 14.111–112 that he will see (cognoscet; cf. 613 cognoscere and 622 noscere) the underworld and simulacraque cara parentis. With a nice twist, Silius applies the same phrase not to the parent that Scipio has come to visit (his father), but to the other one. Pomponia turns out to be the only real parent of the two, and with her revelation affects Scipio’s future deeds much like Anchises’ words relate to Aeneas’ destiny in the Aeneid; see n.634–636 and Intr. 615–649.

Stygias vel leto intrare tenebras vel leto is the focal point, underlining the singularity of the fact that Scipio has entered the underworld (or at least its entrance) alive (cf. Spaltenstein).
The phrase draws out a general connection between Scipio’s *nekyia* and the epic of which it is a part. In earlier books, Roman opposition to Carthage was described in terms of facing death and the underworld. Regulus stresses the unacceptability of bowing to Carthaginian demands by saying that he would sooner wish to enter the underworld (6.488 *mihi sit Stygios ante intravisse penates*). Minucius thinks he has already done so when Hannibal is close to defeating him (7.586 *iam Styga et aeternas intrarat mente tenebras*); but after Fabius has saved his men, they wish to fight even to the death, if only the general would notice their bravery (7.620–621 *vel morte emisse volebant spectari Fabio*); only after Hannibal’s retreat, the *Stygiae ... tenebrae* (7.724) are truly gone. Similarly, Fides imbues the Saguntines with ardour, so they can endure fates even worse than death (2.522 *vel leto graviora pati*). Fighting Hannibal thus equals (or exceeds) the horrors of the underworld (see Intr. 517–614); with his *nekyia*, Scipio overcomes the last, and through the various encounters in this book he learns how to face Hannibal as well.

626–627 *What a fate I had, for when the day arose that was the first of my life it also snatched you away from me without glory and took you in death!*  

Pliny the Elder also attests to Pomponia’s death in childbirth (*Nat. 7.47 auspiciatus enecta parente gignuntur sicut Scipio ... natus*), but other Roman authors do not mention it. Silius’ story effectively makes Scipio Pomponia’s only child, if she had been barren before (cf. n.615 *fecunda Iovis ... furto*). It is hard to reconcile this with the historical existence of his (younger) brother Lucius (the victor of Antiochus III); we must either suppose that the latter was the product of a second marriage or, alternatively, that her death in childbirth was a later invention to enhance Scipio’s legendary status (cf. Plin. *l.c.*), in which his brother was conveniently ignored. According to Plb. 10.4ff., Scipio’s mother still lived when he was elected aedile; but Polybius’ story is problematic (also for other inaccuracies), including his presentation of Lucius as the elder brother; see Walbank *ad loc.* It seems impossible to ascertain to what extent Silius’ narrative concerning Pomponia reflects historical fact, later additions to the Scipionic legend or his own poetic invention.

Silius inverts the image of the stillborn at *A. 6.428–429 quos dulcis vitae exsortis et ab ubere raptos abstulit atra dies et funere mersit acerbo*; here it is the mother, not the child who does not survive the birth. In Vergil, the children have no share in life (*dulcis vitae exsortis*); here, it has fallen to Scipio’s share (*sors*) that his mother would not live beyond his first day.

**subiret** The temporal use of *subeo* is mostly limited to the sense ‘follow up’, ‘come next’; cf. Ov. *Met. 4.399–400 dies exactus erat tempusque subibat quod* etc. [i.e. twilight], *Trist. 4.8.3*, Verg. *G. 3.67*, *OLD s.v. 8b*. For the meaning here (‘arise’, ‘come’), cf. perhaps Ov. *Met. 9.93–94 lux subit*, ‘day dawned’.

**cui te ... eripuit ... dies ... et funere carpsit** Cf. the phrases (also in imitation of Vergil) at Sen. *Thy. 998 tibi illos nullus eripiet dies* (of Thyestes and his sons) and [Sen.] *Her.O. 1424–1425 unus eripuit dies parentem utrumque* (Hyllus losing his parents Hercules and Deianira on the same day). For *eripuit*, cf. also Aeneas’ address to Palinurus at *A. 6.341–342 quis te ... deorum / eripuit* (the same lines are an intertext at 654–655 when Scipio addresses his father; Silius thus connects the two parents). For *carpsit*, cf. 5.591 and Sen. *Her.F. 874 prima quae vitam dedit hora, carpit* (ms. A has *carpsit*, but see Fitch *ad loc.*).

For *noster* followed by a relative clause in which *ego* is understood as its antecedent, cf.
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Cic. *Fam.* 2.11.1; see *KS* 2.1.30 “Oft wird das Relativpronomen auf die in einem Possessivum enthaltene Person bezogen”, with more examples.

*sine honore* Spaltenstein proposes “l’honneur que les femmes retirent d’une naissance”, i.e. Pomponia could not enjoy in life her heightened status as mother. She will reply that she *does* receive honours in the underworld by being set on par with Alcmeone and Leda.

628–647

excipit his mater: ‘nullos, o nate, labores
mors habuit nostra; aetherio dum pondere partu
exsolvor, miti dextra Cyllenia proles
imperio lovis Elysias deduxit in oras
attribuitque pares sedes, ubi magna moratur
Alcidae genetrix, ubi sacro munere Leda.
verum age, nate, tuos ortus, ne bella pavescas
ulla nec in caelum dubites te attollere factis,
quando aperire datur nobis, nunc denique disce.
sola die caperem medio cum forte petitos
ad requiem somnos, subitus mihi membra ligavit
amplexus, non ille meo veniente marito
adsuetus facilisque mihi. tum luce corusca,
implebat quamquam languentia lumina somnus,
vidi, crede, Iovem. nec me mutata fefellit
forma dei, quod squalentem conversus in anguem
ingenti traxit curvata volumina gyro.
sed mihi post partum non ultra ducere vitam
concessum. heu, quantum gemui, quod spiritus ante
haec tibi quam noscenda darem discessit in auras!’

628–629a His mother replies thus: ‘My death involved no hardships, my son.

excipit his For this use of *excipio* (‘proceed’ or ‘reply’), almost always at the start of a line, cf. 687, 6.430, 9.535, 11.90 (*excipit his frendens Fabius*), and also at e.g. Verg. *A.* 4.114, 9.258; see *TLL* 5.2.1254.60ff.

nullus … labores mors habuit nostra Pomponia assures her son that her death was gentle. In this context, it is attractive to take *labores* as both ‘death throes’ and the labours of birth (for which *labor* is commonly used, see *TLL* 7.2.792.46–63).

629b–633 When I was delivered of my heavenly burden in birth, the god born on Cyllene brought me with gentle hand at Jupiter’s command to the Elysian regions and assigned me the same place as where the great mother of Hercules and Leda reside with divine favour.

aetherio … pondere partu exsolvor Cf. the birth of other children by a divine father and mortal mother at Ov. *Fast.* 2.383–384 *Silvia Vestalis caelestia semina partu* / *ediderat* (Romulus and Remus) and V.Max. 3.7.ext.3 *caelesti partu* (Helena).

For *pondus* of a foetus, see *TLL* 10.1.2.2618.21ff., and especially Ov. *Fast.* 2.172 (of Callisto made pregnant by Jupiter; see Intr. 615–649 fn.7), *Met.* 9.289 (of Hercules) and Stat. *Theb.* 7.166 (of Bacchus, yet another child of Jupiter by a mortal woman). The use of
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exsolvo for births is unique, but solvo is more common (OLD s.v. 2b; cf. also resolvo at Calp. Ecl. 5.40 and Stat. Ach. 1.674). For the construction with an abl. (pondere), see TLL 5.2.1877.61ff. (mostly of abstract matters).


**imperio Iovis** The same phrase is important at the end of Aeneid 5, when Anchises appears to Aeneas at Jupiter’s bidding, so that the hero will come to the underworld (A. 5.747, 5.784; see n.623b–625 cara parens). Here, the motion is reversed; Pomponia is sent down, and Scipio (like Aeneas) finds his parent in the underworld. Jupiter’s decision to place Pomponia in Elysium with Alcmena and Leda suggests that he looks upon Scipio as he does upon Hercules and Castor and Pollux, and that by analogy, Scipio will share their places in heaven.

**Elysias .... in oras** Cf. Stat. Silv. 2.7.111–112 pacis merito nemus reclusum felix Elysiis tenes in oris (conj. Markland, see Van Dam ad loc.), of the blessed Lucan, and especially 5.1.193 Elysias felix admittar in oras, of the dying Priscilla, who will be welcomed in Elysium. For oras, cf. also Lucr. 6.763 Acheruntis in oras.

**sedes** Cf. Verg. A. 6.639 sedesque beatas and V.Fl. 1.846 has ... in sedes (both of the blessed lands). In the last passage, Mercury has also brought Aeson and his wife, the parents of the epic’s hero, to Elysium; the parallel may explain the explicit mention here of this traditional guide of the souls to the underworld.

**magna ... Alcidae genetrix** Alcmena, Hercules’ mother. With Alcidae, Silius underlines that Hercules, too, had a real divine father (Jupiter) and a mortal one (Amphitryon, the son of Alcaeus). The same holds for Leda, who was married to Tyndareus.

**magna ... genetrix** picks up Vergil’s phrase for Cybele (A. 2.788); Pomponia has joined the company of mothers of (demi)gods. For the allusion to the end of Aeneid 2, see Intr. 615–649.

**sacro munere** Probably (as Spaltenstein points out) both the permission to be in Elysium and Jupiter’s love which entitled all three women to their place there.

634–636 But now, child, since I may now disclose it to you, learn finally of your parentage, so that you will not fear any wars nor hesitate to attain heaven with your deeds.

Pomponia motivates her disclosure of Scipio’s divine parentage as an encouragement for him to take up the war against Hannibal without fear and to seek glory or even deification in doing so. Her words echo Anchises’ appeal to Aeneas in the Heldenschau (A. 6.806–807; cf. Marks 2005: 93 n.81, Tipping 2010a: 204):

> et dubitamus adhuc virtutem extendere factis
> aut metus Ausonia prohibit consistere terra?

“And do we still hesitate to make known our worth by exploits or shrink in fear from settling on Western soil?”

Just as Anchises, Pomponia addresses both fear (6.807 metus, here pavescas) for the battles ahead (which Aeneas knew would await him in Italy) and hesitation (6.806 dubitamus, here dubites). In Aeneid 6, the lines conclude Anchises’ presentation of Augustus, who is held
up as the culmination of the future glory of Rome, which should inspire Aeneas to pursue his destiny as its founder. Silius uses a different angle. In the proem, the epic is said to sing of the glory of Rome raised to heaven; as Pomponia’s words suggest, Scipio himself will be the fulfilment of this glory (see n. below). Scipio is thereby aligned not with Aeneas, but with Augustus. The parallel with Augustus also shows in the birth story itself (see Intr. 615–649) and in the explicit mention of Hercules (633 Alcidae), to whom Augustus is also compared (A. 6.801 Alcides). For the analogy of Scipio with Augustus, see further Intr. 762–805.

Tipping (ibid.) sees a contrast between Anchises’ parade of the Roman future, which is “protreptic for Aeneas suprapersonal mission” and Pomponia’s recommendation of “unhesitating self-realization”, but it is debatable whether there is a real difference; not only was Aeneas himself rewarded with immortality as well, but Scipio will only achieve it through virtus and pietas to his father and patria—his and Rome’s cause are one and the same, and in seeking personal glory he promotes Rome’s interests. His mother’s admonition to seek heaven anticipates the speech by Virtus at 15.69ff., in which apotheosis is promised to those who honour their divine roots (15.77–78); see Ripoll 1998a: 80, Marks 2005: 35, Klaassen 2010: 123–125, Van der Keur 2014: 298–299. Behind that speech lies, as is universally recognized, Cicero’s Somnium Scipionis, which also promotes service to the country as the way to true glory and heaven. See also the discussion in Intr. 762–805.

verum age, nate, ... discé This picks up 503 verum age, disce, puer (also motivated by a sub clause, there introduced by quoniam); the two passages that are thus introduced mark the most important lessons for Scipio regarding the future and the past, respectively. In the light of the parallel with the Heldenschau as Anchises’ motivation for Aeneas, cf. also Verg. A. 6.756–759 nunc age ... docebo. Aeneas learns of his offspring, Scipio of his true father.

ne bella pavescas ulla The phrase contrasts Scipio with Hannibal, who at 10.369 is described as maioraque bella paventem after the victory at Cannae due to a dream sent by Juno. When Hannibal marches on the Urbs anyway in book 12, Juno accosts him at 12.703–704 quo ruis, o vecors, maioraque bella capessis / mortali quam ferre datum? Scipio, on the other hand, wages his battle on behalf of Jupiter (the battle of Zama is adumbrated at 16.590 as maiora, ‘greater things’, possibly contrasting with Hannibal’s failure in waging maioraque bella; cf. perhaps also 15.489).

Augoustakis (2010c: 219) observes the connection with 16.127–128 ne vero, ne, nate, deum tam laeta pavesce / prodigia, where the mother of Masinissa exhorts her son to join the Romans against Carthage; he shows that both mothers are aware of the divine designs (Pomponia because of Jupiter’s love, Masinissa’s mother since she is a vates, 16.132) and prepare their sons to do the will of the gods. Masinissa is the first to acknowledge Scipio’s parentage in the epic (16.144 nate Tonantis, see Augoustakis 2010c: 220).

in caelum ... te attollere factis Scipio will realize what was said of Rome in the proem: 1.1–2 ordior arma, quibus caelo se gloria tollit / Aeneadum (cf. also of Fabius’ army 7.94–95 summumque decus, quo tollis ad astra / imperii, Romane, caput, parere; that phrase also echoes Anchises’ speech on Rome’s future imperial greatness, see Littlewood ad loc.). In retrospect, the poet thus identifies Rome’s cause with the figure of Scipio. Both phrases are intertextual with Anna’s hopes for Carthage at Verg. A. 4.48–49 Teucrum comitantibus
Silius effectively comments that not Carthage, but Rome attained eternal glory, and Trojan arms destroyed rather than aided Dido’s descendants.

Scipio thus joins the illustrious company of heroes that ‘attain heaven’ by their success in epic; cf. Romulus at Enn. Ann. 54–55 (Skutsch) unus erit quem tu [i.e. Mars] tolles in caerula caeli / templar (borrowed at Ov. Fast. 2.487 and Met. 14.812), Aeneas at Verg. A. 12.795 fatisque ad sidera tolli (cf. A. 1.259–260) and Jason at V.Fl. 4.554–555 quem ... ipse ultero Pelias ad sidera tollit, and also the praise for Pompey at Luc. 7.11–12 attollique suum laetis ad sidera nomen / vocibus. It falls to the bards to realize this heightened status; cf. 12.411 attolque duces caelo (Ennius, on the Roman war heroes, including Scipio) and Stat. Silv. 5.3.10–11 magnanimum qui facta attollere regum / ibam (Statius, on the heroes of his Thebaid)—thus, Silius underlines the power of his own epic here (despite te). Sometimes, there seems to be only a small distinction, if any, between fame reaching sky-high and actual apotheosis. For while in most of the above passages the interpretation that the heroes are only made immortal by song suffices, Vergil actually deified Aeneas (cf. A. 12.797 divum). It is plausible that Pomponia suggests that the same lies in store for Scipio; compare Virtus’ words at 15.77 quis aetherii servatur seminis ortus caeli porta patet, where apotheosis is promised to those honouring their divine descent; there, ortus may echo the same word here, just as aetherii reverberates from 13.629.

For se attollere factis, cf. 224 (cf. also Stat. Theb. 10.215 ingenti se attollere fama). For the expression ‘praise to the skies’ (tollere ad caelum), cf. also Sall. Cat. 48.1, Cic. Fam. 15.9.1, Harus. 47, Arch. 22 and Nat. 2.62.

aperire Pomponia can now ‘disclose’ Scipio’s parentage to him, just as the Sibyl revealed the underworld to him (522 aperi). In doing so, both temporarily assume the poet’s place as the Muses’ mouthpiece, able to provide true and vital information; cf. Silius’ proem at 1.19 fas aperire mihi superasque recludere mentes, 9.341 aperi and 12.389 pandere, which is the more frequent verb for this disclosure of poetic or divine knowledge (cf. 13.724).

637–640a When it chanced that at midday I was alone and sought to get some sleep to rest, suddenly an embrace bound my limbs—not the one familiar and welcome to me, of my husband coming to me. Multiple elements stress that Pomponia did not willingly submit to Jupiter and thus that Scipio was not born from infidelity: i) she was trying to sleep, which is indicated by petitos and the marked tautology at 637–638a; ii) Jupiter bound her limbs (membra ligavit, an anticipation of his serpentine form), so she could not resist him; iii) it was not her husband’s embrace, which was adsuetus and facilis—by implication, Jupiter’s embrace was not facilis (either ‘welcome’ or ‘gentle’) and thus unwanted. Cf. also Spaltenstein nn.13.638 and 13.640 and Augoustakis 2010c: 216.

In Homer’s Nekyia, just after the meeting with Antikleia, Odysseus speaks with Tyro (Od. 11.235–259), who tells him of her rape near the river Enipeus by Poseidon (by whom she was induced to sleep), after which she gave birth to her sons Pelias and Neleus. Tyro is the first in Homer’s catalogue of women. Silius may hint at the Homeric catalogue here with Pomponia’s words in 633–634 (attribuitque pares sedes, ubi magna moratur Alcidae genetrix, ubi sacro munere Leda): Pomponia (with her similar tale) has the same position
(i.e. in the narrative) as Alcmene and Leto, two other women in the same catalogue. But Pomponia’s narration of her own rape also has Roman intertexts. Homer’s story of Tyro seems to have inspired Ennius for his story of Ilia (Ann. 34–50 Skutsch), who in similar fashion herself relates her dream in which she was raped by a beautiful man (i.e. Mars) along a riverbank; at the end of her dream, her father Aeneas spoke to her and she stretched out her arms, calling him, an element which may pick up Odysseus’ failed embrace of his parent Antikleia (for a discussion, see Connors 1994: 102–106). That Silius may be thinking of Mars and Ilia here is suggested not only by the similar combination of rape narrative and failed embrace, but also by verbal correspondences with Ovid’s adaptation of the story of Ilia (Rhea Silvia) in Fast. 3.9–48. As she wakes up, Rhea Silvia notes that her body is languid (Fast. 3.25 languida; cf. here 641 languentia) and tells what she saw in her dream (3.28 vidimus; cf. 642 vidi); she later gave birth to a heavenly burden, i.e. Romulus and Remus (3.42 caelesti ... pondere; cf. 629 aetherio ... pondere). Both Ovid’s Rhea Silvia and Silius’ Pomponia are asleep during the day; but whereas Rhea Silvia is overcome by sleep and Mars rapes her without her noticing (3.22 furta fefellit), Pomponia wakes up and cannot help but recognize Jupiter (642 nec ... fefellit).

For another connection with Ilia, see n.619b–620 quae ni provisa fuissent. If Silius is indeed alluding to Mars and Ilia, this has a double significance: i) the poet has put the rape narrative back in its ‘original’ setting, a Nekyia (retroactive intertextuality, see Gen.intr. § 4.1); ii) Scipio is implicitly connected with Romulus, and is thus marked as another founder of Rome, and another candidate for apotheosis (see n.634–636 in caelum ... te attollere factis). These two considerations may account for the setting and form of Pomponia’s story; for its substance (Jupiter’s amatory transformation into a snake), there are other intertexts (see Intr. 615–649).

**sola die ... medio** Possibly, the time of day is because of sola, since her husband would have been with her at night (Spaltenstein); Gellius also says she was alone (sola, 6.1.3), but is silent on the time. Suetonius records that Augustus’ mother was visited by a snake at night (Aug. 94.4 media nocte). More importantly, rape at midday is a literary trope; cf. e.g. the explicit references to noon at Ov. Met. 1.592 (Jupiter’s conquest of Io), 2.417 (Callisto; see Intr. 615–649 fn.7).

**caperem ... somnos** A common expression for ‘get to sleep’; in poetry, cf. e.g. Catul. 63.36, Ov. Fast. 3.185, 4.530, 6.331, Met. 1.626, Mart. 1.109.8; see also TLL 3.322.80ff.

**subitus** Cf. repente at Gell. 6.1.3 (cf. also Livy, who rather focuses on the snake’s sudden disappearance, 26.19.9) and Suet. Aug. 94.4 (the similar tale about Augustus’ mother).

**membra ligavit amplexu** The serpent’s embrace suggests more sinister settings, such as the death of Laocoon (Verg. A. 2.214 amplexus, 215 implicat, 217 ligant, 218 amplexi). For ligavit see also n.591–594 viperea ... circumligat ilia cauda.

**640b–642a** Then in a flashing light, although sleep filled my drowsy eyes, I saw—believe me—Jupiter.

Pomponia’s story seems to contain a few metapoetic elements through which Silius hints at his intertexts:

i) The combination of having drowsy eyes and being a witness of lovemaking (641–642 implebat quamquam languentia lumina somnus, vidi ...) picks up Prop. 1.10.7 quamvis
labentis premeret mihi somnus ocellos, where the poet’s persona cannot but witness eagerly the passion of his friend Gallus with a puella. Recent scholarship has asserted the clear metapoetic overtones of Propertius’ passage as a reference to his reception of the poet Gallus (i.e. ‘viewing Gallus’ amores’ is ‘reading his love poetry’; see e.g. Thomas 1979: 204; Pincus 2004 with bibl.). In support of this interpretation, the same critics compare Propertius’ poem with Catul. 50, where the theme of sleeplessness (esp. 50.10) also figures as a metaphor both on an amatory and a poetic level, as Catullus describes his reception of Calvus’ verses in erotic terms; see Thomas 1979: 199–205 for the employment of this topical ‘sleeplessness’ (ἀγρυπνία) as a condition for the production (and reception) of poetry since Call. Epigr. 27.4 (Pfeiffer). For ‘having seen’ meaning ‘having read’, we might also compare Prop. 1.13, in which the poet looks back upon Gallus’ passion (at 1.13.14 emphatically vidi ego; cf. here 642 vidi) and likens his girl to Leda conquered by Jupiter (1.13.29ff.). The drowsy eyes of the secondary narrator Pomponia thus suggest her reception of earlier poetry, while vidi ... Iovem suggests that this Jupiter is borrowed.

ii) The source of the borrowing seems to be indicated in the next sentence: nec me mutata fefellit forma dei. While the phrase mutare formam is not rare, the use of the past participle suggests the first line of Ovid’s Metamorphoses and its avowed theme, mutatas ... formas (a phrase with which Ovid himself refers to his epic at Tr. 1.1.117; 1.7.13 and 3.14.19). Jupiter’s disguise did not deceive Pomponia, indeed it gives away his nature: he is an Ovidian Jupiter. Indeed, we should not have expected different, since this conquest of Jupiter is the doing of Venus, the dominant force in Ovid’s entire oeuvre. For possible Ovidian echoes, see Intr. 615–649 fn.7.

luce corusca coruscus suggests Jupiter’s lightning; cf. 6.605, 15.143, Verg. G. 1.328, Hor. Carm. 1.34.6, Sen. Oed. 1029, Pha. 156, Aetna 54, Stat. Theb. 1.216 (and other passages for lightning in general; see also TLL 4.1076.49ff.). It is highly appropriate that the god shows this aspect when fathering Scipio, whose name was connected to lightning (see also n.605 sceptris fulsisse superbis). The setting (of Jupiter appearing with lightning to a mortal woman, who does not live after giving birth) recalls Semele and Bacchus, thus connecting Scipio to another son of Jupiter who attained heaven; for the connection with Bacchus, cf. 15.79–81 and 17.647–648, and Intr. 762–805; Domitian emulates Bacchus at 3.615.

implebat ... languentia lumina somnus Cf. 7.204 composuit luctantia lumina Somnus (the companion of... Bacchus! see prev. n.); both phrases may go back to Verg. G. 4.496 conditique natantia lumina somnus, of Eurydice’s ghost returning to Hades.

The fact that her eyes were languid underlines, rather than undermines, the accuracy of Pomponia’s report to Scipio; for it was so obviously Jupiter who assailed her—even with sleepy eyes she knew that.

vidi ... Iovem Alcmene uses the same expression for Jupiter’s visit to her at [Sen.] Her.O. 1802–1803 thalamosque nostros, in quibus quondam lovem dilecta vidi? The spondaic word vidi at the beginning of the line stresses the significance of Pomponia’s statement. The emphasis on personal visual experience is a form of “Wahrheitsbeteuerung”, or “claim of truthfulness”; cf. Van Dam ad Stat. Silv. 2.6.30 vidi et adhuc video (with 2.6.29 non fallo and here 642 nec me fefellit), Prop. 1.13.14 (see n. above) and e.g. Verg. A. 2.499, 3.623.
642b–644 Nor did the altered shape of the god deceive me, since he was transformed into a scaly serpent and drew his curved convulsions with an enormous coil.

For Pomponia’s description of Jupiter as a serpent, compare that of the snake appearing in Aeneid 5 when Aeneas makes an offering at Anchises’ grave: *lubricus anguis* ... / *septem ingens gyros, septena volumina traxit* (A. 5.84–85). The peaceful snake (which probably symbolizes Anchises’ genius) is a sign of Aeneas’ favoured status with the gods and thus of his future success; Scipio’s birth from a similar serpent must signify the same. Cf. similar descriptions (but few exact verbal echoes) of more dangerous snakes at Verg. G. 2.153–154, Ov. *Met.* 3.41ff., Stat. *Theb.* 5.506–507 and the Bagrada serpent at Sil. 6.225–226.

*nec ... fefellit* Jupiter’s majesty shines through any of his manifestations. Cf. the similar phrase at Verg. A. 12.877–878 *nec fallunt iussa superba magnanimi Iovis* (there, *fallo* is rather ‘escape’).

**conversus in anguem** Silius uses the same diction as Hyginus for Jupiter’s amatory transformations; cf. Hyg. *Fab.* 61.1 *in imbre aureum conversus* (Danae), 77.1 *in cygnum conversus* (Leda; cf. *Astr.* 2.8), 178.1 *in taurum conversus* (Europa).

**curvata volumina** Cf. *simiosa volumina* of other snakes at Verg. A. 11.753, Germ. *Arat.* 49 and Stat. *Theb.* 1.562 (the Python); for *volumina* (suggesting enormity), cf. also Verg. A. 5.85 cited above and V.Fl. 7.536 (the serpent guarding the Golden Fleece).

645–646a But it was not granted to me to continue living after giving birth.

For Pomponia’s death, see n.626–627.


**concessum** For Silius’ frequent use of the passive past participle for verbs with the sense ‘grant’, ‘allow’, see n.155–156a *praevetitum*.

646b–647 Ah, how much I grieved, that my spirit vanished into the air before I could let you know these things!

**quantum gemui** Cf. Anchises’ words at Verg. A. 6.694 *quam metui ne quid Libyae tibi regna nocerent*!; for both parents, the earlier anxiety is lifted now that the son has come to see them. The words may also invert A. 6.872–873 *quantos ... campus aget gemitus*!, on the death of Marcellus (see n.658–660); Marcellus is mourned for his early demise, but Pomponia herself mourns because her early death prevented her from informing Scipio of his parentage.

**noscenda darem** ‘allow you to know’, i.e. ‘let you know’. For this use of the gerund of purpose (*KS* 2.1.731), cf. 323 *habitanda* and 513 *vincendum*; cf. also 612 *patienda*.

**dissessit in auras** For the allusion to Creusa’s ghost at A. 2.791, see Intr. 615–649.

648–649 his alacer colla amplexu materna petebat, umbraque ter frustra per inane petita fefellit.
Enthused by this he sought his mother’s neck in embrace, but thrice her shade, vainly sought through nothingness, evaded him.

Scipio’s failed embrace of his mother goes back to Odysseus’ attempt at embracing Antikleia (Hom. Od. 11.206–208; cf. Achilles trying to embrace Patroklos’ ghost at Il. 23.99ff.) and Aeneas’ similar experience with Anchises at Verg. A. 6.700–701 ter conatus ibi collo dare brachia circum; ter frustra comprena manus effugit imago (cf. also Creusa at A. 2.792–793; see Intr. 615–649); umbra ... petita fefellit is a variation on comprena ... effugit imago. Compare also Ov. Fast. 5.475–476 mandantem amplecti cupiunt et brachia tendunt: / lubrica prensantes effugit umbra manus (when Remus’ shade appears to his foster parents).

The metre of the second half of 649, with its three amphibrachic words, may suggest the repeated and failed embraces; each of the three words reinforces the sense that Scipio cannot catch hold of Pomponia: inane (nothingness), petita (sought but not gained), fefellit (evaded).

colla amplexu ... petebat For the phrase, cf. Ov. Met. 4.597 et dabat amplexus adsuetaque colla petebat, 6.640, Quint. Inst. 4.2.124 (also with amplexu).

materna This picks up maternos ... vultus at 614, making this scene a ring composition.

per inane Presumably, this refers to Pomponia’s incorporeal body rather than the void of the underworld (which would be the usual interpretation of the phrase; cf. e.g. 6.248, 10.151, Lucr. 2.65, Verg. A. 12.354 and for the underworld Luc. 6.731, Stat. Theb. 8.85)—Scipio’s reaching hands go ‘through nothingness’. For inanis used of shades, cf. Prop. 3.18.32, Ov. Fast. 2.554, 5.463, Stat. Theb. 1.93, 10.601; cf. also 544 mortem ... inanem.

fefellit The echo from 642 seems unintentional. For this use of fallere (‘evade’), see TLL 6.1.188.30ff.
650–704 Scipio’s father and uncle

The next to arrive are the shades of Scipio’s father Publius and uncle Cnaeus. Scipio reproaches himself for not having been with his family to protect them and reports that a tomb is being erected for them on the Campus Martius. His father expresses his pleasure at such recognition, then warns his son not to give in to battle-fury and underlines this warning by telling the story of his own death: Hasdrubal bribed Publius’ mercenaries to leave him, rendering him powerless against the Carthaginian armies. Cnaeus adds his own tale; he was burned alive when the enemy set fire to the tower he used as shelter. Young Scipio dispels their fears that Spain has fallen to Carthage by telling that Marcius still holds part of the country and has routed the enemies in revenge for their deaths.

The full story of the fortunes of the brothers Scipio can be found in Livy. At the outset of the war, Publius drew Spain as his consular province; upon discovering at the Rhône that the Carthaginians had already made their way to the Alps, he sent Cnaeus onwards to Spain with the greater part of his troops and returned to northern Italy to defend it against Hannibal (Liv. 21.32). The next year, Publius, too, was sent to Spain by the Senate (Liv. 22.22.1). In the first few years large parts of Spain came under Roman control, after which the situation stagnated. In 212 BC the brothers split their armies in an attempt to attack all the Carthaginian armies at once and bring the war in Spain to a close (Liv. 25.33). Cnaeus’ army was made up for a large part of Celtiberian troops; when these were persuaded by Hasdrubal to desert the Romans and return to their homes, Cnaeus was forced to withdraw and seek safer ground. Meanwhile, Publius attempted to intercept a Spanish army coming to reinforce the Carthaginians; but his army was attacked on three sides by the arriving enemy forces, Publius was slain and the Romans suffered a crushing defeat (Liv. 25.34). All the Punic forces then assaulted Cnaeus’ small army, which had barricaded itself with baggage on a small hill. Livy gives two alternative versions of Cnaeus’ death; the first being that he died in the attack on his fortified position, the second that he had retreated to a tower nearby; when the enemy could not take it, they set the doors on fire and then captured the tower, killing all inside (25.35–36). The scattered Romans were rallied by Lucius Marcius, who kept them alive and defended the Roman territory until Claudius Nero and young Scipio came to relieve him in the next year.

The accounts of other historiographers add little to the picture. Polybius knew of Cnaeus’ fortifying himself with baggage, as a small fragment suggests (8.38), but the rest is lost. Appian (Hisp. 62–63) gives an abridged version of Livy’s account; a notable difference is that in his account, the Romans in the tower are burned to death.

It is clear that Silius has made selective use of his sources and that he presents the brothers in the best possible light, by omitting their miscalculations. There is no mention of a division of troops. Livy attributed Publius’ fall to his own rash plan to attack the Spanish chieftain Indibilis (25.34.7), but here, his death is entirely due to betrayal. It appears that

1 Since all three characters bore the name Scipio, and both father and son were called Publius, I refer to the father as Publius, to his son as Scipio, and to the elder Publius’ brother as Cnaeus, to avoid ambiguity.
2 The only indication that the brothers were not working in tandem is the singular peterem at 679, which we may also take as meaning simply that Publius was in command; the plural is used again at 685–686 (nobis... inclusimus). Silius emphasizes the brotherly harmony throughout the passage; see n.650–651a.
3 See n.669b–670 for a possible remnant of the rashness which Livy depicts.
Introduction to 650–704

our poet has used only Livy’s account of Cnaeus’ vicissitudes and that he has distributed the two variants concerning his death over the two brothers: Publius dies surrounded by the enemy, Cnaeus in the burning tower.4

One might expect that for the encounter with Scipio’s father, Silius would draw heavily upon Vergil’s Anchises, whom Aeneas visited in his *katabasis* in a similar display of *pietas*; the reminiscences of that meeting are restricted, however, to the emotions exhibited by father and son.5 The poet modelled the brotherly pair after a number of literary characters; as we will see, each model offers additional insight into Silius’ presentation of young Scipio and his role in the rest of the epic.

In the last books of the *Punica*, Scipio is presented as the avenger of his family.6 The inspiration for Scipio’s role of *ultor* should be sought in Achilles’ vengeance for the death of Patroclus and, similarly, Aeneas’ retaliation for the killing of Pallas. The groundwork for the evocation of the Homeric and Vergilian intertexts is laid in book 13, since the demise of Scipio’s father and uncle is couched in allusions to the death of Pallas (and, to a lesser extent, also of Patroclus). The very first reference to the Scipios’ deaths at 383ff. has a clear echo of Vergil’s famous apostrophe of Pallas.7 It was Fortune that had snatched them away, the same goddess whom Aeneas blames at *A*. 11.43.8 Like Pallas, the Scipios have met an untimely end, a *funus acerbum* (387, cf. *A*. 11.27). After his evaluation of the brothers and their demise, the narrator moves to young Scipio and his reaction to the news, just as in Vergil the news of Pallas’ death reaches Aeneas’ ears after the narrator’s apostrophe (388 *fama*, cf. *A*. 10.510).9 The connection to Pallas is continued in the present passage with Scipio’s passionate words to the shade of his father; now the primary intertext is Aeneas’ speech at the beginning of *Aeneid* 11. Like Aeneas, Scipio blames the jealousy of the gods (655 *exosus ... deus*; cf. *A*. 11.43 *invidit Fortuna mihi*) and is full of self-reproach over the deaths of his kin.10 The theme of vengeance is also set in motion in this passage, in three different ways which correspond to the triple way in which Vergil gives shape to the retaliation of Pallas’ death in *Aeneid* 10:

i) The Scipios did not die *inultis*, which implies a costly victory for their enemies (685–686); Vergil similarly notes that Pallas killed many Rutulians before he was slain by Turnus.11

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4 See for a full discussion n.683–684. Reitz (1982: 95–96) observes that the order of events is the same in Livy and Silius, even if the actors are different. The burning of the tower presents another deviation from Livy, where only the doors were burned and the Romans subsequently killed by the invading enemy. It could be a variant tradition, since Appian also has it; but it is better to attribute this and other differences to poetic reasons, such as the sustained allusion to the fall of Troy discussed below.

5 In detail: the failed embrace (651b–653), the father’s anxiety of his son’s hazardous exploits (667b–669), the son weeping (696). In function, Vergil’s Anchises returns rather in Silius’ Sibyl, who introduces the various ghosts to Scipio (see e.g. Intr. 494–516, n.519–522) and Pomponia, who provides him with encouraging information (Intr. 615–649); these scenes both reflect Anchises’ presentation of the future Romans to his son.

6 Cf. 7.487–488 *hinc ille e furto genitus patruique piabit / idem ultor patrisque necem, 13.507 patrem ulcisceris, 15.205 vobis ultor ego* (to the *manes* of his kinsmen), 16.86–87, 16.593 *ultor patriaeque domusque*.

7 Sil. 13.384 *magnumque decus magnumque dolorem – A. 10.507 o dolor atque decus magnum rediture parenti.*

8 Sil. 13.383 *abstulerat, 655 abstulit*, cf. *A*. 10.508 and 11.28; for the same verb *auferre*, cf. also 15.393 *Marcellum abstulimus Latio*, where Hannibal credits himself with inflicting a similar death.

9 Scipio’s wild grief may be compared to Achilles’ reaction to the news of Patroclus’ death; see Intr. 381–416.

10 Cf. *ei mihi* at 654 and *A*. 11.57. Both heroes view the fallen warriors as their charge whom they have failed to save; cf. *A*. 11.45–46, 11.55 *haec mea magna fides?*

11 Verg. *A*. 10.509; the pathetic phrase *haec ... prima dies* in the previous line is picked up by Silius with *illa suprema dies* (686).
ii) The enemy armies were routed by Marcius, as *piacula caedis* (701–702); the phrase (‘expiatory offerings’) evokes Aeneas’ capture of eight warriors whom he will immolate as *inferias* (*A. 10.519*) to Pallas’ shade, a motif which goes back to Homer’s Achilles (see n.701b–702 *exacta piacula caedis*).

iii) After his father and uncle have narrated their demise, young Scipio prays that Carthage may pay the price for their deaths, anticipating his own role of vindicator (697–698). Similarly in Vergil, immediately following Pallas’ death the narrator adumbrates the end of the *Aeneid*, when Turnus must pay for despoiling Pallas.12

It should be noted, however, that Scipio is not exclusively motivated by revenge, no more than Aeneas is in Vergil. The demise of his father and uncle mainly serves as a plot device, comparable to the deaths of Pallas and Patroclus: it is a catalyst for Scipio’s more prominent presence in the epic, similar to how in the *Iliad* Achilles dominates the field and the poem for its last books.13 But Scipio goes beyond Achilles. Besides the motive of punishing the enemy, he has another cause which he shares with Aeneas, namely securing a future for his country. This second motive is developed in the *Punica* mainly through allusions to the fall of Troy (~ Rome’s successive defeats) and the foundation of a new Troy in Latium (~ the restoration of Rome and her victory over Carthage under Scipio’s leadership). In the *katabasis* which was to prepare Aeneas for his fated war in Latium, Vergil incorporated a recollection of Troy’s fall, namely the encounter with the shade of the Trojan prince Deiphobus; Silius also looks both forward and back by making that encounter a model for Scipio’s meeting with his kin.

The allusion to Deiphobus is established in the opening sequence. Scipio, like Aeneas, first asks who was responsible for the shade’s death.14 He tells of their (empty) tomb on the *Campus Martius* (659–660), which corresponds to Aeneas’ *tumulum ... inanem* (6.505) for Deiphobus. Scipio’s father, who addresses his son as *decus nostrum* (cf. *A. 6.546 i decus, i nostrum*), calls his attention to the *documenta domus* (671), that is, the story of their deaths; Deiphobus similarly introduces the tale of his demise by pointing to *haec monimenta* (6.512), the wounds on his body. Deiphobus narrates how his wife Helen betrayed him to the Greeks; similarly here, Publius’ fall is entirely ascribed to the treason of the mercenaries (see above).15 At the end of their tale, young Scipio asks the gods that the enemy be punished, just as Deiphobus does at the end of his (*A. 6.529–530*; see n.697–698).16 On a basic level, the significance of these correspondences is that like Deiphobus, the brothers Scipio relate the story of their deaths.17

12 The same metaphor of buying and paying is used in both texts: Verg. *A. 10.503 cum optaverit emptum intactum Pallanta*, Sil. 13.698 *Carthago expendat poenas*.

13 The intertexts suggest a pattern: since Pallas’ death is repaid when Aeneas kills Turnus, or Patroclus’ fall anticipates Hector’s, the death of a dear Pallas-like figure has come to anticipate the hero’s ultimate victory. The same motif is also present for Hannibal, who has a ‘Pallas’ in dead Sychaeus (*5.589–591 num te ... nimio primi Mavortis amore atra, Sychaeae, dies properato funere carpsit?*), and shortly thereafter achieves his greatest victories.

14 Aeneas wants to know who (*A. 6.501 quis*) mutilated Deiphobus thus, while Scipio asks which vengeful god took his family away (654–655 *quis ... exosus deus*, suggestive of divine punishment). This opening question is also a reminiscence of Aeneas’ similar question to Palinurus; see n.654–655a.

15 Compare the cynical use of *fides* at 678–679 *barbara numquam impolluta fides* and *A. 2.309 tum vero manifesta fides*.

16 Cf. for other correspondences 666–667a (~ *A. 6.531–34*), 685–686 and 701b–702 (both ~ *A. 6.501–504*).

17 Compare also the tale of Agamemnon at Hom. *Od. 11.385ff.* (a scene which also begins with a failed embrace), who was similarly killed after a betrayal, and whose story moved Odysseus to tears (cf. 696). Other formal correspondences to Homer’s *Nekyia* are observed by Reitz (1982: 94), who notes that the conversations with Agamemnon and Achilles touch upon events which are otherwise left out of the epic, similarly to the narratives of the two brothers here; furthermore, the scene concludes with Scipio bearing happy news to the shades, just as Odysseus does to Achilles.
But the correspondence goes deeper; just like Deiphobus, the Scipios represent the sorry state of their country, and interwoven in their story are echoes of the fall of Troy in *Aeneid* 2. Publius’ last stand recalls Aeneas’ wish not to die unavenged during Troy’s last night. Cnaeus’ burning tower is a reminiscence of the destruction of defence towers in *Aeneid* 2 and 9 (in the latter, the siege of the Trojan camp is itself a replay of the battle for Troy). Their death is a *ruina* (694), evocative of the words used for the fall of Troy. Young Scipio’s plea to the gods at 697–698 recalls Deiphobus’ similar outcry, but echoes even more closely Priam’s curse at *A. 2.535ff.*

That the death of the Scipios corresponds not only to Deiphobus’ death, but to the fall of Troy itself marks the importance of their demise for the plot. The death of the Scipio brothers was for Scipio personally what Cannae was for Rome; indeed, their quality as ‘pillars’ (cf. 654) suggests that Rome has fallen after their death. But the intertext of *Aeneid* 6, which looks back but also to the future, also underlines the hope which young Scipio represents. Aeneas, though unable to save Troy, will succeed in his divine mission to ‘found’ a new one; likewise, Scipio could not rescue his father (cf. his self-reproach at 655ff.), but on the ashes of his house he will build a new future for his patria by defeating Hannibal—his victory will make him a new founder of Rome.

The theme of vengeance which is developed in this passage not merely looks forward to Scipio’s role of *ultor*, but also answers the general plotline of the *Punica*, namely Hannibal’s championing of Dido. The vengeance that Dido calls for at *A. 4.622–629* (picked up by Silius’ Hannibal at 1.114–119), is here (partially) satisfied with the similar fate of the brothers Scipio. Publius’ speech shares a number of elements with Dido’s last words: i) both list their accomplishments; ii) both blame a misplaced trust in foreigners for their doom; iii) Dido states that she will go unavenged (*A. 4.659–660* *moriemur inultae*) but will die anyway, while Publius remarks that he did *nec inultis* (685 *nec inultis*). Carthaginian revenge will be answered by Roman vengeance. The fact that *ut merita est* at 697 (Carthage deserving punishment) echoes Dido’s self-condemnation at 4.547 shows that in the end, revenge will have come full circle. The scene ends with an allusion to Aeneas’ last sight of Dido, but with a positive twist.

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18 See n.685–686 *nec inultis*. The encircling of Publius’ army is described in terms which could also have been used for the siege of a city; see n.683–684 *spisso circumdedit orbe*.

19 See n.688–689.

20 Cf. *A. 2.290 ruit alto a culmine Troia*, 2.363; cf. also *ruina* of the falling tower (symbolizing Troy) at 2.465 and the tree to which the city is compared at 2.630; cf. further Verg. *A. 1.238*, Ov. *Fast.* 4.177, Sil. 3.565. At 3.206, Hannibal is told that *magnae ruinae* will befall the men of Ida, i.e. the descendants of Troy.

21 Reitz 1982: 96. Another parallel could be 701b–702 *fusos ... victores acie*, which may correspond to initial successes of the Trojan defenders (see n.); Marcius’ defence of Spain is more fruitful, but in the end also only temporary—it will take a Scipio Africanus to end the war.

22 Cf. e.g. 17.651–652 *salve, invicte parens* [i.e. Scipio], *non concessure Quirino / laudibus ac meritis non concessure Camillo*; as Tipping (2010b: 162) notes, Silius there “connects Scipio to both Romulus and Camillus as founders or re-founders of Rome”. Cf. also 15.83 for Romulus as a model.

23 The new walls of Saguntum correspond with Dido’s *moenia* (*A. 4.655*), while the routing of Hasdrubal, *germanus ... Hannibalis* picks up Dido’s punishment of her frater (*A. 4.656*).

24 The desertion of the Celtiberian mercenaries is in syntax (see n.683–684) and diction very similar to Silius’ line on Aeneas’ desertion of Dido: cf. 683 *socio desertos militie* and 8.50 *Iliaco ... deserta est hospite Dido*.

25 Verg. *A. 6.476 prosequitur lacrimis longe et miseratur euntem ~ 704 prosequiturque oculis ... advereratus euntes* (see n.703–704). Dido’s death is also used as an intertext for the suicide of Hannibal’s Capuan allies, which
Scipio’s father and uncle share a number of intertextual models with his mother Pomponia, the previous shade. Both scenes include minor reminiscences of Vergil’s Marcellus, and also of Regulus, the hero of Punica 6.

**Analysis of the presentation of 650–704**

The first word *succedunt* marks the transition to another passage, and to another two shades. Marking contrast with the preceding figure, Scipio’s mother, *patris* stands prominently at the end of the first line, shortly followed by *patrui*. While in the previous passage an embrace featured as a closural device (see An. 615–649), Silius here begins with one (652–653), which is novel. It is another way to ease the transition and to link the scenes and parents; the two embraces in 648–649 and 652–653 join together the two elements that make up Aeneas’ embrace of *his* parent, Anchises, at A. 6.700–702, viz. the attempt itself (648–649) and the similes (652–653; see n.651b–653). The same technique of shared reference is used for the transition to the next scene; see below.

Scipio’s opening speech consists of three elements: i) he enquires after the cause of his relatives’ deaths, while blaming the gods; ii) in self-reproach, he blames himself for not protecting them, *saevus* (see n.655b–657a for two possible interpretations of the word); iii) all Italy grieves, and a tomb is being erected for them. His father addresses each point, in reverse order. At 663–665 he replies to the glory of the senate’s monument for them. Then, picking up on his son’s *saevitia* (cf. 668), he urges him not to give in to such *furor*; the cautioning words at 669–670 are rendered in severe spondees, not unlike his son’s response to the stories of their deaths (his cursing of Carthage, 698 *Carthago expendat poenas*). The rest of his speech addresses the events in Spain, in reply to the opening question of 654–655.

...adumbrates Hannibal’s similar end (see Intr. 256–298 and 850b–895); the allusion suggests that her curse ultimately fails and backfires.

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27 For Regulus and Pomponia, see n.623b–625. Like Regulus for his son Serranus, the elder Scipio is both a model and an anti-model for young Scipio. On the one hand, he emphasizes the eternal value of *virtus* at 663 (plausibly a reference to the similar setting and message of Cicero’s *Somnium Scipionis*), for which Kibbel (1979: 171) has rightly compared the eternal fame of Regulus’ stoicism (6.545–546). On the other, in both cases the son should not imitate his father’s *furor* in battle (see n.671a). The word *documenta* is used at 6.123 for Regulus’ positive example, here at 671 for Publius Scipio’s negative example. There are a few other verbal correspondences: the enemies killed in expiation of their deaths (6.300 *piacula mortis*; here 702 *piacula caedis*); Scipio’s assumption that a god hates Latium (655 *exsus Latium deus*) and Serranus wondering if Jupiter does so (6.102–103 *culmina ... Tarpeia exsus*); Regulus being *Italae ... lumen gentis* (6.130–131), corresponding to the Scipios being mourned by the gens *Itala* at 658 (a rare phrase, see n.658–600).

28 Throughout the passage, the poet identifies the actors by their familial relationships towards one another; see n.703–704 *puer*.

29 In Vergil, the similarly failed embrace of Aeneas and Anchises is described relatively early in their meeting, but only after their short dialogue, whereas here it precedes all other actions.

30 While strictly speaking, Scipio did not ask ‘how did you die?’ that is what is intended, just as Aeneas’ similar questions to Palinurus (A. 2.341–342) and Deiphobus (2.501) prompt them to tell the circumstances of their deaths.

31 The sounds of M, O and to a lesser extent P which fill line 657 may express Scipio’s lamentation.

32 Just as Pomponia answered in reverse order her son’s very similar laments at 623–628 (see An. 615–649).
Publius’ tale of the events in Spain can be divided into four parts. He begins with a general setting at 671–674, with a temporal reference (671–672 *octava ... aestas*) and imperfect tenses. He then sums up their achievements at 675–678 in perfect tenses, with a tricolon (emphasized by the anaphora of *nos ... nos ... nobis*) of restoration, pacification and military superiority over Hasdrubal. The third stage (679ff.) is a proper narrative with strict chronology, as is shown by the second temporal setting at 679–680 (*cum*, with which Scipio zooms in to a specific moment) and *tunc* at 683, marking the next step; the perfects *liquerunt* and *circumdedit* represent the events of the narrative. Perhaps the last two lines (685–686) could be read as part of this narrative as well, but several elements indicate that it is rather a closing comment: i) the day is summarized rather than described; ii) Publius suddenly addresses his son (*nate*); iii) *illa* marks a clear distance between speaker and story.

Following up on the last part of his brother’s tale (marked at 687 by both *excipit* and *coniungere*), Cnaeus narrates how he died. It should be noted that the brothers’ tales perfectly complement each other without overlap; Publius’ actual death was not narrated, so that Cnaeus’ demise and ‘funeral’ may stand for both of them. This is not only a sound narrative strategy (i.e. Silius avoids reiteration) but also emphasizes the brotherly unison. The set-up of Cnaeus’ account is similar to Publius’. He, too, first gives a setting (his search for shelter in a tower) with a pluperfect (689 *optaram*) and imperfect (*ciebam*), and then describes the action which caused his death (the Carthaginians burning the tower) with the perfect *iniecere* (691). Subsequently he, like Publius, comments on his death, and these comments react to his nephew’s words at 654–660. First he states that he holds no grudge against the gods, as they gave him a good death, which would correct Scipio’s lament about an *exosus Latium deus* (cf. also 391–392 *sinistris caelicolis*) at 655. The next lines take up the report of the grief in Italy and the tomb that is being built; for, as Cnaeus relates, the gods gave him a splendid tomb in Spain (692–693) and his grief is about the future of that country.

Young Scipio reacts to both stories by cursing the enemy, similar to Deiphobus’ curse that concludes his story (see Intr. 650–704 above). He then addresses Cnaeus’ grief about Spain by relating what he knows about the events that followed their deaths. The current state of affairs in the country is narrated with a present (698 *continet*) and two perfects which are both resultative (700 *excepit*, 701 *successit*), expressing the present situation of Marcus’ command of the Roman army. Scipio also reports a rumour that the enemy have been routed in battle; the imperfect *ferebat* expresses that this rumour was current before he started his *nekyia* and probably still is (i.e. it represents a situation that started in the past).

Scipio’s good news is summarized by *his* at 703; the difference with *quae* at 696 is that the latter continues the same level of presentation (connecting two similar speeches), while

33 The imperfect *subibat* is a process: the two brothers had set foot on Spanish soil eight years ago and had been conquering it ever since (but never completed their conquest, of course).

34 Cf. also Kißel 1979: 171. This is somewhat similar to Palinurus’ correction of Aeneas (*A. 6.347–348*), who blamed Apollo for not telling the truth.

35 The subject of *cremaverunt* is probably the gods (cf. Spaltenstein) and not the Carthaginians; the hostile actions of the Carthaginians are reinterpreted by Cnaeus as divine providence. This reading is supported by the metre, since only a weak diaeresis and not a real caesura follows *de superis queror* at 692, which suggests that the rest of the line is still part of the same thought.
the anaphoric pronoun his marks a new step. In this case, the discontinuity emerges from the use of the perfect rediere, which indicates a small time lapse between the last of Scipio’s words and the events of 703–704 (“they are on their way back”). Scipio follows his relatives with his eyes, an allusion to Aeneas watching Dido’s return to Sychaeus and as such a epic ending to the passage; at the same time, the allusion marks the transition to the next scene, which starts with a reminiscence of the beginning of Aeneas’ infernal encounter with Dido (n.705–706 multa vix agnoscendus in umbra). The poet prepares for the next groups of shades, the heroes of the Punic wars, by referring to Publius and Cnaeus not as young Scipio’s family (see fn.28 above), but as duces.

36 For this ‘wrapping up’ function of hic at the beginning of a new element in the narrative structure (here, the conclusion of the scene) see An. 30–93 fn.67, Gen.intr. § 7.2 and Kroon (forthc.).

37 rediere is coordinated with the present prosequitur and is therefore not a narrative perfect (“they went away”) but indicates anteriority to that moment of the story, when Scipio watches them walk away (“they have gone back”, resulting in “they are on their way back”). For this use of the perfect, see Adema 2008: 64.

38 See n.703–704 prosequiturque oculis ... ad veneratus euntes.

650–654
succedunt simulacra virum concordia, patris 650
unanimique simul patrui. ruit ipse per umbram
oscula vana petens iuvenis fumoque volucri
et nebulis similes animas apprendere certat.

650–651a Her place is taken by the ghosts of two harmonious men: his father together with
his like-minded uncle.

patris ... patrui refers to the brothers Publius and Cnaeus Scipio (see Intr. 650–704). As
Spaltenstein notes, Silius underlines the harmony between them; cf. here concordia,
unanimi and simul (which echoes simulacra—perhaps that word was chosen for its root?),
but also 660 and 694 geminus (with 382, 15.3, 16.87, 16.464; the apposition at 384 is
singular, but refers to both brothers); Publius speaks for both of them at 669–678 (669
nostri, 675 and 676 nos, 677 nobis); they interrupt young Scipio in unison (661–662), and
Cnaeus ‘connects’ his tale to his brother’s (687 excipit ... coniungere); cf. also their joint
reference as fulmina gentis Scipiadae at 7.106–107, and Publius’ words at 4.674–675. In
essence, they are presented as a single entity.

This harmony is an important part of the lesson here. The lack of it in the Roman state
had figured prominently in the first half of the Punica, best exemplified in the discordance
between Varro and Paulus in books 8–9; cf. also in book 7 the splitting of the Roman army
and Minucius’ subsequent near-defeat, only averted when Fabius joins the fray, who thus
re-establishes himself as the sole commander in Minucius’ eyes (cf. 7.743–745). Rome is
only able to stand against Hannibal when it acts as a single unit and preferably under a single
commander (although Nero and Livius successfully share command at the battle of the
Metaurus in book 15)—i.e. Scipio, who is here prepared for that task (see Gen.intr. § 5.2.2).

After the Punic war, when Carthage has been removed as a threat, the Romans will lose
their newly gained sense of unity (cf. 10.667–668), which will eventually result in civil
war. It is no coincidence that with simulacra ... concordia, Silius alludes to Vergil’s
concordes animae nunc (A. 6.828; cf. Luc. 1.89), of the spirits of Pompey and Caesar who
will soon return to earth and wage civil war; cf. similarly A. 7.335 unanimos ... fratres,
which suggests that the Latin war is essentially a war between brothers. It has often been
noted that the war with Hannibal in the Punica is also evocative of civil war (see Gen.intr.
§ 4.3.3); Silius presents harmony and a unifying leader as the solution to counter these
internal wars (for the conclusion of civil war and the peace under the principate, see Intr.
850b–895).

651b–653 The young man himself rushes through the darkness, seeking their embrace in
vain and attempts to catch hold of their spirits which were like fleeting smoke and mist.

Silius here abandons the earlier idea that the ghosts need to drink of the blood before
they can speak (see n.447–448 sanguine non tacto) in favour of this image of filial piety
(esp. ruit). While Scipio should of course know by now that embracing ghosts is a futile
endeavour (cf. 648–649), the attempt serves to connect both parental scenes. More
particularly, the double simile at 653–654 alludes to the second part of the attempts to
embrace Antikleia and Anchises, respectively, at Hom. Od. 11.206–208 and Verg. A.
6.700–702 (the first part—the triple attempt—is echoed at 648–649, the embrace of
Pomponia; see Klaassen 2010: 123); see on *fumoque volucri et nebulis similes* below. For the language, Silius seems to have been inspired by various descriptions of Orpheus’ fatal looking back at his Eurydice.

*per umbram* ‘Through the darkness’, a common Vergilian phrase (also pl. *per umbras*) and always in this metrical position (singular at *G.* 1.366, *A.* 2.420, 2.732, 2.768, 4.184, 6.257, 9.314, *V.Fl.* 1.239, *Sil.* 16.113 and of infernal darkness *A.* 6.268); taking umbram as ‘ghost’ (which one?) is rightly rejected by Spaltenstein.

*oscula vana petens* Reitz (1982: 93 n.1) adduces *Culex* 293 *oscula cara petens rupisti iussa deorum*, of Orpheus and Eurydice (Ussani 1950: 119; Güntzschel 1972: 198); cf. also *Luc.* 3.739 *tacito tantum petit oscula vultu* (an inversion of the image here: a dying son reaching out for his living father), 5.736 *petit oscula grata* (Cornelia and Pompey) and *Ilias* 567 *oscula cara petit* (Hector and his son). As *petere* suggests, in all these instances the caress never takes place, which is here emphasized through *vana*.

*fumoque volucri et nebulis similes* Homer compares Antikleia’s fleeting shade to a shadow or a dream (*Od.* 11.207 *σκιῇ εἴκελον ἢ καὶ ὀνείρῳ*); Vergil speaks of winds and sleep in similar contexts at *A.* 6.702 (= 2.794) *par levibus ventis volucrique simillima somno*. The comparison with smoke is first found at *Il.* 23.100 (when Patroclus’ shade escapes Achilles) and used by Vergil for Eurydice (*G.* 4.499–500 *ceu fumus in auras / commixtus tenuis fugit diversa*) (Reitz 1982: 93), but also for Anchises’ ghost (*A.* 5.740) slipping away into thin air. Silius here combines the two Vergilian phrases. While the comparison with shadows or dreams suggests incorporeality, smoke and vapour rather stress transience (cf. *Lucr.* 3.456 and of spirits *Sen.* *Oed.* 598 and especially *Tro.* 392–396; the ghosts of Patroklos, Eurydice and Anchises are all compared to smoke as they vanish from sight).

*apprendere certat* A reminiscence of Orpheus’ failure to catch Eurydice’s incorporeal body at *Ov. Met.* 10.58 *bracchialique intendens prendique et prendere certans*; cf. the use of the verb *prensare* by Vergil in his account of that same event at *G.* 4.501 *nequiquam umbras* (see also the prev. n.; here, *animas* replaces *umbras*), and by Ovid at *Fast.* 5.476 *lubrica prensantes effugit umbra manus*, of Faustulus and Acca vainly trying to embrace Remus’ ghost.

For *certo* with an infinitive, see *KS* 2.1.673, *Enn. Ann.* 17.445 *fluctus extollere certant.*

654–660
‘quis te, care pater, quo stabant Itala regna,
exosus Latium deus abstulit? ei mihi! nam cur
ulla fuere adeo, quibus a te saevus abessem,
momenta? opposito mutassem pectore mortem.
quatos funeribus vestris gens Itala passim
dat gemitus! tumulus vobis censente senatu
Mavortis geminus surgit per gramina campo.’

654–655a Which god in his hate of Latium snatched you away, dear father, on whom the Italian state used to rest?

The address to the elder Scipio is modelled after Aeneas’ opening words to Palinurus at *A.* 6.341–342 *quis te, Palinure, deorum / eripuit nobis [...]?* (Kißel 1979: 165 n.7, Reitz
Notes to 650–704

1982: 94). *abstulit* which here replaces *eripuit* is taken from Vergil’s words on Pallas; see n.382–384 and Intr. 650–704. Scipio’s mother Pomponia had also been modelled after both Vergil’s Palinurus and Pallas (see Intr. 650–704).

Reitz (l.c.) remarks that unlike in the Vergilian model, here no answer is expected to the question, making it a “formelhaften Ausdruck des Trauer”; cf. the similar lament against the gods at e.g. Stat. Silv. 2.56.58 (with Van Dam ad loc.) and 5.1.137. It serves, however, also another function, as the poetic variant of an invitation for Scipio’s father to relate the exact circumstances of his death (see An. 650–704 fn.30). Furthermore, Scipio nearly echoes his own words to Appius at 450–452 *quinam te, qui casus, ... dux maxime, fessae / eripuit patriae, cum talis horrida poscant / bella viros?* The death of the two Scipios is, like Appius’, presented as a grave loss for Rome; young Scipio emulates his earlier statement by saying not merely that Rome needed these men, but rested upon them, and that only a god hating Rome would cause their death, signifying their importance to the city. *exosus* calls to mind 391–392 *sinistris caelicolis*; while Scipio may now be at peace with his mother’s death (cf. the allusion to Creusa, Intr. 615–649), he is yet to be reconciled with the loss of his father and uncle, as *exosus ... deus* betrays that he still does not realise that his (and Rome's) destiny is favoured by the gods. Cnaeus corrects this at 691–692 (see An. 650–704).

care pater Cf. *cara parens* (624); Aeneas addresses his father thus at A. 2.707. Scipio likely does not exclude his uncle here, as Publius and Cnaeus are a unity (cf. Reitz 1982: 94).

quo stabant Itala regna This is a double play on the family name. *scipio* is a ‘staff’, which could be a sceptre (cf. *regna*), but also ‘support’ (cf. their capacity as ‘pillars of the state’); Macrob. 1.6.26 relates that the first Cornelius to bear the name had been nicknamed thus for supporting his blind father). Silius may well think here of Cic. *Balb.* 34, where in the context of their death in Spain the two brothers are called *duo fulmina nostri imperi*, presumably with the same overtones of ‘support’ (*fulmen* for *fulmentum*; cf. also Sil. 7.106–107 *fulmina gentis* / Scipiadae), or even of Ennius, if the phrase originated with him. The ‘other’ meaning of *fulmen* in Scipio’s famous epithet (Lucr. 3.1034 *belli fulmen*, Verg. A. 6.842), ‘thunderbolt’, is probably present at 605 (see n.605 *sceptris fulsisse superbis*; cf. Norden and Austin ad Verg. A. 6.842 and esp. Skutsch 1968: 147–148, with references on p.150). For *stare* as ‘rest upon’, cf. 17.149–150 *stabat Carthago ... uni nixa viro* [i.e. Hannibal], *OLD* s.v. 21a, Enn. *Ann.* 500 *moribus antiquis res stat Romana virisque*, Liv. 8.7.16, Tac. *Hist.* 2.69. For another ‘pillar of the state’, cf. 15.385 *Ausanii columnen regni*, of Marcellus.

The *Itala regna* (i.e. Rome) signify the land that was promised to Aeneas (cf. *A. 3.185, Ov. Her.* 7.10); the Scipios had kept Aeneas’ legacy on its feet, which had come dangerously close to falling after the battles of lacus Trasimennus (6.595–596 *ruenti Ausoniae atque Italis ... regnis*) and Cannae (cf. Fabius’ efforts for *Aeneia regna* at 10.643).


655b–657a Woe to me! For why have there been any moments in which I was cruelly absent from your side?

Scipio rebukes himself for not accompanying his father and uncle, for he might have prevented their death; as has often been noted, this brings to memory the rescue of his
father at the Ticinus (4.445ff.), his first show of pietas. Scipio’s words also form a reminiscence of Aeneas’ lament for Pallas at A. 11.42–58, for which see Intr. 650–704. In both Aeneas’ and Scipio’s case, the self-rebuke is unmerited, and serves rather to underline their fides / pietas.

**cur ulla fuere ... momenta** Cf. Thetis’ reproach to Chiron at Stat. Ach. 1.128–129 *cur ulla puer iam tempora ducit te sine?*

**saevus abessem** Cf. Anna’s lament for Dido, who complains at Verg. A. 4.680–681 that she was bringing a sacrifice *sic te ut posita crudelis abessem*, “so that, when you were lying thus, I were cruelly absent” (the syntactic status of *crudelis* has been disputed for centuries; I here follow the interpretation that it is a nominative rather than a vocative; see esp. Henry *ad loc.*, who also adduces Silius’ words on Anna at 8.65–66 *divis inimica sibique, quod se non dederit comitem in suprema sorori*, “angry with Heaven, and with herself for not dying together with her sister”; there, *sibique* suggests that Silius, at least, read Vergil’s *crudelis* as nominative). Both Scipio and Anna partially, and unjustly, blame themselves for not being present at the death of their loved kin. The phrase anticipates the allusion to Dido’s suicide in the elder Scipio’s narrative; see Intr. 650–704.

Marks (2005: 141) also compares the words of the ghost of Achilles in Hom. Od. 11.501–503, where the dead hero laments that he cannot be at the side of his old father Peleus to aid him against his enemies. Silius has inverted the situation; here the living son bemoans his absence to the ghost of the father.

**657b** *By placing my breast before yours I would have changed your death for another.*

Scipio suggests that he would have taken the blow that was aimed for his father, as Gestar saves Hannibal at 12.261–265, which is described in the same words (262 *opposito ... corpore, 265 mutata morte*); cf. also Asbyte’s narrow escape by the sacrifice of one of her followers at 2.117–118 *opposito ... Harpe / corpore praeripuit letum calamumque volantem.* This is a variation of the frequent topos of warriors killed by projectiles that were not meant for them, the *alienum vulnus* (cf. e.g. Il. 13.185 and other Homeric instances in Fenik 1968: 126–128; Verg. A. 10.781–782); other variations of the motif are found at 4.136ff. (Bogus’ spear would have hit nothing if Catus had not come rushing forward) and 7.630 (Bibulus is killed by a spear sticking from the ground—*telo non in sua vulnera misso*).

Scipio’s readiness to die for his parents (cf. 625 *vel leto*) is another sign of his filial pietas.

**opposito ... pectore** Lit. “with breast placed in the weapon’s path”; cf. *opponere corpus*, confronting the enemy in a protective gesture, at Cic. Dom. 63.57, Att. 23.7.1, Curt. 4.14.11.

**658–660** *How much the Italian race everywhere laments your demise! By decree of the senate, a twin tomb is erected for you in the grass on the field of Mars.*

Whether or not such edifices were already erected on the Campus Martius in the 3rd c. B.C. (Spaltenstein) is completely irrelevant, as this is rather a literary monument, and a clear reference to the tomb for Marcellus in Anchises’ elegy at A. 6.872–874:

*quantos ille virum magnam Mavortis ad urbem campus aget gemitus! vel quae, Tiberine, videbis funera, cum tumulum praeterlabere recentem!*
“What sobbing of the brave will the famed Field waft to Mars’ mighty city! What a cortege will you behold, Father Tiber, as you glide past the new-built tomb!”

The death of the Scipios thus parallels Marcellus’, much like the younger Scipio had been set against Augustus (see Intr. 615–649 and esp. n.634–636). But there is perhaps a more intricate connection. Vergil’s elegy of Marcellus may have been in part inspired by the famous inscriptions of the mausoleum of the Cornelii Scipiones (see Brenk 1986: 221–224; Norden ad 868ff. illustrates Vergil’s adherence to Greek rhetoric principles), particularly the epitaph to a Publius Scipio, who also died young and who perhaps is to be identified with the son of Africanus himself (ILLRP 311 = CIL 12 10; see e.g. Moir 1986: 264–266). In alluding to Vergil’s lines on Marcellus, Silius would then return to the original context of the elegy, the famous tomb of the Scipiones (not on the Campus!) and also connect Scipio to the principate. For this kind of retroactive intertextuality, of which our poet is fond, see Gen.intr. § 4.1.

For a possible parallel between Vergil’s lines and Pomponia, see n.646b–647 quantum gemui. See also the comparison at Intr. 650–704 of this empty tomb (see on tumulus below) with that of Deiphobus.

gens Ital a A rare phrase, even more so in the singular. At A. 6.757, Anchises announces that he will show Ital a de gente nepotes, the last of whom is Marcellus. The brothers Scipio (Marcellus’ counterparts in the Punica) are thus mourned by the rest of Aeneas’ progeny who were shown in the same Heldenschau. For the same phrase cf. 742, 6.131–132 (see Intr. 650–704 fn.27), gens Italum at 10.492 and 15.39; cf. also 654 Itala regna, also referring to Aeneas’ legacy (see n.).

tumulus Not their real tomb, but rather a honorary monument (cf. Spaltenstein), as the bodies of the Scipios were still in Spain. Cnaeus says at 692–693 that the burning tower in which he died served as his cremation—this ‘funeral’ presumably counts for both brothers, since they are in Elysium together (703) and have thus received a funeral (in some form). At 16.292, Scipio refers to their tombs (tumulos) in Spain and he performs a Roman funerary ceremony at 16.304–305 (simulatas ... exsequias, since as Duff notes, their bodies were not there).

censente senatu Thus, a state funeral, suggestive of their importance to Rome (cf. 654 quo stabant Itala regna) and similar to the public burial that Augustus held for Marcellus (Dio 53.30.5). censeo is common for senatorial decrees (see TLL 3.794.53ff.) and Silius uses it almost exclusively in this sense (cf. 1.684, 2.375, 7.513, 11.562; only 15.105 is different).

Mavortis ... per gramina campo Mavortis campus is found only here and in Vergil’s model passage A. 6.872–873. Horace uses similar language in a very different setting at Carm. 4.1.39–40 per gramina Martii / Campi. For the archaizing Mavors, see n.16b–18 Mavortem.

geminus See n.650–651a.

661–671a
nec passi plura in medio sermone loquentis
sic adeo incipiunt; prior haec genitoris imago:
ipsa quidem virtus sibimet pulcherrima merces; dulce tamen venit ad manes, cum gratia vitae durat apud superos, nec edunt oblivia laudem. 665
verum age, fare, decus nostrum, te quanta fatiget militia. heu, quotiens intrat mea pectora terror, cum repeto, quam saevus eas, ubi magna pericla contingunt tibi! per nostri, fortissime, leti obtestor causas, Martis moderare furori. 670
sat tibi sint documenta domus!

661–662 Not allowing him to say more they thus begin while he was still speaking; first his father’s ghost speaks the following words: ...

Lines 661–662a are modelled completely on Venus’ interruption of her son Aeneas at Verg. A. 1.385–386 nec plura querentem / passa Venus medio sic interfata dolore est (Reitz 1982: 94). For such interruptions, cf. also (with non passus + inf.) V.Fl. 1.168, 6.469–470 (Acastus and Venus need no further persuasion) and Sil. 16.221–222 (Scipio cannot be persuaded); Spaltenstein also compares 11.97 medio fervore loquentis.

sic adeo For the emphatic doubling (“thus then”), cf. 2.278, 12.646, Verg. A. 4.533 and V.Fl. 4.239 (in the last two cases also coupled with ita).


genitoris imago Cf. A. 6.695–696, where Aeneas says he was drawn to the underworld by the vision of his father (tua ..., genitor, tua tristis imago); sim. A. 2.560 subit cari genitoris imago (cf. also the imitation at V.Fl. 1.712). The reminiscence stresses that Scipio, too, had come to the underworld in an act of pietas. For imago of a ghost, cf. 444, 736, 751.

663–665 “Virtue is indeed its own most excellent reward; still, it comes as a pleasant thing to the dead when appreciation of their lives lasts among the living and forgetfulness does not consume their glory.

That ‘virtue is its own reward’ was a Stoic saying, found many times in Roman writing (cf. Cic. Phil. 5.35, Rep. 6.8, Ov. Trist. 5.14.31, Sen. Ep. 81.19; cf. Ov. Pont. 2.3.12). The addition at 664–665 illuminates the Roman view on how this Stoic tenet relates to glory, which the Romans highly valued and which is essential to epic (cf. Billerbeck 1986b: 3135–3136; Laudizi 1989: 132). According to Cicero, virtue leads to honos, laudes and gloria (Cic. Arch. 44, Mil. 97, Phil. 5.35, Rep. 3.40, Tusc. 1.109, Brut. 281, Fam. 10.10.2; cf. Sen. Ep. 79.17; see also the passages in Reitz 1982: 94 n.3), although as Scipio tells his grandson in Cicero’s Somnium Scipionis, true glory (verum decus) is attained when virtue is pursued for its own sake (Rep. 6.25; cf. Tipping 2010a: 204 and 2010b: 169; similar views are given at Sil. 15.88–89, which should probably also be read with the Somnium in mind; for gloria in Cicero’s works and the different evaluation of it in the Somnium, see Leeman 1949). The view offered here by the elder Scipio is not dissimilar; he does not argue for pursuing earthly glory (the laus of 665), but (tamen) it can be a pleasurable (cf. dulce) by-product of devotion to virtus. In other passages in the Punica, virtus is rather a means to attain glory (cf. 4.603–604, where Silius probably alludes to the fame his epic bestows upon
Fibrenus, but note the similarity with 15.102, and 9.376–377), or is connected with earthly glory (the *praemia virtutis* at 15.254 and 16.157–158, which signify honour among one’s peers, at 15.254 in the form of military decorations).

Line 663 appears to have served as model for Claud. 17.1 *ipsa quidem Virtus pretium sibi.*

**dulce ... venit** The verb *venio* is here probably used in the sense ‘come to’, i.e. ‘happen to’ (*OLD s.v.* 15b, which cites Statius’ somewhat comparable use at *Theb.* 9.563–564 *veniet cineri decus et suus ordo manibus*); *dulce* is a predicative neuter apposition. The elder Scipio reacts to the reported honorary monument with a universal statement—the dead rejoice whenever their deeds are remembered.

**gratia vitae** Since the renaissance, most editors have adopted *gloria vitae*, but *gratia* (printed by Delz) is not difficult—the ‘recognition’ of the Scipios’ lives is materialized by the monument commissioned by the senate (659–660). Spaltenstein compares Verg. *A.* 7.231–232 *nec vestra feretur / fama levis tantique abolescet gratia facti* (cf. also *A.* 4.539) which also argues in favour of *gratia*. Lastly, cf. *A.* 6.653ff., where the blessed in Elysium are said to enjoy still *quae gratia currum / armorumque fuit vivis*; the meaning of *gratia* is different here, but the setting is comparable—their deeds in life still provide pleasure to the dead.

**apud superos** ‘In the upper world’, i.e. among the living; cf. 777 and n.606–607 *ad superos*.

**edunt oblivia laudem** The glory of Silius’ Scipios will be saved from the eroding force of time by his (literary) monument (cf. n.658–660); compare Horace’s monument which will not be destroyed by an *imber edax* (*Carm.* 3.30.3), and cf. also Ov. *Met.* 15.872 *edax ... vetustas* (cf. 15.234 *tempus edax rerum*) and Luc. 7.397 *non aetas ... edax* (with a Lucanian twist). For *edere* (rather than *edax* of Silius’ predecessors) in this sense of ‘wear away’, see also 2.463, 4.22 and 17.344 (cf. also *adesum* at 13.679) and *TLL* 5.2.105.69ff.

**666–667a** But come, tell us, ornament of our house, how great the military command is that burdens you.

This question, which is never answered, recalls Deiphobus’ inquiry after Aeneas’ wanderings which similarly must go without an answer (since the Sibyl interrupts their conversation); cf. Verg. *A.* 6.531–532 *sed te qui vivum casus, age fare vicissim, attulerint* and 533 *an quae te fortuna fatigat...?* After the Sibyl’s admonition, Deiphobus bids Aeneas farewell at 546 *i decus, i, nostrum*. The allusion will alert the attentive reader that, since Deiphobus had narrated the story of his own death, an account of the Scipios’ demise will follow presently. For the Scipios as Deiphobus, see also Intr. 650–704.

**decus nostrum** ‘Glory of our house’, but also ‘glory of our race’, as in Aeneas’ case. Scipio was also called *decus* (of his fatherland) at 515, and again by his father’s shade at 15.184. For the exceptionally frequent use of the word for persons in the *Punica*, see n.515.

**te quanta fatiget militia** For the language, cf. Hor. *Sat.* 2.2.10–11 *si Romana fatigat / militia assuetum graecari* (presumably only a verbal reminiscence).

**667b–669a** Ah, how often does fear enter my heart, when I recall how fiercely you place yourself in the face of great dangers!

The elder Scipio’s anxiety may be compared to the words of Anchises at Verg. *A.* 6.692ff. (Spaltenstein, Reitz 1982: 95 n.1, Ripoll 1998a: 250 n.223), who speaks of the
dangers that his son faced (6.693 quantis ... periclis, reminiscent of 6.83 magnis pelagi defuncte periclis). Two other intertexts are from the Punica itself. Spaltenstein compares Imilce’s speech to Hannibal at 3.119ff. (where she expresses her fears for her husband, since he always rushes headlong into the fray). An even closer parallel is 6.584–587 (cf. 584 quotiens heu), where Marcia, Regulus’ wife, proclaims that she had often beseeched her son Serranus not to follow his father’s example (patrias iras) in battle. When Scipio’s father here asks his son to temper his furor, he probably suggests that he, too, provided an example which should not be imitated (see n.669b–670). Earlier in the Punica (4.445ff.), his son saved him from the thick of battle, raging across the battlefield (cf. saevus eas ubi magna pericla contingunt tibi), when he himself had (somewhat recklessly) sought the centre of the fight at 4.230. The insistence that the heroics which Scipio displayed at the Ticinus need not be repeated, here couched as an advice from father to son, may be compared to Polybius’ comments that Scipio had saved his father with “reckless daring” (10.3.5 παραβόλως ... καὶ τολμηρῶς) and, having thus proven his bravery, could later refrain from putting himself at risk when the country depended upon him (10.3.7).

**inrat mea pectora terror** Cf. 15.135–136 tacitus tamen aegra pericli / pectora subrepet terror, where Scipio’s supporters are anxious about the battles ahead, given the youth of their hero. Their fears are forgotten when Jupiter sends a favourable omen (15.139ff.): a snake in the sky, which hints at his begetting of Scipio in the form of a serpent. Here, the reader knows that the anxiety of the elder Scipio is unnecessary, since this meeting directly follows Pomponia’s revelation that Scipio is the son of Jupiter, a scene which forcefully confirms that the hero stands under the supreme god’s protection (cf. Mars’ safeguarding of Scipio at Jupiter’s behest at 4.462–463).

**saevus** The elder Scipio picks up his son’s self-reproach in 656 and reuses it in another sense in his words of warning; it is a different kind of saevitia for which young Scipio must watch, namely reckless ferocity. Silius uses saevus mostly as an epithet for the Carthaginians and their allies (e.g. 1.170 saevis gens laeta, 6.387 saevoque ... Agenoris urbe) and especially Hannibal (saevus dux / ductor at 5.217–218, 16.617, 17.583; cf. 1.299, 1.463, 2.395, 10.160, 10.450, 12.211, 17.393 and saevire at 4.542, 7.269, 9.570); cf. also line 732, of Hamilcar. Scipio would thus display the enemy’s savagery, which is unwanted; cf. Pan’s intervention at 314ff., where this mitis deus (320) soothes the saevas ... mentes (317) of the Romans. On the Roman side, such behaviour characterizes Varro (cf. 8.243 and 8.335, portraying him as even worse than a Carthaginian; for Varro presented as a Carthaginian, cf. also 8.332 consul datus ... alter Poenis). Other Romans display this ferocity at the moment of their death in battle (5.559 Viriasius, 10.27–28 Paulus, 15.374 Marcellus), making saevitia somewhat suicidal; indeed, Voluptas calls Virtus herself saeva because she incites men to endanger themselves in this way (15.40–41 Virtus te saeva iubebit / per medias volitare acies mediosque per ignes).

**669b–670** *I beseech you, bravest of men, by the cause of our death, temper your fury in battle.*

This admonition has been contrasted with Alexander’s advice of speedy warfare at 772ff. (cf. Laudizi 1989: 133, Grebe 1989: 115–116; contra, see Marks 2005: 36; see n.772–773a); the elder Scipio does not argue against swift action here, however, but rather against the rashness of a Flaminius or a Varro. Indeed, furor, which implies taking
unnecessary risks, is not at all identical to speed, which is a good thing when the situation demands it (cf. Fabius at 10.592ff., Scipio’s rapid capture of Cartagena on his father’s advice at 15.180ff. and Italia urging Nero to make haste at 15.554). His son should learn from his father’s death (cf. 669–670 per nostri .. leti ... causas; 671 documenta domus), which was due to a reckless tactical manoeuvre (this seems to be a remnant of Livy’s account of the death of the Scipios, since Silius otherwise attributes their demise not to their own behaviour, but to the betrayal by the mercenaries; see Intr. 650–704 and n.679b–680). Publius’ ghost counsels at 15.188ff. against fighting the same armies that defeated them; Spain must be conquered cauta virtute (15.186), which shows that virtue also does not imply recklessness (despite Voluptas suggesting the opposite at 15.40–41, see prev. n.). Essentially, the elder Scipio does not advise against heroic behaviour on the battlefield, but rather against the recklessness that battle-fury can bring; he recommends prudence, not inaction.

fortissime Scipio implies that his son does not need to prove his bravery with reckless acts.

671a Let the examples of your own house suffice!

The example from which Scipio should learn is the story which his father narrates. The young hero is here warned with the same words that Livy puts in Fabius’ mouth when he speaks against taking the war to Africa at 28.41.14 domus tibi tua, pater patruusque intra triginta dies cum exercitibus caesi documento sint (Marks 2005: 140 n.73, Tipping 2010b: 168), which reiterates that the young man needs to apply Fabian caution; Scipio will go beyond Fabius, however, due to Jupiter’s support, as was disclosed at 511–514 and 616ff. For this use of documentum, cf. also Ov. Met. 3.579–580 o periture tuaque aliis documenta dature morte. As Marks observes, “the father’s use of the word documenta underlines the didactic function of his story”, which is part of the ‘education’ of Scipio in this Nekyia.

We should also compare (with Reitz 1982: 95 n.2, Marks ibid.) Sil. 6.122–123 sat tibi, sat magna et totum vulgata per orbem / stant documenta domus, where Marus tells Regulus’ son Serranus to look to his father’s example in bearing misfortune. On the battlefield, however, the example of Regulus and the elder Scipio should not be followed; see n.667b–669a.


671b–686 octava terebat

arentem culmis messem crepitantibus aestas,
ex quo cuncta mihi calcata meoque subibat
germano devicta iugum Tartessia tellus.
nos miserae muros et tecta renata Sagunto,
nos dedimus Baetem nullo potare sub hoste,
nobis indomitus convertit terque quaterque
germanus terga Hannibalis. pro barbara numquam
impolluta fides! peterem cum victor adesum
cladibus Hasdrubalem, subito venale, cohortes
Hispanae, vulgus, †Libyci quas fecerat auri†
Hasdrubal, abruptly liquerunt agmine signa.
tunc hostis socio desertos milite multum
ditior ipse viris spisso circumdedit orbe.

non segnis nobis nec inultis, nate, peracta est
illa suprema dies, et laude inclusimus aevum.'

_671b–674_ The eighth summer was threshing the dry harvest from the rustling corn-stalks, since the year when all the Tartessian land had been set foot upon by me and my brother and was passing under the yoke in defeat.

Lines 671b–673a reverberate later in the epic, when the goddess Italia laments the tenth anniversary of Hannibal’s invasion at 15.526–527 _decima haec iam vertitur aestas, / ex quo proterimur_. Note that _calcata_ here has the same function as _proterimur_, with a similar double meaning of ‘set foot upon’ and ‘tread underfoot’, ‘defeat’. The Scipios in Spain thus counterbalanced Hannibal in Italy. The repetition of _germanus_ in 674 and 678 may underline this: these two Roman brothers fought against Hasdrubal, the _germanus ... Hannibalis_.

The second half of the sentence (673b–674) is echoed at 16.646–647 _cum tota subisset / Sidonium possessa iugum Tartessia tellus_, when Scipio reminds the senate of his deeds in Spain in reply to Fabius’ speech. The echo underlines the complete reversal of fortunes with the death of the Scipios: while they lived, Spain had become Roman; after their demise, all of it was Carthaginian land. The elder Scipio somewhat exaggerates the success of the Romans here (possibly based upon Livy’s similarly positive report at 23.49.14 that _tum vero omnes prope Hispaniae populi ad Romanos defecerunt_; cf. 23.27.9, 23.29.16 and 23.32.6), as Carthage still held most of southern Spain and its three armies were not defeated; this situation remained largely the same until the Scipios’ fatal plan to drive Carthage fully out of Spain (see Intr. 650–704).

Military terms dominate these lines: the use of _aestas_ (summer) as the campaigning season, _calcata_ (Roman army boots conquering Iberia), _subibat iugum_ (see below) and _devicta_.

**octava ... aestas** That is, in the summer of the eighth year (so in 211 BC), similar to Livy’s reports (25.32.1 _aestate_, 25.36.14 _anno octavo postquam in Hispaniam venerat_; note that only Cnaeus had been in Spain for eight years, since Publius had arrived a year later).

As suggested above, _aestas_ is a common term for the campaigning season; see e.g. _OLD s.v._ 1c. In poetry, its use as the indication of a year is a Vergilian practice; for the use with an ordinal, we may compare _A. 5.626 septima post Troiae excidium iam vertitur aestas_ (cf. 15.526 cited above), _G. 3.190, 4.207, A. 1.265, 1.755–756, Ov. Pont. 4.10.1, Sen. Her.F. 841, [Sen.] Her.O. 597 and Sil. 3.383.

**terebat ... culmis messem crepitantibus** For _aestas_ as subject of _terebat_ (‘thresh’, _OLD s.v._ 2), we may compare the metonymical use of _area_ at _Tib. 1.5.22 area dum messes sole calente teret_, _Verg. G. 1.192 teret area culmos_, _Sen. Thy. 356–357_ and _Mart. 9.90.11 messes area cum teret crepantis_ (which is, like here, a reference to the summer); Silius takes the metonymy one step further by making the _season_ do the threshing.

**arenem** Grain needs to be dry before it is harvested; the epithet indicates that it is ripe, as at _Catul. 48.5 aridis aristis_ (see Kroll _ad loc._, who adduces _Aug. Civ.Dei 4.8 quamdiu seges ab inititis herbidis usque ad aridas aristas perveniret_), _Ov. Met. 2.213 seges arida_ and _11.112 aretes Ceres ... aristas._
**subibat ... iugum** I.e. ‘was being conquered’. *subire iugum* is ‘accept (the yoke of) the rule of another’; cf. Curt. 6.3.6, Sen. *Pha.* 135, *Tro.* 747, Plin. *Nat.* 10.128 and Apul. 8.30, and the literal yoke at Plin. *Nat.* 8.55. Alternatively, it may allude to the traditional form of humiliation of a defeated army, which had to ‘pass under the yoke’, a construction of two spears stuck in the ground and one transverse spear (cf. Liv. 3.28.11). The usual expression is *sub iugum mittere*, often in passive; for (*sub*)ire, cf. Tac. *Ann.* 11.24.5.

For the imperfect, see An. 650–704 fn.33.

**devicta** Delz rightly rejects *deexa* in the mss. (and printed in most earlier editions), which is used almost exclusively in a geographical sense (‘sloping or moving downward’); the sense ‘in decline’ seems too weak here, and does not fit the context. His conjecture *defessa* (‘war-weary’), for which he adduces 1.566, Cic. *Har.* 27, Hirt. *Gal.* 8.49.3 and Sidon. *Carm.* 7.297 (cf. also Sall. *Jug.* 111.4) is better, although it should be noted that war-weariness does not equal defeat (cf. the first two parallels). Watt (1988: 178) proposes *depressa* in view of the expression *iugo premere* or *deprimere*, but this inverts the chronology (Spain would only be *depressa* by the Roman yoke when it had already been brought under it, *subibat*). Summers’ *devicta* seems a better complement to *subibat ... iugum*, and renders the phrase a close counterpart to 16.646–647 *subisset ... possessa iugum* (see above); another point in favour of that reading is that *devictus* is often used of nations or cities (cf. e.g. 15.322 *urbs Fabio devicta seni*, Verg. *A.* 11.268 *devictam Asiam*, Caes. *Gal.* 7.34.1, Hirt. *Gal.* 1.1, Liv. 45.13.7).

**Tartessia tellus** The land of Tartessos, an ancient trade city located roughly at the estuary of the Guadalquivir, by some Roman writers identified with Gades (Sall. *Hist.* 2.5, Col. 10.185, Plin. *Nat.* 4.120), by others with Carteia (Plin. *Nat.* 3.7.1). It represents the far west at Ov. *Met.* 14.416 *parse ratur occiduis Tartessia litora Phoebus* (cf. Sil. 6.1, 10.537, 16.114) and Sen. *Her.F.* 232 *pastor triformis litoris Tartesii* (Geryon); it stands for all of Spain, as here, at 15.5–6 *metus in Tyrias ne iam Tartessia leges concedat tellus*, “a risk that the land of Tartessus would now yield to the supremacy of Carthage” (thus undoing the work of the brothers Scipio) and at 17.590; the town itself is meant at 3.399 and (probably) 5.399 (cf. also the Spanish boy named Tartessos at 16.465 and 16.509).

**675–678a** We gave restored walls and buildings to poor Saguntum, we made it possible to drink from the Baetis without threat from an enemy, to us the unconquered brother of Hannibal showed his back time and again.

**miserae ... Sagunto** The tragedy of Saguntum, subject of books 1 and 2 and the first of Hannibal’s victories, looms over the first twelve books; the epithet *misera* is used also at 2.105 (during the siege), 7.280 (famine in the Carthaginian camp seems to counterbalance the fate of Saguntum) and 12.432 (Petilia, another town known for *fides* and Hercules, is a second Saguntum when Hannibal sacks it). By restoring its walls, the Scipios ‘undo’ Hannibal’s victory. As heir to their legacy, the younger Scipio will avenge the city by defeating the soldiers that had taken it in the battle of Zama (17.494–495).

Silius uses almost exclusively the feminine name *Saguntos* (cf. e.g. 1.502 *tota Saguntos*); the only exception is 17.328 (*deletum est ... Saguntum*; see Delz *ad loc.*). In other authors, the neuter *Saguntum* is more common; for the feminine, cf. also Liv. 21.19.1 *Sagunto excisa* (but 21.21.1 *Sagunto capto*), 24.42.9, Mela 2.92, Plin. *Nat.* 7.35, Flor. 2.6.3, Auson. *Ecl.* 1.30.
muros et tecta renata  Supply dedimus from 676; muros dare is easy to understand, even if the expression is rare (cf. Verg. A. 10.200 qui muros matrisque dedit tibi, Mantua, nomen). renata may go with Sagunto by enallage, but taking it ἀπὸ κοινοῦ with both muros and tecta is also possible. For renascere of cities or buildings, cf. Liv. 6.1.3 (Rome after the Tarquins), Stat. Silv. 3.5.104 (Stabiae rebuilt), 4.3.160–161 (the temple of the Capitol), Mart. 6.4.3 tot nascentia templa, tot renata (under Domitian).

The verb emphasises the parallelism between Silius’ Saguntum and Vergil’s Troy, cities which both had fallen in the second book of each poet. The Aeneid tells the story of a new Troy in Latium (cf. Troia nascens at A. 10.26–27, 10.74–75), which is again beleaguered but ultimately triumphant. Likewise, this new, revived Saguntum represents the tenuous hopes of Rome after Cannae, under renewed threat with the death of the two Roman generals but saved by the younger Scipio.

dedimus A zeugma, with dedimus having an accusative object at 675 (“give”, i.e. “provide with”) and an infinitive as complement at 676 (“make possible to”); for zeugma, see n.234–236 effudit lacrimas pariter cornumque.

Baetem Modern Guadalquivir in Andalusia. The usual spelling is Baetis, acc. Baetim (cf. e.g. Liv. 28.16.2, Stat. Silv. 2.7.35), also suggested here by the reading in F (baetym); but while the form Baetem in the other mss. is otherwise not attested, Silius uses Baetes at 3.405 (α betes) and 17.638 (a betes, Γ2ς betis); cf. also Baete at Liv. 28.22.1, Plin. Nat. 3.10, 3.13.

potare To ‘drink from a river’ is a common poetical expression for referring to someone’s habitat; cf. e.g. 8.366, 14.227, Verg. A. 7.715 qui Tiberim Fabarimque bibunt, OLD bibo 4. It can also indicate arrival at this place, and by implication, the region around it; cf. Verg. Ecl. 1.62 aut Ararim Parthus bibet aut Germania Tigrim (cf. Sen. Med. 374–375), Prop. 3.12.8, Ov. Her. 12.10, Luc. 10.40. In a few cases there is an added military sense (‘invade’, or ‘conquer’); cf. 13.765 qui Gangen bibit (of Alexander, see n.), Verg. A. 1.473 pabula gustassent Troiae Xanthumque bibissent, Stat. Theb. 3.663; cf. Prop. l.c. Here, the first and last senses are conflated; in Silius’ representation, the Scipios had taken the whole of Spain, including the Baetis region, thus allowing people to live there in safety. As dedimus suggests (with its implicit and thus ambiguous indirect object: the Romans or the Baeticans?), the elder Scipio represents himself and his brother not as conquerors or subjugators, but as liberators.

indomitus I.e. invincible to others, which glorifies the accomplishments of the Scipios; the word is similarly used at Verg. A. 8.728 indomittique Dahae (in Augustus’ triumphal procession), Luc. 2.580–581 profugum ... indomitum regem (Pompey, more successful in hunting Mithridates than Sulla was) and Epic.Drus. 17–18 (which portrays the indomitos ... Sicambros as fleeing: inque fugam barbar a terga dedit).

convertit ... terga A common expression in Latin (also with vertere) for ‘flee’ or ‘retreat’, although less so in poetry (where terga dare seems more frequent); cf. e.g. Verg. A. 6.491, 8.706, Ov. Met. 8.363–364, Stat. Theb. 9.486–487; it is more popular with Silius (2.703, 4.329, 7.402, 9.31, 9.413, 10.287, 10.380–381, 12.206–207, 14.560, 17.147, 17.362).

germanus ... Hannibalis See n.671b–674.

678b–679a Alas, the trustworthiness of barbarians that is never without blemish!

pro barbara ... fides This seems a play on the well-known concept of Punic a fides (i.e. untrustworthiness; cf. Sall. Jug. 108.3, Liv. 22.6.12 and, similarly, 30.30.27; Otto Punicus 1),
which figures prominently in this epic with the opposition between perfidious Carthage (cf. e.g. 1.3–4) and Rome, the defender of fides (cf. 1.634). Livy also comments upon the unreliability of the Celtiberians (and Punic tribes) in his corresponding passage, when he motivates Hasdrubal’s decision to bribe them by saying that he was peritus omnis barbaricae ... perfidiae (25.33.2).

A very similar phrase is used at 10.146 heu bara virtus, of Hannibal’s savagery. For pro in exclamations of lament or censure, see OLD s.v. 2a; the (comparably high-flown) interjections at Luc. 4.96 and Stat. Theb. 2.92–93 similarly address a universal flaw in connection to a specific situation.

679b–682 When I, sure of victory, was pursuing Hasdrubal whose strength had been sapped by defeat, suddenly my Spanish cohorts, a mercenary rabble whom Hasdrubal had bought with Libyan gold, broke the column and deserted the standards.

These “Hispanician cohorts” were actually Celtiberians (Liv. 25.32.3)—a name that does not fit the metre. In Livy, it is Cnaeus Scipio who is left without defence when these local mercenaries leave the ranks (25.33); Publius was killed in a battle as a result of his own strategic misjudgement and rashness (25.34.7 temerarium ... consilium)—a point which Silius evidently does not bring up here, although it is implied in the advice at 669b–670 (see n.). For the intertextuality with Deiphobus and Dido, which would explain why Silius stresses that Publius’ death was caused by mistakenly putting faith in foreigners, see Intr. 650–704.

victor According to Livy (25.32.2–3), the Scipios were convinced of their ability to drive the Carthaginians from the peninsula because of the 20,000 Celtiberian mercenaries they had recruited. victor thus could be proleptic (‘soon to be victorious’). Another option is that it refers to their earlier victories over the Carthaginian forces (677–678 convertit ... terga; cf. Duff “in victorious pursuit”); this would not agree with Livy (according to whom the new campaign followed a period of two quiet years), but Silius often condenses and adapts Livy’s report.

adesum In a figurative sense, adedo is (like edo) normally used of things that are affected in a physical way (e.g. by fire or water); its bold use here (cf. TLL 1.604.8–9 audacter) suggests that the Scipios had ‘nibbled away’ at Hasdrubal’s army, which is preferable to the interpretation that Hasdrubal was himself (mentally?) affected by earlier defeats.

venale ... vulgus The other two instances in the Punica of venalis (‘for hire’, but here perhaps also ‘bribable’) also refer to mercenary troops; cf. 5.195 (also of Spanish forces) and 15.500 venales animae (Gallic mercenaries, recruited by the same Hasdrubal). For this type of parenthetic apposition with an inner and an outer, framing phrase (also known as schema Cornelianum), see Solodow 1986 (p.150–151 on Silius); cf. e.g. Verg. Ecl. 1.57 raucae, tua cura, palumbes. It is here, somewhat unusually, the outer phrase which is the apposition, since cohortes Hyspanae is the grammatical subject. The high poetic register elevates what is essentially a banal context of bribery and recasts it as fatal treason.

†Libyci quas fecerat auri† While the underlying meaning of these words is quite clear (Hasdrubal buys the Celtiberians with Libyan gold), the phrasing has provoked discussion. Housman (The letters of A.E. Housman, A. Burnett (ed.) 2007, II.365) defends the mss. reading Libyci ... auri as a possessive genitive. This umbrella term is too broad, however. We might perhaps compare our phrase with the more specific and fairly common use of
facio with the genitive in the sense “bring under the power of” (e.g. potestatis, dicionis, iuris; see KS 2.1.452–453), in which case Hasdrubal would have made the mercenaries subject not to his authority, but to his gold; but such as phrase has no parallels, and Delz seems justified in rejecting the mss. reading. A number of conjectures have been made by various scholars. Watt (1988: 178–179) suspects that a line has been lost after 681 with which the syntax and the thought are to be completed, but that seems needlessly verbose when even these four words manage to convey the sense. Summers’ solution Libycas quas fecerat auro is simple, but lacks euphony. Others read an ablative signifying means, Libyco ... auro and change the verb (e.g. Schrader ceperat, Ruperti emerat, Shackleton Bailey flexerat), which results in more natural Latin.

abrupto liquerunt agmine signa Cf. (with 680 subito) Liv. 25.33.7 signis repente sublatis Celtiberi abeunt. For abrupte of splitting or breaking the ranks, cf. Liv. 28.14.20 abrupmerent cornua a cetera acie (by the enemy), V.Max. 7.4.ext.2 a reliquo exercitu abrupta legio (an army breaking its own ranks, as here). The expression signa (re)linquere is frequently used for ‘desert’; cf. Sall. Cat. 9.4, Caes. Gal. 4.15.1, Civ. 3.13.2, Liv. 5.6.14, 10.35.7, Luc. 5.349, Tac. Ann. 13.35.4 and figuratively at Ov. Am. 2.9.3, Fast. 4.7.

683–684 Then the enemy, themselves far richer in men now that we had been deserted by our allies, surrounded us in a dense ring.

Possibly Silius thinks of Livy’s account of Publius’ death (in a pitched battle in which three armies attacked from all sides, 25.34.10 ancespse proelium Romanos circumsteterat), but it is more likely that he has adapted the account which Livy gives of the death of Publius’ brother Cnaeus. Many elements of Publius’ story here go back to Livy’s narrative on Cnaeus: i) Publius and Cnaeus had divided their troops; Publius was to advance with two-thirds of the army against Mago and Hasdrubal Gisgo, while his brother moved with the remainder and the Celtiberian mercenaries against Hasdrubal Barca (Liv. 25.32.7–8); Silius mentions only the latter (678 germanus ... Hannibalis). ii) Hasdrubal bribed Cnaeus’ mercenaries, so that they left his standards and went home (see n.679b–682). iii) After defeating the army of Publius, the other Carthaginian generals joined their forces with Hasdrubal’s; Cnaeus was aware that in addition to the desertion of the mercenaries, the enemy troops had been augmented (Liv. 24.34.4 imperator ipse, praeterquam quod ab sociis se desertum, hostium tantum auctas copias sentiebat); Livy’s diction here returns in socio desertos milite and ditior ipse viris. Alternatively, with ditior Silius may think of an earlier passage in Livy, when Cnaeus observed that he could not match Hasdrubal’s army without the mercenaries (25.33.8 nec ... parem sine illis hosti). iv) Unable to outrun the Carthaginians, Cnaeus made a last stand when the enemy attacked his impromptu fortified position on a shallow hillock (see on spisso circumdedit orbe below). Livy gives two variants; in one, Cnaeus died during the first assault, in another, he escaped to a nearby tower, which was set on fire by the Carthaginians when they could not break down its door. It is this second account which is used by Silius for Cnaeus’ own story at 688ff.

For the ablative of personal agent (socio ... milite) without a(b), cf. 8.50 (with Intr. 650–704 fn.24), 3.254, 15.3 and KS 2.1.378. The construction here is easier since miles is a collective noun rather than a person (cf. n.36–38a miles).

multum ditior ... viris This expression is more commonly used of cities, regions or tribes with a large population; cf. withdives Ov. Her. 16.356 illa viris dives, dives abundat
Notes to 650–704

equis (of Asia), Stat. Theb. 5.305 and with opulentus Sall. Jug. 16.5, 57.1, Liv. 1.30.4, 9.31.4, 10.16.6, 23.30.6, 28.37.5. Silius’ use of it with hostis (admittedly a collective noun) is somewhat bold.

For multum rather than the usual molto with the comparative, see OLD s.v. multum2.3. The alternative is probably used to avoid ambiguity (and perhaps for euphonic reasons) in view of the ablative socio ... milite; the same holds mutatis mutandis at 708 multum uno maiora viro.

spisso circumdedit orbe The phrasing may evoke a siege setting; cf. 13.140 spissa vallata corona, which has similar words in the same construction. Such phrases are also found, however, in descriptions of an encirclement on the battlefield (7.583 aciem denso circumvallaverat orbe, Verg. A. 12.744 undique ... densa Teucri inclusere corona) or elsewhere (a hunt at A. 9.551 ut fera, quae densa venantum saepta corona).

685–686 That last day was not idly spent nor did we go unavenged, and we ended our lives in glory.”

non segnis ... peracta est An echo of Aeson’s words at V.Fl. 1.784–785 vos quibus ... non segne peractum / lucis iter, where he addresses his dead ancestors, known by the fame of their wisdom and wars (cf. laude); Publius Scipio suggests that his son may similarly look up to him as an exemplary forefather.

nec inultis In Livy, Marcius (see n.698b–701a) exhorts his soldiers not to let the death of their commanders go unavenged; cf. 25.37.10 ne inultos imperatores suos iacere sinerent and 25.38.5 neu se [sc. Scipiones] neu ... commilitones vestros, neu rem publicam patiar inultam. Here, the vengeance theme recurs frequently; see n.701–702 exacta piacula caedis.

For the warrior who avenges his death by taking many enemies with him, cf. Verg. A. 2.670 numquam omnes hodie moriemur inulti (cf. Ov. Met. 9.131), of Aeneas fighting in Troy that had seen its last day (A. 2.248–249 ultimus esset / ille dies); Dido, on the other hand, dies unavenged (A. 4.659 moriemur inulta); see Intr. 650–704 for both Troy and Dido.

illa suprema dies Perhaps an adaptation of Vergil’s haec te prima dies bello dedit, Pallas’ first day of battle which was also his last. For the connection with Pallas, see Intr. 650–704.

laude inclusimus aevum The glory of a warrior’s death is an important motif in the Punica, as in all epic; cf. 691–692 and the elder Scipio’s own words at 4.674 liceat bellanti accersere mortem; cf. also 3.123–124, 4.259, 4.396ff., 4.509, 5.563, 9.377, 10.8, 10.307–308 (cf. 10.573–574) and other glorious deaths at 2.511 (the glory of the Saguntines’ death) and 11.214. Cf. also Wilson 1993: 226–227. Note that the actual death of Publius is not narrated; Silius can thus go more into detail with Cnaeus’ demise without reiteration.

For includo as ‘end’, see TLL 7.1.955.80ff., Prop. 2.15.53–54 nobis ... forsitan includet crastina fata dies.

687–695

excipit inde suos frater coniungere casus:
‘excelsae turris post ultima rebus in artis subsidium optaram supremaque bella ciebam.
fumantes taedas ac lata incendia passim
et mille iniecerse faces. nil nomine leti

690
de superis queror; haud parvo data membra sepulcro
nostra cremaverunt in morte haerentibus armis.
sed me luctus habet, geminae ne clade ruinae
cesserit affluis oppressa Hispania Poenis.’ 695

687 Then his brother took over to add the story of his own death.

excipit See n.628–629a excipit his. The construction with an infinitive seems novel, and
is possibly modelled after incipere, which can be used with an infinitive.

coniungere For this verb of speech, see TLL 4.335.43ff. and 449 tecum coniungere dicta.

688–689 ‘After the end and in dire straits I had sought the shelter of a high tower and
there fought my last battle.

Cnaeus’ death picks up Vergil’s narrative of the fall of Troy and its replay in Aeneid 9.
In the second book, the desperate Trojans take refuge on the roofs and throw towers down
upon their attackers in a last-ditch effort (A. 2.446–447 quando ultima cernunt, extrema iam
in morte; cf. here post ultima and supremaque bella). The destruction of an epic tower
features again at A. 9.530ff., when a tower of the Trojan camp is set alight by Turnus’
torch and collapses, similar to Cnaeus’ (see n.690–691a for correspondences). Finally, cf. 1.362–
364, where the huge falarica (a missile thrower) of the Saguntines takes out one of
Hannibal’s siege towers, which catches fire and comes crashing down (Cnaeus’ excelsa
turris ~ 6.214–215, where it is stated that the falarica can destroy excelsas turres).

post ultima After the end, i.e. when Cnaeus Scipio realized it was all over. The
oxymoron (what can there be “after the end?”; I have found no parallels, either Greek or
Latin) expresses the hopelessness of the situation: the battle was already lost.

rebus in artis For the expression res artae, first attested at Ov. Pont. 3.2.25, cf. also
2.103 (‘poverty’), 5.477–478, 7.310, 14.425, Ilias 968, V.Fl. 5.324, Stat. Theb. 10.590,
11.156, Tac. Hist. 3.69.4, 4.50.4.

subsidium ‘shelter’, ‘protection’; cf. 14.202 subsidium infidum fugientibus aequora,
Mylae, OLD s.v. 5.

supremaque bella ciebam For bella cieo as ‘fight battles’, cf. 12.218 and 15.346, Lucr.
2.41 belli simulacra ciento (cf. Lucr. 2.324, Verg. A. 5.672, Sil. 16.528).

690–691a They threw smoking torches at it and wide-spreading fires and a thousand fire-
brands.

For the torches setting the tower alight, compare Verg. A. 9.535–536 ardentem coniecit
lampada Turnus / et flammam adfixit lateri (see. n.688–689). Silius outdoes Vergil’s
doubling of lampada and flammam with a rising tricolon, with incendia as a synonym of
taedas (Spaltenstein).

fumantes taedas Smoking torches are also used in the siege of Saguntum (1.320
fumantem lampada, 1.474 fumantesque ... faces). For fumans as an epithet of fire-brands,
cf. also Verg. A. 7.456–457 facem iuveni coniecit et atro / lumine fumantis fixit sub pectore
taedas (Alllecto’s maddening of Turnus) and 9.75–76 fumida ... taeda, which the Rutulians
intend to throw on the Trojan ships to cause saeva incendia (9.77).

lata incendia passim For the line ending and image, cf. Lucr. 5.608–609 videmus /
accidere ex una scintilla incendia passim. lata means ‘wide-spreading’ and is intensified by
passim.
**mille ... faces** An epic motif; cf. how Flamininus and Paulus are overcome by a shower of missiles (Flamininus 5.655–656 *undique fusis / obruitur telis, nimboque ruente per auras*; Paulus 10.303 *vicere virum coeuntibus undique telis*); similarly, Murrus in his last moments experienced Hannibal as *mille simul dextrae densusque ... ensis* (1.500–501). Aeneas fared better, rescuing his father from Troy *per flammas et mille sequentia tela* (A. 6.110).

For *mille* as ‘a huge number’, cf. lines 150, 593, 6.386, 7.746.

691b–693 *I have no complaints against the gods on the score of my death; they put my limbs in a tomb that was hardly small and burned me while still clutching my arms in death.*

For Cnaeus, the burning tower substituted for the usual cremation pyre. A possible intertext is Statius’ story of Hippomedon’s ‘burial’ at Theb. 9.540ff. He had been killed by a shower of Theban missiles (526–527 *undique nimbo telorum*, see n.690–691a *mille ... faces*) and lies dead, still claspng his sword hilt (540 *capulumque in morte tenenti*; cf. here in *morte haerentibus armis*). He is ‘buried’ under his own shield, another unorthodox *sepulchrum* (565 *hoc ... operit tua membra sepulchro*, the same line ending as 692 here) by his friend Capaneus, who promises him a future cremation (563–564, cf. *cremaverunt*). For more possible allusions to these ‘substitutional burials’ in the *Thebaid*, see Van der Keur 2013.

**nil ... de superis queror** Literally, no complaints about the gods, that is, about the fate that they gave him. Cnaeus is happy with the manner of his death, which was honourable (falling with his weapons in hand); his only complaints or rather concerns, relate to the future of Spain, addressed at 694–695. For *queror* with *nil / nihil*, cf. Cic. *Verr.* 2.2.111, *Fam.* 11.20.1, Ov. *Pont.* 4.16.26, Sen. *Thy.* 1095, Luc. 1.37, 9.854–855 (cf. also 5.762–763 *nil mihi de fatis thalami superisque relictum est, Magne, queri*), [Sen.] *Her.O.* 1479, Calp. *Decl.* 16.

**sepolcro** I.e. the tower in which he was burned alive. Cnaeus seems to refer to standard Roman burial practice, in which the body was cremated and the ashes then buried in the family tomb (but usually the tomb did not itself serve as the cremation chamber). For the ‘burial’, see n.658–660 *tumulus*.

694–695 *But I am possessed by grief that after the disaster of our twin downfall Hispania has yielded in submission to the Carthaginians who have poured in.*

**me luctus habet ... ne** The construction is modelled after *verba timendi* with *ne*; with a noun, cf. e.g. Petr. 128.6 *et mentem timor altus habet, ne...* For *habeo* of emotions or mental states (‘possess’, ‘affect’), cf. e.g. 11.20 *idem etiam Locros habuit furor*, Verg. *A.* 11.357 *tantus habet mentes et pectora terror*, Ov. *Fast.* 6.572 *dubium me quoque mentis habet*, *TLL* 6.3.2431.31–52; the construction may be by analogy with *teneo* (*OLD s.v. 10*) and Greek ἔχω (*LSJ s.v. A.I.8*).

**me luctus habet** responds to 659 *gens Itala ... dat gemitus*; see An. 650–704.

**geminae ... clade ruinae** This may be a play on Vergil’s title for the Scipiones Maior and Minor at *A.* 6.842–843 *geminos, duo fulmina belli, / Scipiadas, cladem Libyae*. The first pair of Scipios had been crushed in battle, leading to a second pair of the same family crushing Carthage in revenge. For *geminae*, see n.650–651a.

**cesserit ... Hispania** The same fear moves the Senate to send a new commander (the younger Scipio) to Spain at 15.5–6 *metus, in Tyrias ne iam Tartessia leges / concedat tellus*. 372
affusis Once the Scipios have fallen, the Carthaginians swiftly return to reclaim the land. The verb pictures the generals as some dike or wall that had kept the enemy out, and that now has crumbled (cf. ruinae).

696–702
contra quae iuvenis turbato fletibus ore:
‘di, quaeso, ut merita est, dignas pro talibus ausis
Carthago expendat poenas. sed continet acres
Pyrenes populos qui vestro Marte probatus
exceptit fessos et notis Marcius armis
successit bello. fusos quoque fama ferebat
victores acie atque exacta piacula caedis.’

696 To this the young man responds, his face troubled by weeping: ... 
Throughout the Nekyia, Scipio is explicitly said to be affected by the encounters. He is turbatus also when he sees Appius (449) and the punished women (831); happy after conversing with his mother (648), upon seeing Homer (792) and at the end (895); angry at Hamilcar (737); weeping when he hears of the future fate of Rome (868). In Vergil, Aeneas weeps when he is rejoined with father Anchises (6.699 largo fletu simul ora rigabat), but also when he spots Dido (455, 476; cf. n.703–704) and after hearing the tale of Deiphobus’ death (cf. 539 nos flendo ducimus horas), which is an important model for the tale of the brothers Scipio (Intr. 650–704). These are thus ‘legitimate’ tears, and not to be condemned like his excessive grief at 388ff.

697–698 God, I ask that, as she deserves, Carthage may pay the proper penalty for such daring deeds.

Scipio’s request to the gods that his relatives’ death may be avenged echoes a number of similar pleas on behalf of Troy in the Aeneid. Reitz (1982: 96) notes the correspondences with Priam’s curse of Pyrrhus at A. 2.535ff. at tibi pro scelere... pro talibus ausis / di ... persolvant grates dignas et praemia reddent / debita (which is here picked up with merita). The gods have not been slow to listen to these pleas, as shows from Diomedes’ statement at A. 11.257–258 infanda per orbem / supplicia et scelerum poenas expendimus omnes. By linking the death of the brothers Scipio with the fall of Troy, Silius not only casts the Carthaginians in the same mould as Vergil’s criminal Greeks (cf. Reitz l.c.), but also portrays the young Scipio as an Aeneas, who will build a better future on the ashes of his house; see Intr. 650–704.

For such divine retribution against those responsible for the death of the protagonist’s parent, cf. also V.Fl. 1.793–794 meriti regis succedite tectis / et saevas inferte faces, where Aeson prays that the Furies may visit Pelias.

ut merita est ‘As she deserves’. While the phrase is fairly common, this is likely an allusion to Dido’s words at A. 4.547 quin morere, ut merita es, ferroque averte dolorem, where the queen of Carthage condemns herself to death at Aeneas’ departure. Her curse at her suicide that formed the background for this Punic War (cf. 1.114ff.) may be partially
fulfilled with the Scipios’ death (see Intr. 650–704), but her avengers are locked in the same pattern of guilt; see Intr. 256–298.

698b–701a But the fierce tribes of the Pyrenees are contained by Marcius, famous in arms, who, having proved himself in your service, took up our spent soldiers and has stepped in to take over the war.

Livy reports at 25.37 that following the deaths of Publius and Cnaeus Scipio in battle, an eques named Lucius Marcianus gathered the remnants of the Roman armies and combined them with some garrison troops into a capable force. He managed not only to defend their camp, but routed the Cartaginians (25.37.12–13) and subsequently took two of their camps by surprise (25.39). After this, the situation stagnated, since the two weakened armies dared not attack each other (25.39.18). In the next year, C. Claudius Nero came to relieve Marcius with 13,000 soldiers (26.17.2), shortly followed by the younger Scipio, in full command, with another 11,000 men (26.19.10ff.); Scipio honoured Marcius and his army for preserving the province (26.20.1–3).

continet Presumably ‘contain’, ‘check’ (cf. TLL 4.708.34ff.); while the verb can also mean ‘protect’ or ‘preserve’ (i.e. the Spanish allies, or the province as a whole; cf. Liv. 26.20.2), it seems more plausible that the acres ... populos are the enemy (see foll. n.).

acres Pyrenes populos Spaltenstein convincingly argues that Pyrene (the Pyrenees) stands for the whole of Spain, adding (in n.9.230) 1.190, 9.230, 14.35, 15.451, 16.246, 16.278 and 17.641, where Pyrene and / or its populi represent the entire peninsula. Still, Marcius’ army only controlled the lands north of the Ebro (close to the Pyrenees). For acer, cf. Cydnus, the leader of the Pyrenean tribes, allies of Hannibal, who is called thus at 3.338.

In Latin poetry, only the Greek Pyrene (gen. -es, acc. -en) is used for the Pyrenees (except Juv. 10.151 Pyrenaenum); cf. Tib. 1.7.9 Pyrene, Sen. Pha. 69 Pyrenes, Luc. 1.689 Pyrenen and frequently in Silius; the story of its eponymous heroine is told at 3.420–441.

vestro Marte probatus Livy (25.37.3) tells that during the years that Marcius served under Cnaeus Scipio, he was omnis militiae artis edoctus. For probatus, cf. 7.298 lecta manus, iuvenes in Marte probati (cf. also 4.361) and TLL 10.2.1475.53ff. For vestro Marte (‘in your campaigns’, ‘while serving under you’), cf. 463 nostri Martis (‘our shared campaigns’). Silius does not discriminate between Publius’ and Cnaeus’ armies; vestro refers to both Scipios (cf. also, e.g., the absence of a reference to the fatal division of the troops narrated at Liv. 25.32; see n.683–684).

Lines 699–700, with Marte and Marcius in the fifth foot, respectively, may play on the ancient etymological connection of the name of the gens Marcia with the Roman god of war. Marcius (‘of Mars’), a ‘child’ of the Scipios’ campaigns (Marte), continues their efforts. (For the etymology, see Schulze 1904: 464–466; Deroy 1959: 15–16 argues that the name instead has the Etruscan root *mal/mar-, “hammer”; cf. malleus, marculus or martulus.)

notis ... armis Possibly ‘famous’ (Duff) or rather ‘distinctive’ (by earlier victories), as at 1.519 and 14.606; but notis is primarily ‘well known’, both to the Scipios (complementing probatus; cf. Spaltenstein) and to the soldiers (fessos) whom Marcius rallied (i.e. he was a proven leader to them).

successit bello The verb is well chosen, having here both the sense ‘step into the position of a fallen comrade’ (OLD s.v. 4a; cf. e.g. Caes. Gal. 7.25.3 examinato alteri successit tertius et tertio quartus) and ‘succeed to the position of command’, ‘inherit the war’ (OLD s.v. 5).
The tidings said that your victors were even routed in battle and that punishment has been exacted for your death.

Spaltenstein rightly points out that the contrast between fusos and victores reflects Livy’s similar stress on the reversal of fortunes (cf. e.g. 25.38.13 victi a victoribus castra tutati sitis), a favourite topos with the Romans (Spaltenstein adduces Horace’s famous line at Epist. 2.1.156 Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit; in the Punica cf. also 867 and 15.691). In the Aeneid, such a reversal is present in the Trojan revenge for the Greek capture of Troy, both at A. 2.367–368 victis redit in praecordia virtus, / victoresque cadunt Danai and in the glimpse of the future at A. 6.837 victor ... caesis insignis Achivis (Mummius, the conqueror of Corinth); for the Scipios and the fall of Troy, see Intr. 650–704.

fusus acie is a common phrase for ‘routed in battle’; cf. 11.146–147 ducibus tot caede peremptis, tot fusis acie, Liv. 5.28.6, 5.34.9, 8.16.10, Mela 1.98, Tac. Hist. 4.17.2, Fron. Str. 2.13.1; cf. also Tac. Ann. 2.5.3.

fama ferebat This is the same report that informed Scipio of the family tragedy at 387–388 tristes lacrimas et funera acerba suorum / fama tulit (with the same phrase). Compare Aeneas’ words to Deiphobus at A. 6.501–504:

_quis tam crudelis optavit sumere poenas?_  
_cui tantum de te licuit? mihi fama suprema_  
_nocte tulit fessum vasta te caede Pelasgum_  
_procuibusse super confusae stragis acervum._

“[W]ho chose to exact so cruel a penalty? Who had power to deal thus with you? Rumour told me that on that last night, weary with endless slaughter of Pelasgians, you had fallen upon a heap of mingled carnage.”

Silius reverses Vergil’s setting. Aeneas heard the rumour (fama) of Deiphobus’ death, and asks in desperation who punished the Trojans thus (501 sumere poenas); the question opens the conversation with the shade of his old friend. Here, Scipio tells of the report (fama) that the death of his family members is being revenged, exacting punishment from the enemy (exacta piacula caedis); this closes the scene. For more correspondences between the two passages, see Intr. 650–704.

For the line ending, cf. Ov. Met. 12.197 and again at 200 eadem hoc quoque fama ferebat, Luc. 3.417. For fama fert, cf. also Liv. 1.45.2, 10.46.16, Curt. 7.8.30, Sen. Her.F. 748.

exacta piacula caedis What Scipio asked for at 697–698 has already been partially fulfilled. This theme of revenge for the elder Scipio’s death recurs in multiple ways: i) the Scipios have avenged their own death by slaying many enemies (cf. 685 nec inultis), ii) Marcus does so by defeating the Carthaginians and iii) young Scipio will be the avenger of his father and uncle once he takes up the command in Spain; cf. 15.205 vobis ultor ego, 16.86–88 and 16.593 ultor patriaeque domusque.

But piacula also has the sense of ‘expiatory offering’, dead enemies serving as atonement for the Scipios’ deaths. Cf. (of young Scipio’s vengeance) 15.10–11 patrios patruique piare optantem manes, 15.443–444 prima hostia vobis, sacrati manes, campo iacet, but also 4.464–465 multasque paternos / ante oculos animas, optata piacula, maectat, where the fallen enemies are sacrifices for Scipio’s endangered father. This goes back to Aeneas setting aside men for sacrifice after Pallas’ demise at A. 10.517–520 and ultimately to Achilles’ sacrifice of twelve Trojan men at Patroclus’ funeral (Hom. II. 21.27–28,
23.210–212; the motif also returns in the human sacrifices at Menoeceus’ funeral at Stat. *Theb.* 12.68–69). For the connection to Pallas / Patroclus, see Intr. 650–704.

Compare also 6.299–300 *magnas ... de sanguine poenas / praecepit Tyryo et prae sumpta piacula mortis*, of Regulus avenging his own death in advance by slaying many Africans, and similarly 5.213; for such expiation of fallen comrades, cf. 4.230–232, 15.820–821. For the same use of *piacula* as expiation for someone’s death formed by the death of another, cf. Luc. 4.790 (Curio’s death atoning for Hannibal), 10.462 *grata piacula morti* (Ptolemaeus atoning for dead Caesar), V.Fl. 1.810 (Aeson’s death avenged by Pelias’).


703–704

his laeti rediere duces loca amoena piorum,
prosequiturque oculis puer adveneratus euntes.

703–704 *Happy with this news the generals went back to the lovely abode of the blessed, and with his eyes the son follows them in adoration as they go.*

**his laeti** Spaltenstein compares Palinurus’ happiness at hearing that the site of his death will carry his name (*A. 6.382–383 his dictis curae emotae ...; gaudet cognomine terra*). But cf. also the joy of Achilles’ shade upon learning of the exploits of his son Neoptolemus from Odysseus at Hom. *Od.* 11.538–540 (Juhnke 1972: 289 n.245, Reitz 1982: 96, Marks 2005: 142), a scene which receives closer imitation at 750–751 (see Intr. 705–761).

**duces** By referring to them as ‘generals’ rather than as Scipio’s family (see on *puer* below) as at 650–651, Silius paves the way for the next passage, that of the war heroes.

*loc a amoena piorum* I.e. Elysium. The phrase is probably a conflation of Verg. *A.* 5.734–735 *amoena piorum / concilia* and 6.638 *locos laetos et amoena virecta*; cf. also V.Fl. 1.842 *amoena piorum* (there *amoena* is nominalized). Cf. also 552 *turba piorum* with n. Martial has a very similar phrase at 12.52.11 *loca laeta piorum*.

**prosequiturque oculis ... ad veneratus euntes** An inversion of Verg. *A.* 6.476 *prosequitur lacrimis longe et miseratur euntem*, Aeneas’ last sight of Dido (Ahl / Davis / Pomeroy 1986: 2550, Spaltenstein *ad loc.*, Marks 2005: 142 n.76). Tears are replaced with following eyes, which is more common (see below), and pity with adoration. The next scene begins with another reminiscence of the meeting with Dido; the allusion thus serves as another transitional device (cf. *duces* above).


**ad veneratus** is very rare; before Silius, cf. only Var. *R.* 1.6 *ad veneror Minervam et Venerem* (*TLL* 1.830.25ff. cites only three later instances). For Scipio’s worship of his family, cf. 16.311 *veneratur facta iacentum*, at the burial of his relatives.

**puer** Here ‘son’ (*TLL* 10.2.2516.35ff.), which is not restricted to non-adults; cf. e.g. Hor. *Carm.* 1.12.25 (Dioscuri), 1.19.2 (Bacchus), 4.6.37 (Apollo), Ov. *Her.* 16.90 (Paris at his return to Troy). Since here all three men are called Scipio, Silius distinguishes by their familial relations and ages; cf. 652 *iuvenis, 662 genitoris, 687 frater*. 376
705–761 Roman war-heroes and Hamilcar; the lawgivers

The ghost of Paulus enquires about Scipio’s reasons for entering the underworld; the hero laments Paulus’ death and informs him of his burial by Hannibal. Scipio sees other Roman leaders who have fallen in the war; he then views more ancient ghosts, all saviours of Rome. The last, Lutatius, sets the stage for Hamilcar, the father of Hannibal. Hearing of his son’s exploits from an accusing Scipio, he takes great pride in Hannibal’s *pietas*. After the military men, the Sibyl shows the spirits of lawgivers. When Scipio wishes to address them all, she reminds him how many thousands descend to the underworld.

The first and longest part of this passage (705–751) deals with the ghosts of military leaders and has a chiastic structure. The opening conversation with Paulus is followed by a short series of other heroes from the second Punic war; then another series, now of heroes from earlier ages, is concluded with the conversation with Hamilcar. The second part, on the lawgivers, treats a separate subdivision of ghosts; nevertheless, I have included it in this passage because it forms with 729–731 a frame to the meeting with Hamilcar (see below).¹

Throughout the *Nekyia* the poet interweaves his Homeric and Vergilian models and the present passage is no exception. A fine example of this practice is presented by the moments when Scipio is led to take a different course of action. Twice Scipio interrupts his review of the spirits to move on to others, once because he himself desires to see the shades of earlier men (719–720), once because of the Sibyl’s admonition that the dead are innumerable (755ff.). This corresponds to and combines similar pairs of interruptions in Homer and Vergil. In all these intertexts we find first a counterfactual and then the real event, as here. Odysseus does not press Aias for a conversation since he desires to speak to the ghosts of other men (*Od.* 11.566–567) and later is kept from seeking out Theseus and Peirithoos by the multitude of shades that was gathering (11.630ff.). Aeneas is twice admonished by the Sibyl, first when he shows groundless fear of the incorporeal spirits (*A.* 6.292–294), and then when he tarries too long in Deiphobus’ company (6.537–538).²

Silius has both the Homeric and Vergilian type of interrupting (Scipio checks himself at 719–720 and is held back by the Sibyl at 755ff.), and the Vergilian phrasing at 755–757a (see n.) is joined with the Homeric theme of the ghostly hosts.³ Like his models, the poet uses the device to close one passage and move to the next.⁴

Paulus

In some ways, the meeting with Paulus is a continuation, or double, of the conversation with Publius and Cnaeus Scipio. In both cases young Scipio reports the universal lament for

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¹ At the same time, it also forms the transition to the Greek ghosts of 762ff. (Kijfel 1979: 177, Reitz 1982: 110) and prepares for the theme of Greek models and Roman imitation; see n.752–754.
² The Vergilian Sibyl reminds Aeneas of the little time that remains, a motif that Silius has adapted at 807–808; see n. *ad loc.* The correction by the Sibyl is marked in both cases with *admonere* (6.293 and 538) as here at 757.
³ Note that Silius adapts the theme to present a different reason: Odysseus is prevented by the multitude from seeing the ghosts of his preference, while Scipio prefers to speak to *all* ghosts, which is impossible because of their multitude.
⁴ In Vergil, the first admonishment concludes the description of the monsters, the second ends the conversation with Deiphobus, after which Aeneas enters Elysium; in Homer, the first passage marks the transition to the shades of mythical characters outside the Trojan war, while the second concludes the *Nekyia* as a whole.
their deaths (658–659 Scipios, 711–712 Paulus) and their burial (659–660 and 713–714); both the Scipio brothers and Paulus are identified as the support of the state (654 and 712–713). Paulus is also, like his predecessors, partially modelled on Vergil’s Deiphobus; we may adduce 711 *armipotens ductor* (cf. A. 6.500), the unanswered query on the hero’s reasons for entering the underworld at 708–710 (cf. A. 6.531–534), the mention of the burial of the deceased (714–715; cf. 6.505–506) and possibly 705 *vix agnoscendus* (as a variation of 6.498 *vix ... agnovit*; see n.705–706). In the previous scene, the echoes of the fall of Troy presented Scipio as the new Aeneas (see Intr. 650–704); here, his new role is confirmed “at a national level” by the former Roman commander Paulus, whose address of Scipio as *lux Italum* hints at the scene in *Aeneid* 2 where Hector’s ghost transfers his role of guardian of the nation to Aeneas (see n.707–709).

Juhnke (1972: 287) draws attention to the intertextuality with the meeting of Odysseus and Achilles in *Odyssey* 11; indeed both in structure and words Paulus’ question unmistakably echoes Achilles’ similar enquiry (see n.707–709). Odysseus’ previous interlocutor Agamemnon is just as important a model, however, mainly for the general setting: i) the drinking of blood (cf. 706) is mentioned with Agamemnon, but not with Achilles; ii) at the end of the dialogue between Odysseus and Agamemnon the two weep (*Od*. 11.465–466; cf. 716 *lacrimans*), which is directly followed by the sighting of fellow combatants (11.467–470), just as here. Paulus (like Vergil’s Deiphobus) is modelled upon both Agamemnon and Achilles, just as Hamilcar has features of both Achilles and Aias (and Dido, see below).

The dialogue itself comes across as disjointed; Paulus’ question after Scipio’s motives is answered with a lament on the former’s death and his funeral. The issue is complicated by the ambiguity of Paulus’ tears (716 *lacrimans*), which some scholars believe to originate not in sorrow, but in his being touched by Scipio’s report. The conversation should be analysed in the light of its larger context. Kibbel’s interpretation that Paulus’ question cuts to the core of Scipio’s visit, reorienting the reader towards its ultimate function, has merit. The hero went to the underworld not only to assuage his grief, but also out of anxiety for Rome’s future (399 *noscere venturos ... annos*, see n.). After the last meeting, which emphasized Scipio’s personal loss, the next sequence focuses on the national disaster; Scipio’s reply stresses Rome’s still dire condition, which is reinforced by the references to Cannae and other Roman defeats at 717–718 (see n.). Paulus’ tears are tears of grief, not for himself, but for his country. We should compare the narrative structure in the *Odyssey*. There,

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1 Publius’ question at 666–667, also echoing that of Deiphobus (see n.), likewise remained unanswered.
2 Juhnke (1972: 288) argues that Scipio’s reply mirrors Odysseus’ answer to Achilles in structure (report – praise – solace); this does not convince, as Odysseus reports his own deeds (and thus answers Achilles’ question), whereas Scipio speaks of Paulus’ funeral.
3 Such an orientation is useful, now that Scipio’s professed motives for entering the underworld, i.e. learning the future and seeing his relatives, have been fulfilled. Kibbel’s view (1979: 174–175) that the focus here lies on Scipio’s “Selbstfindung” is less convincing, however. The scholar believes that by stressing Rome’s grief for Paulus and the honour done to him even by his enemy, Scipio shows his comrade the glory of his life and death, which touches Paulus; this would suggest that Scipio has learned the value of virtus and sees in Paulus the glory that follows from a life dedicated to it. But the emphasis is on grief and ruin rather than Paulus’ honor; the corresponding words on Scipio’s family at 654ff. (see above) are a lament (cf. e.g. 655 *ei mihi*).
4 Cf. Scipio himself at 868. The alternative proposed by Ruperti, that Paulus is moved by Hannibal’s humanity, conflicts with Scipio’s condemning words; to remove this objection, Spaltenstein argues that seeking glory is not
Agamemnon weeps after the dialogue (Od. 11.465–466) and Achilles departs in joy (11.538–540). In our passage, likewise one meeting ends in sorrow (Paulus) and one in happiness (Hamilcar); the meeting with Paulus counterbalances the dialogue with Hamilcar, opposing Rome’s grief and Hannibal’s success. The contrast forcefully emphasizes the need for the hero to swing the war in Rome’s favour, a role for which this same Nekyia prepares him.

**Lessons for Scipio**

Besides his interlocutors, Scipio sees various groups of shades which should all in some way motivate him for his future mission. The first, of which Paulus himself is also a member, is that of the Roman leaders who have fallen in the second Punic war; if Appius Claudius and Publius Scipio are included, the protagonist has thus met all consular casualties of the war (see n.716–718 Flaminius ... Gracchus et ... Servilius), a vivid reminder of the cost and thus of Hannibal’s culpability (which is stressed again in the conversation with Hamilcar, see below).

A more positive motivation is represented by the second catalogue of spirits. Six Roman leaders of the past are paraded, who all once defended the city against foreign rulers. In each case one man successfully stood against the enemy’s machinations, and the link with Scipio, the saviour of Rome against Hannibal, is easily made. The first five represent virtues which Scipio must pursue in order to repeat their victory (with Brutus, Camillus and Curius it is putting national above personal interests, in various forms; with Caecus determination, with Horatius Cocles valour and self-sacrifice), while Lutatius (an obvious model for Scipio as the victor in the previous Punic war) is typified by the foedera which he negotiated and thus represents Rome’s lawfulness and fides, championed in the Punica by Scipio. Lutatius’ name allows for an easy transition to his opponent, Hamilcar (marked by the strong anaphora of the conditional clause, see An. 705–761 below).

As lawgivers, the shades of the decemviri remind of the respect for laws and pacts that the Romans display (and the Carthaginians lack) in the epic, and Scipio’s joy at seeing them (755 laetatur) suggests a similar mindset in him. Thus the conversation with Hamilcar is both preceded and followed by a reference to Roman fides and, by implication, Punic perfidia.

**Hamilcar**

The meeting with the ghost of Hamilcar, the enemy, is obviously modelled after Odysseus’ attempt at conversation with Aias’ implacable shade (Od. 11.543–564) and Aeneas’ words to Dido’s ghost (A. 6.450–476). The differences stand out just as much as the correspondences, however. Unlike his epic predecessors, Scipio makes no effort at reconciliation and reproaches Hamilcar for his son’s deeds, whereas Aias and Dido with their silent gaze themselves reproach the visitor for the injustice done to them. Hamilcar, on the other hand, does not remain silent, but exults over Scipio’s words.

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9 Agamemnon also does not cry ‘happy tears’, but laments his enemy’s cruelty; this is another indication that the reaction of Scipio and Paulus to the latter’s cremation by Hannibal is one of anger, not gratitude.

10 Cf. e.g. the much quoted phrase at 9.437 melior pietate fideque, where Scipio is compared with Hannibal.

11 Klaassen (2010: 122 n.58) rightly connects the lawgivers with Vergil’s Numa at A. 6.808–812; see n.533–534.
Close intertextuality, both in imitation and contrast, features in the setting of the meeting rather than in the speeches. Like Aias, Hamilcar stands at a distance (733 \textit{procul, Od.} 11.544 \textit{νόσφιν}, still hateful (11.544 \textit{κεχολωμένη and especially 553–554; see n.532–534a \textit{frons nec morte remissa}). The line introducing Scipio’s words is the opposite of the lines in Homer and Vergil (737 \textit{non miti ... vultu, Od.} 11.552 \textit{ἐπέεσσι ... μειλήσις, A.} 6.455 \textit{dulcique ... amore}). Scipio begins with two questions which are actually conclusions, just as Aeneas does to Dido (and Odysseus’ opening question is similar). At the end of the scene, when Hamilcar proudly leaves with quickened steps, the model has become Achilles, who leaves happy because Odysseus has told him the exploits of his son, just as Scipio has talked of Hannibal; cf. \textit{Od.} 11.538–539 ψυχῆ δὲ ποδώκεος Αἰακίδαο / φοίτα μακρὰ βιβᾶσα (“and the ghost of the quick-footed grandson of Aeacus departed with long strides”) and 750–751 \textit{citato celsus abit gressu}. By combining Homer’s Achilles and Aias in Hamilcar, Silius has created a powerful image of this implacable man, who takes pride in the deeds of his son.

The infernal meeting with Dido is important as an intertext not merely because Hamilcar belongs to Dido’s Carthage, but because Silius repeatedly alludes to the passage where he explicitly connects her with the Barcae: Hannibal’s oath in the temple of Dido (1.81–139). Vergil indicates Dido’s implacability by comparing her to a block of marble (6.471 \textit{Marpessia cautes}); she then rejoins Sychaeus. In Punica 1, Silius alludes to this scene by presenting an actual marble statue of Dido (1.86 \textit{marmore maesto}), joined forever with her Sychaeus (1.90; cf. Spaltenstein \textit{ad loc.}). The vengeful Dido from \textit{Aeneid} 6 thus witnessed Hannibal’s oath.

We should study the dialogue in that context. Scipio’s accusation of pact-breaking recalls Dido’s last words to Aeneas, when she calls him \textit{perfide (A.} 4.305); Hamilcar praises his son for his \textit{fides} and \textit{pietas} (749), traits normally reserved for the Romans. In a grand reversal of moral positions, we are presented with a pro-Carthaginian perspective, such as is also found in 8.50–201 (the story of Anna, Dido’s sister). Carthage’s war on Rome is a just revenge for the injustice done to its founder by Aeneas, and Hannibal’s fulfilment of his oath an act of \textit{pietas}. Does this also mean that Silius allows ‘two voices’ in his epic, similar to those that have been discerned in Vergilian studies? Is Hannibal justified, and deserving of the reader’s sympathy or admiration? The answer to the last

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12 For the reading \textit{miti instead of mitis (printed by Delz), see n.736–737 non miti ... vultu.}
13 Reitz 1982: 109 (although she has Homer’s lines refer to Aias).
14 Von Albrecht 1964: 150.
15 Reitz 1982: 107–108; for the allusions, see n.740–743 (Scipio’s accusations play on Hannibal’s oath) and nn.744–747a, 747b–749, 750 (Hamilcar’s recollection of the setting and his own words).
16 The authenticity of 8.144–223 is disputed, however; see Delz 1987: lxiv-lxviii, Volpilhac / Miniconi / Devallet 1981: 125–127 (Budé edition vol. 2), Santini 1991: 115–116, Ariemma 2000: 67–68. But from the first part of the passage in book 8 it is already sufficiently clear that in retelling the story of Aeneas and Dido, Silius has further developed Vergil’s ambivalent depiction of Aeneas, so that Dido is more obviously the wronged party, victim of a breach of \textit{fides} by Aeneas (Ahl / Davis / Pomeroy 1986: 2497–2499, Ganiban 2010: 91–96). This “more pro-Carthaginian version of the affair” (Ganiban 2010: 94), being the story of Anna’s flight to Italy, should be seen as focalized through her. The ancient Trojan perfidy is now, in the Second Punic War, offset with Punic perfidy, but that also means that Carthage is now in the wrong (see n.738–739). See also Intr. 256–298.
17 Cf. e.g. Parry (1963), ‘The two voices of Virgil’s \textit{Aeneid}’, \textit{Arion} 2: 266–280 and Lyne (1987), \textit{Further Voices in Vergil’s “Aeneid”}, Oxford.
question must be no. Silius may adopt and develop the ‘Carthaginian voice’ in the *Aeneid*, but it does not follow that Hannibal’s actions are thereby justified (see fn.16 above). Not only does Hamilcar’s view conflict with the narrator’s own programmatic statements throughout the poem (see e.g. n.750a), but it is also inherently paradoxical. Hannibal’s personal oath on the gods of his nation implies breaking the national oath sworn to Jupiter (see n.744–747a *fallere divos iuratos patri*); Hamilcar perverts the Roman values of *fides* and *pietas* by applying them to an oath breaker (see n.747b–749).18 The keen reader will spot other weaknesses in Hamilcar’s praise of his son; the intertextuality of 747–749 shows that Hannibal’s efforts are futile and oppose fate, casting him as the losing party of the epic (since it underlines that Hannibal is fighting the gods and stresses his mortal parentage; see nn. *Phrygias res vertere temptat* and *o vera propago*). As such, the speech actually reinforces Scipio’s position. He is morally superior (cf. fn.10), is supported by the gods and was even fathered by one. While Scipio’s own accusations are somewhat weak, Silius has fashioned Hamilcar’s proud reply as an ingenious subversion of Hannibal’s moral and indeed epic position. Carthage’s questionable ‘voice’ thus strengthens the Roman one.19

### Analysis of the presentation of 705–761

During the span of this passage, the focus of the *Nekyia* shifts from conversations to a series of catalogues; the conversations that do occur in the rest of the book (Paulus, Hamilcar, Alexander) are much shorter than the preceding ones.20 The ghosts come in quick succession, indeed; the narrative is always swiftly moving forward to new encounters. Paulus is not only already present when Scipio is still watching his kin leave (705 *iamque aderat*), but has even begun talking at the moment our attention focuses on him, as is indicated by the other imperfect *fundebat* (706). Similarly, the next spirits are presented while Paulus still hears of events in the upper world (716–717 *dum ... iam ... iam*).21 Paulus’ name frames the dialogue (706, 716); he is part of the catalogue of Roman leaders, which opens with the second use of his name (Reitz 1982: 99).

Besides the pace, the setting also subtly changes; while earlier the spirits came to Scipio (an ‘Odyssean’ setting), now they parade before him and the Sibyl selects the interesting ones (more of an ‘Anchisean’ presentation).22 Reitz (1982: 101–102) observes the various ways in which the catalogues are incorporated in the narrative: i) the Sibyl lists the names

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18 Kißel 1979: 176 n.38, Reitz 1982: 108; cf. also Tipping (2010b: 65–66), who comments that Hannibal’s imitation of his father and his appeal to his own son to follow in his footsteps (3.78–86) is “an almost perfect perversion of the exemplary mechanism whereby Romans sought to establish and re-establish the traditions that would preserve the correct relationships between past, present and future.”


20 Reitz (1982: 97–98) draws attention to the faster narrative pace after 704; the short meeting with Paulus serves as a bridge between the longer conversation with Scipio’s kin and the catalogues that follow. The use of past tenses at 717–720 suggests that the narrator, by ‘telling’ rather than ‘showing’, covers a longer period of time in only a few lines.

21 For *iam* as an indication of the pace of the narrative, rather than of the quick succession of the events themselves, see Kroon / Risselada 2004. Cf. 54, 64, 124, 228–230, 291, 300, 393.

22 See n.724 *ora ... docet venientum*; see also n.757b–759a *lustras dum singula visu.*
in answer to Scipio’s enquiries (831–849; cf. 778–797); ii) she tells them of her own accord, either in direct speech (725–735, 809–830, 850–867) or as narrated by the narrator (752–754); iii) the ghosts are listed by the narrator as they are observed by Scipio (717–718, 721–723, 800–805). Silius has thus combined the main ways in which Homer and Vergil introduce the ghosts in the second half of their underworld narrative (Odysseus’ own observation and Anchises’ speech).

The poet plays with these various ways in our passage. Half-way through the catalogue of Rome’s saviours (721–731), which follows that of fallen consuls (717–718), the mode of presentation changes from observation by Scipio to the Sibyl’s direct speech. As a result, the various Roman leaders which follow Paulus are shown in three groups of three: i) those fallen in the second Punic war (717–718 Flaminius, Gracchus, Servilius, connected by *iam ... iam*);23 ii) the patriots who put the state above personal interests (721–723 Brutus, Camillus, Curius, with triple *nunc*) and iii) the other saviours Claudius, Horatius Cocles and Lutatius (725–731). Of this last triad, the first two are closely linked by *hic ... ille* (725–726), by the metaphor of ‘barring from the door’ (*deiecit* 726, *exclusit* 728) and a play on their cognomina (see n.725–728). Its third member, Lutatius, forms the transition to the conversation with Hamilcar; the two are connected by spatial reference (Lutatius close by: *hic ... ille*; Hamilcar far off: *ille ... procul*)24 and through the introductory phrases (729–730 *si tibi dulce ... vidisse*, 732 *si studium ... cognoscere*). Our poet thus not only shifts to a different mode of presentation in the middle of this catalogue, but also makes the transition to a new topic and conversational partner during its course.25 This transition occurs during a speech, a device which Silius often employs; see An. 417–493.

Since Hamilcar is introduced in much the same way as Lutatius is, with a *si*-clause, the initial assumption might be that the catalogue is not yet finished.26 Only with the third use of such a clause at 734, when the Sibyl proposes that Scipio let Hamilcar drink (the obvious signpost for another conversation), does the reader have to review the previous interpretation. The phraseology of 734b–735 echoes that of 446–448; the two pairs of lines frame the major meetings of this *Nekyia*, as only the conversation with Alexander will follow.27 As for the dialogue itself, it has been observed by Juhnke (1972: 289) that Scipio’s first words are vehement, after which he seems to adopt a more moderate tone, stating factually Hannibal’s transgressions; conversely, Hamilcar’s speech begins in a matter-of-fact manner and ends on a high note. With this chiastic structure, the dialogue has a strong programmatic beginning and a fitting climax, in which Hamilcar picks up Scipio’s opening words and answers his critique on the *Punica fides*. Similar mirroring pairs of

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23 The imperfects (718 *stabat* etc.) suggest that this short catalogue forms the setting of the next catalogue, that of earlier leaders, at 721ff. This subordinate narrative position reflects Scipio’s preference (720 *raptabat amor*).

24 The first *ille* is anaphoric, the second deictic; spatial reference was implied also with the earlier *hic ... ille* (both deictic) for Claudius and Cocles.

25 It is thus the reverse of the transition at 716, where the conversation with Paulus ends seamlessly in a catalogue. The chiastic movement of this passage was discussed above in Intr. 705–761.

26 *cognoscere* at 732 is ‘know the face of’ rather than ‘meet’, cf. 613 and 622.

27 This corresponds to Homer’s practice, where a last reference to the blood drinking is made with the shade of Aias (who stands apart, not drinking like the other ghosts); there too only one conversation, that with Hercules, will follow (for the correspondences between Alexander and Hercules see Intr. 762–805). The parallel lines also draw attention to the special status of both Appius and Hamilcar—the first does not need to drink, the second is allowed to do so despite being an enemy.
speeches are found in the conversations with Pomponia and with Scipio’s father; see An.

While the introduction of Hamilcar is a fluent transition from catalogue to conversation,
the presentation of the next group of shades is strongly marked with *ex in* (752).\(^{28}\) It was
submitted earlier that the *foedera* of Lutatius and the lawgivers (both underlining the
Roman respect for lawfulness and *fides*) frame the conversation with Hamilcar, forming a
contrast with his praise of Hannibal’s perversion of *fides*. This does not mean that the
lawgivers should be included under the same heading as the preceding Roman ghosts.\(^{29}\)
Rather, they are the second group of shades which has been presented earlier in the
description of the ten infernal gates by the Sibyl (533 *qui leges posuere*); the first were the
warriors (532 *belligeros*), which includes the defenders of the Roman state but also
Hamilcar for Carthage. As such the ten gates are a (rough) ‘index’ of the catalogues that
will follow and their order (for a full discussion, see Intr. 517–614). Obviously the other
nine groups are not treated as elaborately as the warriors; Silius elegantly lets his Sibyl set
the limit by pointing out the innumerable multitude of ghosts that Charon has to take across
(a stock theme which is thus here employed in a meaningful way), which at the same time
allows a smooth transition to the next scene (Reitz 1982: 110); in addition, the description
of the lawgivers had prepared the shift of focus from Rome to Greece (see fn.1 above).

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\(^{28}\) In addition, the perfect *recessit* (751) reflects the resolution of the story by the narrator, who concludes
the narrative of Scipio and Hamilcar from his own time and perspective rather than from a standpoint within the story.
For the term ‘resolution’, see Gen.intr. § 7.2.

\(^{29}\) So Reitz (1982: 101), who interprets the Roman shades of 720–731 and 751–753 as representatives of Roman
history.
705–715

iamque aderat multa vix agnoscendus in umbra
Paulus et epoto fundebat sanguine verba:
‘lux Italum, cuius spectavi Martia facta
multum uno maiora viro, descendere nocti
atque habitanda semel subigit quis visere regna?’
cui contra tales effundit Scipio voces:
‘armipotens ductor, quam sunt tua fata per urbem
lamentata diu! quam paene ruentia tecum
traxisti ad Stygias Oenotria tecta tenebras!
tum tibi defuncto tumulum Sidonius hostis
constituit laudemque tuo quaesivit honore.’

705–706 And already present was Paulus, hardly recognizable in the deep shadow, and after drinking the blood he spoke these words.

ianque aderat By presenting the next shade as already there, Silius retains speed in his narrative. The phrase itself was first used by Horace at Serm. 1.5.20–21 iamque dies aderat (cf. e.g. Verg. A. 2.132, V.Fl. 2.107, Stat. Silv. 3.1.55, Sil. 16.303) and for introducing characters at Verg. A. 12.391, Ov. Met. 7.404, V.Fl. 1.255, 5.273, Sil. 2.188, 5.306, 11.191 and 17.8; cf. also Luc. 4.93–94 iamoque ... saeva fames aderat.

multa vix agnoscendus in umbra Presumably a combined allusion to three scenes in Aeneid 6 at once: Palinurus at 340 hunc ubi vix multa maestum cognovit in umbra, Dido at 451–453 quam Troius heros / ut primum iuxta stetit agnovitque per umbras / obscuram and Deiphobus at 498–499 vix adeo agnovit pavitantem ac dira tegentem / supplicia. Unlike in Vergil, it is here the ghost who speaks first; the use of agnoscendus instead of agnovit keeps the ‘camera’ focused on Paulus rather than Scipio.

Spaltenstein argues that vix agnoscendus is to be explained by Paulus’ maimed appearance due to his battle wounds (cf. 10.235ff.), adducing the description of Deiphobus’ body which is also introduced by vix ... agnovit. But while Deiphobus may be a model for Paulus (see Intr. 705–761), Silius gives no other hint to justify this interpretation and, conversely, explicitly provides a different reason with multa ... in umbra.

Paulus L. Aemilius Paulus, consul in 216 BC and figuring prominently in books 8–10 as one of the two Roman commanders at the battle of Cannae (RE 1.581.4ff., Aemilius n° 118). Unlike his colleague Varro, Paulus fought to the death. Silius honours him with an aristeia (which ends in his demise) at 10.1–82, 170–325.

epoto ... sanguine Having omitted a reference to the blood drinking in the case of the brothers Scipio for greater dramatic force, Silius resumes it here. The ghosts need to drink blood to regain speech; see n.447–448 sanguine non tacto. In most cases, the reference is in the form of a sub-clause, as here; see An. 494–516.

fundebat ... verba For fundo as ‘speak’, attested already in Plautus, see TLL 6.1.1566.45ff. Scipio’s response is presented with similar diction, 710 effundit ... voces.

707–709 Star of the Italians, whose martial feats, far greater than one man could do, I have witnessed, who forces you to descend to the darkness and to visit the realm where men stay for all eternity?
A similar query about his reason for visiting the underworld is put to Odysseus by Achilles at *Od.* 11.473–476 (cf. also Anticleia in 11.155–162) and to Aeneas by Deiphobus at *A.* 6.531–534. The structure of Paulus’ question closely follows that of Achilles’ (cf. Juhnke 1972: 287):

σχέτλε, τίπτ ἐτι μεῖζον ἐνὶ φρεσὶ μήσεαι ἔργον;
πῶς ἔτλης Ἀϊδόσδε κατελθέμεν, ἔνθα τε νεκροὶ
ἀφραδέες ναίουσι, βροτῶν εἴδωλα καμόντων;

“stubborn man, what deed yet greater than this will you devise in your heart?
How did you dare to come down to Hades, where dwell the unheeding dead,
the phantoms of men outworn?”

Overall, Paulus’ question is more positively phrased than that of Achilles: the deprecating (*pace* Juhnke) σχέτλε is replaced by the laudatory title *lux Italum*, and Achilles’ astonishment that Odysseus would attempt an even greater deed (μεῖζον ... ἔργον) here returns in Paulus’ assertion that he witnessed Scipio performing deeds greater (*facta ... maiora*) than one man could do. Other echoes are *descendere nocti* (*Ἀϊδόσδε κατελθέμεν*) and *habitanda* (ναίουσι). For Deiphobus’ question, compare especially *subigit quis visere regna* with 531–532 *te qui vivum casus ... attulerint* and 533–534 *quae te fortuna fatigat, ut tristis sine sole domos, loca turbida, adires?*

With *quis*, Paulus is the first to suggest that the hero has been *sent* (as was Odysseus by Circe and Aeneas by Anchises), yet Scipio comes of his own accord; this is a reversal of Achilles’ statement that Odysseus ‘dares’ (*ἔτλης*), while he is actually sent and thus ‘must’.

As in Deiphobus’ case, the question remains unanswered, being superfluous to the reader and essentially merely rhetorical.

**lux Italum** Ennius identifies Hector as *lux Troiae* in *trag.* 69 (cf. Jocelyn’s n., with Greek antecedents); similarly, Vergil’s Aeneas addresses Hector as *lux Dardaniae* at *A.* 2.281 (cf. also Acc. *trag.* 163a). In the Vergilian scene, the image of the old (Homeric) hero appears to Aeneas and transfers his status as defender of the nation to the new hero, telling him to found a new Troy elsewhere; likewise here, the encounter with Paulus’ ghost indicates the transition from the old defence, which had failed, to the new saviour of Rome. The same identification of the perished previous generation with fallen Troy and of Scipio with the hopes of a new Troy is present in the meeting with the elder Scipio and his brother; see Intr. 650–704.

As Tipping (2010b: 155–156) notes, the allusions to Achilles’ words to Odysseus in Homer and to Hector’s instructions to Aeneas (both scenes in which the protagonist of an earlier epic “cedes epic centrality” to another hero) also mark Scipio as an epic successor, one who with his superlative deeds (cf. on *multum uno maiora viro* below), his epic *facta*, is even *“the exemplary hero of epic and Rome”*.

**spectavi** This may have been at the battle of Cannae, where Scipio commanded the Campanian troops (8.546–561; so Duff), in whose midst he displayed many *spectacula ... virtutis* (8.554–555), and where he pitted himself against Hannibal (9.411ff.), but possibly a more general meaning is intended, if Silius envisaged Scipio as taking part in all battles (Spaltenstein). Given Paulus’ status as commander, the verb could signify that he ‘marked’ Scipio’s deeds as his general, rather than just witnessed them; for this meaning, cf. also 6.23 and 7.621. Cf. also the use of *spectare/spectatus* for recognizing martial prowess at 1.77, 1.252, 3.317, 8.295, 9.454, 12.198, 12.401, 15.659, 17.520.
Martia ‘in battle’, but also ‘worthy of Mars himself’ (cf. Mars’ special protection of Scipio at 4.457ff. and 9.438ff.); cf. 17.646 Martia praebebat spectanda Quiritibus ora, after which Scipio is compared to Bacchus and Hercules—Scipio moves in the company of gods.

multum uno maiora viro There are several examples in the poem of the unus vir—the epic hero whose actions are decisive, who does great things single-handedly: in the Roman camp Paulus himself (who slays a multitude at 10.28–29 cadit ingens nominis expers uni turba viro; cf. 8.316–317 and 10.521–522) and Marcellus (14.617–618), but especially Fabius (7.252 me solum, quaeso, toti me opponite bello; cf. 7.6ff. and 7.743; see also Tipping 2010b: 113–116, 135, 156); but the prime example is Hannibal, as Juno’s favourite (1.36 dux ... sufficit unus, 1.39) and as the sole defender of Carthage (17.149–150 stabat Carthago truncatis undique membris uni innixa viro, 17.197, 512, 515); cf. also 5.153, 11.523, 12.485–486. Compare also the patriots at 721–731, who alone were responsible for deterring the enemy (cf. 727 solus). By performing feats greater than uno ... viro, Scipio surpasses such heroes (Tipping 2010b: 156). Paulus seems to suggest that Scipio’s ability approached that of the gods, greater than men; see the above n.

The unus vir is a favourite topos of Livius (cf. e.g. 2.10.2, 2.43.6, 4.28.7, 6.6.6–7, 6.23.1, 8.36.3, 9.16.19, 22.22.6, 24.34.1, 25.37.1) but ties in well with the epic concept of the hero.

For the use of the adverb multum instead of multo, see n.683–684 multum ditior ... viris.

descendere nocti For the construction with a dative, see n.757b–759a descendisse Erebo.

habitanda semel I.e. a visit to the underworld is permanent; one cannot leave and return a second time. The thought is traditional (cf. e.g. Verg. A. 6.425 irremeabilis undae), although the phrase is not.

710–713 To him Scipio spoke these words in response: ‘Warlike leader, how long was your fate lamented throughout the city! How nearly you dragged a crashing Italian state with you to the Stygian darkness!' armipotens ductor Cf. the address to Deiphobus at Verg. A. 6.500 Deiphobe armipotens. armipotens is usually an epithet of Mars (Lucr. 1.33, Verg. A. 9.717, Ov. Fast. 2.481, 5.559, V.Fl. 3.253, Stat. Theb. 3.344, 7.78) or Minerva (Acc. trag. 127, Verg. A. 2.425, 11.483) and is only once used for another mortal, Achilles, at A. 6.839; cf. also Stat. Silv. 3.2.20 Ausoniae Celer armipotentis alumnus (of Italy).

per urbem lamentata Similarly, Scipio reported to his relatives that for their deaths gens Itala passim dat gemitus (658–659); see also the foll. n. For the passive sense of the deponent lamentata, Blomgren (1938: 10 n.1) compares 8.299 (fustraris), 5.443 and 16.533 (ausum), 16.162 (sunt ... meditata); lamentor retains its active sense at 869.

ruentia The loss of Paulus had almost toppled Rome, just as the state had leant on the brothers Scipio (cf. 654 quo stabant Itala regna). The similarities between the Scipios and Paulus are discussed in Intr. 705–761. For a character acting as ‘support’, cf. also Hannibal at 17.149–151 stabat Carthago ... / uni innixa viro, ... ruentem / Hannibal absenti retinebat nomine molem. For the same use of ruo of countries or cities, cf. 6.104, 6.595, 6.702, 7.575, 11.234; cf. also cadentem at line 377 (of Capua).

paene ... tecum traxisti An echo of Metellus'/Juno’s words to Paulus just prior to the latter’s death at 10.50–51 si superest Paulus, restant Aeneia regna; sin secus, Ausonian tecum trahis. Contrast Lucan’s Pompey, who did not make a heroic last stand (like Paulus).
Notes to 705–761

but fled the battlefield: Luc. 7.654–655 nec ... trahere omnia secum / mersa iuvat gentesque suae miscere ruinae, “but he does not choose ... to drag down everything with him and plunge it into ruin and embroil the nations in his fall”. For this use of *traho*, see *OLD s.v. 8b*. For Paulus and Pompey, see Marks 2008: 70–75.


With the phrase surrounding *Oenotria tecta*, the word order, too, suggests that Rome is in Death’s clutches. But the same phrase also seems a reaction to Paulus’ question why Scipio is here; when his country has almost fallen and permanently passed to the underworld, the hero visits the underworld alone, in order to learn how to save his country.

**Oenotria tecta** The adjective *Oenotrius* seems significant, with its overtones of antiquity (see n.51–53 *Oenotris finibus*); the long legacy of Aeneas (cf. 1.2, where the same adjective is used together with *Aeneadum*) had almost come to an end.

tecta is boldly used, meaning ‘city’ and thus the political entity that is Rome, rather than its material manifestation. Compare 1.571 *deflete fidem murosque ruentes*, where the crumbling walls of Saguntum also represent the political downfall of the city.

671–675 Moreover our Carthaginian foe erected a tomb for your dead body and sought glory by paying you the last respects.

The events to which Scipio refers are described at 10.558ff.

tum Possibly temporal (Hannibal buried Paulus after the defeat at Cannae outlined in the previous lines), but it has more force as a connective marker (‘moreover’); Paulus’ death was bad enough (even a calamity to the state; cf. n.710–713 *paene ... tecum traxisti* above), but Hannibal’s vanity in burying him added insult to injury (cf. Paulus’ reaction at 716).

**Sidonius** I.e. Carthaginian; see n.142–145 Sidonius ... ductor.

**laudemque tuo quasivit honore** The possessive *tuo* here replaces a genitive of object (*honore tui*, “the last respects to you”); cf. 467 *tuam [curam]*, *KS* 2.1.599. Scipio criticizes Hannibal; cf. 10.559 *hostilis leti iactabat honorem*, “he flaunted paying last respects to his dead enemy”, and the similar negative verdict on Hannibal’s burial of Gracchus at 12.478 *laudemque Libys rapiebat humandi* (cf. 12.473–474 *fāmam nomenque volentem mitificae mentis*). What was considered a humane and praiseworthy deed of Hannibal by other authors (cf. Luc. 7.799–800 *Poenus humator / consulis et Libyca succensae lampade Cannae*, which Caesar should have imitated at Pharsalus) is here condemned as easy glory seeking.

716–720
dumque audit lacrimans hostilia funera Paulus, ante oculos iam Flaminius, iam Gracchus et aegro absumptus Cannis stabat Servilius ore. appellare viros erat ardor et addere verba, sed raptabat amor priscos cognoscere manes.
And while Paulus learns in tears of his burial by the enemy, already Flaminius, Gracchus and Servilius with miserable face, killed at Cannae, stood before Scipio’s eyes.

For an interpretation of these tears, see Intr. 705–761.

‘burial by the enemy’, a surprising use of hostilis; it is used as an alternative for a genitivus auctoris in a few other instances (see TLL 6.3.3051.83–3052.13), but commonly only of ‘hostile’ acts. Cf. also n.714–715 for the possessive tuo instead of tui, and KS 2.1.209.

C. Flaminius was killed at the battle of lake Trasimene (5.655–658); Ti. Sempronius Gracchus was betrayed by his Lucanian hosts and slain in an ambush (12.475ff., Liv. 25.16); Cn. Servilius Geminus fell at Cannae while in command of the centre (10.222–225). These three shades are here brought to the fore to stress the dire situation for Rome—after Appius Claudius, P. Scipio and Paulus, these are the three other Roman consuls who had been killed in the war thus far during their (pro-)consulate (the fourth one, L. Postumius Albinus, had not yet entered office when he was killed by the Boii—his fate may be referred to at 482–483 [see n.]; the surviving ones were Ti. Sempronius Longus, C. Terentius Varro, M. Claudius Marcellus, Q. Fulvius Flaccus and the dictator Q. Fabius Maximus). It seems therefore of little importance that Flaminius is a controversial figure in the Punica (Kißel 1979: 171 n.26, Reitz 1982: 99) or that Gracchus’ role had been very limited (Spaltenstein)—Scipio and the reader are reminded how grave the Roman losses have been in terms of leadership, and how much Scipio has to avenge.

An almost identical list of consuls is found at 12.549–550 and 17.161 (both leave Servilius out), where they also represent Rome’s losses and, in the latter case, show Hannibal’s guilt.

The description of Servilius is more elaborate than that of the other two, indicating the place of his demise and his sad face. Cannae was the climax of Rome’s defeats and as such is mentioned by name, while aegro ... ore probably reflects its severity: as Spaltenstein suggests, Servilius mourns for Rome rather than himself.

He burned to address the men and talk with them, but he was carried away by his desire to know the ghosts of earlier men.

Scipio’s preference to meet earlier ghosts imitates Hom. Od. 11.565–567, where Odysseus does not press Aias for a conversation, but rather goes to see other shades (see Intr. 705–761). Silius adopts Homer’s sentence structure; compare Od. 11.566–567 ἀλλὰ μοι ἠθελε θυμός ... τῶν ἄλλων ψυχὰς ἱδέειν κατατεθνηώτων (“but [my] heart ... desired to see the ghosts of those others that are dead and gone”) and here sed raptabat amor ... cognoscere manes. In both texts the lines conclude the list of fellow combatants (in Homer: Agamemnon, Achilles, Aias; here: Scipio’s father, Paulus and the small catalogue of 717–718). Unlike Homer, Silius continues with the subset of military heroes (earlier ones, priscos), whereas Odysseus turns to ‘general’ mythological figures (‘of others’, τῶν ἄλλων).

These lines, rich in intertextuality, are also rich in sound, especially of A and O.

For the doubling of the grammatical structure, see below on raptabat amor ... cognoscere.

**addere verba** Not simply ‘speak’ (cf. OLD s.v. 13, TLL 1.588.13ff.); the sense ‘add’ seems retained in some way, either i) ‘add words to his address’ (appellare), i.e. ‘have a conversation with them’ or ii) ‘have more conversations’ (with his contemporaries).

**raptabat amor ... cognoscere** The use of the subject amor reflects Homer’s subject θυμὸς (see above), but the syntactical structure and diction echoes Verg. A. 2.10 sed si tantus amor casus cognoscere nostros; cf. also A. 3.298–299. For amor governing an inf., cf. also A. 6.134–135, 12.282, Stat. Theb. 5.428, 12.532 and Silv. 3.2.1. See also n.21–23 incumbere ... vigor.

The similar syntax of lines 719 and 720 (where in both cases a noun governs the infinitive) opposes the two conflicting desires (of speaking with the contemporary generals and of meeting other shades); the strong raptabat (‘sways’) indicates that the last desire had the upper hand.

**721–731**
nunc meritum saeva Brutum immortale securi nomen, nunc superos aequantem laude Camillum, nunc auro Curium non umquam cernit amicum.
ora Sibylla docet venientum et nomina pandit:
‘hic fraudes pacis Pyrrhumque a limine portae
deiecit visus orbis, tulit ille ruentem
Thybirdis in ripas regem solusque revulso
pone ferox ponte exclusit redeuntia regna.
si tibi dulce virum, primo qui foedera bello
Phoenicum pepigit, vidisse: hic inclitus ille
aequoreis victor cum classe Lutatius arvis.

**721–723** *Now he sees Brutus who earned immortal renown with his savage axe, now Camillus who equalled the gods in fame, now Curius who was never open to money.*

The next six shades, in two groups of three, belong to men who defended Rome from foreign threats, and who are as such models for Scipio. The first three put the interest of the state above their own and exemplify patriotism: Brutus repelled and opposed the Tarquinians, even if it meant having to execute his own sons who had sided with the enemy; Camillus saved Rome from the Gauls, although he had gone in exile before (cf. 7.557ff.); Curius refused to take bribes from the Samnites and subsequently defeated them. Scipio’s own moral choice will come in book 15, where he prefers Virtus over Voluptas.

**meritum saeva Brutum immortale securi nomen** An allusion to Vergil’s representation of Brutus at A. 6.819–823; there the saevas secures refer both to the consular fasces (819 consulis imperium; cf. saevas secures at Lucr. 3.996 and 5.1234) and to Brutus’ execution of his sons (820–821 natos ... ad poenam ... vocabit; cf. also A. 6.824–825 saevumque securi ... Torquatum, another father who executed his son). Vergil is ambivalent (823 vincet amor patriae laudumque immensa cupido) and Reitz (1982: 103) suggests that these mixed feelings about Brutus’ actions resonate here. While Silius’ immortale ... nomen picks up Vergil’s laudumque immensa cupido (by Scipio’s time, Brutus has got the glory he wanted), the phrase is more neutral than Vergil’s. Considering the nature of this small catalogue, Brutus’ execution of his sons here probably exemplifies unrestricted devotion to the nation.
superos aequantem laude The lesson to Scipio is: patriotism leads to fame, which sets you on par with the gods (also reflected in Brutus’ case through \textit{immortale nomen}). Virtus has a similar message in book 15, where she proclaims that those who follow her path will reach sublimity (15.101–102, after having said earlier that Scipio may enter the gate of heaven at 15.77–78). Notably, \textit{superos aequantem} echoes Ovid’s words on Augustus in his imperial majesty (\textit{Trist.} 4.8.52). The discussion whether Livy’s portrayal of Camillus was modelled on Augustus (or Augustus styled himself after Camillus) is still ongoing (a recent contribution is Gärtner 2008); Tipping (2010b: 124) notes that “it seems safe to conclude that [Livy’s Camillus] would have prompted a contemporary Roman audience to think of the first princeps.” Thus intertextuality with Ovid would support the notion that Scipio, by following Camillus as a model (see foll.n.), would be a proto-princeps; see Gen.intr. § 4.3.3.

\textit{superos aequare} is elsewhere only found at Sil. 1.611 \textit{aequantem superos virtute senatum}, also with a modifying ablative. The respectability of the senate, not yet tainted by \textit{voluptas}, matched the virtues of a Camillus. Cf. also 4.810 \textit{Hannibal aequatus superis} (being given the choice over life and death); Silius blurs the line between his poem’s heroes and the gods.

\textbf{Camillum} M. Furius Camillus defeated the Gallic army that had besieged Rome and had been bought off with gold (1.624–626), and persuaded the Romans not to move to Veii, but to rebuild their devastated city. For his actions he was called the ‘second founder of Rome’ (Liv. 5.49.7). Fabius compares himself to Camillus and his exile at 7.557ff., when he is about to save Minucius’ army, despite the actions of the senate and the people against him. Since the Gauls under Brennus serve as models for Hannibal in the epic (see n.79–81), Camillus as their conqueror is a fitting model for Scipio. The latter is explicitly compared to Romulus and Camillus in the last lines of the epic (17.651–652 \textit{salve, invicte parens, non concessure Quirino / laudibus ac meritis non concessure Camillo}), implicitly becoming Rome’s ‘third founder’ (a title otherwise given to Marius, cf. Plut. \textit{Marius} 27.5); other correspondences with Camillus are Scipio’s refusal to leave Rome and found an empire elsewhere (10.426ff.), and his voluntary exile (see nn.514b–515 and 517–518).

\textbf{auro ... non umquam ... amicum} A reference to Curius’ refusal to take bribes (see foll.n.) and to his frugal lifestyle in general. For this use of \textit{amicus} with an inanimate object in the dative case (‘lover of’, ‘well-disposed towards’), see \textit{TLL} 1.1904.6ff.

\textbf{Curium} M. Curius Dentatus was known for ending the Third Samnite war (290 BC) and for fighting Pyrrhus at Beneventum (275 BC), which eventually forced the Epirote king to leave Italy. Here the focus is probably on the Samnite war. According to a famous story (V.Max. 4.3.5) the Samnites sent envoys to Curius to bribe him; while they marvelled at his humble abode, he said in answer to their gifts that ‘he would rather reign over the rich than be rich himself’ and that ‘they could not defeat him in battle nor corrupt him with money’. The latter is also Ennius’ praise of Curius at \textit{Ann.} 456 (Skutsch) \textit{quem nemo ferro potuit superare nec auro}, which Silius picks up at 15.115, when Virtus promises to Scipio \textit{nec ferro mentem vincere nec auro} (cf. Marks 2005: 158 n.128); this shows that Curius with his incorruptibility figures as a model for Silius’ Scipio.

724 \textit{The Sibyl elucidates the faces of the arriving shades and reveals their names.}

\textbf{ora ... docet venientium} The Sibyl assumes Anchises’ role in the \textit{Aeneid}, when he shows his son the future Romans from a hill \textit{unde ... posset ... venientium discere vultus} (\textit{A.} 6.754–
With docet, she combines the tasks of Vergil’s Sibyl at A. 6.109 doceas iter et sacra ostia pandas (‘inform’; cf. 6.614) and of Anchises (‘instruct about’) at 6.759 te tua fata docebo and 891 Laurentisque docet populos; cf. also 6.723 ordine singula pandit (also with a plural neuter). For docere for seers, cf. also V.Fl. 3.377 (Mopsus) and 4.558 (Phineus).

This phrase marks the transition from an ‘Odyssean’ half of the Nekyia, in which the shades come to the hero, to an ‘Anchisean’ one, where the Sibyl points out ghosts of interest. See also An. 705–761.

nomina pandit Notably, the Sibyl presents the next two ghosts by a description rather than by name, and Lutatius’ name follows only at the end of 731. Does this phrase mean that she informs Scipio of their names outside of the text, or does it anticipate her identification of the men by their fame (also nomen) and the play on cognomina (see the foll.n.)?

725–728 This man, bereft of sight, rejected a deceptive peace and drove Pyrrhus away from our gate, that man withstood the king that assaulted the banks of the Tiber and while behind him the bridge was broken down, he singlehandedly ousted the returning rulers.

The second series of three Romans who successfully warded off a foreign enemy from Rome begins with Ap. Claudius Caecus, who opposed Pyrrhus’ peace overtures, and P. Horatius Cocles, who held the Pons Sublicius (until his fellow citizens had finished demolishing it behind him, revulso pone ... pone) against the army of Porsenna, who sought to reinstate the Tarquinians (redeuntia regna).

As his cognomen Caecus indicates, Claudius was blind. Silius uses the description visus orbus as a means to identify Caecus (cf. 466 pulcherrima, alluding to the cognomen Pulcher); it may, however, be a clever pun on cognomina if that of the next Roman hero is also taken into account: Claudius the Blind saved Rome from Pyrrhus, Horatius One-eye (Cocles; cf. Plin. Nat. 11.150 ab isdem qui altero lumine orbi nascendentur Coclices vocabantur) protected it from Porsenna. The two heroes are also connected through the metaphors a limine portae deiecit and exclusit (Reitz 1982: 105); see the note below. Note also the spondees and alliteration of P and R throughout these lines.

fraudes pacis Pyrrhumque A hendiadys, for ‘the treacherous peace about to be concluded with Pyrrhus’. After the costly battle at Heraclea in 280 BC, Pyrrhus sought a peace treaty with the Romans, having advanced to a few days distance from Rome. The senate was dissuaded from accepting the treaty by Claudius (Plut. Pyrrh. 18–19). Here, fraudes pacis suggests that Pyrrhus, whose position in Italy later proved to be weak, tried to trick the Romans with this treaty. In hindsight, Claudius’ speech saved them.

a limine portae A Vergilian line ending; in the Aeneid, limen portae is applied only to the gates of Troy (2.242 ipso in limine portae, 2.752 obscuraque limina portae, 3.351 Scaeaque amplector limina portae, of the New Troy in Buthrotum; cf. also 2.803); this is picked up by Silius at 13.73 Scaeaque ad limina portae. Pyrrhus’ fraudes should be compared to the Greek wooden horse (A. 2.264 doli); the gates of Rome (as the second Troy) are not entered by the enemy, unlike Troy’s. deicit connects Pyrrhus with Hannibal, who had been repelled in book 12 and who was also known for his fraudes (see n.738 fraudum genitor).

visus orbus The same collocation is used at 4.535 orbus partem visus and Stat. Theb. 1.74; orbus is more commonly used with luminis (in poetry cf. Ov. Met. 14.189, Ibis 260 and Sen. Oed. 197), and is used in an absolute sense at Apul. Met. 5.9.
tulit ‘withstood’; see OLD s.v. 19a. This passage is the only one cited in which a person is the object; ruentem ... regem should thus be read as ‘the king’s onslaught’, with ruentem as a dominant participle.

Thybridis Silius only uses the Greek name for the Tiber, which Vergil introduced (cf. e.g. A. 2.782). For Silius’ extensive use of such Greek names, usually also with Greek inflections, cf. in book 13 lines 30 Argyripae, 43 Ilion, 44 Amyclas, 48 Tydides (also 58 and 67), 72 Simoenta, 93 Trinacria, 201 Geryones, 321 Capyn, 385 Dictarchea, 400 Cymaeam (494 Cymes, 498 Cymaeo), 440 Cyclopas, 564 Phlegethon, 566 Cocytos, 571 Acheron, 575 Tisiphones, 588 Briareus, 699 Pyrenes, 765 Gangen, 802 Atridas. For the use of Greek declensions for Greek nouns in Latin poetry, see Housman (Classical Papers, eds. Diggle / Goodyear 1972: 817–839).

solus According to a well-known version of the story at Liv. 2.10, Horatius Cocles was at first helped by two other men (Sp. Larcius and T. Herminius) and defended the bridge alone when the other Romans had crossed the Sulpician bridge and his two comrades had retreated. Silius’ omission of the other two aligns well with the Punica’s heroes being presented as uni viri, able to defend a nation by themselves (see n.707–709 multum uno maiora viro).

revulso pone ... ponte Cf. Vergil’s description of Cocles at A. 8.650 pontem auderet ... vellere. Silius’ rendering follows historiography more literally, with Cocles defending while others demolish the bridge.

redeuntia regna Porsenna laid siege to Rome to return power to the Tarquinians. The diction here echoes Luc. 5.207 regnaque ad uliores iterum redeuntia Brutos, of Caesar, but alluding to the same Tarquinians.

729–731 If it pleases you to see the man who in the first war against the Punics arranged a treaty: here is he, Lutatius, victorious with his fleet in the fields of the sea.

The last Roman war leader, Lutatius, is another prime model for Scipio, as the victor of the first Punic war. With the new Roman fleet, Lutatius blockaded the Carthaginian ports on Sicily, cutting off Hamilcar and his men from Carthage. Hanno sailed with a fleet to counter the Romans, but the latter triumphed at the Aegates islands. Without access to the sea, Hamilcar was then forced to negotiate a peace treaty (Plb. 1.62, Nep. Ham. 1).

The presentation of Lutatius sets the stage for his Carthaginian opponent, Hamilcar. The poet links Lutatius and Hamilcar through the use of similar clauses (729 si tibi dulce, 732 si studium), only loosely connected to the main clause, and effects the transition to the conversation with a third use of this grammatical structure (734 si ... cordi est).

Line 731 has a chiastic structure, both syntactically and with the alliteration of aequeiris ... arvis and of cum classe, possibly including victor ... Lutatius. The stylized line serves to end the list of Roman heroes.

si tibi dulce For dulce est as a synonym for placet, see TLL 5.1.2193.39ff. (with a dative 2193.50–55 and 67–69).

foedera ... pepigit ‘arranged a treaty’; for pango of foedera, cf. Verg. A. 10.902 nec te cum meus haec pepigit mihi foedera Laurus (‘deal’, i.e. life for Mezentius) and of pacem, cf. Liv. 38.48.10 and 11. Scipio picks these words up at 738–739 (talia ... sunt foedera vobis? haec ... pepigisti?) and throws them in Hamilcar’s face for his not having respected this treaty.
**hic inclitus ille** Cf. *A.* 6.479–480 *hic inclitus armis / Parthenopaeus,* in Vergil’s catalogue of deceased warriors. *hic* is deictic, similar to its counterpart *illa* at 733; the *ille* here at 730 is recognitional (“that victor we all know, Lutatius”; cf. *inclitus*).

**aequoreis ... arvis** *arvis* is the convincing conjecture by Damsté for *armis* in ω; the scholar adduces Verg. *A.* 8.695 *arva ... Neptunia,* of the sea battle at Actium. Cf. for ‘watery’ *arva* also Sil. 12.452 and Sedul. *carm.pasch.* 3.227. Silius also uses *aequoreus* when referring to Lutatius’ victory at sea at 6.663 *aequoreum iuxta decus et navale tropaeum*; cf. also 14.32 *tropaeis,* 15.259 *certaminis,* Luc. 6.422 *triumphos,* all of sea battles.

If the conjecture is correct, this line would suggest a parallel between the end of the first Punic war and the battle of Actium, which is in line with Silius’ allusions to Actium elsewhere; see also n.740–743 *fervet gens Itala Marte barbarico* and Gen.intr. § 4.3.3.

732–737

si studium et saevam cognoscere Hamilcaris umbram:
illa est (cerne procul) cui frons nec morte remissa
irarum servat rabiem. si iungere cordi est
colloquium, sine gustato det sanguine vocem.’ 735
atque ubi permissum et sitiens se implevit imago,
sic prior increpitat non miti Scipio vultu:

732–734a *If it is your desire also to know the savage shade of Hamilcar: there it is (look afar), whose brow, not relaxed in death, retains its mad anger.*

The Sibyl now presents Hamilcar, the father of Hannibal, to Scipio. For a discussion of the correspondences and differences with Homer’s Aias and Vergil’s Dido, see Intr. 705–

**studium** For the construction with an infinitive, cf. Verg. *G.* 1.21, *OLD s.v.* 3b; see also n.719–720 *raptabat amor ... cognoscere*.

**saevam ... umbram** *saevam* is either to be taken with *Hamilcaris* by enallage, or as an indication that the man was savage even in death, which is then elaborated in the next lines. This follows the construction in Homer, where κεχολωμένη (‘wrathful’; *Od.* 11.544) is nominative and qualifies Aias’ ghost (ψυχὴ), rather than the name in the genitive.

**cognoscere** For the educational aspect implied, see n.503–504 *cognoscere cordi est.*

**cerne procul** Possibly a reminiscence of Aias’ shade standing apart (*Od.* 11.544 νόσφιν ἀφεστήκει) and certainly counterbalancing *hic* (730) of Lutatius. By contrast, Vergil’s Aeneas only recognizes Dido when he stands next to her (*A.* 6.452 *ut primum iuxta stetit*).

**frons nec morte remissa** Having a ‘relaxed brow’, i.e. being relaxed (cf. Sen. *Dial.* 11.8.4, *Ep.* 23.3, Plin. *Ep.* 2.5.5), is the opposite of having ‘a stern brow’, i.e. being grave (Martial asks Silius in his letter to him to read his witty poems nec torva ... fronte, sed remissa). Hamilcar thus retains the same ardent hatred for the Romans in death that he had in life. *nec morte* is a reminiscence of *Od.* 11.553–554 οὐκ ἄρ’ ἐμελλές / οὐδὲ θανὼν λήσεσθαι ἐμοὶ χόλου (“were you then not even in death to forget your wrath against me [...]?”); while Odysseus phrases it as a question, trying to reconcile Aias, the Sibyl’s flat statement makes clear that no such reconcilement is possible, and Scipio does not seek it.

**irarum servat rabiem** A reminiscence of the epic’s proem, lines 1.17–18 *tantarum causas irarum odiumque perenni servatum studio,* and of the first introduction of Hamilcar at 1.70–71 *hanc rabiem ... addiderat puero patrius furor.* We are reminded that the rift
between Rome and Carthage is eternal; if Dido’s wrath lasts beyond the grave, so does Hamilcar’s.

734b–735 If you want to have a conversation, allow him to gain speech by drinking the blood.

The diction of this sentence is to be compared with 446–448: coniungere dicta ~ iungere ... colloquium; sanguine non tacto ~ gustato sanguine; effundere voces ~ det vocem.

iungere ... colloquium While colloquium does occur in the lower poetic genres (cf. Prop. 4.11.32, Ov. Her. 21.18, Stat. Silv. 1.2.50, 2.1.56, 3.2.135), in epic it is found only here, at 12.476 and at Ilias 564.

cordi est For the expression cordi esse with infinitive, see n.503–504 cognoscere cordi est.

det vocem ‘speak’; the expression (otherwise meaning ‘grant speech’) was first used in this sense by Vergil (A. 7.560 talis dederat Saturnia voces, 11.534–535, 11.840) and later at Ov. Met. 9.584 (cf. with word play Ov. Her. 21.141), Sen. Thy. 1036, Med. 802, V.Fl. 4.49, 7.412, Apul. Met. 7.25. Noteworthy in this context of nekyia is Luc. 6.774, where Erictho commands the reanimated corpse to speak (da vocem qua mecum fata loquantur).

736–737 And when permission had been granted and the thirsty ghost had sated itself, Scipio thus reproached him, not mild in aspect.

Juhnke (1972: 289) observes that line 737 is an exact reversal of Odysseus’ address to Aias in Od. 11.552 τὸν μὲν ἐγὼν ἐπέεσσι προσηύδων μειλιχίοισι, “to him I spoke with winning words” (cf. also Verg. A. 6.455 dulcique adfatus amore est); Scipio is not at all interested in reconciliation. For the correspondences and contrasts with Homer’s scene, see Intr. 705–761.

As usual in this Nekyia, the blood drinking is presented in a sub clause; see An. 494–516.

permissum For Silius’ use of impersonal constructions for verbs of ‘forbid’, ‘grant’, see n.155–156a praevetitum.

sitiens This is the last mention of a ghost drinking the blood in this Nekyia, making this participle the more notable. Perhaps it merely hints at the notion that blood is the only substance that ghosts will drink, after which they ‘thirst’, but a better (because less general) interpretation is that Hamilcar was eager to speak to Scipio, and thus eager to drink the blood (another contrast with Aias, who remains at a distance). We are, however, also uncomfortably reminded of Silius’ first characterisation of Hamilcar’s son Hannibal at 1.59–60 penitusque medullis sanguinis humani flagrat sitis, “and a thirst for human blood burned in his inmost heart.”

se implevit ‘took his fill’; the expression is used for eating and drinking at Cels. 1.proem., 1.2, 1.3, Mela 3.53 and Sen. Dial. 7.6.1; cf. the metaphorical use at 9.527 quantisque furens se caedibus implet (of Mars). The verb is a bit of an oxymoron with imago, playing on the incorporeity of the shade that regains parts of its corporality (including speech) by drinking.

sic prior See n.621–623b sic iuvenis prior.

increpitat A favourite verb of Silius, who uses it 24 times (cf. 13.7), against 10 in Statius, 5 in Vergil, 3 in Valerius Flaccus and a handful of instances in other authors.

non miti ... vultu Scipio is normally characterized as having a more benign aspect; cf. 8.559–560 flagrabant lumina miti adspectu and 16.281 miti reiecit munera vultu. The
phrase likens him to Jupiter, to whom the epithet *mitis* is applied three times (7.239, 9.542, 12.666; cf. also 4.795); Scipio thus shows his divine heritage (cf. 615ff.) by being wrathful towards his enemies and benign to everyone else. Compare also Scipio’s ‘unclouded [i.e. Jupiter-like] brow’ at 16.233 *vultuque sereno*.

Delz prints the mss. reading *mitis*; in that case, *mitis* goes with an *ablativus limitationis* (*vultu*), which is indeed possible (cf. Stat. Theb. 6.291–292 *vultu mitior adstat / Aegyptus* and *TLL* 8.1159.8–13; cf. also with *acc. lim.* Stat. Silv. 4.6.55–56 *mitis vultus*). The passages cited above suggest, however, that this is not Silius’ practice, and that we should read *miti ... vultu*; another, stronger argument for that reading is that both in the Homeric and Vergilian model for this line the *verbum dicendi* is accompanied by a modifying substantive and adjective in ablative case, which are, as here, separated by another word (*Od.* 11.552 ἐπέεσσε προσηύδων μειλιχίοισιν; *Verg.* A. 6.455 dulcique adfatus amore est). The corruption is easily explained by the s- (of Scipio) following *miti*.

738–743

‘taliane, o fraudum genitor, sunt foedera vobis? aut haec Siciania pepigisti captus in ora? bella tuus toto natus contra omnia pacta

exercet Latio et perruptis molibus Alpes eluctatus adest, fervet gens Italae Marte barbarico, et refluent obstructi stragib us amnes.’

738–739 Such, begetter of deceit, are treaties to you? Or was it this that you arranged when you were caught on Sicily’s coast?

Scipio refers to the peace treaty which ended the first Punic war and picks up the Sibyl’s words on the general at the Roman side of the negotiating table, Lutatius (730 *primo qui foedera bello Phoenicum pepigit*), thus stressing that both parties agreed to the same terms, which subsequently the Carthaginians did not honour.

The scene with Hamilcar, the implacable enemy, is to be compared with Aeneas’ meeting with Dido (see Intr. 705–761). In her last words to Aeneas in life, Dido had called him *perfide* (*A.* 4.305); in the *Punica*, this is picked up at 8.169 and 8.176 (a flashback to the age of Aeneas), where Dido warns Anna against her treacherous hosts in Italy. In the age of the *Punica*’s narrative, the roles are reversed; the Carthaginians, not the descendants of Aeneas, are now identified by *perfidia* and *fraudes*. Aeneas wishes to reconcile Dido during their infernal meeting, but Scipio has no such intention; the conversation is rather a presentation of the two opposing perspectives of the warring parties (cf. Reitz 1982: 107) and, indirectly, a denunciation of Hannibal’s position (see Intr. 705–761).

talia I.e. ‘so easily broken’, ‘worth so little’.

fraudum genitor ‘father of lies’ (Duff), referring to the peace treaty which turned out to be a ‘false oath’ (*6.696 irrita pacta*) and an exponent of the general *perfidia* of Carthage (the *fraudum domus*, 6.479) which Silius so often comments upon (cf. e.g. 1.5–6 *sacri ... perfida pacti gens Cadmea*; see also n.99–103). If genitor is taken slightly more literally, Scipio equals Hannibal to *fraudes* (cf. Spaltenstein) and certainly several of Hannibal’s actions are called *fraus* (cf. 1.484, 5.43, 7.134, 7.153, 7.260, 7.331, 7.403, 12.52, 12.737 and also 7.26, Fabius proof against every *fraus*); for the Carthaginians and their allies cf.
also 1.219, 6.326, 6.479, 6.542, 7.654 (cf. 12.352). The identification of Carthage with deception also shows in the distribution of the word dolus (Hannibal 13 instances, Carthage in general 6); for fraudes or doli are used against Carthage only in a few cases (7.269, 15.327, 15.601, 17.559; the Romans distance themselves from a compatriot using doli at 12.302).

For genitor, cf. Plin. Nat. 15.19 Graeci, vitiorum omnium genitores, Rufin. hist. 2.14.1 talium malorum patrem, 5.28.6 pater ... impietatis and of gods 3.126 bellorum genitor (Mars), Mart. 8.2.1 Fastorum genitor parensque Ianus, Aug. mund. 31 genitorem virtutum (God).

vobis I.e. not only Hamilcar and Hannibal, but the whole Carthaginian race (cf. Tipping 2010b: 64 n.31); compare the programmatic faithlessness of Carthage at 1.8–11 and passim.

Sicania ... captus in ora Spaltenstein notes that this does not do justice to Hamilcar, since he was not physically caught by the Romans and still held Eryx (and even negotiated an unopposed withdrawal according to Nep. Ham. 1); still, the Roman naval supremacy after the battle at the Aegates islands meant that the Carthaginians were ‘trapped’ on Sicily, which led to their surrender (for the background see n.729–731).

In antiquity, the Sicani were believed to be the first settlers of Sicily, giving it the name Sicania (Thuc. 6.2.3; cf. also RE 2A.2.2459.6ff.). Vergil’s use of Sicania and its inhabitants Sicani as synonyms for Sicily and Sicilians (cf. A. 1.557 Sicaniæ and Ecl. 10.4 Sicanos) was adopted by most later poets, but especially Silius (who uses words with the root Sican-16 times). Sicānīus is the most common form in hexametric poetry (also in [Sen.] Her.O. 1361) and used eight times by Silius (1.35, 2.334, 3.243, 4.502, 14.4, 14.237, 14.492 and here); Vergil’s variant Sicānus, always at the end of the line, is rare in later epic poetry (only Stat. Theb. 4.239, but more often in other metres: Prop. 1.16.29, Ov. Her. 15.57, Hor. Epod. 17.32), with the notable exception of Silius (8.335, 14.34, 14.111, 14.291, 15.325), who also has Sicānus (10.312, 14.258, 16.216; cf. Ov. Ib. 598 Sicānīs) in other metrical positions.

740–743 Your son wages war against the whole of Latium in defiance of all pacts and after having struggled through the Alps by smashing the obstacles he is now present, the Italian people seethes with barbarian war, and the rivers, obstructed by slaughter, stream back.

Silius seems to have designed Scipio’s indignant speech to make Hamilcar happy, for the Roman repeats a number of elements from Hannibal’s oath before his father at 1.116ff.: non superi mihi, non Martem cohibentia pacta, non celsae obstiterint Alpes Tarpeiaque saxa. hanc mentem iuro nostri per numina Martis, per manes, regina, tuos. “The gods shall not stop my career, nor the treaty that bars the sword, neither the lofty Alps nor the Tarpeian rock. I swear to this purpose by the divinity of our native god of war, and by the shade of Elissa.”

Hannibal is not restrained by treaties (contra omnia pacta) nor by the Alps (Alpes eluctatus) and now wages his barbarian war in Italy; Marte barbarico (i.e. not a Roman one) picks up nostri ... Martis. His breaking of the peace treaty, crossing of the Alps and choking the rivers are all important motifs in the Punica; see the respective notes below. It is puzzling why Spaltenstein reads these words as praise after 738–739; Scipio continues his reproach.
bella ... toto ... exercet Latio TLL 5.2.1375.30 compares this use of *exerceo* to Luc. 9.453–454 *Aeoliam rabiem totis exercet harenis* (of Auster), which Silius seems to imitate at 9.524 *Romuleis exercet proelia turmis ... furor* (of the wind Vulturum); for *bellum* as its object, cf. also 2.40 *Martem* (of Hannibal’s soldiers), Sen. *Dial.* 10.7.1 *odia exercentes iniusta vel bella*, Tac. *Ann.* 12.32.2, Juv. 15.60 *puerilis ... acies*. Considering the use of the dative in the first two passages cited, *toto ... Latio* is probably dative as well and governed by *exercet* (‘wages war against’, ‘inflicts war upon’) rather than an ablative of place. Cf. also 745 *Latinis* with *n.*

contra omnia pacta I.e. the treaty ending the first Punic war (6.696 *irrita pacta*) which also protected Saguntum (cf. e.g. 1.294, 1.692–693, 2.274). In Silius’ representation, Hannibal’s hatred of Rome stems from this treaty and he seeks to undo it (1.60–62, 1.106ff., 11.527–528); his disregard for treaties recurs throughout the epic, and he even suggests that his own son do the same if he might fail (3.84–86). That the breaking of the treaty is an important motif is reflected by its mention in the proem (1.5, 1.8–10); cf. books 1 and 2 *passim*, 4.185, 4.788, 6.692, 11.5, 11.160, 11.559, 12.679, 17.347–349. Several other adversaries of Rome are also pact-breakers (Capua 13.100, Syracuse 14.97 [cf. 14.82–83], Syphax 17.67ff., Philip of Macedon 17.420). See also n.99–103 and n.284–286a for Capua’s pact-breaking.

*perruptis molibus Alpes eluctatus* Hannibal’s crossing of the Alps, described at 3.477–556, 630–646. *perruptis* may refer specifically to 3.640ff., where Hannibal’s army breaks obstructing rocks (3.643 *mole*) with fire, thus opening the way to Italy. A more general interpretation is also allowed, since this crossing is often presented as a breach, with the Alps as the walls of Italy; cf. 4.818 *patent Alpes*, 5.160 *perfractas Alpes*, 11.135 *ruperit Alpes*, 12.15 *ruptis Alpibus*, 12.696 *exaequare Alpes*. This is part of the greater motif of the *moenia Romae*; see von Albrecht 1964: 26, and Hannibal’s comparison of the Alps to Rome’s walls at 3.509–510. The reproach implied in Scipio’s words seems to be that Hannibal has crossed (and thus shattered) a sacred barrier, previously untrodden by all mortals but the demigod Hercules (cf. 1.546); Hannibal’s climbing the Alps is akin to Gigantomachy (cf. the reference to Ossa and Pelion at 3.495).

As one of Hannibal’s main accomplishments, the crossing of the Alps is a recurrent *topos* and features in virtually all lists of his deeds; cf. 1.65, 1.546, 4.63–66, 5.160, 6.106, 6.703–704, 9.187, 11.135, 12.15, 12.70–71, 12.513, 12.696, 15.529, 17.318–319, 17.500–502 (see also Asso 2010: 185 n.23 for a full list of references within the *Punica*).

For a comparable use of *eluctor* (‘overcome by hardship’), cf. Tac. *Agr.* 17 *super virtutem hostium locorum quoque difficillates eluctatus*. The verb is found in other poetry (*TLL* 5.2.427.58ff.), but not with an object.

eluctatus adest Cf. Turnus at Verg. *A.* 9.51 *improvisus adest* (metrically equivalent); just as Turnus arrived unexpectedly early at the Trojan camp, Hannibal surprised the Romans by taking the unusual route through the Alps and doing so at high speed.

*fervet gens Itala Marte barbarico* Cf. Verg. *A.* 8.676–677 *totumque instructo Marte videres fervere Leucaten* (cf. also here 740–741 *toto ... Latio*), the second connection between the Punic wars and Vergil’s account of the battle of Actium in a few lines, the first being *aequoreis ... arvis* at 731 (see n.). This suggests that Scipio’s victory over Hannibal which saved Italy in this war should be compared to Octavian’s conquest over Mark
Notes to 705–761

Antony which ended the civil wars and heralded the empire; for Scipio as the predecessor (or perhaps rather parallel) of Augustus, see Intr. 850b–895.

The expression ‘seethe with war/battle’ is only found in Verg. l.c. and Silius (cf. 1.456–457 fervere partem diversam Marte infausto, 14.559 perfusum bello fervet mare; cf. also 6.316–317 multusque per arva / fervebat Mavors); for this use of ferreo of places (here, the people seem to represent the nation Italia as a whole), see TLL 6.1.593.73ff.

For gens Itala, see n.658–660; as noted there, the phrase typifies the Romans as the descendants of Aeneas, which is apt, considering the connection between this passage and Hannibal’s oath in the temple of Dido in book 1 (see above).

refluunt obstructi stragibus amnes A joint reference to all the great battles in Italy, at the Ticinus, Trebia, lake Trasimene and Aufidus (Cannae). The topos of a river being obstructed by carnage goes back to Hom. II. 21.219–220 (the complaint of the river god Skamandros), imitated by Statius at Theb. 9.436–437 stipatus caedibus artas / in freta quaero vias (Ismenus). Silius outbids Homer at 4.665 caede ... stagna alta rubent retroque feruntur (spoken by the river Trebia) as his river is not only blocked, but even flows back; cf. (also of Trebia) 1.47–48 stipantibus armis corporisque virum retro fluat. Silius is fond of the topos; cf. the more traditional instances at 1.45–46, 6.707–708, 11.137–138, 15.767–768 (sim. also 8.668ff.).

A river flowing backwards was traditionally a prime example of an adynaton (Prop. 3.19.6, Ov. Her. 5.30–31, Met. 13.324, Pont. 4.5.43, Trist. 1.8.1–2), and as such brought about by magic (Ov. Met. 7.199–200, by song at Ov. Am. 2.1.26). Here, obstructi suggests that the cause is physical (there is no other way to go); elsewhere, Silius lets the water ‘retreat in horror’ (cf. 4.443–444, 5.330–331; cf. Verg. A. 8.240, 9.124–125, 11.405).

744–751

post quae Poenus ait: ‘decimum modo coeperat annum excessisse puer, nostro cum bella Latinis concepit iussu, licitum nec fallere divos iuratos patri. quod si Laurentia vastat nunc igni regna et Phrygias res vertere temptat, o pietas, o sancta fides, o vera propago! atque utinam amissum reparet decus!’ inde citato celsus abit gressu, maiorque recessit imago.

744–747a Hereupon the Carthaginian says: ‘The boy had just begun to grow out of his tenth year, when he took up the war against the Latins on my command, and he is not allowed to break the oath sworn by the gods before his father.

After the reminiscences in Scipio’s speech, Hamilcar explicitly alludes to Hannibal’s oath in the temple of Dido (1.81ff.); his recollection includes a number of verbal echoes. For the paradox in these lines (Hannibal’s vow implies breaking other oaths), see Intr. 705–761.

post quae Only here a poetic formula for ‘in response’; cf. only Hor. Ep. 2.2.39 post haec.

decimum ... annum As coeperat ... excessisse (‘starting to leave his tenth year behind’) suggests, Hannibal almost celebrated his tenth birthday and thus still was nine at the time.
Silius follows the tradition in Polybius (3.11) and Livy (21.1.4), who both state that Hannibal took this oath when he was nine years old.

**excessisse excedo** with a temporal object usually means ‘exceed’, ‘be older than’ (*TLL 5.2.1208.82ff.* *transgredi*, e.g. Colum. 6.21, Plin. *Nat.* 7.28–30, 22.114), which is awkward here with coeperat. In sense (but not in construction), our phrase is more comparable with the intransitive use of *excedo* (‘grow out of’; *TLL 5.2.126.69ff.*); cf. Pl. *Bacch.* 148 *iam excessit mi aetas ex magisterio tuo*, Merc. 61 *ex ephebis*; cf. also the transitive use at 14.493 *aevō ... nondum excessisset ephebos*.

**nostro ... iussu** Cf. 1.99 *patri iussu* and here 747 *patri*.

**bella Latinis concepit** Hannibal has followed Hamilcar’s admonishment at 1.109 *age, conceipe bella*. For *concipio* in this sense (‘take up’, ‘declare’), see *TLL 4.55.58ff.*, Var. *L.* 5.86; here it has the added notion of ‘take over’, ‘adopt’ (from his father) or even ‘make part of himself’ (cf. 1.38 *deae cunctas sibi ... induit iras*). *Latinis* is probably a dative, by analogy with *bellare + dat.*; cf. 16.564 *laetus bellare Latinis*, Stat. *Theb.* 8.505, *KS 2.1.319* (Dativ bei Verben des Streitens und Kämpfens).

**licitum** For the neuter past participle, see n.155–156a *praevetitum*.

**fallere divos iuratos patri** There are two possible explanations for the dative *patri*. The verb *iurare* may have an object in the accusative (the subject in a passive construction) signifying the substance of the vow; the dative may indicate the person (or thing) in whose presence or to whom the vow is made (cf. e.g. 3.83 *cineri iuret patrio Laurentia bella*, *TLL 7.2.676.12ff.*). The object in the accusative may also be the entity by which the vow is made, e.g. the gods, as here; in a passive construction, this type is commonly accompanied by a *dativus auctoris*. This is also Duff’s interpretation here for *iuratos patri* (“sworn by his father”). But it is not Hamilcar’s vow which Hannibal upholds so diligently, but his own (cf. Håkanson); the multiple references to the oath scene in book 1 (see above and n.740–743) strongly suggest that Hamilcar here recollects the vow which Hannibal made by the gods in his own presence. (These *divos* are Carthage’s ‘native Mars’, 1.118–119 *nostri ... Martis*, and the ghost of Dido, but will also include the gods of the underworld; cf. 1.93–94, 1.119–120.) The construction with *iurare* here is therefore novel, combining the different constructions outlined above: ‘swear by the gods (*divos*, acc.) before his father (*patri*, dat.)’; cf. perhaps [Tib.] 3.19.15 *hoc tibi sancta tuae Iunonis numina iuro* (which also has another object, *hoc*, the vow itself).


**747b–749 But if he now ravages the Laurentian realm with fire and seeks to overthrow the Phrygian state, o duty, o sacred faithfulness, o true descendant!**

These lines contain another set of allusions to the oath scene in book 1. Of the various names by which Hamilcar there referred to the Romans (1.106 *gens recidiva Phrygum*, 1.110 *Laurentibus*, 1.111 *pubes Tyrrhena* and 1.112 *Latiae ... matres*) two recur here; cf. *Laurentia ... regna* and *Phrygias res*. At 748, *igni* echoes 1.115 *ferro ignique sequar*, itself an allusion to Verg. *A.* 4.625–626 *ulator qui face Dardanios ferroque sequare colonos*. The same imagery is used for Scipio at 16.151–153 *ille tibi, qui iam gemino Laurentia lustro possedit regna ..., in Libyam flammis ferroque trahendus*. 

399
Laurentia The word carries a notion of antiquity, referring to the days of Aeneas (see below on Phrygias res vertere temptat); the same connotation is present at 1.659, 1.669, 8.28, 8.68, 8.357, 8.597, 12.706, 13.60 and 13.65. The name occurs both in Hamilcar’s exhortation at 1.109–110 and in Hannibal’s instruction that his son should swear a similar oath in case of his own death at 3.83 cineri iuret patrio Laurentia bella.

vastat ... igni The expression ferro ignique vastare is common in Roman historiography and other prose genres; cf. Liv. 3.68.1, 7.30.15, 8.1.7, 10.12.8, 23.41.13, 31.7.13, Vell. 2.110.6, Curt. 3.4.3, V.Max. 5.6.1, 7.3.8 (ext.), Tac. Ann. 14.38.2, [Quint.] Decl. 3.13, Flor. Epit. 1.15.2, 3.18.11; cf. also Cic. Harus. 15. Our passage is the only one which omits ferro.

Phrygias res vertere temptat An adaptation of Verg. A. 10.88–89 nosne ... Phrygiae res vertere fundo / conamur?, where Juno defends her aggression against the Trojans by blaming Paris. In the Punica, the goddess is still hostile to the descendants of Aeneas, and Hannibal, by trying to overthrow the state of the Trojans, is doing her work (cf. 1.26–55). In these seven lines (744–751), Silius interweaves the various causes of the war—Juno’s enmity towards the Trojans, Dido’s curse and Hamilcar’s own hatred after the defeat in the First Punic War.

The names Laurentia and Phrygias are also suggestive of another passage. At 12.706, Juno opened Hannibal’s eyes when he was besieging Rome; he was not fighting Phrygio ... Laurentive colono (cf. Verg. A. 4.626 cited above), but the gods. Juno’s and Hannibal’s actions are ultimately fruitless.

O pietas, o sancta fides Cf. Verg. A. 6.878–879 heu pietas, heu prisca fides invictaque bello / dextera!, on the younger Marcellus (Spaltenstein, Reitz 1982: 108), and Statius’ imitations with added irony at Theb. 2.462 haec pietas, haec magna fides! (on Eteocles) and 5.627 pietas haec magna fidesque! (Hypsipyle, blaming herself for the death of Opheltes); for the word order cf. also Theb. 7.217 et pietas et laesa fides. Here, there is also irony, but it is dramatic irony, as Hamilcar surely does not intend it; seeing the values that are characteristic of the Romans here being applied to their enemy, the champion of perfidy, should alert the reader to the paradox here, especially since Statius had given the phrase an ironical overtone. See the discussion in Intr. 705–761.

For sancta fides, cf. 2.479–480 sanctae / ... Fidei and 13.282 sacra Fides, of the goddess that opposes Hannibal and his allies for their pact-breaking. Although Hamilcar attaches religious piety to his son’s deeds with sancta, we are reminded that Fides herself judged otherwise. The epithet is fairly common with fides (cf. e.g. Catul. 76.3, Pub. Sent. U.9, Cic. Ver. 3.6), but we may compare Verg. A. 7.365 quid tua sancta fides?, where Amata accuses Latinus of not keeping his word to Turnus. In both epics the tension arises from the fact that the sancta fides to a human conflicts with the will of the gods, and while Latinus is justified in not keeping it, Hannibal is reprehensible because he does remain faithful to his oath.

O vera propago Hannibal is truly Hamilcar’s son because he inherited his father’s hatred of Rome and is fulfilling his father’s dreams. Yet by asserting this, Hamilcar also implicitly marks him as the son of a mortal, who is therefore no match for Scipio. Klaassen (2010: 124) contrasts this phrase with Mars’ hail of Scipio at 4.476 vera Iovis proles (applied to Hercules at A. 8.391), and Aeneas’ similar title in Vergil (A. 6.322 deum
certissima proles), which Silius imitates at 767–768 for Alexander. Note also that our phrase goes back to Ovid’s *Met.* 2.38–39 *pignora da, genitor, per quae tua vera propago / credar*, of Phaethon, son of Phoebus (cf. V.Fl. 5.125–126, of the Amazons, children of Mars); the link with Phaethon, the *imago* of the incompetent ruler, reflects badly upon Hannibal (his command will be disastrous to Carthage). Hamilcar does his son little service by stressing his parentage.

750a *And may he regain our lost glory!*’

This *amissum decus* is the loss of Carthage’s power after the defeat in the first Punic war, when Sicily and Sardinia went to the Romans and the city was obliged to pay tribute. This disgrace caused Hamilcar’s hatred of Rome and motivated him to have Hannibal swear his oath: he must *dedecus id patriae ... depellere* (1.108) if his father himself could not do it. Hannibal himself is as much obsessed by removing this stain (cf. 1.61–62 *avet Aegates abolere, parentum dedecus*) and the disgrace of later failures (12.205–206, 12.282–283, 13.16–17). Cf. also 12.403–404 for a Carthaginian ally wishing to wipe out the blot of defeat. The theme is present with the Romans as well, but to a much lesser extent; cf. 7.710–711 and 13.99.

Even with this last wish, Hamilcar is at variance with the programme of the narrator, who declared in the proem that he would sing the *decus ... laborum / antiquae Hesperiae* (1.3–4).

750b–751 *Then he leaves with quickened step and his head held high, and his shade has gone back the greater.*

For *maiorque recessit imago* as a concluding remark in past tense, see An. 705–761 fn.28.

*citato ... gressu* Cf. 445–446 *gressus ... citatos*; like there, the quickened step is a sign of eagerness and joy. For the allusion to Achilles at Hom. *Od.* 11.538–539, see Intr. 705–761.

*maior ... imago* Spaltenstein correctly interprets *maior quam venerat*, a complement to *celsus*, for which he adduces 15.738–739 *celsus ... ibat consul ovans, maior maiorque videri*. Reitz (1982: 109; cf. Watt 1988: 181), thinking of the traditional greater stature of gods and ghosts, compares *A.* 2.772 *nota maior imago* (with Austin’s n.) and Virtus and Voluptas at 15.21, but such descriptive information would add little here at the end of the scene, as she notes; still, her suggestion that Silius has given the traditional formula a new nuance is worth considering.

752–754

exin designat vates, qui iura sub armis
poscenti dederint populo primique petitas
miscuerint Italis Piraeo litore leges.

752–754 *Then the prophetess points out the men who had given a constitution to the people that was demanding it in arms and who were the first to join laws sought from the Piraean shore to Italian ones.*

These lines refer to the *decemviri*, the men who had drawn up the laws of the Twelve tables following demands by a tribune of the plebs (*poscenti ... populo*). Silius here follows
Livy’s account, in which three of these men were sent to Athens (Piraeo litore) to learn about the laws of Solon and the institutions of other Greek states (Liv. 3.31.8).

The lawgivers are the second group of shades that had been ‘announced’ in the list of the ten gates of the underworld; see An. 705–761. The mention of Athens marks the transition to ghosts from the Greek world (Reitz 1982: 110, Ripoll 1998b: 37). The diction of 753–754 also subtly anticipates the theme of this next passage. Sense requires that primi goes with iura dederint (these were the first written laws of Rome; when read literally, the text wrongly implies that later laws were also based upon Greek models); the formulation as it stands, however, is suggestive of the primus ego motif, the various claims of Roman poets to be the first to bring their respective form of Greek poetry to Italy. These claims are generally characterized by i) primus (or similar) in nominative case; ii) a Greek name, often geographical; iii) in many cases a form of Italus. Cf. e.g. Lucr. 1.117–119 Ennius ... qui primus ... detulit ex Helicone ... coronam, per gentis Italos hominum quae clara clueret (cf. Enn. Ann. 206ff.), Verg. Ecl. 6.1–2 prima Syracosio dignata est ludere versu / nostra ... Thalia, G. 2.176 Ascræaumeque cano Romana per oppida carmen, Prop. 3.1.3–4 primus ego ... Ital per Graios orgia ferre choros, Hor. Carm. 3.30.13–14 princeps Aeolium carmen ad Italos deduxisse modos, Ep. 1.19.23–24 Parios ego primus iambos / ostendi Latio (cf. also 1.19.32–33). The allusion to this poetic motif (the translation of Greek creation to a Roman context) prepares for the central theme of the next scene (762–805): a review of Greek models and, it is implied, Roman successorship and appropriation; see Van der Keur 2014: 289–290.

Note the marked alliteration of P (poscenti ... populo primique petitas ... Piraeo) and L (Italis ... litores leges), perhaps a nod to the antiquity of the Twelve Tables, since alliteration is especially frequent in archaic Latin texts.

exin See n.537–539.

designo ‘point out’; TLL 5.1.716.37–39 quotes this line under the broader meaning notare, but why would the Sibyl not actually point out the shades (cf. 5.1.715.76–82)? The context of presentation does not require extra marking, such as digito at Ov. Am. 3.1.19, 3.6.77.

qui iura ... dederint Cf. the same respect demanded for lawgiving Romans at 11.175 hi sunt, qui iura dedere. The phrase iura dare can mean both ‘give laws’ and ‘dispense justice’ (and hence ‘rule’). The first (preferable here) is often associated with the founding of a city; cf. Verg. A. 1.292–293 Remo cum fratre Quirinus iura dabunt, 1.507 iura dabat legesque viris (Dido), 3.137 iura domosque dabam (Aeneas on Crete), 5.758, Ov. Fast. 1.38, 5.65, Hor. Ars 398; for the combination of lawgiving and city-founding, cf. also 533–534 with n.

sub armis A curious phrase; according to historiography, the plebs did not take up arms to demand their laws. Ernesti (who takes the phrase with dederint) sees a reference to the power of the decemviri, symbolized by the threatening presence of their 120 fasces-bearing lictors (Liv. 3.36.4); such a stark reminder of the despotic rule of the decemviri (most of all Appius Claudius, cf. 824–827) would not combine well, however, with Scipio’s joy at seeing them (755–756). Spaltenstein takes it as a more general indication of the strife between the patricians and plebeians in the years preceding the institution of the decemviri (“‘en période de guerre’, sc. civile”); sub armis, “standing at arms”, suggests an actual
armed conflict, however. Since the war in the *Punica* is cast as an analogy to civil war which is ended through Scipio’s victory (see Gen.intr. § 4.3.3), the poet has perhaps cast the earlier class strife as another example of civil war which has been resolved, in this case through law-making.

**Piraeo litore** The phrase (referring to Piraeus, the port of Athens and thus to the city itself) goes back to Catul. 64.74 *curvis e litoribus Piraei*; the adjective *Piraeus* is found at Ov. *Met.* 6.446 *Piraeaque litora* (ambiguous at Prop. 3.21.23 *Piraei ... litora portus*).

**miscuerint Italis** Viz. *legibus* (cf. TLL 8.1088.15, where this line is cited under *miscere res rebus*); hence ‘they introduced Greek models into Italian laws’, which seems preferable to taking the phrase as ‘introduce to the Italians’, for which there seem to be no parallels.

755–761

laetatur spectatque virum insatiabilis ora 755

Scipio et appellet cunctos, ni magna sacerdos
admoneat turbae innumerae: ‘quot milia toto
credis in orbe, puer, lustras dum singula visu,
descendisse Erebo? nullo non tempore abundans
umbrarum huc agitur torrens, vectatque capaci
agmina mole Charon et sufficit improba puppis.’

755–757a Scipio is delighted and cannot stop looking at the men’s faces and would address them all, if the great priestess did not remind him of their countless numbers.

The Sibyl’s admonishment recalls her similar corrections of Aeneas in Vergil (see Intr. 705–761); cf. A. 6.292–293 *et ni docta comes ... / admoeneat ..., / inruat* and 6.537–539 *et fors omne datum trahent per talia tempus, / sed comes admonuit [...]. For the content of the correction (the number of the dead prevents contact with them), Silius was probably inspired by the (somewhat different) treatment in Homer, where Odysseus, wishing to see the ‘older men’ (*Od.* 11.630; cf. 720 *priscos manes*), is scared away by the hosts of ghosts; with *innumerae turbae*, Silius alludes to Homer’s ἔθνε ... μυρία νεκρῶν (“the myriad tribes of the dead”, 11.632) while using the diction of Vergil’s imitation *innumerae gentes* (*A.* 6.706).

Scipio checked himself at 719–720, imitating Odysseus (see n.); the present passage is connected with the earlier one through *appellet* (719 *appellare*).

**laetatur** For Scipio’s joy, see Intr. 705–761 and n.752–754 *sub armis* above.

**insatiabilis** Not so much implied criticism of Scipio as the prelude to the admonition. Scipio’s insatiable eagerness to meet the spirits is counterbalanced by the underworld’s ‘greed’ in taking them (761 *improba*).

**magna sacerdos** An echo of Deiphobus’ address of the Sibyl after her warning at *A.* 6.544.

**turbae innumerae** The shades in the underworld are countless (see n.525 *innumeri ... populi* with parallels), as are the new arrivals; see n.759b–761 below. For *turbas* of ghosts coming to the underworld, cf. e.g. Verg. *A.* 6.305 (also Sen. *Her.F.* 868); for those already there, cf. Sen. *Her.F.* 837, 849. The word is mainly used to refer to a subdivision of ghosts (cf. 535, 548, 798, Verg. *A.* 6.325, 6.611), particularly the sinners (Tib. 1.3.70, Luc. 6.799, Sen. *Her.F.* 1223) and the blessed (552, V.Fl. 1.750).
757b–759a How many thousands on the whole earth do you think have descended to Erebus, son, while you look at only a few?

In these lines the Sibyl recapitulates her words at 524–530; there the focus was on the vastness of the underworld, able to hold _innumeri ... populi_ (cf. 757 _innumerae turbae_); here, she stresses the masses of the dead that come down (529 _descendunt_, 759 _descendisse_) from all the world (_toto in orbe_, a summary of 527–528) and the field that takes them all (529–530 _capit campus_) is here replaced by the roomy boat of Charon (760–761 _capaci mole_).

With the subordinate clause _lustras dum singula visu_, two interpretations of this sentence seem possible: i) Scipio sees only a few of the thousands that have descended (i.e. in all time); ii) in the time that Scipio is looking at a few individuals, thousands more have descended from all the world. The last interpretation goes best with the lines that follow, which treats the never ending stream of new arrivals. To ‘see them all’ would thus be an exercise without end.

**lustras dum singula visu** Similar phrases are used in ecphrastic scenes at _A._ 1.453 _sub ingenti lustrum dum singula templo_ (Aeneas’ viewing of the relief in Carthage) and Sil. 2.404–405 _per singula laetis / lustrat ovans oculis_ (Hannibal’s shield) and for teichoscopy at _V.Fl._ 6.576 _singula dum magni lustrat certamina belli_ (Medea’s view of the battlefield); cf. also _Ov._ _Trist._ 3.1.33 _singula dum miror_, an imitation of _Verg._ _l.c._ While the general setting of the _Nekyia_ is not only about viewing, but also about speaking, this phrase underlines the gradual transition from a series of conversations to a parade of groups of ghosts (see An. 705–761; the only remaining meeting is that with Alexander at 767ff.).

For the tautology of _lustrare visu_, cf. 5.307, _Stat._ _Theb._ 5.546–547 and _Ach._ 1.126.

**descendisse Erebo** For _descendo_ as ‘go to the underworld’, see n.529b–530 _descendunt cuncta_. With Erebo, cf. _Verg._ _A._ 6.404 _imis Erebi descendit ad umbras_ (Aeneas) and _Stat._ _Theb._ 11.464 _descensuram Erebo_ (Pietas). For the dative, cf. also 708 _nocti_ and 9.529 _terris_ (but also e.g. _de-mittere_ with dative at 1.439 _demiserat umbris_, 2.541 _Erebo demitte_, _Verg._ _A._ 2.398 _multos Danaum demittimus Orco_, and _de-icere_ at _Verg._ _A._ 10.318 _dieicet leto_, both by analogy with e.g. _Hom._ _II._ Ἀιδί προήριψεν; see _TLL_ 5.1.492.62ff.).

759b–761 At all times, an abundant stream of ghosts is driven here, and Charon transports the hosts in his roomy boat, and his greedy vessel is big enough.

Silius presents the hosts of the dead and Charon’s vessel in colourful words. The boat is roomy (_capaci_; _mole_ also suggests its size) and greedy (_improba_), and thus suffices for the _agmina_ coming in as a _torrens_ (i.e. not a trickle) non-stop (suggested by the strong litotes _nullo non tempore_, i.e. without pause and without end); the host is so big, it cannot even contain _itself_ ( _abundans_). Note the watery word play of _abundans ... torrens ... agmina_; the ‘overflowing river’ of ghosts (cf. _OLD agmen_ 1a ‘stream, current or course (of water)’) matches the Styx they seek to cross.

Whether Charon is or is not able to ferry the influx of ghosts was somewhat of a _topos_ in the first century AD. The author of the _Epicedion Drusi_, stating that death awaits all, says that _omnis expectat avarus / portitor et turbae vix satis una ratis_ (357–358); Charon is ‘barely’ able to cope. Seneca on the other hand lets his chorus contrast the countless peoples that go to the underworld with the sole ferryman that transports them all (_Her.F._ 557 _uno tot populi remige transeunt_; 775 _cumba populorum capax_); the thought is ridiculed.
at Juv. 2.151. It becomes more of a problem for Charon when war or plague kills off more men than usual (cf. Sen. Oed. 170 fessus turbam vectare novam), and he has to use ‘extra ships’ at Luc. 3.16–17 praeparat innumeram puppam Acheronis adusti / portitor and Petr. 121.116–118 vix navita Porthmeus / sufficiet simulacra virum traducere cumba; / classe opus est. In Silius, Charon just makes extra room in his boat (9.251 laxabat sedem venturis portitor umbris).

Line 761 has troubled some readers, since the stress on the innumera turba (757) may seem to be undone by the statement that Charon’s boat suffices to ferry them. Bauer suggested vix sufficit (adducting Petr. l.c.), Müller nec sufficit, to alleviate this, but emendation is unnecessary: i) it is exactly the paradox which makes the image attractive; Charon’s boat is not only capax, but also improba, precisely because it takes so many, defying belief; ii) in the above passages, the ferryman is only in trouble in special situations, whereas here the normal procedure is described (and would one not imagine a truly long queue at the Styx since the dawn of time otherwise?); iii) Silius’ diction seems to echo that of Seneca (vectat 760 and Oed. 170, Her.F. 765; capaci 760 and Oed. 166, Her.F. 775; turbae innumerae 757 and Her.F. 556 gentes innumeras), whose Charon normally transports the multitudes without problem (Her.F. 556–557); iv) the Sibyl’s point is not just that thousands die every moment, but that these thousands also reach the underworld by crossing the Styx and could be available for Scipio’s view. Delz’ decision to retain et sufficit seems therefore justified. In other words, -que in 760 should be interpreted as ‘and yet’.


capaci ... mole For moles of a ship, cf. TLL 8.1341.28ff., always of big boats (warships at Prop. 4.6.19, Luc. 3.356, Liv. 37.15.2; Aeneas’ ships at Verg. A. 5.118, 8.693; the Argo at V.Fl. 1.127, 1.599, 2.353); Charon’s lumbering boat is more of an island ferry than a punt.

For capax, cf. the two Senecan passages cited above plus Ov. Met. 4.439–440 mille capax aditus ... urbs habet (the roomy city of the underworld) and Sen. Her.F. 659 regno capaci (Fitch ad loc. also adduces Hor. Carm. 3.1.16 omne capax movet urna nomen); cf. 529–530 capitique campus iners and the discussion in Intr. 517–614.

improba Spaltenstein quotes TLL 7.1.692.23ff. ‘funestus, immitis’, as a general reference to the malignity of the underworld, which would add little here. It is better to read it as ‘rapax, avidus’ (cf. Epic. Drusi 357–358 avarus portitor and Stat. Silv. 2.1.186 avidae trux navita cumbae, also of Charon; so also Kißel 1979: 89 n.2); the boat is ‘greedy’, i.e. taking in more than it should be able to, a reference to the load Charon has to take across. Probably there is in addition a nod to the traditional ‘greed’ of Death, taking away so many; cf. for Mors 14.622, Tib. 1.3.4, Sen. Her.F. 555, Oed. 164, for the underworld Hor. Carm. 2.18.29, Verg. G. 2.492, Gratt. Cyn. 347, Sen. Her.F. 677, for Pluto Callim. Epig. 2.6 ἁρπακτὴς Ἀιδῆς,Sen. Her.F. 782, Ag. 752, Stat. Theb. 11.410, and for Tisiphone Verg. G. 3.553.

Notes to 705–761
762–805 Greek ghosts: Alexander the Great, Homer and the Iliadic heroes

The Sibyl presents the ghost of Alexander the Great and lists his accomplishments. Desiring glory himself, Scipio asks him how he attained his high fame. Alexander recommends to wage war with daring and not to delay action, since life is short. He departs and the shade of Croesus approaches. Next Scipio sees a resplendent phantom surrounded by a multitude; the Sibyl tells that it is Homer and praises the poet for his song and quality. Scipio blesses Achilles for having Homer as his bard, wishing that he would also sing Rome’s praises. He then views the Homeric warriors who accompany their poet, and the ghost of Castor.

After a variety of Roman souls, the narrative now turns to Greek ghosts. While the two most prominent shades, Alexander and Homer, have received much scholarly attention in isolation, the scene has rarely been studied as a whole. Its theme was already prepared at the transition from Roman to Greek spirits at 752–754 (the *decemviri* who imported Athenian laws to Rome), where Silius hints at the *primus ego* motif of Roman poets who transpose a Greek genre to Latin (see n. ad loc.). The entire parade of Greeks is to be considered in this light, as a review of Greek models and, by implication, Roman successors. The scene is central to Silius’ poetics. We may discern a few main lines of thought in the scene: i) the identification of Alexander as a model leader and an example to Roman leaders; ii) the importance of *gloria* and *virtus* to the hero; iii) the major role which is reserved for poetry in eternalizing the hero.

The meeting with Alexander is the last one in this *Nekyia* which involves a conversation; this fact, along with the fame attached to his person, confers significance to this scene. The Macedonian general, with his specific advice on warfare, serves as a personal model for Scipio, who seeks to follow in his footsteps on the path to glory (769–770). The Roman resembles Alexander in several ways.1 Both are *iuvenes*, being victorious (763 *victor*) over the enemy and gaining glory at an early age (see n.762 *iuvenem*). Both are driven by their quest for glorious deeds.2 Both are sons of Jupiter, who fathered them in the form of a snake.3

Scipio’s adoption of Alexander as a role model reflects the latter’s status for the Romans as a paradigm of leadership and authority and as the pinnacle of personal achievement.4 The Macedonian was especially connected to Roman imperial ideology.

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2 Cf. Ripoll 1998a: 248–249. Line 769 *similique cupidine rerum* is a reference to Alexander’s famous πόθος (Hardie 2004: 152); see n.767–771 ad loc. For an evaluation of the glory-motif, see below.
4 See Wirth 1976 and Spencer 2002. Whether the *imitatio Alexandri* which many Roman leaders displayed (e.g. Caesar, Pompey, Mark Antony and Augustus) originated with the historical Scipio cannot be established; as Spencer (p.168) notes, “we have not contemporary texts chronicling links between Alexander and [...] Scipio, and
Vergil’s depiction of Augustus and his victories at A. 6.791ff. and 8.678ff. is influenced by panegyric writings on Alexander, including the comparison with the wanderings of the demigods Hercules and Bacchus (for whom see below).5 It has been often been noted that Silius’ Alexander is, in turn, based upon the princeps in Vergil, as is apparent from his introduction hic ille est (cf. A. 6.791 hic vir, hic est) and the geographical names at 764–766, which reverberate from the Aeneid (see n.763–766). Silius has thus reversed the direction; instead of viewing Augustus in an Alexandrian light, we are invited to read Alexander as an Augustus, and thereby Scipio as well.6 By following the same path as Alexander, Scipio will establish not only his own fame, but also (as a proto-emperor) the hegemony of Rome.

Silius does not only draw on Augustan panegyric; the lines also evoke encomiastic poetry on the Flavians, and Domitian in particular. In Jupiter’s prophecy at 3.612–617, the exotic names of Alexander’s oriental conquests are listed as future triumphs for Domitian.7 The Flavian house has risen to the stars through virtue, thus realizing Alexander’s exhortation.8 Another parallel is Statius’ Silv. 4.3; the words of the river god Vulturnus in praise of Domitian resemble those on Alexander’s achievements here,9 and in her panegyric prophecy, Statius’ Sibyl identifies the orient as Domitian’s next conquest, where he will follow in the footsteps of Hercules and Bacchus (4.3.154–157).10 Scipio’s adoption of Alexander as a model contributes to his own status as a model for Domitian.11

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5 See e.g. Norden 1899: 422–436. According to some authors Augustus shared the serpentine birth of Alexander and Scipio (and Bacchus); see Intr. 615–649. Compare also his visit to Alexander’s sarcophagus in Alexandria (Suet. Aug. 18). For Silius’ own use of the Alexander tradition, see Borzsák 1982, Laudizi 1989: 134.

6 In addition, with his adaptation of Anchises’ words on the shade of Augustus, Silius seems to introduce Ennius’ epitaph of Scipio himself (see n.763–766 hic ille est) into his portrayal of Alexander—a subtle way to stress the connection between the three men! For Scipio being modelled after Augustus, see Intr. 179–255, 615–649 (and n.634–636), nn.721–723 superos aequantem laude, 740–743 fervet gens Itala Marte barbarico, Intr. 850b–895 (with n.890b–893) and Gen.intr. § 4.3.3. Cf. also the triumphal scene at 17.645ff., which is modelled after Octavian’s triumph following the battle of Actium at Verg. A. 8.720ff. (see Hardie 1993: 39 with n. 47, Ripoll 1999b: 39, Marks 2005: 243 with n.117, Tipping 2010b: 187).

7 Cf. Stat. Silv. 4.1.40–43; see n.763–766 Bactra Dahaeque. The next lines (3.618–621) couple Domitian’s martial victories with his accomplishments as a poet; the Muses and Phoebus will admire his song, an encomium which surpasses even the praise for Homer at 13.789 et cantu Musas et Phoebum aequavit honore. The emperor will thus emulate both Greek models presented here: Alexander and Homer.


9 Cf. e.g. 13.763 vagus … victor ~ Stat. Silv. 4.3.155 vagus Hercules. Augustus is compared to the same demigods (cf. Verg. A. 6.801–805, but also e.g. Hor. Carm. 3.3.9–16, where Augustus is expected in heaven near vagus

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Scipio admires Alexander because of his *gloria* (768). In epic terms, this is the Iliadic ideal of *κλέος* (see n.798–799 *gratantum*); but to an audience used to Vergil’s Aeneas and his goal of attaining a ‘national’ destiny beyond his personal glory, or sensitive to the danger posed by men such as Lucan’s protagonists who are driven by concern for their own fame, Scipio’s personal motivation for the great deeds he will do may seem disconcerting. While the elder Scipio notes that ‘virtue is its own reward’, with glory as a pleasurable by-product (n.663–665), his son here seems primarily obsessed with glory itself.\(^{12}\) It seems wrong, however, to divorce the concepts of *virtus* and *gloria*; Scipio’s query about Alexander’s *gloria* is answered with a reference to *virtus* (774). The conversation is to be considered in its broader context.

At 634–636, Pomponia motivated her disclosure of Scipio’s divine origin to him with the exhortation to “raise himself to heaven through his deeds”. When at the beginning of book 15 Scipio is confronted with a choice between Voluptas and Virtus, the latter tells him that man is born for glory (15.88); the way to heaven is open to those who honour their divine roots (15.77–78). Alexander, himself the son of a god (767–768), is best suited to guide the young hero on his path.\(^{13}\) Scipio’s question after the road to eminent glory anticipates Virtus’ description of her own lofty home, which is only reached by a long and steep path.\(^{14}\) Glory is thus linked to attaining *virtus*—and serving *virtus* is not strictly personal, as its divine incarnation herself attests. It is through service to the country that Scipio will pursue *Virtus* (15.113–115) and thereby conquer Carthage.\(^{15}\) The notion of attaining heaven through service is emphasized through the parallels of the demigods Hercules, Bacchus, the Dioscuri and Romulus (15.78–83), all benefactors of mankind.\(^{16}\)

The importance of *gloria* and *virtus* as a means of achieving immortality is underlined by the short mention of Croesus directly after the meeting with Alexander (776b–777).

\(^{11}\) Cf. also the address of Statius’ Sibyl to Domitian at 4.3.139 as salve, *dux hominum et parens deorum* (cf. 4.1.15) and Silius’ address to Scipio at 17.651 *salve, invicte parens*; both pick up Vergil’s eulogy of Italy at G. 2.173, effectively equating the glory of the country with the glory of its leader.

\(^{12}\) The discrepancy is observed by Tipping (2010b: 172). See fn.2 above for Alexander’s *πόθος*. A positive reading of Scipio’s *cupido gloriae* is given by Ripoll (1998b: 40–41), who observes that it is a Roman value (Sil. 3.576–581, 6.332–333); indeed, it is the main theme of the epic (1.1–2 *gloria ... Aeneadum*). On the relation between *virtus* and *gloria*, see also n.663–665. For the advice itself of waging war with daring, which at first sight also seems to conflict with the words of caution of the elder Scipio, see n.772–773a.


\(^{14}\) 13.770–771 *quaer via ... superbum / ad decus et summas laudum perduxerit ~ 15.102 ardua saxoso *perducit semita clivo*. Virtus’ companions are Honor, Laudes, Gloria, Decus and Victoria (15.98–99); cf. here 768 *gloria, 771 decus* and *laudum arces*.

\(^{15}\) The influence of Cicero’s *Somnium Scipionis* is universally recognized; see von Albrecht 1964: 164, Heck 1970, Ripoll 2000: 164–170, Fucecchi 2014: 317–318. As Fucecchi notes, with the speech of Virtus Silius ‘anticipates’ his own literary model: “while the young, Flavian Scipio becomes the ideal precursor of Cicero’s Aemilius as the future leader who needs to be ‘educated,’ the voice of Silius’ Virtus resonates with exhortations almost recalling those pronounced by the Ciceronian ghost of Scipio Africano.”

Croesus serves as a foil to Alexander (as is suggested by the juxtaposed clauses in 776a and 776b) or more accurately to the concept of *gloria* which had been the subject of the conversation, in that Croesus represents an opposite view on what mankind should strive for. After death, all the wealth Croesus had gathered amounts to nothing; this puts Alexander’s different ideal—to attain glory—into sharp relief, as unlike wealth, glory actually has value beyond the grave,\(^{17}\) and the *virtus* by which it is achieved is therefore a far more worthy thing to pursue.\(^{18}\)

Essentially, the hero may thus pursue his own immortality through *virtus*. But the notion of *gloria* also introduces the theme which prevails in the rest of the scene: the immortalization of heroes through poetry. In his encounter with Homer, Scipio echoes Alexander’s words when he visited Achilles’ tomb at Sigeum near Troy by calling Achilles blessed to have Homer as his herald (see n.796–797). In his wish to be like Achilles, Scipio directly begins to follow Alexander’s example.\(^{19}\) But the point of this second link with Alexander is not so much to emphasize Scipio’s likeness to either Greek model but rather to connect more or less explicitly the attainment of *gloria* through deeds (the theme of the conversation with Alexander) with the enlargement of these deeds and this fame through poetry.\(^{20}\) The second half of the scene is an encomium of the power of poetry. A full discussion of its many aspects can be found in Van der Keur (2014)\(^{21}\); a few main findings will be presented below.

As he calls Achilles blessed for having Homer, Scipio expresses his desire that Homer could also sing the *Romula facta*. Most critics agree that this should be taken as a reference to a *Romanus Homerus*, the Roman counterpart to Homer. We should think not of Ennius or even of Vergil (even if their poetry clearly claims the title for them) but rather of Silius himself. Indeed, we might say that Silius may claim to be the new Homer precisely because he is also the new Vergil; his status of epic successor to Vergil includes his incorporation of Vergil’s (and Ennius’) quality of being the Roman Homer.\(^{22}\) The programmatic, self-referential nature of the scene also emerges when we compare another passage which evokes Alexander’s visit to the tomb of Achilles: Luc. 9.961ff., where Caesar plays a tourist at the ruins of Troy. Comparing the crumbled city with the eternal fame of the Iliadic heroes, Lucan comments upon the immortalizing power of poetry and claims for his own Latin work the same lasting readership that Homer has—another Roman Homer. Silius’

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\(^{17}\) While death has equated Croesus with the beggars (777b), Alexander still towers above all generals (768–769).

\(^{18}\) See for a further discussion n.776–777.

\(^{19}\) Marks 2005: 145; see also Ripoll 2000: 162. Alexander himself resembles the Homeric warrior he wanted to be; see n.763–766 *vagus ... victor in omni cursu*. Scipio himself is modelled frequently after Achilles in the *Punica*; see for this book nn.217b–218 *oblatum metit ... agmen*, 234–237, Intr. 381–416, Intr. 417–493, Intr. 650–704. Achilles is only a warrior, Alexander a general, the role which Scipio will assume in the remainder of the epic; Marks (p.143) contends that from this point on it is Alexander rather than Achilles who is Scipio’s primary model, which seems true to some extent; but his assumption (p.145) that Scipio’s sighting of Achilles’ *shade* would imply that the latter is dead and gone as a model is illogical—for he had also seen the shade of Alexander.

\(^{20}\) Cf. 794 *maiora ... facta*, 797 *crevit tua carmina virtus*.


Scipio recognizes Lucan’s message: the enormous debt heroes owe to their poets.\(^{23}\) The hero’s quest for *gloria* is thus intricately linked with the poet’s activity.\(^{24}\)

Just as Scipio is the Roman equivalent of Achilles (and Alexander), so is Silius’ poem thus the Latin counterpart of Homer’s epics. The passage has a number of metapoetic aspects which underscore Silius’ debt to Homer. In her enumeration of Homer’s merits, the Sibyl tells Scipio that the poet had revealed “all this” (*haec cuncta*) to the world; she plausibly refers to the underworld, which Scipio had been viewing for the last three hundred lines. But “all this” is also the *Nekyia* itself, which Silius could not have written but for *Odyssey* 11.\(^{25}\) Scipio also views the Iliadic gazer at the relief in Carthage with its various scenes from the Trojan war, which is essentially another review of Homer’s work.\(^{26}\) Since Scipio is here being prepared for his role in the last books of the epic, we might say that both Aeneas in *Aeneis* 1 and Scipio here in *Punica* 13 first view their role models before setting out as epic successors to perform their own heroic deeds.\(^{27}\) A point of difference is that here the Homeric warriors are presented primarily as *literary characters*; the young hero is glad to be in their company.\(^{28}\)

Homer eternalized Achilles, as he eternalized Troy by (p)raising it to heaven (791). But the poet himself also takes on a divine quality: he looks like a god to Scipio (784–785). Silius goes beyond the traditional *topos* that a poet lives on after death through his poetry:\(^{29}\) Homer has “earned” (*meruit*) this divine appearance by his poetry. This phrasing brings us back to the theme of apotheosis through service. Several elements in the passage evoke the demigods who are traditionally connected with having earned godhood. Alexander is here

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\(^{23}\) Or: the debt which great leaders (such as Alexander, Caesar and Scipio) owe to their poets, who turn them into literary characters (i.e. epic heroes) and enhance their fame beyond their own historical deeds (cf. the poets who accompanied Alexander on his campaigns to celebrate his deeds). Deremetz (1995: 471–472) observes that the sequence Alexander–Homeric Achilles emphasizes Scipio’s own metamorphosis from ‘merely’ a general to an epic hero through the art of Silius’ poetry, an art which he owes to Homer.

\(^{24}\) Epic poets sing of heroes who strive for heaven through their deeds, and with their poetry eternalize them, i.e. grant them the immortality they seek. The theme is well illustrated by the opening lines of the *Punica*: 1.1–2 *ordior arma quibus caelo se gloria tollit* / *Aeneadum*. On one level this refers to the heroic deeds of the Romans: “I begin with the war in which the glory of the Aeneadae raises itself to heaven”. But if we take *arma* as a metapoetic reference to the epic genre, the lines are also a self-conscious statement: “I begin the epic in which (or: by which) the fame of the Aeneadae reaches heaven”.

\(^{25}\) Silius alludes to Lucretius’ eulogy of Epicurus to emphasize the theme of Greek originator and Roman heir; see nn.785b–787 *meruit deus esse videri*, 788–789 *terram, mare, sidera, manes* and Van der Keur 2014: 288–289.


\(^{27}\) Cf. also Stat. *Ach*. 1.864–865 (Status’ Achilles views his Homeric self); see Van der Keur 2014: 296 n.33.

\(^{28}\) Silius emphasizes the relation between the warriors and their poet, rather than between the warriors and their viewer. Note the difference with Vergil’s Aeneas, whose viewing is ‘in character’: he grieves when he relives the Trojan war as he views the relief at *A*. 1.453ff.; similarly, the shades of the Greek warriors fear his arrival in the underworld at *A*. 6.489–493. Silius’ Scipio, on the other hand, is glad to see the same warriors; for he sees in them not the ancient enemies of his ancestors, but the heroes made famous by Homer’s poetry (cf. Ripoll 2001a: 98). Scipio’s happiness indicates his own status as a literary character; see n.798–799 *gratantum*. In his description of Homer’s achievements and the warriors, Silius alludes to the two Homeric epics; see nn.790–791 and 800–803.

For another difference in the perspectives of Vergil and Silius, see n.778–780 on Silius’ adaptation of Vergil’s encomium of the young Marcellus in his depiction of Homer.

the last conversational partner; in Homer’s *Odyssey*, that place belongs to Heracles. But Heracles is also a model for Silius’ Homer. Heracles is dead and deified at the same time; Odysseus sees the hero’s phantom in the underworld, while Heracles himself is among the gods. Just so it is suggested that Scipio (merely) sees Homer’s shade (cf. 779 *effigiem*), a phantom which looks like a god. Indeed, Homer’s appearance is like that of Bacchus (see n.778–780), another demigod. The scene is concluded by the last traditional pair of deified benefactors of mankind, Castor and Pollux, who among the two of them are also simultaneously both in the underworld and among the gods; Silius focuses on Castor, the mortal half of the twins who ascended to godhood.

The scene thus displays a strong internal unity. The meeting with Alexander, the model leader, underscores the ideal of immortal *gloria*, attained through *virtus*. Seeing Homer and his characters reminds Scipio (and the reader) that poetry, in which such virtuous deeds are remembered and exalted, promises this immortality. Interwoven with this theme of eternal glory are subtle references to actual apotheosis (through *Virtus*) and to its exemplars Heracles, Bacchus and the Dioscuri, who serve as models not only for the hero but also, surprisingly perhaps, for the poet. Apotheosis may be more than simply a fitting analogy for poetry’s immortalizing power. Scipio will be immortal as an epic hero, but the apotheosis which Virtus outlines for him also marks another parallel with Augustus and underscores his status as proto-emperor and model for Domitian.

**Analysis of the presentation of 762–805**

After the Sibyl’s admonition at 757–762 that Scipio cannot speak to every shade since their number is limitless, those that do step into the limelight are especially significant. It is striking, therefore, that of the two most prominent members of the Greek department (Alexander and Homer) the names are not given. Instead, their identity is revealed through a description of their achievements (763–766 and 788–791); Silius used the same technique (also through his Sibyl) at 725–728 (Appius Claudius Caecus and Horatius Cocles). 30 Hercules and Bacchus both shimmer through the description of Alexander’s (oriental) wanderings; cf. especially 763 *vagus* (see fn.10 above) and n.763–765 *qui Gangen bibit*, and probably also the similar formulæ at Hom. *Od*. 11.625 ὁς εἰπὼν ὃ μὲν αὖτις ἐβῆ ~ Sil. 13.776 *haec effatus abit*. Like Alexander, Homer’s Heracles is in many ways a model for the man who views him, both for returning from the underworld and for continuous labours (the parallelism with Odysseus is indicated by Heracles himself at *Od*. 11.618–619). Being the son of the supreme god is a quality shared between Heracles, Bacchus, Alexander and Scipio; indeed, Scipio’s address of Alexander as true son of Hammon evokes both Mars’ address of Scipio at 4.476 and Euander’s words on Hercules at *A*. 8.301 (see n.767–771 *Libyci certissima proles Hammonis*). The demigods are also suggested by the connection with Augustus, who is explicitly compared to them.

31 See Van der Keur 2014: 302–303. Both Homer’s Heracles and Silius’ Homer are surrounded by a host of clamorous shades (*Od*. 11.605, Sil. 13.783 *laeto clamore*), both receive an extensive description.

32 See n.804–805 *alternam lucem*.

33 It may not be coincidental that Scipio, when he expresses his wish for a Roman imitation/emulation of the Greek literary example, speaks of *Romula facta*; Romulus (who was deified as Quirinus) was the Roman counterpart to the Greek demigods, but also as founder of Rome the example for its later emperors. For the special relevance to Domitian, the emperor-poet, of a deified Homer, see fn.7 above.

34 Vergil does the same for Numa (*A*. 6.808–812), Caesar and Pompey (826–835), Mummius (836–837), Aemilius Paulus (838–840); the young Marcellus (a model for Homer, see n.778–780) is named only at the end of his description at 883.
The meeting with Alexander can be divided into three nearly equal parts: the introduction by the Sibyl (762–766), Scipio’s question (767–771) and Alexander’s reply (772–775); the phrases that introduce their speech are progressively shorter (a full line at 762, a hemistich at 767, a choriamb at 772). The description of Alexander’s deeds is very stylized, with its alternation of *qui* and *cui* clauses and pointed alliteration (*vagus ... victor; Pellaeo ... ponte; stant sacro sua*) and assonance (*tellu vagu ... cur su ... tulit, cui; Bactra Dahaeque*). The Macedonian’s advice at 772–775, with its short, pointed sentences and lack of coordinating particles, comes across as a series of aphorisms; the enjambment prevents the suggestion of a list. Silius’ Alexander alternates *sententiae* (772, 773b–774a, 775b) and precepts to Scipio in the second person (773a, 774b–775a). The brevity is iconic of the speed and urgency which Alexander recommends. At 776–777, this narrative unit is concluded with the appearance of Croesus and the chiastic line 777 (opposing *dives* with *egenis* and *apud superos* with *mors*).

Through *atque hic*, the encounter with Homer is closely tied in with the preceding meeting with Alexander, as at Verg. *A. 6.860*, where the younger Marcellus is connected to his forebear. As Grebe (1989: 116–118) has shown, Silius uses the same structure as Vergil (narratorial description – description by the protagonist, culminating in an exclamation) and the same elements (Marcellus’/Homer’s *vultus*, his activity, his retinue), but he rearranges the order and distribution of these structural and descriptive elements. Line 780, the description of Homer, displays the characteristics of a golden line with its alternation of adjectives and substantives; the adjectives *purpurea* and *nitentia*, both ‘shining’, are picked up by Scipio’s *luce refuglet* (781). Like Alexander’s achievements, the feats of Homer are described in stylized lines; note at 787–788 the counterbalancing adjectives *tanto non parvum*, alliteration (*parvum pectore, carmine complexus*), the asyndetic enumeration *terram, mare, sidera, manes* and finally the chiastic line 789.

The series of subjects or themes touched upon in this scene about Homer are connected associatively, and carefully ordered so that the series eventually comes full circle to the subject with which it started. After mentioning the crowd surrounding Homer, Scipio draws attention to his divine appearance; the reply of the Sibyl which immediately follows picks up this topic, but now focuses on his merits for which he has deserved to appear divine and whereby he even equalled the gods (789). Staying on the topic of deification, she then names Troy, which Homer had ‘raised to the stars’. With Troy, Scipio thinks of Achilles, who is then presented to him among Homer’s retinue; with this *gratantum turba* (798) we are back again at *mirantes animae* (783). Scipio’s own reaction is notably the same as that of Homer’s characters, which emphasizes his own status as a literary character whose fame is enlarged by poetry. Homer

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35 In each, the first word is the focal point: *turpis, audendo, pigra, tu magna, mors*.
36 Ripoll 1998b: 42.
37 Cf. Ripoll *ibid*.
38 E.g. in Vergil the exclamation focuses on the noise of Marcellus’ retinue, while his *vultus* is described by the narrator; in Silius it is Homer’s *vultus* that is the subject of Scipio’s exclamation. Grebe (1989: 117) also compares the metrical structures in both passages; indeed, lines 781b–783 closely resemble the metre of Verg. *A. 6.860b–862* (discounting word division, however), with also *nam* paralleling Vergil’s *namque* and 782 *praecipua* counterbalancing 6.861 *egregium*. Vergil’s lines describes Marcellus’ beauty and sad *frons*; Silius’ verses, by contrast, portray Homer’s shining *frons* and the joy of his retinue.
39 Cf. 783 *laeto ... clamore* and 792 *oculis laetantibus* (Juhnke 1972: 290 with n.248), but also 803 *laetus*. 
is presented in similar terms to his characters, with a stress on visual aspects; both are images (effigies at 779 and 799), i.e. models which can be inspected and taken as inspiration for Roman emulation—both by the hero and by his poet.\textsuperscript{40}

At 798, the transition to the Homeric heroes is introduced with \textit{sed}; the adversative marks that the narrator shifts his attention to other shades.\textsuperscript{41} The Homeric warriors are presented in pairs, with \textit{stupet} governing Achilles and Hector, \textit{miratur} for Ajax and Nestor and \textit{adspectat} for the Atrides and Ulixes. The shade of Castor is separated from the others through \textit{hinc} (804); he has a different status, not only because he is not one of Homer’s characters, but also because he personifies transcendence of mortality (804 victuram; see n.804–805). These last two lines are not focalized (despite \textit{cernit}); the narrator gives background information in addition to what Scipio can see, (805 \textit{peragebat}, and probably also 804 \textit{victuram}). This small intrusion by the narrator concludes the passage and facilitates the change of subject in the next lines.


\textsuperscript{41} We remain in the same scene, since the reader has already been prepared for the new topic (cf. e.g. line 234), unlike at 806, where \textit{sed} marks an abrupt change of subject (see Intr. 517–614 for the use of \textit{sed} as a divisional marker in the \textit{Nekyia}). The particle \textit{at} can indicate a similar, but often stronger, shift of the ‘camera’; see An. 179–255 with fn.36.
Notes to 762–805

762–777
post haec ostendens iuvenem sic virgo profatur: ‘hic ille est, tellure vagus qui victor in omni
cursu signa tulit, cui pervia Bactra Dahaeque,
qui Gangen bibit et Pellaeo ponte Niphaten
adstrinxit, cui stant sacro sua moenia Nilo.’

incipit Aeneades: ‘Libyci certissima proles
Hammonis, quando exsuperat tua gloria cunctos
indubitata duces similique cupidine rerum
pectora nostra calent, quae te via, fare, superbum
ad decus et summas laudum perduxerit arces.’

haec effatus abit. Croesi mox advolat umbra,
dives apud superos, sed mors aequarat egenis.

762 Thereafter the maiden points out a young man and speaks thus: ...

**iuvenem** This reference to Alexander (provided we do not follow the reading *iuveni* of
ω, but *ostendens* requires an object) underscores his status as a model for Scipio, who is
called a *iuvenis* throughout the book (cf. Reitz 1982: 111 n.1, Marks 2005: 33 n.53); see
n.385–386 *iuvenis*.

**virgo** Vergil used this as a title for the Sibyl at *A. 3.445*, *6.45*, *6.104*, *6.318*, *6.560*, in
the last three cases as the term of address by Aeneas. Silius adopts this practice in this
book; cf. also Scipio’s address at 520 (see n.) and 781, and the narrator at 807 and 833.

763–766 Here is that man, who wandering over the earth moved his banners in conquest in
every campaign, who passed through Bactria and the Dahaeans, who drank from the
Ganges and confined the Niphates with a Macedonian bridge, whose walls rise on the
sacred Nile.

These lines are highly reminiscent of Anchises’ description of Augustus at *A. 6.791ff.*
(791 *hic vir, hic est*) and 8.678ff. and its comparison to the wandering Hercules or Bacchus’
oriental triumph (cf. *tellure vagus*), which in turn is a reminiscence of Alexander’s eastern
conquests; Silius effectively reverses the direction of the comparison. For a detailed
discussion, see Intr. 762–805.

**hic ille est** With this introduction, Silius may well be adding Ennian roots to Vergil’s
neque hostis / quibit pro factis reddere opis pretium*, which is, notably, on Scipio himself
(cf. Cic. *Leg.* 2.57). Silius could not have made it more apparent directly at the outset that
Alexander (as model leader) represents what Scipio should and will become.

**vagus ... victor in omni cursu** An echo of Catul. 64.340 *qui persaepe vago victor
certamine cursus* (cf. Marks 2005: 143), from the song of the Fates who prophesy the future
greatness of the hero Achilles. The echo emphasizes the parallelism between Achilles,
Alexander and Scipio, all sons of a god, and anticipates Scipio’s imitation at 796–797 of
Alexander’s words at Sigeum when he calls Achilles happy for having a Homer to sing his praises (see n. ad loc.). For the nexus Achilles – Alexander – Scipio, see Intr. 762–805.

For the sense of in omni cursu (‘in every journey’), we should compare Ovid’s complaint that his place of exile is ab omni devia cursu (Pont. 3.1.27), at the end of the world; for Alexander, even the ends of the world were pervia.

**Bactra Dahaeque** The names of these enemies recall Augustan praise. On Vergil’s shield of Aeneas, Bactria (modern Afghanistan) is one of the enemies vanquished by Octavian at Actium (A. 8.687–688 ultima se cum Bactra vehit, of Mark Antony), while the indomitique Dahae (A. 8.728) (a nomadic people which fought Alexander at Gaugamela, the parent tribe of the later Parthians) walk in his triumphal procession (see also on the Niphates below). Similarly, Bactria represents the reach of Augustus’ power and the glory of Rome at Prop. 3.1.15–16; both peoples also simply stand for the front line in the east (Bactria: Hor. *Carm.* 3.29.28, Prop. 4.3.7, Stat. *Silv.* 3.2.136; Dahae: Luc. 2.296, 7.429). The Flavian poets employ these same names in their panegyrics for Domitian as possible future sources of praise; cf. Sil. 3.613 vacuasque ostendent Bactra pharetras and Stat. *Silv.* 4.1.40–41 restat Bactra novis, restat Babylona tributis / frenari? qui Gangen bibit A hyperbole (Ripoll 1998b: 38), since Alexander reached only the Indus valley, but the river Ganges obviously represents India as Alexander’s furthest conquest. The Ganges features often in poetic praises of Bacchus; cf. Ov. *Am.* 1.2.47, *Fast.* 3.729, *Met.* 4.21, *Trist.* 5.3.23, Stat. *Theb.* 4.387, 7.687, 12.788. Another such passage is Sen. *Oed.* 427, where the god is witnessed by qui bibit Gangen (i.e. a ‘conquered’ Indian, rather than the conqueror, as here). Statius uses the same half line at *Theb.* 1.688 quique bibit Gangen, to indicate one of the ends of the world (cf. also Sil. 8.407–408 ille, super Gangen ... implebit terras voce, of Cicero’s far-reaching fame, a literary conquest).

For the imagery of ‘drink from a river’ for ‘conquer’, see n.675–678a *potare.*

**Pellaeo** ‘of Pella’, the Macedonian capital and birthplace of Alexander, and thus referring to the king himself. For *Pellaeus* in references to Alexander, cf. Luc. 3.233, Stat. *Silv.* 1.1.86, 4.6.59–60, Mart. 9.43.7, Juv. 10.168; cf. also 17.230 gloria Pellae, Man. 1.770, 4.689. The adjective is more frequently used in a general sense (‘Macedonian’, or in relation to Egypt ‘Ptolemaic’); cf. e.g. 11.381, Verg. *G.* 4.287 and many instances in Lucan.

**ponte Niphaten adstrinxit** Presumably modelled after Verg. *A.* 8.728 pontem indignatus *Arapes* (Spaltenstein), which there immediately follows the *Dahae* (see n. above). Another important intertext is Stat. *Silv.* 4.3, in which the river Vulturinus eulogizes Domitian as a *victor* (4.3.84) for the bridge by which he has been bound; cf. 4.3.75 *ligasti* and 4.3.78 *iam pontem fero perviusque calcor*. For constraining the force of water with man-made structures as an imperial act, cf. also e.g. Verg. *G.* 2.161 *Lucrinoque addita claustra.*

The Niphates itself also features in Augustan panegyric. The closest parallel is Verg. *G.* 3.30, in the context of Vergil’s promise to write of Octavian’s victories, including those over the *Gangarides* (3.27) and *Nilum* (3.29), where also rivers represent their neighbouring peoples; cf. also Hor. *Carm.* 2.9.19–20 *cantemus Augusti tropaea Caesaris et rigidum Niphaten.* The *Niphates* is the name of an Armenian mountain range, part of the Taurus (Strabo 11.12.4, Mela 1.81, Plin. *Nat.* 5.98); Silius, however, speaks of it as a river (cf. Luc. 3.245, Juv. 6.409). He presumably wanted to imitate Vergil’s phrase at *A.* 8.728 but also vary it by inserting a different geographical name (which also featured in Augustan poetry).
For *adstringo* (‘bind’), *TLL* 2.960.16–17 (‘i.e. ζευγνύναι’) compares 13.106, but here the sense is stronger (‘shackle’ rather than ‘connect’); cf. Stat. *Silv.* 4.3.75 *ligasti* above.

**cui stant sacro sua moenia Nilo** The realm of the Nile is also the last of the conquests of Augustus named at Verg. *A.* 6.800. *sua* signifies both that Alexander founded Alexandria and that he carries his name (Spaltenstein). *stant* may simply be ‘are located’, a pictorial alternative for *sunt* (*OLD* s.v. 13; cf. Smith *ad* Tib. 1.1.64 ‘esse is colourless, *stare* gives the picture’), but the meaning ‘are still standing’ (*OLD* s.v. 15 and 16) with its overtones of permanence and eternity is also present; the founding of Alexandria here represents Alexander’s longest lasting achievement and is a fitting climax as the most obvious witness to his accomplishments (cf. Reitz 1982: 112, who compares Dido’s claim to fame at *A.* 4.655 *mea moenia vidi*). The epithet *sacer* applies to all rivers (see also n.552b–555 *sacro contermina fonti*), but especially the Nile (also at Stat. *Silv.* 1.6.77), the longest river known to the ancients (cf. 16.36); Dausqueieu also compares the Egyptian belief that the Nile is Osiris. The Nile’s divinity and greatness adds to Alexander’s fame.

767–771 The descendant of Aeneas begins: ‘Most sure descendant of Libyan Hammon, since your undoubted glory surpasses all other generals and my heart glows with a similar desire for deeds, tell me what road brought you to grand glory and the highest places of honour.’

**incipit Aeneades** Cf. Verg. *A.* 6.103 *incipit Aeneas heros*. The use of the patronymic just before Scipio addresses Alexander as the son of Hammon is significant: i) Scipio, like all Romans, is a ‘descendant’ of Aeneas, but he is also the epic successor to Aeneas, and like Aeneas and Alexander has divine parentage; ii) Scipio’s interest in attaining *gloria* (768) looks back at the proem of the *Punica* (1.1–2 *gloria ... Aeneadum*; cf. Tipping 2010a: 205 and 2010b: 170); as *Aeneades*, the hero is the ultimate representative of his people; iii) the Sibyl’s introduction of Alexander alludes to Vergil’s presentation of that other *Aeneades*, Augustus; the patronymic underscores Scipio’s likeness and foreshadowing of the future emperor(s). See also Intr. 762–805. This is the only instance of the nom. sg. of *Aeneades* in antiquity; see n.890b–893 *Aeneadis*.

**Libyci certissima proles Hammonis** Silius’ Alexander sharply contrasts with Lucan’s: 10.20 *Pellaei proles vaesana Philippi* (perhaps in turn influenced by Seneca’s critique of Alexander at *Ben.* 1.13.2–3 as *vesanus adulescens*, who cannot stand comparison to deified Hercules); note the similar structure of geographical genitive – *proles* with adjective – the name of the father. As Cresci Marrone (1983–1984: 92) observes, the adaptation stresses the radically different treatment of Alexander in the two epics—of mortal origin and an *exemplum* of tyranny in Lucan, but of divine parentage and a paradigm of glory in Silius (see Intr. 762–805 with fn.4). Both *certissima* and later *indubitata* serve as a rebuttal of Lucan’s presentation of Alexander; Silius seems intent on rehabilitating the Macedonian as a model for Roman leaders and emperors (*pace* Ahl / Davis / Pomeroy 1986: 2551-52, Tipping 2010a: 207 and 2010b: 172; see e.g. Ripoll 1998b: 43–44, Marks 2005: 143, Fucecchi 2014).

*certissima*, like *vera* at 4.476 (Scipio) and *A.* 8.301 (Hercules), is ‘truly’, ‘indisputable’ (cf. Ripoll 1998a: 79 n.283); Alexander had shown his divine roots by his deeds, like Hercules and Scipio. Silius’ phrase also echoes Verg. *A.* 6.322 *deum certissima proles*, of Aeneas (cf. *Ilias* 236 *sacer Aeneas, Veneris certissima proles*); since Scipio is Aeneas’ successor (see prev. n.), this phrase underscores the similarity between Alexander and Scipio.
Hammon is presented throughout the *Punica* as a pro-Carthaginian god: he fights for Carthage at Cannae (9.298); he is the tutelary deity or progenitor of several of Hannibal’s soldiers (2.59, 5.357, 14.438, 14.459; cf. 14.572) and his name can represent his people (12.749; cf. 15.672 and 17.634). The emphasis on this African parentage for a general who is to be a model for the Roman Scipio may be surprising (cf. Ahl / Davis / Pomeroy 1986: 2551; *contra* Kißel 1979: 177 n.44, Marks 2005: 144 n.82). But Hammon’s loyalties are here irrelevant; a different issue is at stake, namely the *imitatio Alexandri* of the poem’s main protagonists. The specific reference to Libyan Hammon evokes Alexander’s visit to his oracle in Siwa, where he was greeted as the son of Hammon-Zeus (Curt. 4.7.15). In book 3, Hannibal seeks to consult this oracle (3.6–13, 3.647–712) and thus to imitate Alexander (cf. Nicol 1936: 7–10, Vessey 1982: 321); with his own divine birth, Scipio is here shown to be the real successor of Alexander (unlike Hannibal, ‘true son of Hamilcar’, cf. 749).

**similique cupidine rerum** I.e. ‘with a similar thirst for glory’ (Duff; cf. Reitz 1982: 113 “Ehrgeiz”), suggestive of Alexander’s famous πόθος (Hardie 2004: 152; cf. e.g. Arr. *An*. 1.3.5, 2.3.1, 3.1.5, 3.3.1, 4.28.4, 5.2.5, 7.1.1, 7.16.2, *Ind*. 20.1 and with the Latin *cupido* Curt. 3.1.16, 4.7.8, 7.11.4, 9.2.8, 10.1.16), in which *rerum* is probably ‘glorious deeds’ (*OLD* s.v. 7). But we might well read *simil i ... cupidine* as an enallage (‘a desire to do similar deeds’). Ripoll (1998a: 248 n.214 and 1998b: 41) adduces Livy’s description of Scipio at 28.17.2 *inexplebilis virtutis veraque laudis.*

**qua e te via, fare** Possibly modelled after Verg. *A*. 6.533 *qua e te fortuna fatigat*, with *age fare* at 6.531. Silius has *fare* only here and at 666 (there with *age*). Its use is limited in Latin poetry (Verg. 3, all with *age*; *Os. 1*; *V.Fl. 2*), except for Seneca (11 times, and 2 in *[Sen.] Her.O.*); the usual verb is *dic* (cf. e.g. 8 and 781).

**superbum ad decus superbus** here has no negative overtones; cf. 3.232–233 *celsique decus ... superbum corporis*, 10.398–399 *superbum cristarum decus* and 12.394–395 *Latiaeque superbum vitis ... decus* (the only other collocations of *superbus* and *decus*, all in the *Punica*), where *superbus* signifies ‘a source of just pride for its bearer’.

**summas laudum ... arces** For an abstract use of *arx* as ‘acme’, cf. e.g. Plin. *Nat.* 35.101, Quint. *Inst.* 12.11.28 *Cicerone arcem tenente eloquentiae*, Tac. *Dial.* 10.5; cf. also for the Greek ἀκρόπολις Pl. *Tim.* 70a. But a more literal reading of *arceres* should also be considered, if the phrase is read from the perspective of a later passage in book 15. Compare the words of Virtus there, who says that mankind is born for glory (15.98 *ad laudes genitum*) and that Scipio should seek to enter her home, which is situated in a high place (15.101–102 *celso stant colle penates, ardua saxoso perduxerit*; cf. here via ... *perduxerit*); from there Scipio will look down upon mankind (15.106–107 *celsus ab alto infra te cernes hominum genus*). This elevated house of Virtus, reminiscent of the heaven in the *Somnium Scipionis* (cf. Cic. *Rep.* 6.25 *ipsa virtus trahat ad verum decus*), is a play on the high home of the wise, as described in Lucr. 2.8–9 *sapientem templum serena, despicere unde quaeas alios*; among later imitations of that passage, the most relevant here is *Ciris* 14–15 *si mihi iam summas sapientia panderet arces, unde hominum errores ... despicere ... posse m*, where *arx* is used in the same way (cf. also Ov. *Met.* 15.147ff. and Stat. *Silv.* 2.2.131 *celsa ... arce*). As Lyne *ad Ciris* 14 observes, Silius (with the poet of the *Ciris*) has combined the Lucretian description with the much older image in Hesiod of the house of Ἀρετή (≈ *Virtus*) that is situated on top of a hill, only to be reached by a long and steep path (Hes. *Erg.* 289ff.).
Now if *arx* has a double meaning here (both ‘acme’ and ‘high place’), and if that high place is the abode of the goddess Virtus, it should be noted that *arx* also often refers to heaven as the home of the gods. Scipio’s question relates to the same issue that Virtus speaks of: those who act according to their divine nature will reach heaven (15.77–78 *quis aetherii servatur seminis ortus, caeli porta patet*; cf. Verg. *A. 1.250 tua progenies, caeli quibus adnus arcem, 9.638 macte nova virtute, puer; sic itur ad astra, dis genite*). This is true for Hercules and Bacchus (15.78–81) and thus by implication also for those men of divine origin who are compared to them—Augustus at *A. 6.801–805*, Alexander and, more importantly, Scipio himself. As one son of a god to another, Alexander is to advise Scipio how to act upon his mother’s counsel *nec in caelum dubites te attollere factis*.  

772–773a *Thereupon he answers: ‘Cunning, slow warfare is disgraceful. You should finish a war with daring.*

Alexander’s exhortation seemingly contradicts the recommendation of caution by the elder Scipio at 670 *Martis moderare furori* (cf. Laudizi 1989: 133, Grebe 1989: 115–116), recalling the rashness that led to Flamininus’ and Varro’s defeat in earlier books, in total denial of the salutary effects of Fabian tactics (Ahl / Davis / Pomeroy 1986: 2551). It is true that Alexander’s words seem to challenge specifically the tactics employed by Fabius in book 7 (cf. Fucecchi 1993: 40), an interpretation which is corroborated by Silius’ phraseology in the rest of the *Punica*. Cunning in war, *sollertia Martis*, is also Hannibal’s trademark (6.309 *quem nunc penes est sollertia belli*), but cautious cunning belongs primarily with Fabius (7.125–126 *dilato Marte... sollers cunctandi Fabius*). The gerund at 7.126 (and also at 8.11 *lentando* and possibly 7.91–92 *arte / bellandi lento*) responds to Ennius’ famous praise of Fabius *cunctando restituit rem* (Enn. *Ann. 363*); Fucecchi (ibid.) is surely right in regarding *audendo* in the next line as Alexander’s substitute for Ennius’ gerund. Lastly, the word *lentus* characterizes Fabian tactics (7.15, 7.92, 8.324 and *lentando* cited above).

It is wrong, however, to equate caution to slowness, nor is swiftness equal to rashness; Fabius himself advocates swift action and an abandonment of his slow tactics when the situation calls for it (7.565, 7.593–594, 10.594–596; cf. Marks 2005: 24–25, 30–31, 34–36, Tipping 2010b: 171; see also n.669b–670). While Fabius’ tactics did save Rome, they cannot end the war, and finishing the war rather than merely staying alive is what Alexander’s counsel is about (cf. on *expedias* below; cf. also Scipio’s retort to Fabius at 16.672–676). Furthermore, a distinction should be made between battle tactics, which the words of Scipio’s father relate to, and war strategy, which is what is discussed here (Ripoll 1998a: 250 n.223). Alexander’s advice therefore does not contradict that of Scipio’s father, but complements it. The elder Scipio himself prompts his son to attack Carthago Nova at 15.180ff., a move in which the hero combines the caution recommended by his father with the daring and speed which Alexander advocates. The advice does entail an abandonment of Fabian warfare, but now that the tide is turning, the Romans should adopt a new, bolder strategy (cf. Fucecchi 1993: 40, 47; Marks 2005: 34 n.56); Laudizi (1989: 133–134, 1991: 14) notes that, like Alexander, Scipio is secure of divine favour (16.664–665, 670–672) and that delay (implied by Fabian tactics) would postpone the glory of victory.  

*expedias* Not merely ‘wage’, but ‘finish’, ‘see through’; *TLL 5.2.1608.11ff.* compares Amm. 22.9.2 *ad expedienda incidentia* and Don. *ad Aen. 5.285 expedito certamine.*
Alexander may imply that Fabian tactics (cunctando instead of audendo) were good enough for initial defence, but only boldness may end the war.

773b–774a Valour has never raised itself to the stars by being tardy.

astris Alexander responds to Scipio’s summas ... arces (cf. Blomgren 1938: 47–48). Delz and Blomgren adduce 3.594–595 se Curibus virtus caelestis ad astra / efferet, on the Flavian house; with the echo Silius draws a parallel between Alexander (modelled after Augustus) and Domitian. The use of the dative is surprising, since with efferre we would expect a preposition (ad, in, super) with the accusative (as at 3.594–595, 6.185–186 sub astra ... extulit ... caput, Stat. Theb. 6.93 extulerat super astra caput); but cf. perhaps Stat. Theb. 6.25–26 caelo Tithonia currus extulerat, Cypr. Num. 228–229 se tertius alto / lucifer extulerat caelo. The sole parallel cited in TLL 5.2.145.40ff. (Verg. Cat. 3.2) is probably rather an abl. of comparison. There is no need, however, to reject astris in favour of artis (read by Nic. Heinsius).

774b–775 You must precipitate the time to do great things: black death threatens as you act.

Just as Scipio’s father (669–671), Alexander’s draws on his own life for his advice, recommending not to put off action in view of his own premature death.

praecipita With a object of time, this verb often means ‘hurry towards the end of’ (cf. TLL 10.2.1.468.49ff., Verg. A. 8.443 praecipitate moras), but here the sense is rather ‘hurry to begin with’, i.e. Scipio should not postpone taking decisive action.

mors atra A frequent collocation, often of personified Death (e.g. Tib. 1.3.4–5); a good parallel is 6.53 plenos rictus mors atra teneret, where mors also governs the verb, but is not exactly personified (cf. also e.g. Stat. Silv. 2.1.154–155 mors ... exedit ... decus).

776–777 After these words he leaves. Presently the ghost of Croesus comes flying, a rich man in the upper world, but death had made him equal to the poor.

Croesus, the fabulously wealthy king of Lydia, was known both for his riches and for the fact that he lost it all when he was defeated by Cyrus (Hdt. 1.86). The immediate succession of Croesus to Alexander within the same line and the repetition of mors at 777 and 779 suggest that a comparison should be made between the two Greek kings (both, incidentally, adversaries of the Persians but with opposite outcomes; cf. Reitz 1982: 114 n.4). Kißel (1979: 177–178) thinks that the juxtaposition of Alexander and Croesus represents the antithesis of virtus and voluptas, which somewhat overstates the case (cf. Reitz 1982: 114 n.4); but I would agree with the underlying assumption that it is the value systems, or perhaps it is better to say the mindsets, of these kings which are being contrasted. The morale of Croesus’ story as it is commonly known (Hdt. 1.30–32) is that one should not praise a man before his death (since Croesus lost his wealth during life), but that is not what Silius focuses on; rather, Croesus gained nothing by hoarding gold and earthly riches, since death made him equal to the poor. Alexander, by seeking glory instead, still remains the model general after his death (768–769). Glory is presented as the only thing worth pursuing, since it lasts after death (cf. 664–665).

Line 777 has the quality of a sententia, with the antithesis dives and egenis enclosing the other contrasting pair apud superos (‘among the living’) and mors.

advolat I.e. ‘glided towards them’ (like a shade); as Spaltenstein notes, the connotation of speed is not present here. For shades, the verb volitare is normally used; cf. 1.97, 13.524,
Notes to 762–805

Lucr. 4.65, Verg. A. 6.293, Luc. 7.180, Petron. frg. 43.1 (Müller). For volare, cf. the imago of Scipio at 17.538 campo fugiens volat ales imago (where the word is probably chosen to suggest speed).

apud superos ‘in the upper world’; cf. OLD s.v. 2b, and lines 607 (ad superos) and 665.

mors aequarat egenis In Latin literature, Croesus is used both as an example of the vicissitudes of fortune and as an eponym for ‘rich man’ (see Otto s.v. Croesus). The notion that wealth and power do not count after death is a familiar topos (e.g. Pl. Trin. 493–494, Hor. Carm. 1.4.13–14, 2.18.32–34, Sen. Ep. 91.16); at Prop. 3.5.17, Croesus shares his place in the underworld with Irus (the beggar from the Odyssey) as representatives of the rich and the poor (for the same pair cf. Ov. Tr. 3.7.42 and Mart. 5.39.8–9).

778–791

atque hic Elysio tendentem limite cernens
effigiem iuvenis, caste cui vitta ligabat
purpurea effusos per colla nitentia crines
‘dic,’ ait ‘hic quinam, virgo? nam luce refulget
praecipua frons sacra viro, multaeque sequuntur
mirantes animae et laeto clamore frequentant.
qui vultus! quem, si Stygia non esset in umbra,
dixissem facile esse deum.’ ‘non falleris;’ inquit
docta comes Triviae ‘meruit deus esse videri,
et fuit in tanto non parvum pectore numen.
carmine complexus terram, mare, sidera,
et cantu Musas et Phoebum aequavit honore.
atque haec cuncta, prius quam cerneret, ordine terris
prodidit ac vestram tulit usque ad sidera Troiam.’

778–780 And now, seeing a shade moving along the path from Elysium, whose hair, flowing over his shining shoulders, was chastely bound with a gleaming fillet, the young man said...

The description of Homer (whose name is not given, and whose identity is only revealed at 790–791) combines that of several figures in Vergil’s Elysium. Obviously, the first candidates for comparison are the singers there: i) Orpheus (6.645–647), who, like Homer here, does not speak, and who is also presented as a sacerdos (6.645; see on vitta purpurea below); ii) the general reference to the sacerdotes casti and pii vates in Elysium (A. 6.661–662; cf. caste at 779), whose heads are girt with a nivea ... vitta (see also below on vitta purpurea); iii) the bard Musaeus, who is surrounded by a great host (6.667–668 medium ... plurima turba hunc habet) of animae (6.669); cf. here 782–783 multaeque sequuntur mirantes animae.


\[
\text{atque hic Aeneas (una namque ire videbat)} \\
\text{egregium forma iuvenem et fulgentibus armis,} \\
\text{sed frons laeta parum et deiecto lumina vultu} \\
\text{‘quis, pater, ille, virum qui sic comitatur euntem?}
\]
filius, anne aliquis magna de stirpe nepotum? 
quid strepitus circa comitum! quantum instar in ipso! 
sed nox atra caput tristi circumvolat umbra.' 

“At this Aeneas said—for by his side he saw a youth of passing beauty in resplendent arms, but with joyless mien and eyes downcast: ‘Who, father, is he that thus attends the warrior on his way? Is it his son, or some other of his progeny’s heroic line? What a stir among his entourage! What majesty is his! But death’s dark shadow flickers mournfully about his head.’”

Both Scipio’s vision of Homer and Aeneas’ sighting of Marcellus are introduced with atque hic (778; A. 6.860); both heroes view the shade as it walks (778 tendentem ... cernens, A. 6.860 ire videbat). Other shared aspects are their ‘shining’ appearance (780 colla nitentia, 781 luce refuget; A. 6.861 fulgentibus armis), the attention to their countenance (782 frons sacra, A. 6.862 frons laeta parum), the heroes’ question after their identity (781 hic quinam, virgo, A. 6.862 quis, pater, ille), followed by an exclamation (784 qui vultus, A. 6.865 qui strepitus; the noise of the companions itself here returns at 783 laeto clamore); Silius’ praecipua (782) possibly responds to Vergil’s egregium (6.861). For iuvenis see below.

Silius’ Homer is thus clearly based upon Vergil’s famous encomium; and yet nearly every element is inverted (see also An. 762–805 with fn.38). Vergil’s tragic figure of the future is replaced with a successful poet from the past (cf. Reitz ibid.); the scene conveys joy, not pessimism. Marcellus’ frons laeta parum is answered with the laeto clamore of Homer’s retinue. Whereas Aeneas contrasts Marcellus’ presence with his gloom (umbra) around his head, ending on a negative note, the climax is far more positive with Scipio’s inverted exclamation that if Homer had not been in the Stygian gloom (umbra), he would have thought him a god. Silius’ adaptation extends to the rest of the scene. Marcellus is tragic because fate will only allow that he be “shown to the world” before death will take him; Scipio will call Achilles blessed, however, for the same thing, for being “shown to the nations” (A. 6.869–870 ostendent terris hunc tantum fata nec ultra esse sinent ~ 796–797 cui ... contigit ... gentibus ostendi)—by a poet like Homer. Silius suggests that poets make all the difference, and from this new perspective Marcellus should perhaps also be called blessed for having a Vergil. Silius has thus turned Vergil’s tragic encomium of a (future) leader into an joyous encomium of poetry. The only negative echo may be Scipio’s futile wish that Fate would allow Homer to sing Roman deeds (793 si nunc fata darent ~ A. 6.869–870 ... fata nec ultra esse sinent; Hardie 2004: 152 compares rather A. 6.882 si qua fata aspera rumpas); in both cases fate cannot be altered, but Silius implicitly offers an alternative for Homer, viz. Roman poetry and his own epic project. See Intr. 762–805 and on effigiem iuvenis below.

At least one more model (and perhaps the most surprising) for Silius’ Homer may be discerned, which has no direct Vergilian counterpart: v) the god Bacchus (see below on vitta ... purpurea and effusos per colla ... crines). This anticipates Scipio’s statement that he might easily mistake the man for a god, and points to the message of this scene: by raising their characters to heaven, the poets themselves come to resemble the gods. See also Intr. 762–805 for a comparison with another deified hero, Herakles in Homer’s own Nekyia.

Elysio ... limite I.e. ‘the path from Elysium’; the words echo the description of the gate leading to Elysium at 551–552 quae secreti per limitis umbram Elysios ducunt campos (see
n. ad loc.). Spaltenstein comments on the incongruity of Homer’s presence in Elysium with 537–539, where poets were allotted their own gate. Moreover, here Scipio can presumably see Homer coming along this path, whereas the Sibyl’s description of the ten gates suggests that those parts of the underworld are not visible to Scipio. Silius clearly accepted these minor inconsistencies to include the allusion to Marcellus and the other figures in Vergil’s Elysium.

**effigiem iuvenis** The status of *iuvenis* is not immediately clear. Most modern scholars take it as a genitive with *effigiem*, and indeed the intertextuality with Vergil’s Marcellus (*A. 6.860–861 atque hic Aeneas (una namque ire videbat / egregium forma iuvenem*) might recommend it, even if it is unexpected that Homer, “that hoary figure of antiquity” (Hardie 2004: 152) would be presented as a youth here. It is more likely, however, a nominative as a reference to Scipio: i) Homer is a *vir* (782, and perhaps 800), whereas Scipio is always a *iuvenis*; ii) after Alexander and Croesus, Scipio needs to be re-established as the subject; throughout the *Nekyia*, Silius consistently marks topic switches explicitly, and for Scipio always with *Scipio* or *iuvenis*. A stylistic consideration may be that the two nouns, one accusative, one nominative case, balance the participles of 778 *tendentem* and *cernens*. This leaves two main objections. One is that *effigiem* is left rather isolated; but cf. e.g. the sign ‘Phantom’ at Germ. *Arat. 65 haud procul effigies*, which is introduced in a similar way. The other is of course the connection with Marcellus; but for that, we should consider the scene as a whole. The tragic aspect of Marcellus is his unfulfilled potential, cut short by his premature death. This same theme is here raised by Alexander as he urges Scipio to perform great deeds before death will take him (774–775). But every reader will know that Scipio will live to see his great victory; as a *iuvenis*, he is just as much a *spes patriae* as Marcellus, but more favoured by fate.

**vitta ... purpurea** The colour is unexpected, since with priests and poets, white fillets are more common (cf. e.g. *nivea* at Verg. *A. 6.665, Ov. Met. 13.643, Stat. Theb. 3.467*). But purple *vittae* figure also at *Ciris 511, Sen. Thy. 686, Stat. Theb. 2.738* (purple-and-white), *Silv. 2.7.9* and *Ach. 1.611* (and also the attire of the *flaminica Dialis*; cf. Fest. s.v. *tutulus*).

The connotation of *purpureus* of ‘radiant’, ‘gleaming’ is also present (cf. Reitz 1982: 116). The colour refers to the typical shine of things in Elysium (cf. *A. 6.640–641 lumine ... purpureo*); the same goes for *nitentia* (cf. *A. 6.677 camposque nitentis*). Furthermore, it stresses Homer’s semi-divine appearance: i) the purple fillets are associated with Liber at Stat. *Silv. 2.7.9* (see Van Dam *ad loc; see for that poem also n.781–783*) and *Ach. 1.611*, where Achilles is even likened to the god; ii) *purpureus* is often used to describe a radiant divine presence (see n.781–783 *luce refuglet*); see also Silius’ description of Liber in the foll. n.

Lastly, cf. the *purpureos ... flores* that Anchises will strew to honour Marcellus (*A. 6.884*).

**effusos per colla ... crines** These lines, and this phrase in particular, closely resemble Silius’ description of Bacchus as he manifests his godhood at 7.194–196 *inde nitentem / lumine purpureo frontem cinxere corymbi, et fusae per colla comae*; compare also Bacchus’ *effusos ... crines* at Sen. *Her.F. 471–472* and *Oed. 416*. Hair that flows over the shoulders is also typical of his Maenads (Catul. 64.391 *Thyiadas effusis ... crinibus, Ov. Ars 3.784, Fast. 6.514*), of nymphs (Verg. *G. 4.337*), and of ephebes (16.519–521 *Theronis fusam late per lactea colla / ... comam, Stat. Theb. 5.220–221 per colla refusis ... comis*).
Tell me, maiden, who is this man? For his sacred brow shines with a special light, and many souls follow him in adoration and accompany him with happy cries.

The deceased poet is accompanied by a host of spirits (like Musaeus in Vergil, see n.778–780). Since the encounter with Homer is immediately followed by the sighting of the Homeric heroes, it is plausible that it is they who are intended here as his infernal audience (see n.798–799 gratantum). This is much like Statius’ presentation of another deceased poet—Lucan—in the nether world at Silv. 2.7.113–115, who is there accompanied by his characters, the Pompei and Catones. Statius’ Lucan, like Homer, is sacer (2.7.116) and sacerdos (2.7.23); other correspondences are frequentant (see below) and purpureas ... vittas (see the n. above).


luce refuglet The radiance of divine presence (cf. 640 luce corusca); cf. with the same line ending Aeneas at A. 1.588–589 claraque in luce refulsit / os umerosque deo similis (and 590–591 lumenque inuentae / purpureum), Venus at A. 2.591 pura ... in luce refulisit and Bacchus at Stat. Theb. 5.267 multa subitus cum luce refulisit; cf. also Ov. Fast. 6.251–252 caelestia numina sensi, / laetaeque purpurea luce refulisit humus.

frons sacra The poet is priest of the Muses (cf. 9.340; Spaltenstein ad loc. addsuces Verg. G. 2.476 and sacerdos for the poet at A. 6.645, Hor. Carm. 3.1.3, Prop. 3.1.3; cf. also Stat. Silv. 2.7.24).

frequentant At A. 6.478 the same verb is used for the Homeric warriors crowding the furthest regions of the nether world (arva ... ultima). Here these same ghosts ‘crowd around’ Homer, suggesting that their home is wherever their creator goes. Cf. the honour paid by the living to the deceased Lucan at Stat. Silv. 2.7.1 and 2.7.126; Van Dam ad loc. notes that frequento is both ‘attend’ and ‘celebrate’, ‘cherish’ (cf. gratantum at 798). For other instances of the verb with a person as object see TLL 6.1.1309.23ff.

What a face! That man, if he would not be in the Stygian darkness, I would easily have declared to be a god.

For the discrepancy between Homer’s appearance and his ghostly status, see Van der Keur 2014: 301–303 and Intr. 762–805.

qui vultus Cf. Verg. A. 6.865 qui strepitus circa comitum!, part of Aeneas’ words on Marcellus (whose vultus is described a few lines earlier: 862 deiecto lumina vultu).

Stygia ... in umbra The collocation is usually plural (often Stygius ad umbra, ‘to the shades / the underworld’); cf. 5.617 and e.g. Ov. Met. 1.139. The only parallels for the singular are 5.597 and 9.45; in both cases umbra is ‘darkness’, as here.

denum Scipio’s statement matches the description at 778ff., with its phraseology that is borrowed from portrayals of (e.g.) Bacchus; see n.778–780 and 781–783 luce refulget.

‘You are not mistaken,’ Trivia’s learned disciple replies, ‘he has deserved to seem a god, and no small deity housed in his great breast.

non falleris Cf. Ov. Met. 13.644, where Anius (called Phoebi lecte sacerdos in 640; cf. docta comes Triviae) answers Anchises with the same phrase in the same metrical position.

docta comes Triviae Cf. A. 6.292 docta comes (sc. Aeneae), also of the Sibyl; Austin ad loc. adduces the use of doctus for Tiresias (Ov. Met. 3.322), Carmentis (Ov. Fast. 1.499) and Amphiaraurus (Stat. Theb. 1.1398). The Sibyl is both Apollo’s prophetess and the keeper
of the dead, the domain of Hecate (Trivia); cf. her introduction in the Aeneid as Phebi Triviaeque sacerdos (A. 6.35). comes may be a reminiscence of A. 6.564–565, where she professes that Hecate herself guided her through the nether realm (cf. 6.565 docuit). It is in this capacity of divinely instructed sage that the Sibyl can comment upon ghosts such as that of Homer (even though in ‘reality’ she died earlier than most of the shades Scipio encounters).

meruit deus esse videri The words echo Lucretius’ eulogy of Epicurus at 5.19 merito nobis deus esse videtur; both poets pay homage to the Greek who stood at the basis of their respective subjects (for this is Homer’s underworld; see n.790–791 haec cuncta); see Van der Keur 2014: 288–289. For the same thought of human discoveries equalling divine benefactions, see Man. 1.28–29.

numen Possibly the genius that every man has (so Duff), but also evoking the god that possesses a vates (both prophets and poets); cf. the Pythia at Luc. 5.163 insueto concepitispectore numen, the Sibyl at Verg. A. 6.78–79 magnum sipectorepossit / excussisse deum.

788–789 With his poetry he encompassed the earth, the sea, the stars, the shades, and he equalled the Muses in song and Phoebus in glory.

The phrase which describes Homer’s poetic achievement, “encompassing” the world with his song, echoes Silius’ earlier description of the (Homeric) shield of Achilles; cf. 7.121–122 clipeoamplexus terramquepolumque / maternunquetotumqueminagine mundum, “bearing on his shield the earth and the heavens and his mother’s ocean—the whole world in pictures” (trans. Littlewood 2011). The description is part of a simile which depicts Hannibal as Achilles. Since in the present passage it is Scipio who hopes to be sung in epic like Achilles was (796–797), the echo illustrates the rivalry which Silius establishes between Hannibal and Scipio in their claim to being the epic successor to Homer’s protagonist.

complexus For complector in this sense (‘cover’, ‘encompass’) see TLL 3.2087.21ff. (of authors) and 3.2087.21ff. (of texts); cf. also Sen. Ep. 88.40 bellum Troianum complexus est, also of Homer. For other poets compare also Verg. G. 2.42 (non ego cunctameis amplecti versibusopto) and Stat. Silv. 5.3.100 omnia namque animocomplexus. In the context of Verg. l.c., Morgan (1999: 72) offers an interesting analogy between Homer and Oceanus, the river which encircles the world.

terram, mare, sidera, manes Lucretius describes his subject matter as the origins of terramacluamare siderasolem / lunaiqueglobum (5.68–69), with which he follows in the footsteps of Epicurus, whom he had just declared a god; in his encomium of Homer, Silius here pointedly adds manes (absent also at 7.121–122 cited above), the realm of the underworld that is being described in this book; the point is stressed at 790. For the implied ‘correction’ of Lucretius (who had taken fault with Homer for misleading mankind with his descriptions of a non-existing underworld), see Van der Keur 2014: 289. The exact phrasing (excepting manes) is adopted from imitations of Lucretius at Verg. A. 12.197–200 haec eadem ... terram mare sideraiuro and Ov. Met. 1.180 terram, mare, sideramovit.

In his knowledge of the cosmos, Homer rivals Orpheus (the bard in Vergil’s Elysium), who sings of its creation at A.R. 1.496ff. (496 γαῖα καὶ οὐρανὸς ἥδε θῆλασσα and at 500 ἀστρα); cf. also the singers Silenus at Ecl. 6.31ff. (emulating Orpheus, cf. 6.30), Iopas at A. 1.740ff. and Teuthras (or, if Delz is right, Orpheus himself) at Sil. 11.453ff.; see Deremetz 1995: 471.
Manuwald (2007: 84) argues that these words refer to “the three levels of the world (heaven, earth and underworld)”, *sidera* being the “level of the gods”. But the actual phrasing counters that interpretation: i) at Lucr. *l.c.*, *sidera* refers to the sky as merely one part of the material world; ii) we would then expect the common order heaven – earth/sea – underworld; iii) the presence of *four* elements makes a reference to three levels unlikely.

**cantu Musas et Phoebum aequavit honore** Equalling the Muses is here the ultimate praise. Duff’s “rivalled” for *aequavit* carries the unwanted overtone of competition; the sense here is rather that Homer attained the highest level of competence, which Silius also attributes to Vergil at 8.592–593 *Mantua, Musarum domus atque ad sidera cantu / evecta Aonio*, who ‘matches Homer’s lyre’ (593). The only one to receive even higher praise, from Jupiter himself, is the emperor-poet Domitian, who will be lauded by the Muses and admired by Phoebus for his song, with which he surpasses Orpheus (3.619–621).

790–791 **And all this here, before he saw it, he revealed to the earth and he took your Troy to the stars.**

These lines allude to Homer’s two epics (cf. also n.800–803): 790 on the *Nekyia* in the *Odyssey* (see on *haec cuncta*), 791 on Troy which was immortalized in the *Iliad*. Silius effectively summarizes the breadth of Homer’s legacy for his own poetry. The word *ordine*, referring to the poetic arrangement of subject matter, is shared with two passages in the *Aeneid* where Vergil engages with the Homeric heritage: Verg. *A*. 1.456 *Iliacas ex ordine pugnas* (the scenes from the *Iliad* on the relief in Carthage) and 8.629 *pugnataque in ordine bella* (the shield of Aeneas, Vergil’s emulation of the Homeric shield of Achilles).

**haec cuncta** Broadly speaking, all parts of the world as named at 788, but particularly the last item, the *manes*; Silius’ (Vergilian) Sibyl effectively states that everything Scipio has seen, or indeed the entire concept of the *Nekyia*, is Homer’s legacy; see Intr. 762–805.

**prius quam cerneret** Probably not a play on Homer’s reported blindness (cf. Spaltenstein, Manuwald 2007: 84), for would Silius then not have written ‘although he could not see it’? The clause is better explained as a reminiscence of Ennius, who states at *Ann*. 211–212 that nobody has seen (*vidit*) wisdom in his dreams *prius quam sam discere coepit*, “before he starts to study it”, a defence against detractors to the effect that Ennius did not receive poetic inspiration merely by seeing Homer in a dream, but that he had that inspiring dream because he was actively studying poetry (Skutsch *ad loc.*). Silius’ praise is its opposite: Homer is lauded exactly because of his poetic inspiration, which enabled him to ‘see’ before seeing, i.e. to describe the underworld (*haec cuncta*) before coming there as a ghost.

**vestram tulit usque ad sidera Troiam** A deliciously Roman approach to reading the *Iliad*. By (p)raising Troy to heaven, Homer has done for the metropolis of Rome what Ennius will do for the Romans (12.411 *attolletque duces caelo*) and indeed what Silius himself is doing now: cf. 1.1–2 *ordior arma, quibus caelo se gloria tollit / Aeneadum* (cf. Reitz 1982: 117; see Intr. 762–805 fn.24).

Poets often play with the ambiguity of ‘reaching heaven’ (see n.634–636 *in caelum ... te attollere factis*; Hardie *ad* Verg. *A*. 9.641–642). On the one hand it refers to fame reaching sky-high, the kind of immortality which poetry can bestow; on the other, poetry may also promise actual apotheosis to its characters. The fame and immortality which epic heroes pursue is closely bound to the poems in which they are sung. Pomponia had tasked her son
with seeking heaven at 635; the phraseology here and Scipio’s wish for a Homer at 793–
795 suggest that we should assume a direct relation between the hero’s quest for heaven
and the poet’s own activity. There is also a connection between the glory of the epic city
and that of the epic hero. Scipio easily passes from the city which was made famous by
Homer’s Iliad (Troy) to an encomium of that poem’s protagonist, Achilles (796–797); in
the Punica, the glory of Rome (announced in the proem, 1.1–2; cf. also 3.163–164, 7.94–
95) is similarly connected to, or culminates in, the glory (and promise of deification) of
Scipio. See for a more detailed discussion of these points Van der Keur 2014: 297–300.

792–797
Scipio perlustrans oculis laetantibus umbram
‘si nunc fata darent, ut Romula facta per orbem
hic caneret vates, quanto maiora futuros
facta eadem intrarent hoc’ inquit ‘teste nepotes!
795
felix Aeacide, cui tali contigit ore
gentibus ostendi! crevit tua carmine virtus.’

792 Scipio, looking with joyful eyes at the ghost, says...
perlustrans oculis laetantibus
Cf. 2.405 lustrat ovans oculis, of Hannibal’s joy over
his shield, which displays the foundation of Carthage (405 *gaudetque origine regnit*), just
as Scipio is here looking at the glorifier of his nation’s origin, Troy. The expression
(per)lustrare oculis is used both for close inspection and for scanning a larger region; cf. in
1647.

793–795 If Fate would give that this poet now would sing Roman deeds throughout the
world, how much greater these same deeds would come to future descendants, if Homer
testified to them!

The idea that song aggrandizes heroic deeds is very old, as is the claim that song has
more lasting glorifying power than monuments; in Latin poetry, the latter topos is found
already at Enn. Ann. 404–406 (see Suerbaum 1968: 151ff.; for early Greek examples, such
as Pind. Nem. 4.6–8 and Pyth. 6, see Suerbaum p.328–329) and is best known from Verg.
G. 3.10–48, Hor. Carm. 3.30, Prop. 3.2.17–26 and Ov. Met. 15.871ff. While Silius makes
no explicit mention of monuments, this passage focuses on visual aspects (cf. e.g. 792
perlustrans, 797 ostendi; cf. Bettini 1977: 145), and indeed, a poetic monument is hidden in
intertextuality, viz. the temple reliefs in Carthage in Aeneid 1. When Scipio hopes that
Homer would sing of Roman facta in a new epic throughout the world (*per orbem*), we may
think of Aeneas’ review of this relief, which depicts the Iliadic war (Verg. A. 1.457
bellaque iam fama totum vulgata per orbem) and is in essence a monument to Homer’s
already celebrated (‘first’) epic. The same scene is evoked at 800ff. when Scipio, like
Aeneas, views the Homeric characters (see n.800–803 stupet). Both heroes (with their
poets) engage with the Homeric legacy before setting out to do their own epic deeds. See in
detail Van der Keur 2014: 293–296.

Silius comments upon the immortality which poets offer at 4.396–400, where he
glorifies Roman triplets who closely resemble the Horatii in Livy. The primary model for
that passage, and also an intertext here, is Vergil’s self-referential promise of immortality for Nisus and Euryalus; cf. A. 9.446 fortunati ambo and 4.396 felices leti, but also here 796 felix Aeacide; (Hardie ad 9.446–449 also adduces Luc. 9.980–986, V.Fl. 2.242–246 and Stat. Theb. 10.445–448; cf. also Prop. 3.2.17 fortunata). For the same theme, cf. also Hor. Carm. 4.8 and especially 4.9, which reiterates that the participants of the Trojan war would be unknown but for Homer. See also n.796–797.

The reference to nepotes at 795 suggests through intertextuality that Silius is hinting at the power of his own epic here (see also Intr. 762–805); compare 4.399–400 si modo ferre diem serosque videre nepotes / carmina nostra valent and Prop. 3.1.35 meque inter seros laudabit Roma nepotes, in a poem which glorifies poetry’s power to immortalize both its subjects and its creator and draws the comparison between Homer’s poetry and Propertius’ own (cf. with similar diction and tenor also Ov. Pont. 3.2.35–36).

si nunc fata darent For the echo of Vergil’s Marcellus, see n.778–780.

Romula facta Silius uses the adjective Romuleus far more often; for Romulus, cf. 16.793, Prop. 3.11.52, Hor. Saec. 46, Carm. 4.5.1, and more strictly of Romulus himself at Prop. 4.4.26, Ov. Fast. 2.412. While Romul(e)us often just means ‘Roman’, it probably also alludes to the founder of Rome, thus combining (with Troy at 791) “both elements that Roman tradition claimed as crucial components of Rome’s foundation” (Manuwald 2007: 85). The same combination is made at Verg. A. 6.875–877, where Marcellus is said to be the foremost hope of the Trojan and Latin peoples, and the pride of Romulus’ land (Romula ... tellus, with the same epithet; for the echoes of Marcellus, see n.778–780).

By labelling the Roman achievements as facta, Scipio effectively marks them as epic deeds, worthy of their own epic poem; Tipping (2010b: 156 n.74) usefully points to the meta-epic connotations of facta as the subject matter of epic, aducing e.g. Lucr. 5.238, V.Fl. 1.11–12 and Stat. Silv. 1.97. His suggestion (p.174) that Romula facta also evokes Romulus’ fratricide (thus problematizing Scipio’s wish that Homer would sing his city’s glory) seems far-fetched, however.

per orhem ... caneret Homer’s song would reach the whole world; the epic which Scipio asks for cannot fail to be successful. The phrase canere per orhem is part of a whole nexus of statements by Latin poets about the future of their own poetry; see Van der Keur 2014: 294 with n.25.

intrarent TLL 7.2.63.35ff. compares Ov. Fast. 5.31 intravit mentes suspexit honorum and more literal instances of ‘enter (the mind, ears etc.)’, but I agree with Spaltenstein that the sense must rather be ‘passed down to’, ‘reach’, for which there seem to be no parallels.

796–797 Blessed Achilles, who had the fortune to be shown to the world by such a voice! Your virtue has been enlarged by his song.

As has often been noted (see the bibliography in Marks 2005: 145 n.84), this remark alludes to the words of Alexander during his visit to Achilles’ tomb, quoted by Cicero at Arch. 24 as “o fortunate ... adulescens, qui tuae virtutis Homerum praecenem inveneris!” (cf. Arr. An. 1.12.1, Plut. Alex. 15.8). By wishing to imitate Achilles, Scipio thus styles himself after Alexander, just as Silius presents himself as Homer’s Roman counterpart; see the discussion in Intr. 762–805. Silius may have thought specifically of Cicero’s rendering, while distributing its various elements over multiple sentences; cf. 795 hoc teste (~
praeconem, κῆρυξ in Arrian and Plutarch), 796 the vocative felix (~ fortunate), 797 virtus. Cf. also Vergil’s fortunati ambo (see n.793–795), where the subjects of song are called happy precisely because their deeds are immortalized by it.

Alexander claimed descent from Achilles through his mother Olympias, of the royal house of Epirus. Achilles was also adopted as a role model by some of his other descendants, such as Pyrrhus (15.292) and his grandson, the young Hieronymus of Syracuse (14.95 aeternus carmine Achilles; for the similar emphasis there on the hero’s debt to his poet, cf. Theocritus’ Idyll 16, which likens Hiero II to Achilles). The fact that these are both autocrats and enemies of Rome has led Tipping (2010b: 174) to submit that Scipio here “places himself in some deeply undesirable company”; but the hero’s characterisation elsewhere suggests otherwise. At 15.274–276, Laelius positively compares him with the heroes of Homer’s epic and states that through his pietas, Scipio outshines their glory and prowess celebrated in song:

\[
macte, o venerande, pudici, \\
ductor, macte animi. cedat tibi gloria lausque \\
magnorum heroum celebrataque carmine virtus. \\
\]

“Be blessed, venerable leader, for your chaste heart, be blessed. Before you the glory and praise of great heroes and their virtue celebrated in song must bow.”

Apart from the line ending carmine virtus, compare also the recurrence of heroum at 799 and of venerandus at 801. While Scipio in our passage models himself after Achilles, he will eventually surpass this exemplar; cf. Ripoll 1998a: 464 with n.189, Marks 2005: 145 n.86 and 2010b: 194.

gentibus ostendi Another verbal play with Vergil’s description of Marcellus (see n.778–780), who is said to be ‘merely shown’ to the world by fate (A. 6.869 ostendent terris hunc tantum fata). Silius adapts the phrase to fit his own message: it is the presentation (the ‘showing’) by Homer that ensured Achilles’ fame.

crevit tua carmine virtus The language ties in with earlier expressions of the vitalizing power of poetry, such as Ov. Pont. 4.8–47 carmine fit vivax virtus, of the glory of Germanicus; cf. also (of the poet’s own fame) Pont. 4.2.35–36 laudataque virtus / crescit and Hor. Carm. 3.30.7–8 ego postera / crescam laude recens.

798–805
sed, quae tanta adeo gratantum turba, requirens, heroum effigies maioresque accipit umbras. invicto stupet Aeacide, stupet Hectore magno Aiacisque gradum venerandaque Nestoris ora miratur, geminos adspectat laetus Atridas iamque Ithacum corde aequantem Peleia facta. victuram hinc cernit Ledaei Castoris umbram; alternam lucem peragebat in aethere Pollux. 800

798–799 But when he asks what that great host of so joyous spirits is, he learns that they are the shades of heroes and older ghosts. gratantum Several editors have adopted Lefebvre’s conjecture grassantum, but the mss. reading gratantum looks back to 783 laeto clamore and Scipio’s words on Achilles;
Notes to 762–805

Homer is accompanied by grateful spirits, because they owe their fame to him. For the absolute use of grator cf. (with TLL 6.2.2244.43ff.) Ov. Met. 7.142, 7.162 and Stat. Theb. 11.7. The sense in those parallels is ‘happy’; here the overtone ‘grateful’ is also present.

Silius here follows the Iliadic ideal of κλέος rather than its revaluation at Odyssey 11.489–491, where Achilles’ ghost rejects Odysseus’ congratulation and says that he would rather be a poor man, but alive, than a king among the dead. Here, on the other hand, the ghosts (Achilles first) are happy even in the underworld because Homer granted them the glory they sought (cf. also lines 664–665). Scipio shares their sentiment (802 laetus); immortality through fame has in the previous lines been (re)asserted as the epic ideal by Alexander and by Scipio himself, who eulogizes Achilles exactly because of his Homeric fame. The correspondence between his joy at sighting the poet (cf. 792 oculis laetantibus) and that of the Iliadic warriors (783 laeto clamore) emphasizes Scipio’s own status as a literary character.

heroum effigies This picks up effigiem iuvenis at 779 (just as gratantum looks back, see n. above); Homer and his characters are closely connected. See also n.800–803 stupet.

maiores … umbras Probably both ‘older shades’ (cf. Reitz 1982: 118 n.1), i.e. older than Homer (from the mythical age) and ‘greater’, as the characters of a great poet (cf. 409 maiore vate, for Vergil’s Sibyl).

800–803 He marvels at invincible Achilles, marvels at the great Hector and admires the stride of Aiax and the venerable face of Nestor, and looks with joy at the two sons of Atreus and also the man of Ithaca, who equalled with his mind the deeds of Peleus’ son.

Silius starts with Achilles, whose μῆνις is the theme of the Iliad, and ends with Odysseus, whose title Ithacus is suggestive of the Odyssey; the poet thus frames this list with a reference to both Homeric epics (cf. also n.790–791). That Odysseus ‘equals’ Achilles (aequantem) also reflects their shared status as protagonists in the epics. The epithets of the heroes go back to their Homeric counterparts (Juhnke 1972: 291 with nn.); this, too, suggests that they are here as the characters of Homer (cf. Reitz 1982: 119).

invicto The mss. read ire viro stupet Aeacide, which makes no sense. Housman (Class. Papers p.906) argues that the words be kept, but with a different punctuation (as printed by Delz), taking the first two words with the preceding lines, so that viro refers to Homer. The construction of ire with a dative would mean “move towards” (cf. for persons 15.327 ire sorori, Prop. 1.15.8 ire viro, 1.20.32, 4.1.148; see also TLL 5.2.640.21–30); the problem with that reading, however, is that we expect the sense “accompany” instead (cf. 782–783 sequuntur … frequentant); the host of followers is already with Homer. Summers’ conjecture ire virum (for virorum; defended by Häkanson; cf. Reitz 1982: 118 n.1) would make virum the attribute of umbras, which already has an attribute in maiores. Ker (1967: 27) would read ire viros, to which effigies and umbras would be an “anticipated apposition”; but to end a sentence with a generic word (viros), after a more specific apposition, seems weak and unnatural. It is better to adopt Thilo’s conjecture invicto. The adjective assigned to Achilles then balances Hector’s epithet at the end of the line; while it also results in the loss of a reference to Homer, the transition from poet to retinue is implied in gratantum (“grateful ghosts”). The epithet invictus also underscores the parallelism between Achilles and Scipio; Silius picks up Ennius’ address Scipio invicte (Var. 3 Vahlen) at 17.651 salve, invicte parens.
So does Aeneas marvel (A. 1.495 stupet) at the relief in Carthage which displays the events of the Trojan war; cf. also 802 miratur ~ A. 1.456 miratur, 792 perlustrans ~ A. 1.453 lustrat. The protagonists of both Vergil and Silius look admiringly at images (799 effigies) of Homer’s cast of characters, i.e. the epic tradition in which they stand; see n.793–795.

Aeacide ... Hector magno The champions of both sides in the Iliad are here juxtaposed. For Hector magnus, cf. Verg. A. 6.166, Ov. Met. 12.446–447, Sen. Tro. 322, 784, Aetna 593, Stat. Silv. 1.1.13, 2.2.77, 5.3.78–79; cf. also Homer’s μέγας κορυθαίολος Ἕκτωρ (e.g. II. 2.816) and II. 11.58 Ἕκτορά ... μέγαν. The epithet is more frequent for Achilles (cf. e.g. 11.450).

Aiacisque gradum Possibly a reference to II. 7.214 μακρὰ βιβάς, one of Aias’ most notable appearances in the Iliad, his entry into his duel with Hector; Spaltenstein adduces Aias’ more general characterisation as a swift runner at II. 14.520ff. Compare also Hor. Carm. 1.15.18–19 celerem sequi Aiacem. Another, less preferable option is to think of the ‘lesser’ Aias, son of Oileus, whose stock epithet is ταχύς (e.g. Il. 2.528, 10.111, 13.67).

venerandaque Nestoris ora Nestor is proverbial in Latin literature for his age (cf. Otto Nestor 1), which veneranda may point to (Spaltenstein; cf. 2.409 iustae Bitia venerande senectae, Luc. 9.987, 10.323). Spaltenstein’s suggestion that ora draws focus to Nestor’s famous rhetorical skill is also attractive; cf. for his mellifluousness 15.455–456, Il. 1.248–249 Νέστορ ἡδυεπὴς (Cic. Sen. 31), Laus Pisonis 64, Plin. Ep. 4.3.3, Otto s.v. 2 (and for garrulity possibly Mart. 3.28.2) and wisdom Hom. Il. 7.325, 9.95, Od. 24.53, Ov. Ars 2.736, Ilias 176 fidus sollerti pectore, Stat. Silv. 5.3.191–192; for venerandus as ‘worthy to listen to’, cf. Luc. 2.530 veneranda voce.

geminos ... Atridas A Vergilian phrase; cf. A. 2.414–415, 2.499–500 vidi ipse ... geminosque in limine Atridas, 8.130, Stat. Ach. 1.467–468; with the exception of A. 8.130, the two sons of Atreus are mentioned in conjunction with other Greek warriors, as here.

Ithacum The reference to Ithaca is suggestive of Odysseus’ nostos; see above. The word is frequently used for Odysseus; cf. e.g. 2.180, 2.183, 13.48, Verg. A. 2.104.

corde aequantem ... facta cor is here the seat of wisdom; Odysseus is as wise in council, and as crafty, as Achilles is skilful on the battlefield; cf. Il. 19.217–219 κρείσσων εἰς ἐμέθεν καὶ φέρτερος οὐκ ἐλλογίν περ / ἑγχει, ἐγὼ δὲ κε σεό νοήματι γε προβαλοίμην / πολλόν, ἐπεὶ πρότερος γενόμην καὶ πλέιονα οἶδα, “better are you than I and mightier not a little with the spear, but in counsel I would surpass you by far, since I am the elderborn and know the more”.

Peleia The patronymic is found only here and at Stat. Ach. 1.551 Peleius heros. In both cases the reference is to Peleus’ son Achilles.

804–805 Then he sees the ghost of Castor, Leda’s son, soon to return to life; Pollux was spending his turn of life in heaven.

In Homer (Od. 11.298ff.), Odysseus sees the shade of Leda, which occasions a comment by the narrator on her sons (see below). The Dioscuri are named also at Aeneid 6.121–122, as an example of men (more specifically descendants of Jupiter) who were able to return from the underworld. Scipio, also a son of Jupiter and also able to make a non-permanent visit to the dead, is compared to them a few times; cf. 633 (his mother Pomponia shares the same place as Leda), 15.61–62 and 15.82–83 (both Voluptas and Virtus adduce
the Dioscuri as parallels). Here the twins conclude the series of Greek shades; being both
dead and immortal, they serve as a fitting conclusion to a scene which has as its major
theme the transcendence of mortality through the immortalizing power of poetry. The pair
corresponds to Heracles in *Odyssey* 11 (another son of Jupiter, and also the last
mythological ghost viewed by the protagonist), whose shade is in the Underworld while he
himself resides as a god on Olympus.

Of the two sons of Leda, only Pollux was immortal (as son of Jupiter), but he agreed to
share his immortality with his mortal brother Castor (son of Tyndareus). On the
interpretation of this shared immortality and death the traditions differ. Most Greek sources
(up to the Hellenistic age) tell that the two spend their days alternately among the gods and
among the dead, but always together (Hom. *Od*. 11.302–304, and more explicitly Pind.
Alcibiades in Ael. *VH* 13.38). By contrast, according to all Roman sources the brothers
change places every day (one being in heaven, while the other is in the underworld; they are
thus never together), a tradition that is first attested at Verg. *A*. 6.121–122 *alterna morte*
(but possibly going back to a Hellenistic source; see Norden *ad loc.*); cf. also Ov. *Fast.*
10.51.2, Hyg. *Fab*. 251.2 *alterna morte*, *Astr*. 2.22 *alternis diebus eorum quemque lucere,*
and in Greek Lucian. *Dial.deor*. 25(26). For the development of the tradition, see Roscher
s.v. Dioskuren p.1155.50ff.

At Hyg. *Astr*. 2.22 the latter interpretation of the myth is connected to their stars, which
shine in alternation; when one is setting, the other star rises. Silius seems to hint at that
element here as well, with *lucem ... in aethere*. For an interpretation of the myth in relation
to astronomy, see Frazer *ad* Apollod. *l.c* and *ad* Ov. *Fast.* *l.c*.

Silius presents Pollux as a character as well, with a similar reference at 9.295
*alternumque animae mutato Castore Pollux*; he is one of the gods that lament over the battle
of Cannae. In both passages, Pollux is the one who is in the upper world, possibly alluding
to his immortal origin, while Castor (the twin who started as a mortal) is in the underworld.

*alternum lucem* ‘alternating life’, i.e. ‘his life which alternates (with Castor’s)’,
varying Vergil’s *alterna morte*; the adjective *alternus* is used in most Latin references to
the story. *lux* is both ‘life’ (‘enjoying the light of day’) and ‘light’, a reference to their being
stars in the sky. While Vergil focuses on Pollux taking Castor’s place in the underworld,
Silius privileges Castor’s transcendence of mortality, his ‘life beyond death’, which ties in
well with the theme of the previous lines, the eternal fame which poetry bestows.

*in aethere* ‘in heaven’, either as a star in the sky or with the gods on Olympus. Another
possible interpretation is ‘under the sky’, i.e. on earth; cf. the use of the phrase in *Aeneid* 6
of the suicides who now wish for life again, *quam vellent aethere in alto / nunc et
The Sibyl reminds Scipio of their limited time and directs his attention to the ghosts of Roman women. Scipio views the shades of Lavinia and Hersilia, Carmentis and Tanaquil, followed by chaste Lucretia and Verginia, and finally Cloelia. Then Scipio’s attention shifts to the punished sinners: Tullia, who drove her chariot over her father’s body, must swim in the Phlegethon; Tarpeia, who betrayed the Capitol to the Sabines, must endure that Jupiter’s eagle feasts on her innards; an unnamed Vestal is torn open by the dog Orthrus because she polluted her office by losing her virginity.

This catalogue of women has a famous model in Homer. Od. 11.225–327, where Odysseus sees the daughters, wives and mothers of the heroes of myth. Vergil has a much shorter list of seven females at A. 6.445–449, which precedes the meeting of Aeneas and Dido. Against these mythological figures Silius places ladies from Rome’s legendary history. Their number goes back to Silius’ predecessors. Homer names fourteen women in total, Vergil seven (excluding Dido), Silius seven exemplary females; the three wicked women correspond to the three sinners Tityos, Tantalus and Sisyphus at Od. 11.576–600.

The first seven women represent a number of virtues. Lavinia and Hersilia brought peace; through marriage (both with a god’s son) they reconciled the Trojans and Latins, and Romans and Sabines, respectively. Carmentis and Tanaquil both foresaw the future; they represent an affinity with the will of the gods. The next two, Lucretia and Verginia, honour the most important virtue of a Roman woman, pudicitia. The last, Cloelia, displayed bravery that was normally only found in men. These seven women were also instrumental in the founding and preservation of Rome. Lavinia (the wife of Aeneas), Hersilia (the wife of Romulus) and Carmentis (the mother of Euander) are all “Stammütter”, founding mothers; similarly, the reign of Tanaquil’s Etruscan husband marked a new phase for the Roman monarchy. The last three women represent Rome’s struggle to free itself from domination—Lucretia’s suicide heralded the end of the reign of the Tarquins, people like Cloelia thwarted its restoration by Porsenna, and the tyranny of the decemviri was ended following Verginia’s death.

1 Another famous catalogue, much longer, is the Catalogue of Women or Ehoiai, traditionally ascribed to Hesiod. Most (1992: 1019) contends that the passage in the Odyssey is an allusion to that genealogical poem, as part of a review (or incorporation) of different epics or epic subgenres in the Nekyia. Silius’ Nekyia may similarly be interpreted as an overview of various epic intertexts; see Gen.intr. § 4.4.

2 The three women at A. 6.445 (Phaedra, Procris and Eriphyle) are adopted from Homer’s catalogue (Od. 11.319a and 326b). Silius’ seven virtuous women contrast with Vergil’s Dido; see below.

3 Cf. for references to Aeneid 8, both Euander’s ‘Rome’ and the shield of Aeneas (Reitz 1982: 120) nn.809–810 Troiugenae ... Latinis, 812–815 rapta et culmi ... e stramine fultum ... torum, 816–817, 828–830. The first section (the seven virtuous women) serves as one of the counterparts to Anchises’ parade of heroes in Aeneid 6 (cf. Ahl 2010: 55–56; see n.818–820 vis et); cf. also 721–731 and 850–867.

4 Silius has female villains, whereas in Homer and in Vergil’s Tartarus there are only tormented men (Ahl 2010: 50, 56). For echoes of Vergil’s description of Tartarus, see nn.831–832, 833–836a, 839–843 (also on immane nefas).

5 For the virtuous pairs of women, see Augustakits 2010c: 222–225; he labels the prophetic powers of Carmentis and Tanaquil as “the visionary ability to influence those actions of their relatives most conductive to success”.


7 Tanaquil is a transitional figure in the catalogue; her casta mens (818–819) also anticipates the pudicitia of Lucretia and Verginia that will follow (cf. also Cloelia 829 nondum passa marem); cf. Reitz 1982: 122.
With these virtues and symbolism, the women are a model for Scipio. In the last books of the *Punica*, he will display the same qualities. By defeating the foreign oppressor Hannibal and thus restoring peace, he, too, will be a founding father for Rome. As the prophecy of the Sibyl attests, Scipio acts in accordance with the divine will (cf. also the favourable omen at 15.138–148 with which Jupiter confirms Scipio’s election to the command in Spain). In the beginning of book 15, he will choose chaste *Virtus*, and he is without blemish himself.

In the same vein, the three sinners are negative models. All are guilty of a crime against *pietas*, with increasing severity: Tullia acted against her father, Tarpeia against her country, the unnamed Vestal betrayed her oath to her goddess. These three counterbalance the previous seven in several ways: i) Tullia and Verginia are contrasted in their treatment of their father (cf. *patrius* at 827 and 833); ii) Hersilia and Tarpeia behaved oppositely in the Sabine war; Hersilia was content with Romulus’ simple hut, while Tarpeia loved gold; iii) Tanaquil’s eagle was propitious, Tarpeia’s is punishing; iv) Cloelia and Tarpeia are contrasted in their patriotism; v) Lucretia and Verginia remained chaste, unlike the Vestal of 844ff.

Who is this Vestal? She remains unnamed, which may imply that Silius either i) does not want us to think of any particular Vestal, focusing on the crime instead, or ii) does not want to fix the reference to one specific Vestal, thus allowing for multiple references at once. If we explore the possibilities for the latter, it is noteworthy that during the second Punic War, two Vestals were found guilty of a breach of chastity shortly after the defeat at Cannae (216 BC), one of whom was buried alive (Liv. 22.57.2); the sight of a punished Vestal is therefore topical for Scipio himself. Morality—or lack of it—is an important motif in the *Punica*; in Silius’ view, it goes together with victory. The two catalogues clearly stress that females can be as important to the state as men, and that the virtue or wickedness of one may save or ruin the whole nation. It has been recognized that this catalogue of women (particularly the virtuous ones) anticipates the beginning of book 17 and the chastity of Claudia Quinta, which she proves by pulling the ship with the image of Cybele singlehandedly into Rome (17.33–47).

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9 Augoustakis (2010c: 222) draws attention to the instructive element marked by *cognoscere*; see n.807–808.
10 See n.721–723 *Camillum*. The emphasis on the divine birth of the husbands of Lavinia and Hersilia (809 *Veneris nurus*, 811 *Martigenae thalamos ... Quirini*), i.e. Aeneas and Romulus, founders of Rome, subtly suggests the similarity with Scipio, who was revealed as the son of Jupiter at 637–647.
11 *Virtus*: 15.30 *laetique pudoris*, 15.101 *casta domus*; Scipio: 15.274–275 *pudici, ductor, macte animi*; 17.130 *casti dotoris*. Cf. also *casta Fides* at 1.481 and 2.525, the famous Roman virtue (1.634 *sacrata gens clara fide*).
12 Cf. Kißel (1979: 182). The divine aspect is, however, already present in Tarpeia’s crime of betraying Jupiter’s Capitol. It is noteworthy that Silius emphasizes the crimes rather than the punishments (cf. 842 *immane nefas*, 844–845 *neque ... leviora ... delicta*, 848 *nec par poena tamen sceleri*); see Reitz 1982: 125 and 1993: 319.
13 Cf. also Reitz 1982: 123–124 and 1993: 317, and Augoustakis 2010c: 226; Reitz also contrasts Tullia (the wife of Tarquinius Superbus) with Lucretia (whose death heralded his fall), but that connection (chiefly based on contemporaneity) is only very implicit.
and Verginia, whose *pudicitia* led to the ousting of their oppressors.\(^{16}\) The similarity between Cloelia and Claudia is underscored by 829 *nondum passa marem*, which echoes Ovid’s words on Claudia at *Fast.* 5.156 *virgineo nullum corpore passa virum*; compare also 818–819 *castae augurio valuit mentis* (on Tanaquil, where the element of *castitas* is first introduced) with 17.31 *pudica mente valet*.\(^{17}\) For other connections between books 13 and 17, see Gen.intr. § 5.2.3.

But there may also be a connection with Domitian. Many critics agree that 844–849 must allude to the condemnation of several Vestals under his reign.\(^{18}\) In AD 83, three Vestals were condemned on charges of *incestum* and ordered to choose their own deaths; around AD 89/90, the chief Vestal Cornelia was buried alive.\(^{19}\) We should note, perhaps superfluously, that Silius’ Vestal cannot *be* any one of these Vestals, since that is chronologically impossible; Scipio views a sinner who is already in the underworld, not a future one. It is more likely, however, that she is meant to *evoke* the trials under Domitian.\(^{20}\) These lines were part of the emperor’s campaign to restore moral values.\(^{21}\) Silius’ general moralizing stance, and the connections between his Scipio and Domitian, suggest that he may have supported Domitian’s policy in this;\(^{22}\) though perhaps lamenting their necessity. These lines are among the few which might be used to date the *Punica*. The extraordinary nature of the punishment in AD 89/90, after an interval of two centuries, would have provoked a far greater reaction from the Romans than the first in AD 83.\(^{23}\)

\(^{16}\) It is also a moral victory; cf. Augoustakis (2010c: 227) “The image of Claudia Quinta’s chastity and religiosity announces the restoration of ethos and the ascent to glory for the Romans”.

\(^{17}\) Augoustakis (2010c: 231–232) also notes that Silius at 17.33–34 “exploits her genealogy to point to Claudia’s Sabine origins, as she becomes an example of the successful amalgamation between the Latin and the Sabines into one race, the Romans”; this would look back to Hersilia and her role as reconciler.


\(^{19}\) The main sources are Suet. *Dom.* 8 and Plin. *Ep.* 4.11; cf. also Stat. *Silv.* 1.1.32ff., Juv. 4.9–10, and on the earlier trial Dio Cass. 67.3.3–4, Philostr. *vita Apoll.* 7.6. The second trial is dated to AD 91–92 (the eleventh year of Domitian’s reign) in Jerome’s translation of Eusebius (Helm p.191), but in the same year as Domitian’s triumph over the Dacians in the Armenian translation (Karst p.217); it is put to AD 89 in the *Chronicon Paschale* (see *CAH* 11.79 and Sherwin-White *ad* Plin. *l.c.*); Courtney *ad* Juv. 4.9–10 puts it at 93, while Jones (1996: 77–78) opts for 89–90. In the light of the Stat. *Silv.* 1.1.36 (presumably also an allusion to Cornelia’s punishment), which was written shortly after the triumph of Domitian in the end of 89 AD (see Nauta 2002: 422 n.141), Jones’ dating seems most plausible. In any case, judging by Plin. *Ep.* 4.11, Cornelia’s punishment was conducted between the death of Titus’ daughter Julia (around 89) and the execution of Herennius Senecio (93).

\(^{20}\) The reader’s identification of the Vestal with a 1st century one may also be prepared by the comment at 823–824, which points to the lack of chastity in future Rome; cf. Reitz 1982: 124, Mezzanotte 1995: 369. The suggestion in Augustakis 2010c: 225 and 2013: 174 that Cornelia is directly relevant because of her association with the house of the Corneli and Scipio himself seems less likely, given the extensiveness of the *gens Cornelia* in Rome—the figure of Sulla at 855–860 would then be as personally relevant, which I do not believe.


\(^{22}\) Unlike Pliny (*Ep.* 4.11.6 *immanitate tyranni licentia domini*); Suetonius, on the other hand, puts the trials in a largely positive context of Domitian as a defender of public morals. For Silius, cf. Laudizi 1989: 31 “in 13,844 ss. Silio abbia lodato Domiziano per la sua severità esemplare”, although Reitz (1982: 124 n.4) rightly objects that there is no explicit praise (but no disproval either). We should compare Scipio’s representation as a *castus dactor* (see fn.11 above) with Domitian as *pudicus princeps* (Mart. 9.5.2; see Mezzanotte 1995: 368); cf. Marks 2005: 238–239.

\(^{23}\) Mezzanotte 1995: 368. The last conviction had taken place in 114–113 BC; see *CAH* 9.730. For the Vestals (and their trials) in the Republican age, see Wissowa 1923 and Münzer 1937.
46) argues that it is likely that Silius wrote these lines when the scandal and its severe punishment were still fresh in his memory; this would make around 90 the \textit{terminus post quem} for this book. Still, some caution is necessary because of the existence of the earlier process, and these lines are on their own no conclusive evidence for the later dating. For the dating, see also Gen.intr. § 6.

As was noted above, the catalogue of Rome’s seven virtuous women plays against Vergil’s short catalogue of females preceding Aeneas’ meeting with Dido in the underworld. The connection is emphasized through verbal interplay; note the echo of \textit{A. 6.440–441 monstrantur ... Lugentes Campi} (the place where these women reside) at 806 \textit{monstrata Lavinia}. But a more interesting comparison is that between these Roman women and the Carthaginian queen herself; several elements in the description of the Roman founding mothers and heroines evoke, and raise a contrast with, Dido, ‘Stammutter’ of Carthage. Vergil had created her as a tragic heroine, whose love for Aeneas ultimately destroyed her and led to her curse of the Trojans. It is this curse by which Silius’ Hannibal is bound and which underlies the central conflict of his poem. While a reader of Vergil may sympathize with Dido’s plight, even if her love stands in the way of Rome’s future greatness, our poet in this catalogue seems to stress her faults (or perhaps rather her problematic status) implicitly through highlighting the contrasting virtues of the Roman women. Dido wanted to become Aeneas’ wife, and indeed styles herself \textit{Veneris nurus} at \textit{Sil. 8.143}, but her love, running counter to fate, led to her misery; Silius picks up Aeneas’ address of her as \textit{infelix Dido} (\textit{A. 6.456}) with the contrasting phrase on Lavinia at 809 \textit{felix haec ... Veneris nurus}. Lavinia is not only contrasted with Dido as the real wife of Aeneas, but also in her role of reconciler of two peoples, whereas Dido, after the departure of the Trojan, called for war between their nations. Next, the description of Lucretia, who chastely has her eyes cast down (822 \textit{fert frontem atque oculos terrae ... fixos}) recalls Dido’s similarly averted gaze at \textit{A. 6.469 illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat}; we are reminded, however, that it is not out of chastity, but anger over unrequited love that Dido does not meet Aeneas’ eyes. This contrast becomes more clear in the next lines which describe the wound of Verginia, who was killed by her father to save her \textit{pudor}. Dido’s deeds in \textit{Aeneid 4} are opposite; she has \textit{not} held on to her \textit{pudor} (cf. 4.55 \textit{solvitque pudorem}), her devotion to Sychaeus, by giving in to her love with Aeneas, with disastrous consequences for herself and Carthage. Verginia’s wound evokes both Dido’s fatal wound by Amor’s arrows at the beginning of \textit{Aeneid 4} and her suicide at its end. She dies by the steel, not to preserve her \textit{pudor}, like Verginia (826 \textit{defensi ferro ... pudoris}), but to end her \textit{dolor} (\textit{A. 4.547 ferroque avertere dolorum}). Dido’s ‘failure’ to remain chaste stood at the basis of the present war. The

\textsuperscript{24} And thus roughly at the same time as Stat. \textit{Silv. 1.1.32ff.}, dated around 90 AD; see fn.19.
\textsuperscript{25} As Suetonius notes, Vespasian and Titus had given no attention to the Vestals’ \textit{incesta}; therefore, with the process of 83 Domitian’s policy already stood out.
\textsuperscript{26} With a similar ambiguity of ‘being shown’ and ‘showing herself’; see n.806 \textit{monstrata}.
\textsuperscript{27} This type of allusion-with-inversion is characteristic of Silius; see Gen.intr. § 4.1.
\textsuperscript{28} An intertextual reading of \textit{haec} would thus be “\textit{this woman, not Dido, became daughter-in-law of Venus and may be called felix}”.
\textsuperscript{29} Cf. Kißel 1979: 181.
\textsuperscript{30} 13.825 \textit{vulnus sub pectore servat} – \textit{A. 4.67 tacitum vivit sub pectore vulnera} and 4.689 \textit{infixum stridit sub pectore vulnera}. Dido’s wound picks up the injury of her goddess Juno; see n.824b–827 \textit{vulnus sub pectore servat}. 

\textbf{Roman heroines vs. Punic Dido}
catalogue of women thus contrasts Rome (and its fides and castitas) with Carthage; the legacy of Dido is war, but the Roman women represent the conclusion of war through virtue. Indeed, at the moment of Rome’s greatest defeat, the tale of Cloelia (the last virtuous girl mentioned here) is narrated to Hannibal (10.492–502), but he fails to recognize its significance as an anticipation of Rome’s eventual victory over her Carthaginian foe through the individual virtus of her citizens. It is this lesson that Scipio must now take to heart.

Analysis of the presentation of 806–850a

The passage opens with an abrupt transition from the ghosts of Homer’s warriors to those of Roman women, marked by sed.31 The same particle is used at the start of all major ‘units’ of the Nekyia; see An. 517–614. The diction here clearly echoes that at 613, suggesting the equivalence of the transition.32 From 613, we slowly delve deeper and deeper into the past, from Scipio’s parents and contemporaries to finally the warriors of myth. From 806, the chronological direction is reversed; starting in the same mythological age with Lavinia, the poet takes us back to Roman history and to Scipio’s future.33

The reason for the abrupt transition is presented by nam (807).34 The Sibyl urges Scipio to view the female ghosts, before his time runs out. As his guide, she guards his progress and makes sure he does not tarry; she redirects his attention also at 613, and interrupts his viewing at 756ff. and 850.35 The Sibyl is thus the poet’s prime instrument for closure, opening and ordering of the scenes. Both catalogues are fully narrated by the priestess, which distinguishes them from the previous one at 800–805 (which was focalized through Scipio).36 This is similar to Anchises’ description of the future Romans and the Sibyl’s portrayal of Tartarus in Vergil, which these catalogues combine; in Homer’s catalogue of women, Odysseus is the narrator.37

As has been discussed above, the first catalogue is presented in three pairs, with Cloelia as its conclusion and climax. This subdivision is supported by the way in which the various women are introduced. For the second member of the first pair (1B), Hersilia, Scipio is asked vis et ... spectare (811); this is echoed for Tanaquil (2B) at 818 vis et ... [sc. spectare]. Similarly, Hersiliam cerne at 812 (1B) is picked up at 824–825 Verginiam iuxta cerne (3B); close is 816 aspice Carmentis gressus (2A).

There is a similar connection between the two catalogues. Both are introduced in the same way (806 sed subito and 831 cum subito).38 Furthermore, iuxta, which at 824 closely

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31 The abruptness (unusual in this Nekyia) is also noted by Reitz (1982: 120).
33 Lavinia’s name is programmatic: ghosts of Romans, not Greeks, and of women, not men, will follow; see Reitz 1982: 120 and n.806 Lavinia. The catalogue itself is only roughly chronological and is structured primarily along associative lines (Reitz 1982: 123).
34 For nam marking a background explanation, see Kroon 1995: 147–148.
35 Cf. also her ‘double’ Autonoe at 489ff. Scipio himself is responsible for a (smaller) transition only at 719–720. For the intertextuality in these interruptions, see n.807–808 and Intr. 705–761.
36 Reitz 1982: 121. For the various ways in which the catalogues are presented, see An. 705–761.
37 While Odysseus tells that he interrogated them all (11.233–234), the catalogue itself, like ours, features no speech.
connects Lucretia and Verginia, is repeated at 844 to connect Tarpeia and the unnamed Vestal, whose crime contrasts with the castitas of the first two.\textsuperscript{39}

In his portrayal of the three sinners and their punishments, Silius varies the sentence structure. With Tullia, the crime comes first, in the sub clause, and then the punishment in the main clause.\textsuperscript{40} With Tarpeia, the punishment is mentioned first in a sub clause, followed by her crime in the main clause. Finally, for the unnamed Vestal both punishment and then crime are presented in main clauses; in addition, it is only apparent that she is an indecent Vestal through the mention of her crime at the end, with the final word sacerdos. In result, the immensity of her crime (848 nec par poena ... sceleri) is fully emphasized.

Kißel (1979: 182 n.61) argues that the structure and number of lines in the two catalogues of women may follow the principle of the golden ratio. This famous principle, used in art, mathematics and architecture, means that the proportion of the smaller to the greater part is the same as that of the greater part to the whole.\textsuperscript{41} In Kißel’s view, the comment at 823–824a divides the first catalogue into two parts of 17 and 7 lines, respectively; the second catalogue is also 17 lines. The ratio between the small and the large part (7 : 17) is almost the same as that between the large and the whole (17 : 41).\textsuperscript{42} While this is an ingenious discovery, I find it hard to accept. Several objections must be made:

i) the selection: Kißel counts 806–808 with the first catalogue (whereas it is doubtful if even 806 alone may be taken with the description of Lavinia), but discounts its direct counterpart in 831–832; similarly he excludes the comment at 823–824, but includes that at 829–830 (quaes optabit habere / quondam Roma viros), which is alike in tenor.

ii) the division: the division between 806–822 and 824–830 would be one between matronae and virgines,\textsuperscript{43} but Spaltenstein (n.13,806, adducing Liv. 3.44.1) rightly notes that no Roman would have made such a sharp distinction between Lucretia and Verginia;\textsuperscript{44} Kißel also ignores the connections within the catalogue (as outlined above).

iii) the interpretation of the principle: here there would be two greater parts (806–822 and 832–849); strictly speaking, the principle would apply only when the ratio 824–830 : 806–822 (7 : 17) would equal 806–822 : 806–830 (17 : 24) and / or the ratio 833–849 : 806–830 (17 : 25) would equal 806–822 : 806–849 (24 : 44), both of which are untrue.

\textsuperscript{39} These two receive the same sort of punishment and both acted against gods (see fn.12 above); moreover, Tarpeia may have been considered a Vestal as well (see n.844–847).

\textsuperscript{40} Note the alliteration of F (the punishment of her harsh deed, fregit, is depicted in similar harsh sounds; on the aversion to the letter F see Quint. \textit{Inst}. 12.10.29) and assonance of U at 836–838.

\textsuperscript{41} The use of the golden ratio in Vergil’s oeuvre has been similarly championed by Duckworth (1962), who explains the principle at length at p.36ff.

\textsuperscript{42} Actually 17 : 44 in Kißel, who thus includes 823–824a and 831–832 for the whole (although he \textit{excludes} these lines for the count of the smaller parts!), but 7 : 17 : 41 is (almost) true, while 7 : 17 : 44 is not.

\textsuperscript{43} Kißel \textit{l.c}. “Im Zentrum (824–830) stehen—wie zwischen den zwei Brennpunkten einer Ellipse—Mädchen, die ihren Ruhm noch als Jungfrauen erworben haben.”

\textsuperscript{44} Kißel recognizes this, noting that the comment stands “verbindend” between Lucretia and Verginia, but thereby contradicts his own theory, which would imply a strong division rather than a gradual transition.
but suddenly Lavinia was pointed out to him and attracted his gaze.

**monstrata** A reflexive interpretation (‘showed herself’, ‘stood out’; cf. Verg. A. 7.569, Stat. Theb. 6.582, 10.30, Tac. Ger. 31.4) is possible, but *monstrata* is better taken as a passive (‘was pointed out’, viz. by the Sibyl; so also Duff; cf. a similar ambiguity at A. 6.440–441 *monstrantur ... Lugentes Campi*). It occasions the explanation at 807–808; cf. for the Sibyl pointing out ghosts also 752 *designat* and 762 *ostendens*. Scipio’s shift of attention is thus doubly motivated, by the Sibyl’s admonition (*monstrata*) and by Lavinia’s own appearance (*traxit*).

The women in the catalogue remain silent and are shown like a series of images. The Sibyl focuses not on their appearance (cf. the Homeric warriors in the previous lines), however, but rather on their * deeds*. The catalogue is in effect a description of Roman *res gestae*, with the women as a procession of (national) *imagines* (as in aristocratic ancestor galleries or funerals) similar to Vergil’s *Heldenschau*; cf. their male counterparts at 721–731.

**Lavinia** The daughter of Latinus, the second wife of Aeneas and, as mother of their son Silvius, from whom the kings of Alba Longa and Rome’s founder Romulus descended, an ancestress of the Roman empire; she is mentioned as such in Vergil’s *Heldenschau* at A. 6.764–765. Reitz (1982: 121) notes that Lavinia thus connects the mythological age of the Homeric warriors of 798–805 and the history of Rome which follows. Her name alone indicates what will follow—a catalogue of Roman (not Greek), female (not male) spirits.

**807–808** For the maiden warned him that it was time to know the spirits of women, lest the life-giving light of dawn would call him back as he loitered.

For the duration of Scipio’s *Nekyia*, see n.404–407 *sub lucem*.

The Sibyl’s warning is based upon a similar admonition by Vergil’s Sibyl at A. 6.538–539 *sed comes admonuit breviterque adfata Sibylla est: ‘nox ruit, Aenea; nos flendo ducimus horas’* (Reitz 1982: 120; for another adaptation of the same lines see Intr. 705–761 and n.755–757a). Aeneas is warned not to tarry when he is speaking with Deiphobus; here the Sibyl interrupts Scipio’s viewing of the Homeric warriors. In both cases, the message seems to be that the hero should not linger on the glorious past of the Trojan war, but rather proceed to his own future (cf. sim. Intr. 615–649); or in metapoetic terms, we should not linger overlong on Greek models but press on to Roman matters. With both poets, a survey of Roman history follows, in Vergil through Anchises’ parade of future Romans, here in the form of a catalogue of exemplary Roman women.
The Sibyl’s admonition that Scipio should see women, too, is also “a nicely witty bow to convention” (Ahl 2010: 55); the hero of the Punica should not omit what Odysseus and Aeneas had done (for the catalogues of women in Homer and Vergil, see Intr. 806–850a).

The interruption by the Sibyl marks a turning point in the chronological order of the shades viewed; the Nekyia no longer moves progressively further back in time (see An. 806–850a). That these lines are a turning point is also suggested by the intratextuality with 613 *maternos tempus cognoscere vultus* (the transition from the description of the underworld to Scipio’s meeting with the shades). The connection with the introduction of Pomponia also has another function. Scipio here first inspects Lavinia and Hersilia, the *Veneris nurus* (809) and the *Martigenae thalamos ... Quirini* (811); Silius stresses the divine parentage of their husbands. Likewise, Pomponia had revealed that Scipio was the son of Jupiter; the poet again subtly suggests the similarity with Aeneas and Romulus, founders of Rome.

**virgo** For the title, see n.762 *virgo*.

**tempus cognoscere** Cf. the construction of *tempus* with infinitive at 493 and with AcI at 613 (see n. ad loc.).


**vocaret** For this use of *voco* for ‘call away’, cf. 857 *lux vocat*, Verg. *A.* 2.668 *vocat lux ultima victos*, 3.70 *vocat Auster*, see *OLD* s.v. 2b and 2c.

**809–810** ‘This blessed woman’, she says ‘the daughter-in-law of Venus, united Trojans and Latins through a long line of joint offspring.

**Veneris nurus** Vergil’s title for Creusa at *A.* 2.787, and also used as a claim to fame by Dido at Sil. 8.143 (a remodelling of her last words); but it is Lavinia, rather than Dido, who is truly Venus’ daughter-in-law, since her union with Aeneas resulted in the nation that claimed Venus as its ancestress and tutelary deity. The Sibyl calls Lavinia *felix*, in contrast with Aeneas’ address of Dido as *infelix* at *A.* 6.456. For this catalogue as a contrast to Dido, see Intr. 806–850a.

Hersilia is called *mea* [i.e. *Martis*] *nurus* at Ov. *Fast.* 3.206, underlining the similarities between the two women.

**ordine longo** The phrase echoes the start of Vergil’s *Heldenschau*, where Anchises ascends a hillock *unde omnis longo ordine posset / adversos legere* (*A.* 6.754–755); from there, Aeneas views his descendants, the first of whom is Silvius, Lavinia’s son. For the same use of the phrase for ‘long succession’, see 11.295 (cf. also, of a long life, Stat. *Theb.* 2.169 and Silv. 5.3.129). For a different use, see 357–358 with n.

**Troiugenas ... Latinis** Cf. Vergil’s *A.* 8.117 *Troiugenas ac tela vides inimica Latinis*, which stresses the hostility between Trojans and Latins; Silius’ use of the same names in the same position in a line about the union of these peoples underlines Lavinia’s role of peace-bringer through marriage. For *Troiugena*, cf. Catul. 64.355, Lucr. 1.465, Verg. *A.* 3.359, 12.626, Liv. 25.12.5 and of Romans Sil. 14.117, 16.658, Juv. 1.100, 8.181, 11.95.

**sociata** The same word is used by Vergil in the prophecy that advised Latinus not to marry Lavinia off to his countrymen; cf. *A.* 7.96 *ne pete conubiis natam sociare Latinis* and
12.27. The meaning is ‘unite in marriage’ (OLD s.v. 1b), here used of that marriage’s offspring, while it is in fact their parents who are sociati (Spaltenstein).

prole Cf. the similar construction at 1.379 Dulichios Italis miscebat prole nepotes.

811 Do you want to look at the bride of Quirinus, son of Mars, as well?

Martigenae ... Quirini For the echo of Ov. Fast. 1.199–200, see n.812–815. Romulus is here presented as the son of the god Mars, while his own apotheosis is hinted at through the use of the name Quirinus (the name he received as god). For the connection with Scipio, son of Jupiter and also candidate for deification, see n.807–808. According to Ov. Met. 14.846ff., Hersilia herself was also deified as the goddess Hora, but Silius evidently did not adopt that element. The epithet Martigena is Ovidian (cf. also Am. 3.4.39, also of Romulus and Remus) and is used for the Romans at 12.582 and 16.532; cf. also Stat. Theb. 10.103 (of Amor).

Martigenae, like Trosiugenas in the previous line, is in grand epic style, heightening the glory of these women.

vis et For the Vergilian echo, see n.818–820 vis et.

thalamos Often used for ‘marriage’ (see OLD s.v. 2b), but Silius’ personifying application (‘wife’) is bold; cf. perhaps Luc. 7.347 subolem ac thalamos desertaque pignora. There are parallel uses of coniugium (cf. Verg. A. 3.296, 11.270, Sen. Tro. 59, Juv. 8.219) and conubium (cf. Stat. Theb. 3.579, 8.62, 8.385, 10.768, Ach. 2.69) for ‘wife’; Spaltenstein justly observes that the entries in TLL 4.325.16 and 4.816.30 are too broad.

812–815 Behold Hersilia; when the neighbouring nation once spurned the rough suitors, she was abducted by the shepherd who would be her husband, and entered his hut and lay happily upon his bed made from stalks of straw and called the in-laws back from war.

The tale of the rape of the Sabine women and their success in reconciling their fathers and husbands is best known from Liv. 1.9–13 and Plut. Rom. 14–19; Livy mentions Hersilia as the one who convinced Romulus to pardon the Antemnates (the first neighbouring town he had conquered), while in Plutarch, she is named among the women who interposed themselves between the Romans and Sabines (but there as wife of Hostilius).

The story is also told at Ov. Fast. 3.179ff., where Hersilia takes the initiative for the reconciliation (3.206ff.; Spaltenstein); for some traces of Ovidian diction, see the nn. below. The main model for the depiction of Romulus’ hut and bed is Fast. 1.199–200 dum casa Martigenam capiebat parva Quirinum, et dabat exiguum fluminis ulva torum (for the straw bed, cf. also Fast. 1.205 and 3.185 stipula and below on culmi ... e stramine fultum ... torum).

Hersiliam ... hirsutos Possibly an etymological pun.

sperneret ... gens vicina Cf. Liv. 1.9.2 Romulus legatos circa vicinas gentes misit and 1.9.5 spernebant; cf. also Ov. Fast. 3.189 spernebant generos inopes vicinia dives. Compare for hirsutos also Liv. 1.8.2 generi hominum agresti.

pastori Romulus and his brother Remus had been brought up by the shepherd Faustulus; they performed pastoral duties themselves and led a band of shepherds during the overthrow of Amulius (Liv. 1.4.6ff.); these were among the first inhabitants of Rome (1.6.3). So also Ovid at Fast. 3.191 oves pavisse.

intravit ... casae I.e. ‘became his wife’; the bride’s entering the house of the groom was the main part of the Roman wedding ceremony (see OCD p.902 ‘marriage’). Romulus’
house was a casa, a simple hut; cf. Prop. 2.16.20, Ov. Fast. 1.c., Vitr. 2.1.5, V.Max. 2.8, 4.4.11, Sen. Dial. 12.9.3, Petr. 34.6. The construction of intrare with a dative is common in Silius (though not as frequent as with an accusative), but not elsewhere; cf. 6.498, 7.464, 9.289, 11.470 (ponto ω, pontum Delz), Stat. Theb. 1.255; see TLL 7.2.58.58ff. for later instances.

culmi ... e stramine fultum ... torum For the straw bed, cf. Ov. Fast. 1.c., and also Her. 5.15, Fast. 5.519–520, Met. 8.655, Hor. Serm. 2.6.88 and Luc. 9.842 nec culmis crevere tori. The ‘humble’ bed is in most passages a sign of both poverty and good morals; Green ad Fast. 1.200 also compares Hom. Od. 14.48ff., Call. Hecale fr. 240 Pf. (35 / 454) and Verg. A. 8.366–367 stratisque locavit / effultum foliis (for the construction and image, cf. also Ecl. 1.68 tuguri congestum caespite culmen). Romulus’ hut, which was meticulously maintained and rebuilt throughout the ages, was better known for its straw roof; cf. Ov. Fast. 3.184 de canna straminibusque domus and also Verg. A. 8.654 Romuleoque ... horrebat regia culmo, Prop. 2.16.20 stramina ... casa, Vitr. 2.1.5, Dion.Hal. 1.79.11.

soceros I.e. her own father and all his compatriots. Ovid uses the plural in the same context (also of the Sabine fathers) at Am. 2.12.23–24 femina Romanis ... inmisit soceros (cf. Fast. 6.95 and Luc. 1.118); cf. also Verg. A. 11.105 hospitibus quondam socerisque vocatis (of all the Latins), Hor. Carm. 3.5.8, Stat. Theb. 11.217 (with Venini’s n.).

revocavit ab armis For the diction, cf. Ov. Am. 2.18.11 sumptis revocatur ab armis, Stat. Theb. 10.346 laetis socios revocabat ab armis (cf. also Sil. 15.599 revocatus ad arma).

816–830

adspice Carmentis gressus. Euandria mater haec fuit et nostros tetigit praesaga labores. vis et, quos Tanaquil vultus gerat? haec quoque castae augurio valuit mentis venturaque dixit regna viro et dextros agnovit in alite divos. 820
ece pudicitiae Latium decus, inclita leti fert frontem atque oculos terrae Lucretia fixos. non datur, heu, tibi, Roma (nec est, quod malle deceret), hanc laudem retinere diu. Verginia iuxta, cerne, cruentato vulnus sub pectore servat, 825
tristia defensi ferro monumenta pudoris, et patriam laudat miserando in vulnere dextram. illa est, quae Thybrim, quae fregit Lydia bella, nondum passa marem, quales optabit habere quondam Roma viros, contemptrix Cloelia sexus’ – 830

816–817 Behold the steps of Carmentis. She was the mother of Euander and with her foresight touched on our hardship.

Carmentis was the mother of Euander, the Arcadian king whose town was built on the later site of Rome. She was an old Latin goddess (cf. Liv. 1.7.8 divinitate credita, with Ogilvie’s n. on Carmentae) and a nymph at Verg. A. 8.336 and 339, but her presence in the underworld suggests that Silius regarded her as a mortal. Due to her name, etymologized from carmen, she was credited with prophetic powers (A. 8.340 vatis fatidicae, Liv. 1.7.8.
fatiloquam, Ov. Fast. 1.509ff.; cf. here praesaga), through which she had foreseen futuros Aeneadas magnos et nobile Pallanteum (A. 8.340–341), the glory of the future Rome. As the mother of the founder of ‘proto-Rome’ and as the prophetess of its later grandeur, she is (like Lavinia and Hersilia) one of its ‘Stammütter’ (Reitz 1982: 121, who adduces 7.18 qui Carmentis opes et regna Euandria servas, where Rome is presented as her legacy).

**Carmentis gressus** ‘the steps of Carmentis’; cf. 801 Aiacisque gradum. *gressus* refers to a way of walking; but it is attractive to read it as a reference to metrical ‘feet’ (cf. *Carmentis*). These two lines may then be taken as an allusion to her prophecies (in metre) or even to earlier poetry. Are we meant to think of Vergil’s (lines on) Carmentis, who foretold the *Aeneadas* (see above), the subject of Silius’ own song (1.1–2 gloria ... *Aeneadum*), of whom Scipio is the ultimate representative (cf. 767 *Aeneades*)? For Carmentis’ evoking the interaction with older poetry in the *Aeneid*, see Goldschmidt 2013: 58–61.


**nostros tetigit ... labores** The phrase is a reminiscence and actualization of *A*. 8.340–341 cited above; Carmentis had foreseen Rome’s future, and thus also the second Punic war—that is, if we accept Duff’s interpretation of *labores* as a reference to the war. The use of *nostros* seems to disprove this reading, however, since the Sibyl does not associate herself with Rome’s people (cf. 501 *tuis*, 502 *proavis ... vestris*, 791 *vestram ... Troiam*); this is probably why many editors have printed *vestros* instead. But another possible interpretation is that *labores* refers to the *Nekyia* itself (cf. Verg. *A*. 6.135 *insano ... labori*); *nostros* could even (metapoetically) refer to Silius, whose poetry has thus been foretold by Vergil’s *Carmentis* (see above on *Carmentis gressus*). In any case, Scipio’s *labor* is analogous to that of his people, which is the programme of the epic (1.3–4 decus ... *laborum antiquae Hesperiae*).

Drakenborch may be correct in reading *cecinit* for *tetigit*, in view of *A*. 8.340 *cecinit*. The sense of the verb *tango* would be “make a (slight) mention of”, for which *OLD* s.v. 10a cites only archaic and prose parallels; and should we suppose that Scipio would be flattered if Carmentis would have mentioned the Roman *labores* merely in passing?

818–820 *Do you also wish to see what face Tanaquil has? This woman, too, was proficient in augury with her chaste mind and foretold to her husband his future rule, recognizing the favour of the gods in a bird.*

Tanaquil, the wife of Lucius Tarquinius Priscus, predicted his rise to kingship during their journey to Rome after she witnessed an eagle take his cap, circle round their wagon and replace it upon his head; she interpreted the event as a favourable omen (Liv. 1.34.8–9).

**vis et** Supplement *spectare*; the phrase is an elliptic echo of 811. Silius here imitates *A*. 6.817–818 *vis et Tarquinios reges animamque superbam / ulturis Bruti, fascisque videre receptos*?; as Ahl (2010: 55–56) observes, the list in lines 809–830 “is, for Silius’ listening Scipio, a catalogue of female heroes of the Roman past where the *Aeneid* has what is, for Virgil’s listening Aeneas, a catalogue of male heroes of the Roman future.” The sequence Tanaquil – Lucretia refers to the same part of history as Vergil’s Tarquins and Brutus, but note that Silius has not simply replaced female with male, but also the hated (Tarquins) with the lauded (Tanaquil).

**quos ... vultus gerat** Lit. ‘what face she wears’, thus ‘what she looks like’. *vultum gerere* more commonly means ‘wear an expression’ (e.g. V.Max. 6.6. *ext*.1 *maestum vultum*, *OLD*
Notes to 806–850a


quoque I.e. like Carmentis. Silius uses the prophetic powers of both women as a transition from the founding mothers to other Roman heroines, just as castae anticipates that from prophetesses to chaste girls.

castae augurio valuit mentis Lit. ‘she was proficient in the augury of her chaste mind’; casta is traditional for prophets and priests, see n.441b–444 castae ... imago Sybillae. For the diction, cf. 17.31 pudica mente valet, of Claudia Quinta (see Intr. 806–850a).

ventura ... dixit regna viro The dative viro goes both with dixit and with ventura; for the construction cf. e.g. Prop. 1.9.1 dicebam tibi venturos ... amores, Calp. Ecl. 4.53.

dixit ... agnovit A hysteron proteron.

dextros agnovit ... divos Cf. the augur Tolumnius at Verg. A. 12.260 accipio agnoscoque deos after witnessing a bird sign. For agnosco of recognizing a divine hand, TLL 1.1359.44ff. also cites Cic. Tusc. 1.70, A. 9.656, Luc. 4.255. For dextros ... divos, cf. the singular at 5.227, 11.529, 12.193 and 13.265 (see n.) and dextri dei at Stat. Ach. 1.738–739 and Silv. 5.1.71.

821–822 Look, Latium’s jewel of chasteness, Lucretia, famous for her death, holds her gaze and eyes fixed to the ground.

puhicitiae Latium decus Cf. V.Max. 6.1.1 dux Romanae pudicitiae Lucretia and (more abstract but in reference to Lucretia) Flor. Epit. 1.9.1 libertatis ac pudicitiae decus. Silius may have modelled her title after Prop. 1.15.22 Argivae fama pudicitiae (Evadne); cf. also with similar context Ov. Pont. 1.3.116 laude pudicitiae.

For decus of persons, see n.514b–515 decus hoc. Ovid has a similar praise for Hersilia at Met. 14.832–833 o et de Latia, o et de gente Sabin a praecipuum ... decus. Compare also Turnus’ address of Camilla as decus Italiae virgo at Verg. A. 11.508.

inclita leit It was Lucretia’s suicide after the rape by Sextus Tarquinius that made her famous, as it most clearly showed the innocence of her mind.

For inclitus with a genitive, TLL 7.1.959.23ff. only adduces (late Latin) Dict. 4.15 gentem ... inclitam bellandi. The (more common) construction with an ablative is used at 4.495; but cf. e.g. laudare + genitive of cause of praise at 4.259 and 5.561. Silius frequently lets an adjective or participle govern a genitive (mostly of limitation or cause, as here); cf. in this book lines 33 laetus opum, 52 aeger delicti, 126 aevi vitaque tenax, 177 trepidantum interritus, 188 erectos animi, 214 turbidus ausi, 490 veri fecunda, 725 visus orbus, 876 fractus opum, 879 damnatusque doli, 886 falsusque cupiti ... motus.

fert frontem atque oculos terrae ... fixos Lucretia has her eyes downcast as a sign of her chastity (cf. with Spaltenstein Verg. A. 11.480 oculos deiecta, of Lavinia), and perhaps also shame over her rape (cf. downcast gazes signalling shame at 10.395–396 fixis in tellurem oculos, Tac. 4.72.3 fixis in terram oculos). The forehead, like the eyes, was considered an index of someone’s mind; cf. 733 and see Van Dam ad Stat. Silv. 2.1.43. The line seems a reminiscence of the averted gaze of Dido in Verg. A. 6.469 illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat (cf. A. 1.482), also with a dative (solo ~ terrae). For Dido, see Intr. 806–850a.

The collocation ferre frontem is unique; the combination of ferre with oculos is more common, especially with composites of ferre (cf. 11.261; for the simple form, cf. Verg. A.
8.310, 11.800, Sen. Tro. 458, V.Fl. 7.306, Mart. 6.80.7). The natural interpretation would be ‘direct her gaze’, but Spaltenstein rightly notes that the sense must here be ‘keep her gaze’; fixos goes with both frontem and oculos.

823–824a Alas, it is not given to you, Rome (and there is nothing that you should want more) to hold on to this glory for long.

Duff takes datur apparently as a historical present (“not long, alas, was Rome permitted”); the lines can only be then referred to Lucretia’s young age at the time of her death. But a present tense can only be interpreted as historical in a narrative, while this is a comment by the narrator (the Sibyl, in this case). These lines are better taken as a sad comment on the loss of Roman chastity in future days (cf. Kißel 1979: 182), anticipating the crime of the Vestal at 848–849.

824b–827 Next to her, look, Verginia retains the wound in her bloodied breast, a sad testament to the defence of her chastity with steel, and despite this pitiful wound she praises her father’s hand.

The story of Verginia is told at Liv. 3.44–48. When one of the decemviri, Ap. Claudius, almost succeeded in getting the girl into his power to satisfy his lust, her father drove a knife into her breast to save her from dishonour. Livy connects the tale to that of Lucretia and compares the outcomes; in both cases, the people threw off their oppressors, the Tarquinii and the decemviri respectively (3.44.1; cf. Reitz 1982: 122). After a series of founding mothers, these two females along with Cloelia are represented as instruments of freedom, the first two through their deaths, the last through her own actions.

Line 826 is a ‘golden line’, with the centre position taken by a noun instead of a verb.

cruentato The detail may go back to the story in Livy, where it is Verginia’s father who with his bloodied body (3.50.3 respersusque ipse cruore) attests to the deed to which he had been driven.

vulnus sub pectore servat The words are borrowed from Verg. A. 1.36 Iuno aeternum servans sub pectore vulnus (cf. Lucr. 2.639; for similar diction cf. Sil. 5.594 and 7.554).

tristia ... monumenta The noun marks that the girl’s fame rested upon her death, the safeguard of her virginity, while the adjective stresses the terrible necessity of the deed. For monumenta, cf. A. 6.512, the mutilated body of ghostly Deiphobus; cf. also 671 documenta.

laudat miserando in vulnere The construction may be laudare with in + abl. denoting the cause of praise (“for her sad wound”; see OLD laudo 1b, TLL 7.2.1044.79ff.), but Silius more frequently uses a genitive for this purpose (1.395, 4.259, 5.561); cf. also the simple ablative at 8.460–461. It is more likely that miserando in vulnere is an adverbial adjunct: “even with / despite her sad wound she praises her father’s hand”. The contrast between laudat and miserando builds upon that in the previous line (tristia ... monumenta). Lines 825–827 form a tricolon around Verginia’ vulnus; the first line introduces the theme, the second marks the tragic fame which she derived from it and the third fully draws out the paradox of Verginia praising her father for delivering this blow. Delz’ suspicion of the double use of vulnus in three lines is therefore unfounded.

828–830 That girl is the one who overcame the Tiber, overcame the Etruscan war, not having experienced a man, whose qualities Rome shall once wish to have in her men, Cloelia, who paid no heed to her sex.
Cloelia, one of the hostages of the Etruscan king Porsenna, led a group of girls in escape from his camp and swam to safety across the Tiber (Liv. 2.13.6–11). Impressed by her deed and the similar bravery of Horatius Cocles and Mucius Scaevola, Porsenna concluded peace with Rome. Cloelia forms the climax of the catalogue, setting an example even to men; Livy tells that her exceptional heroism was rewarded with an equestrian statue (Liv. 2.13.11). Her story is told to Hannibal at 10.478–502 by the turncoat Cinna; both there and here, the tale is a testimony to the victory of Roman valour over a foreign king (which Hannibal does not take to heart in book 10).

She is the only Roman female on Vergil’s shield of Aeneas; cf. A. 8.651 fluvium vinclis innaret Cloelia ruptis, which also focuses on her feat of crossing the Tiber. fregit may pick up Vergil’s ruptis—Silius’ way of commenting that Cloelia conquered more than just her bonds.

Thybrim ... fregit Lydia bella A zeugma (see n.234–237); Cloelia ‘cleft through’ the Tiber and put an end to the war with Porsenna through this act. For frango of swimming, cf. 10.498 frangens undam, Sen. Oed. 428, Luc. 8.374, [Sen.] Her. O. 506, and also of Scipio himself 8.533–534 undosum frangere nando / indutus thoraca vadum. For its use with bella, TLL 6.1.1248.3ff. cites Cic. Prov. 32 bellum Allobrogum ... proeliis fregit, Epic.Drus. 452, Sen. Contr. exc. 8.5 tu fregisti bellum, ego sustuli.

The war with Porsenna is called Lydius because of the Etruscans’ alleged origin from the region in Minor Asia (5.9–11, Hdt. 1.94, Verg. A. 8.479–480, Vell. 1.1.4, Plin. Nat. 3.50.1; see RE 6.731ff.; the modern consensus that the Etruscans were indigenous to Italy has recently been challenged by comparative DNA research; see Achilli et al. 2007, Pellecchia et al. 2007). Cf. for Lydius 10.484 and also 9.190, 13.8, Catul. 31.13, Cic. Div. 1.19, Verg. A. 2.781, 10.155, Culex 366 (also of Porsenna), Stat. Silv. 1.2.190, 3.3.191, 4.4.6.

 nondum passa marem I.e. she was still an unmarried virgin (at 10.492–493, Silius puts her age at ‘not yet twelve years’). The expression, a reference to sex, is mostly Ovidian; cf. Met. 9.741 passa bovem est (Pasiphae), 15.410 passa marem est (hyenas), Fast. 2.178, 5.156 virgineo nullum corpore passa virum (Claudia Quinta), Petr. 25.4, Stat. Theb. 1.575, OLD patior 2c, TLL 10.1.1.732.17ff.; cf. also 547–548 taedas passis virginibus (of wedding torches, see n.) and 2.83–84 Veneris iam foedera passae.

 optabit The reading in ω is optabat, but a condemnation of males from Rome’s past would not be in line with Silius’ favourable presentation of Cloelia’s contemporary Horatius Cocles (726–728) and others. It is preferable to read optabit (conj. Bentley 1811: 385, L. Müller 1861: 174–175; printed by Delz); the subclause is then a hint (like, presumably, 823–824) at the declining morals after the Punic wars, which the poet also criticizes elsewhere (cf. e.g. 3.589–590; see Intr. 348–380).

 contemptrix ... sexus Cloelia did not ‘despise’ her sex, but ignored its limitations and the conduct that was expected of women. Cf. similarly Stat. Theb. 6.334–335 sexum indignantur (of Admetus’ strong mares) and 9.609 sexum indignata (Atalanta).

831–850
cum subito adspectu turbatus Scipio poscit,
quae poenae causa et qui sint in crimine manes.
tum virgo: ‘patrios fregit quae curribus artus
et stetit adductis super ora trementia frenis,
Tullia non ullos satis exhaustura labores 835
ardenti Phlegetonte natat; fornicibus atris
fons rapidus furit atque ustas sub gurgite cautes
egerit et scopulis pulsat flagrantibus ora.
illa autem, quae tondetur praecordia rostro
alitis (en quantum resonat plangentibus alis
armiger ad pastus reidiens Iovis!) hostibus arcem
virgo, immane nefas, adamato prodidit auro
Tarpeia et pactis reseravit claustra Sabinis.
iuxta (nomine vides? neque enim leviora domantur
delicta) illatrat ieiunis faucibus Orthrus,
armenti quondam custos immanis Hiberi,
et morsu petit et polluto eviscerat ungue.
nec par poena tamen sceleri; sacraria Vestae
polluit exuta sibi virginitate sacerdos.
sed satis haec vidisse, satis.’ 850

831–832 ...when Scipio, disturbed by a sudden sight, asks what the reason for punishment
is and who the indicted ghosts are.

In earlier editions *cum* is paired with *tum* (833), making 831–832 a simple temporal
clause; Delz regards it as a *cum inversum* construction, however (with the preceding speech
serving as the main clause), which is plausible considering *subito*.

The list of virtuous women is counterbalanced by a similar group of female sinners; the
introduction at 832 refers to the group as a whole (*pace* Duff, who thinks it only bears on
the first, Tullia). Scipio’s questions are modelled after the similar enquiry in *Aeneid* 6,
when Aeneas (suddenly seeing the gate to Tartarus, *A. 6.548 respicit ... subito*, and terrified,
6.559 *externitus ~ turbatus*) asks *quae scelerum facies? ... quibusve urgentur poenis?*
(6.560–561) (Spaltenstein). The structure of the questions in Vergil (first nominative, then
ablative) may suggest that here, the reading *quo ... crimine* in *Γ* is correct. Silius’ account
of the punishments may partially go back to its Vergilian counterpart; see the individual nn.
below. There are also verbal echoes of a later passage in Aeneas’ *katabasis*: cf. *A. 6.710–
711 horrescit visu subito causasque requirit inscius Aeneas;* Silius alludes to part of
Anchises’ reply at 837 (see n.836b–838 sub gurgite below).

**subito adspectu turbatus** Cf. 449 *adspicit et subito turbatus Scipio visu*. Most likely,
*subito* is not an adverb, but a modifying adjective for *adspectu*, which is weak on its own
(cf. also *A. 6.710 visu subito* cited above).

It is surprising that Scipio can see the sinners as they are punished, presumably in
Tartarus; the fact that the Sibyl described the underworld to him at 523–612 (without the
use of deictic markers) suggests that it was not visible to Scipio. Spaltenstein, who rejects
the possibility that Scipio can see Tartarus, claims that “ces ombres défilent comme les
autres”, but that seems impossible, since the punishments are in progress (cf. 844–845 *iuxta ...
illatrat Orthrus*). Reitz (1982: 126) discusses whether this involves a possibly
inadvertent abandonment of the *Nekyia* form, since these ghosts do not come to the blood
offering but are viewed in the underworld, and concludes that Silius combines Homer’s
Odysseus (who views both women and sinners) and Vergil’s Aeneas (to whom Tartarus
with its sinners is described). This literary play is also an emulation; by seeing the punished sinners, Scipio surpasses Aeneas, who only sees the gate of Tartarus. The impact of this vision becomes apparent at 871ff., when he asks if Hannibal will receive similar punishment (see also n.833–836a). Silius deviates from his initial presentation also at 651–653 and 778–779 (see nn.); in both cases the image takes precedence over consistency.

sint in crimine ‘stand accused’; cf. Ov. Fast. 2.497 falsaeque patres in crimine caedis, Met. 7.576, Cic. Ver. 2.4.100.

833–836a Then the maiden says: ‘She who broke the body of her father with her chariot and pulled the reins to halt above his quivering features, Tullia, will not ever have endured enough of her sufferings and swims in the burning Phlegethon.

Silius intensifies Livy’s version of Tullia’s crime, who there (1.48.7) is said to have driven her carpentum (two-wheeled carriage) over the body of her father, king Servius Tullius (who had been murdered by her husband Tarquinius and his followers), but not to have halted above it; instead, her trembling driver had pulled the reins (1.48.6 inhibit frenos) when he encountered Servius Tullius’ body; cf. (sim.) Ov. Fast. 6.603–608. Here, Tullius’ ora trementia adds a vivid and incriminating detail; was his corpse still convulsing (i.e. Tullia could hardly wait to maim his body), or (even worse) was he still alive, his face (ora) quivering in fear?

Reitz (1982: 124) notes that those who assaulted their parents also figure in Vergil’s Tartarus (A. 6.608–609 quibus ... pulsatusve parens), which may go back to Plato (see below on ardent Phlegetonte natat). Tullia’s crime, bordering on patricide, violates the parental pietas; she is contrasted with Verginia, who praises her father even if she died by his hand (cf. Reitz 1982: 123).

Scipio asks at 871–872 if Hannibal will also burn in the Phlegethon; he shares not only this punishment with Tullia, but also aspects of her crime, for in a vision of his victory at Cannae he is described as running his chariot over the Roman corpses (8.661–662 currusque citatos arma virum super atque artus et signa trahentem). Compare also his near-shipwreck at 17.258 [procella] frangit super ora trementia fluctum.

stetit adductis ... frenis Delz compares Stat. Theb. 6.424–425 adductis alium ... stare ducem loris, of Polynices at the beginning of the chariot-race. Here, the verb does not merely refer to Tullia’s upright position as charioteer; super implies the sense ‘came to a halt’ (OLD sto 10a; cf. Verg. A. 12.622 adductisque ... subsistit habenis), which points to the severity of Tullia’s crime—she not only ran over Servius’ body, but even halted right above him. Hence, the sense ‘trample’ is also present (cf. the gruesome lack of parental pietas of Oedipus’ sons at Stat. Theb. 1.238–239 nati ... cadentes calcavere oculos).

non ullos satis exhaustura labores Tullia will not have endured any of her torments enough, i.e. she will see no end to her suffering. For the diction and thought, cf. Sen. Pho. 167–169 non ego hoc tantum scelus / ulla exiari credidi poena satis / unquam (Oedipus of himself); cf. also Verg. A. 9.356 poenarum exhaustum satis est (cf. G. 2.398), Sil. 6.287, TLL 5.2.1411.38ff.

ardenti Phlegetonte natat The punishment is adopted from Plato’s Phaed. 114a (Reitz 1982: 124 with n.5, Spaltenstein), where homicides are said to be thrown into the Cocytus, but patricides and matricides into the Pyriphlegethon, the river of fire; after a year, they could plead for mercy with the spirits of those they wronged, but if none was given, they would be carried back to the river. Silius implies at 835 that there will be no such mercy for Tullia.
ardenti translates φλέγω (similarly 563 urit, also of the Phlegethon; cf. also Sen. Thy. 1017–1018 and Culex 272). In most bilingual puns, Silius gives both the Greek word and the translation; cf. (with nn.) 433 nunquam laeta Megaera, 555 Lethaeos ... oblivia, 571 tristior ... Acheron; the Greek is implicit at 605 sceptris fulsisse. Cf. also n.400–403 Autonoe. For Latin etymologizing see Intr. 256–298 fn.39 (on 275 venenis ~ Venus), 348 mite decus mentis (~ clementia), 699–700 Marte ... Marcius and 812 Hersiliam ... hirsutos.

836b–838 Its source swiftly erupts from black furnaces and sends forth scorched rocks from the depths of its torrent and batters her face with blazing stones.

The Phlegethon is a fiery river of molten stone (Duff’s ‘water’ is inappropriate); this description builds upon the earlier one at 563–565 (saxosa incendia). It is like the Etna, which is said to emit a volcanic stream fonte e Phlegethontis ut atro (14.61), has ardentes ... scopuli (14.68) and houses the camini (smithy) of Vulcan (14.56, cf. fornacibus); for more correspondences with volcano descriptions see n.563–565.

fornacibus atris ... rapidus furit Cf. Vergil’s description of fire raging in an oven at G. 4.263 aestuat ut clausis rapidus fornacibus ignis. For fornacibus, cf. also Lucr. 6.681 flamma foras vastis Aetnae fornacibus effet and G. 1.472 undantem ruptis fornacibus Aetnam; in those passages, fornacibus is an ablative of origin, as here.

fons Probably both ‘spring’ (from the fornacibus) and ‘river’; cf. Luc. 3.235–236 ferens rapidum diviso gurgite fontem vastis Indus aquis.

sub gurgite Compare the purification of the souls in Vergil’s Elysium at A. 6.741–742 sub gurgite vasto / infectum eluitur scelus aut exuritur igni; with fiery Phlegethon, the two forms (submersion and fire) are combined.

ora This may deliberately echo ora at 834; she is repaid for the injury to her father’s ora.

839–843 Now that maiden, whose innards are picked by a bird’s beak (listen how much noise Jupiter’s armour-bearer makes with its beating wings as it returns to its meal), Tarpeia, betrayed the citadel to the enemy (a horrendous crime) for gold, which she loved greatly, and she opened the gates for the Sabines with whom she had struck a deal.

When the Sabines went to war against Rome over the rape of their women, their leader Tatius bribed Tarpeia, the daughter of the commander of the Roman citadel, to admit his troops; see Liv. 1.11.6–9, Prop. 4.4, V.Max. 9.6.1, Fest. s.v. Tarpeia. Both the crime of high treason and the type of punishment feature also in Vergil’s Tartarus; cf. A. 6.621 vendidit hic auro patriam and 6.597–598 rostroque immannis vultur obunco immortale iecur tendens (of Tityos; cf. also Hom. Od. 11.576–581, with two vultures, Lucr. 3.98ff., Sen. Ag. 18 tondet ales ... iecur). Note that Silius replaces Vergil’s vultur with the armiger Iovis, the eagle; Jupiter thus takes direct revenge for Tarpeia’s betrayal of the Capitol, which housed his temple (Reitz 1982: 125), and which (like Jupiter himself) is named Tarpeius very frequently in the poem (in this book see lines 1 and 267). We should also compare the punishment of Prometheus, whose liver was eaten by an eagle (also sent by Jupiter), which would return the next day when the liver had grown back (Hes. Th. 523–525, Aesch. apud Cic. Tusc. 2.24, A.R. 2.1247ff., Apollod. 1.7.1, Diod.Sic. 4.15.2, Hyg. Astr. 2.15, Prop. 2.1.69–70 ales; it is a vultur at V.Fl. 4.69 and 7.359, possibly to evoke Tityos; see Murgatroyd ad 4.69); see n.597–600 pastusque cadavere vultur and below on resonat plangentibus alis ... ad pastus rediens. The punishment is possible in the case of Tityos and Prometheus, as
their immortality forces the liver to grow back; for Tarpeia we have to suppose a similar miracle (cf. also 872–873 _renatos ... artus_, which picks up these lines). Prometheus’ punishment is also alluded to at 609, where tyrants are said to be chained to a rock.

Tarpeia’s betrayal of her country contrasts with Cloelia’s bravery, which saved Rome from another foreign besieger. For the eagle, cf. the more favourable one at 820.

_tondetur_ A vivid variant on _carnere_ or _pascere_ (‘browse’, ‘crop’, hence ‘feast upon’; cf. Spaltenstein). For _tondeo_ with a retained acc., Spaltenstein adduces [Tib.] 3.7.172 _tondetur ... seges ... partus_, Ov. _Met._ 11.47 _arbor tonsa comas._

_praecordia_ Not the specific _iecere_ (‘liver’) in the tradition on Tityos and Prometheus (cf. _Verg._ A. 6.598, Hor. _Carm._ 3.4.77 and the passages cited above); _praecordia_ may be ‘heart’ (cf. Prometheus’ _cor_ at Hyg. _Fab._ 31.5, 144.2), but is here probably used in a more general way (‘innards’).

_en_ The word has demonstrative force, but normally it draws attention to a point of visual interest (cf. 6.516, 7.152, 11.236 and 16.75); for an auditive parallel, cf. Sen. _Phaed._ 1025 _totum en mare immugit._

_resonat plangentibus alis ... ad pastus rediens_ The image of Scipio witnessing the bird as it returns to its victim may be taken from A.R. 2.1251ff., where the Argonauts see Prometheus’ eagle heading towards its meal and feel the force of its huge wings (cf. the comment on their sound here); cf. of the same bird Cic. _Tusc._ 2.24 _se ad pastus referit._ For the image and diction, cf. also the rooks at _Verg._ G. 1.381–382 _e pastu decedens ... increpuit densis exercitus alis_ and the swans at _A._ 1.397 _reduces ... ludunt stridentibus alis._

Gärtner (2009: 90–91) proposes to read _<im>pastus_ for _ad pastus_ (adducing 3.343 _impastus ... vultur_), which would reflect not only the eagle’s hunger but also, since it always “returns hungry”, the infinity of the sinner’s punishment. This is possible (cf. _ieiunis_ at 845), although his argument that given the various mss. readings ( _ad pastus_ αGV, _et pastus_ δ, _e pastu_ Γς), the archetype may have been simply _pastus_ is unconvincing; the variant readings are found only in a single sub-branch of β (δ).

_armiger ... Iovis_ Cf. Aesch. _apud_ Cic. _Tusc._ 2.24 _Iovis satelles_ (of Prometheus’ eagle). For the phrase (always of the eagle), cf. e.g. 4.126, 10.108, 17.53, _Verg._ A. 5.255, 9.564. The bird bore this epithet because it carried Jupiter’s lightning bolts (cf. Hor. _Carm._ 4.4.1); Pliny ( _Nat._ 10.15) explains its title by reporting the belief that eagles were never hit by lightning.

_immane nefas_ Cf. _A._ 6.624 _ausi omnes immane nefas auseque potiti_, part of the Sibyl’s description of the sinners in Tartarus, shortly following upon _vendidit hic auro patriam_ (621). The phrase is not found elsewhere.

_adamato ... auro_ Silius follows the traditional story (as provided by Livy) rather than the version at _Prop._ 4.4, where Tarpeia betrays Rome out of love for Tatius (perhaps _adamato_ hints at, and ‘corrects’, that rendering). Coveting the golden bracelets of the Sabines, she asked for ‘that which they carried on their left arms’; instead, she was rewarded with their shields, which the Sabines piled on top of her so that she died (Liv. 1.11.8). The corrupt Tarpeia is the negative counterpart of Curius, _auro ... non umquam ... amicum_ (723), just as her lack of patriotism contrasts with Cloelia (828 _fregit Lydia bella_).

_prodidit_ Cf. _Prop._ 4.4.85 _prodiderat portaeque fidem patriamque iacentem._

_pactis_ Presumably the past participle of _paciscor_, “to the Sabines who had negotiated a bargain”. The root _pact-_ is common to the various accounts of the story; cf. _Prop._ 4.4.82
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*pacta ligat, pactis ipsa futura comes*, Liv. 1.11.9 *pacto* (cf. also Ov. Am. 1.10.49 *armillas ... pepigisse Sabinas*).

844–847 Next to her *(You see it? For no lighter crime is punished there)* Orthrus, once the fierce guardian of the Hiberian cattle, barks with hungry throat, and he bites and eviscerates with filthy claw.

This unnamed Vestal virgin (cf. 848–849) is connected with Tarpeia through her similar punishment (see below on *illatrat ieiunis faucibus*); in addition, there is the tradition that Tarpeia herself was also a Vestal virgin (Var. L. 5.7, Prop. 4.4.15; possibly she was confused with her later namesake who was among the first Vestals when their order was established by Numa; cf. Plut. Num. 10.1), which in itself may have suggested the sequence to Silius.

Silius seems to have invented this punishment; at least there are no parallels extant.

The victim herself is left implicit; *illatrat, petit* and *eviscerat* are supposedly used in an absolute sense (unless *ieiunis faucibus* is the object; see n. *illatrat ieiunis faucibus* below).

**nonne vides** A touch of didactic poetry; this is a frequent phrase in Lucr., Verg. G. (cf. also the lessons at 9.50 and 15.84, Hor. Serm. 1.4.109, Ov. Met. 15.362, 382, Gratt. 62).

**domantur** ‘are punished’, cf. 611 *domat ... Megaera* (with n.); Delz also adduces 14.219. We would expect the sinners rather than the sins to be the subject, however.

**neque ... leviola ... delicta** It seems hardly coincidental that this phrase for the last person in the women’s catalogue anticipates the conclusion of the list of future Romans at line 867 *nec leviola lues quam victus crimina, victor*; see n.867.

For *levis* as ‘light (crime)’, see *TLL* 7.2.1212.81ff. The comparative probably connects the Vestal to Tarpeia; the sinner who is punished next to Tarpeia (*iuxta*) has committed no lighter crime.

**illatrat ieiunis faucibus** The ‘hungry throat’ belongs to the dog (abl. of instrument) rather than the victim (dat. with *illatrat*, as at Luc. *l.c.* below) since i) *ieiunis faucibus* for ‘a victim with a hungry throat’ would be harsh and ii) the position of the phrase between the verb and the dog’s name suggests that it is Orthrus who is famished (cf. Apul. *l.c.* below, and hungry Cerberus at Prop. 4.5.3–4 and Apul. Met. 1.15). The unnamed Vestal receives punishment similar to Tarpeia’s—disembowelment by a hungry predator.

The compound *illatrare* is only found at Luc. 6.729 *manibus illatrat* (of the witch Erictho); cf. *allatrare* at Sil. 8.289 (Liv. 38.54.1, Plin. Nat. 2.173, 4.19, Mart. 2.61.6, 5.60.1) and *oblatrare* at 8.248 (Sen. Dial. 3.43.1, Suet. Vesp. 13.1, Apul. Met. 6.19 *canis ... tonantibus oblatrans faucibus mortuos*); sim. *circumlatrare* (Sen. Dial. 6.22.5), *collatrare* (Sen. Dial. 7.17.1) and *elatrare* (Hor. Ep. 1.18.18).

**Orthrus** The (two-headed) dog of Geryon, the three-bodied giant who lived near Gades in Spain (see n.200–201); Hercules killed him when he came to get Geryon’s cattle as his tenth labour. Orthrus was the brother of Cerberus, being also born from Echidna and Typhon (Hes. Th. 309ff.), and thus well suited to join in his brother’s watch over the shades.

The dog’s name is variously spelled Ὄρθος/Orthus (e.g. Hes. Th. 293, Apoll. 2.5.10, *schol. ad Pind. Isth. 1.13) and Ὄρθρος/Orthrus (e.g. Quint.Smyrn. *Posthom. 6.253, schol. ad Plat. Tim. 24e, Serv. ad A. 8.300, Tzetz. Chil. 2.333). Both spellings are attested in the mss. of the *Punica*, but the support for the second is quite strong (Orthrus F; Orthrus LβCh). Delz has opted for the first spelling, since Ὄρθος may well have been the original Greek name.
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(cf. the good case made by Müller-Graupa in RE 18.1B.1495ff.). It does not follow, however, that Silius also wrote it. The fact that most later (scholarly) writers have Orthrus may imply a name change over the centuries. Perhaps the copyist of F knew his Hesiod too well.

**armenti ... custos ... Hiberi** Cf. Ov. Her. 9.91–92 armenti dives Hiberi / Geryones (whose dog Orthrus was) and Met. 11.348 armenti custos (of a herdsman); Silius imitates Her. l.c. also at 12.119 armenti vector Hiberi (of Hercules with Geryones’ cattle).

**morsu petit** ‘seeks with its teeth’; cf. 9.383–384 (‘bites the dust’; sim. 17.263), Sen. Dial. 5.4.3, Plin. Nat. 9.44.

**polluto eviscerat ungue** Orthrus’ polluted claw anticipates the description of the Vestal’s own pollution of her office (849 polluit); the sinner is repaid in similar coin (cf. n.836b–838 ora), and it is unnecessary to suspect with Delz the double use of pollu– in three lines (cf. also n.824b–827 laudat miserando in vulnere). polluto is probably the result of the eviceration, or it may be a natural property of Orthrus’ paws (for the appropriateness of pollution to the underworld, the place of death, cf. Luc. 6.706–707 satis ore nefando / pollutoque). For the rare eviscerare, cf. Enn. scen. 362 (Vahlen) summis saxis fixus asperis evisceratus (Thyestes’ curse upon Atreus), Pac. trag. 4 (Ribbeck), Verg. A. 11.723 pedibusque eviscerat uncis (of a hawk), OLD s.v.

**848–849** And yet the punishment is not equal to the crime; for this priestess polluted the shrine of Vesta when she laid down her virginity.

This punished Vestal has often been considered a reference to the death penalty of one of their order under Domitian, providing thus a terminus post quem for this book; see Intr. 806–850a. Her willing loss of virginity contrasts with the chastity of Lucretia and Verginia (cf. also 829 non passa marem for Cloelia).

**nec par poena ... sceleri** I.e. her crime was far greater than her punishment. For the diction, cf. (with TLL 10.1.1.267.39–41) the legal phraseology at Cic. Leg. 3.11 noxiae poena par esto (also 3.46), and also Sen. Oed. 1030 [non] umquam rependam sceleribus poenas pares (sim. Pho. 242); Ovid intends the opposite meaning (a less severe punishment) at Tr. 2.578 ut par delicto sit mea poena suo.

**exuta sibi virginitate** sibi is either a dativus auctoris or incommodi; the first interpretation has more force, as it underlines the point that the Vestal broke her vows of chastity willingly, or even on her own initiative. For the use of exuta, see n.120–121 exuta feram.

**850a** But these sights are enough, enough.

**satis haec vidisse** The focus is on haec; Scipio does not need to see more than these punishments. Duff’s translation “enough, enough, of all these sights” merely suggests that the Sibyl puts an end to Scipio’s viewing, but in comparable passages the object of vidisse also has emphasis, referring to the point beyond which one should or need not go; cf. 4.796 sit satis ante aras caesos vidisse iuvencos (i.e. human sacrifice is not wanted), Stat. Theb. 11.127–129 sat funera mensae / Tantaleae et sones vidisse Lycaonis aras (Iocaste does not want to see another act of impietas added to her house), [Sen.] Her.O. 166; sim. Ciris 455.

A similar phrase, but negated, is found in Aeneid 6: nec vidisse semel satis est (A. 6.487; there the shades, rather than the hero, are the subject); cf. also (with emphasis on vidisse) Ov. Met. 1.499–500 oscula, quae non / est vidisse satis, Tr. 3.10.39, Luc. 8.687. For satis with a perfect infinitive, cf. also 270 vixisse satis.
850b–895 The future beyond the *Punica*: Roman civil war and Hannibal’s end

At the end, the Sibyl shows to Scipio the shades of future Roman leaders: Marius, Sulla, Pompey and Caesar; she also predicts the wars that will break out between them, and notes that an equal punishment awaits both victor and vanquished. Scipio laments the fate that is in store for Rome, and asks what punishment Hannibal will receive. The priestess tells that he will be exiled from Carthage and will serve first Antiochus III, then Prusias of Bithynia; when the Romans will come to claim him, Hannibal will commit suicide by poison. After this prophecy the Sibyl leaves and Scipio returns to his comrades.

The last catalogue of the *Nekyia*, of future Roman leaders, is in setting and form clearly modelled after Vergil’s *Heldenschau*. It has often been noted, however, that Silius presents a much bleaker picture of Rome’s future than his predecessor—only the leaders of the civil wars are named, without something positive to counterbalance them; this had led some to conclude that Silius is pessimistic about the more recent Rome, which had been wrecked by civil strife and the ambitions of a few individuals, eventually resulting in the autocracy of the emperors. This reading might be defensible if the book would have ended with this vision of the future—but the poet does an encore. For this reason the last catalogue and the prophecy of Hannibal’s end will be discussed together; for the description of Hannibal’s last years is critical to our understanding of the preceding catalogue, as we will see.

This catalogue treats the figures of Marius and Sulla, Pompey and Caesar, two pairs which represent the Roman civil wars of the first century BC. The sequence of leaders is both rising (in power and greatness) and falling (in morals). Marius was of low origins (854 *origine parva*), while Caesar was descended from the gods (862 *deum gens*); conversely, Marius had a long *imperium*, but still as consul (855), whereas Sulla grabbed sole power, and while he abdicated, his successors never relinquished their autocracy (858–860).

The content of the catalogue has primarily been inspired by Lucan’s *Bellum Civile*. Marius and Sulla, who are not present in *Aeneid 6*, are parallels for Pompey and Caesar in Lucan. Silius continues this identification. His Sulla cannot postpone his destiny, 855–856 *nec ... morari iussa potest*, an echo of Pompey’s words just before the battle of Pharsalus *nil ultra fata morabor* (Luc. 7.88), and is the first to grab power (858 *imperium hic primus rapiet*), an act in which he is historically followed and epically preceded by Lucan’s Caesar (5.389–390 *nomen inane / imperii rapiens*). The descriptions of Pompey and Caesar provide more echoes of Lucan, the most obvious being the portrayal of Pompey’s *caput*,

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1 See n.850b–852. In addition, many phrases pick up significant elements from Anchises’ descriptions of the various men paraded before Aeneas; cf. nn.853–855a *aetherriam in lucem* (Silvius) and *veniet ... origine parva in longum imperium consul* (Numa), 858–860 *imperium hic primus rapiet* (Brutus), 864b–865 (Pompey and Caesar), 866 *heu miser* (Marcellus).


3 Cf. Tipping 2010b: 41 “Silius’ Sibyl presents mastery as an evil ‘fatally’ introduced to Rome by Sulla and persisting in Silius’ own day”, Penwill 2013: 49.


6 See also n.858–860 *nec ... quisquam exsistet et tanto in nomine*.
which alludes to Lucan’s description of the head just after it had been cut off (8.679–681). These intertextual links suggest that Silius’ Sibyl not only adumbrates Rome’s future civil wars here, but also ‘foretells’ Lucan’s epic. The civil strife is presented as epic material (see nn.864b–865 quantas moles and terraque marique), and gratum terris ... caput can arguably be read as an homage to Lucan’s epic, in which the fate of Pompey’s head and the political power which it represents is a major theme (see n.861–862a).

At the same time, Pompey and Caesar are also presented in their capacity of Aeneadae, epic successors of Aeneas. For Pompey, Silius echoes Lucan’s description of Pompey’s head, a passage which itself in turn alludes to Vergil’s Aeneas (see n.861–862a). Similarly, Silius’ portrayal of Caesar picks up both Ascanius (see nn.862b–864a stelligerum attollens apicem and Troianus Iulo Caesar avo) and Aeneas (A. 10.228 deum gens). Yet the Vergilian echoes draw attention to the major differences. Both Pompey and Caesar are in fact anti-Aeneas, associated with the destruction of Rome rather than its founding. For the allusion to Pompey’s decapitation aligns him, in Vergilian fashion, with Priam rather than Aeneas; and Caesar, the great descendant of Ascanius, whose starry head recalls the portents preceding Aeneas’ flight from Troy, betrays his heritage by assaulting Rome, which his ancestors had built. Scipio, though also an Aeneades, contrasts starkly with these men; this last catalogue presents a model which he should avoid. As negative successors of Aeneas, Pompey and Caesar much more resemble Hannibal. This connection is hinted at a few times in the catalogue, but becomes very clear when Scipio, after hearing of their crimes and punishment, asks if a similar treatment awaits Hannibal, reserving for him the punishments that had been attributed at 833–843 to those who had undermined Rome from within (see n.869b–873).

The Sibyl then speaks of Hannibal’s last years, following the defeat of Carthage. The association between Hannibal and the characters of Lucan’s Bellum Civile is here continued and intensified. After the capitulation of his city, Hannibal will try to start anew; in metapoetic terms, he will attempt another Punica (see n.876–881 rursus bella volet ... instaurare) and retrace his steps as the anti-Aeneas (see n.882), fleeing from his defeated city, but immediately failing as an Aeneas by leaving his wife and son behind. His failed

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7 See n.861–862a for the significance of this allusion; cf. also nn.866 and 867.
8 On the question whether this makes the Punica a ‘prequel’ to the Bellum Civile, just as it is a ‘sequel’ to the Aeneid, see below.
9 Tipping (2010a: 202) compares 3.625 nate deum on Domitian, arguing that the link with Caesar casts a negative light on the emperor. But Silius rather seems to present several possible ways of being an Aeneades.
10 As Caesar crosses the Rubicon, he tries to confront this issue at Luc. 1.195ff. by invoking Rome’s gods (with a reference to Iulus and Troy at 1.196–197 Phrygiique penates gentis Iuleae) and passing the guilt to his enemies.
12 Cf. nn.853–855a veniet ... origine parva in longum imperium consul (Hannibal as an autocrat, seeking longa imperia), 864b–865 (evokeative of gigantomachy, an image primarily associated with Hannibal throughout the Punica) and 866 tot in ... orbe.
13 Cf. von Albrecht 1964: 151–152 (who only stresses the juxtaposition of Hannibal and Caesar) and Tipping (2010b: 90), who notes that Scipio’s question after Hannibal’s fate directly following the words about Pompey and Caesar “further associates the would-be destroyer of Rome with the ructions of Roman civil war” (the insufficiently considers, however, what the connection, and more in particular the fact that Hannibal’s end is described, would mean for Silius’ reading of Lucan or his view on Roman history; see below).
14 See n.876–881 desertis coniuge fida et dulci nato. The re-enactment of Aeneas’ flight from Troy is otherwise complete: broken Carthage echoes Troy (n.876–881 fractus opum), Hannibal is an exile on the seas, like Aeneas
attempts to renew the epic reflect, with striking consistency and in great detail, the vicissitudes of Lucan’s Cato and especially Pompey after the battle of Pharsalus. Pompey fled Greece in one small ship (Luc. 8.258 *parva puppe fugit*, Sil. 13.881 *una profugus … puppe*; see also below) and arrived at Cilicia (Luc. 8.255–257, Sil. 13.882 *Cilicis Tauri*). There, he thought of going to the Parthians, but was dissuaded by Lentulus, who would not condone Pompey’s being a servant to their king (8.339 *Parthorum famulus*), which is exactly what Hannibal will become (886 *Assyrio famulus regi*; see n. ad loc.). Pompey then hoped to receive hospitality in Egypt; his ‘host’ Ptolemy murdered him instead. Similarly, Hannibal will go to the court of Prusias of Bithynia, who at first welcomes him, but then betrays him to the Romans; Prusias’ hospitality (890 *munus regni*) will turn out to be the same as that extended to Pompey (Luc. 8.653 *munere regis*, the murder of Magnus).

Hannibal’s final years closely correspond to Pompey’s flight after Pharsalus, then. This fits in well with the rest of the *Punica*, which, as critics have noted, both adumbrates and evokes the future civil wars of Rome. It is important, however, to determine in what way exactly the epic looks forward to these wars. Some scholars privilege the potentially negative elements, the seeds of future internal wars sown by Rome’s victory over Carthage; such readings take the *Punica* as a true ‘prequel’ of Lucan’s *Bellum Civile*, with Rome at the end of the epic (even when victorious) well on its way to self-destruction, or to the destruction of the republic at least. This presupposes, of course, that Silius entirely shares Lucan’s pessimistic agenda. To my mind, Silius’ response to Lucan is different, and in our interpretation we should take into account his response to Vergil as well. Rather than reading the *Punica* as an adumbration of future strife, I would prefer to view the Hannibalic war as Silius presents it as an analogy to civil war. The difference with the former interpretation is that with an analogy, the resolution of the war is far more important; for in the reading of the *Punica* as a ‘prequel’ to the *Bellum Civile*, Scipio’s victory over Carthage is but a prelude to more war (and therewith a hollow victory), whereas if the Hannibalic

(nn.876–881 *profagus lustriabit caerula*, 882). Von Albrecht (1964: 177) also notes the echo in 17.611 *patriae superstes* of Hor. *Saec. 42* (on Aeneas) and observes that Hannibal is like Aeneas, but without a future.


16 The allusion is also observed by Fucecchi (1990b: 165–166), who notes that since Pompey is still accompanied by a large part of the senate, “Annibale appare ancor più drammaticamente isolato”.

17 Fucecchi 1990b: 166 n.32, who also compares Lentulus’ remark *si servire potes* (Luc. 8.341) with Hannibal’s willingness to endure *aegra servitia*.

18 Other echoes of Luc. 8: nn.885b–890a *dubio petet aequora velo, segniter … imbelli … in aeo et latebram*.

19 Cf. e.g. Ahl / Davis / Pomeroy 1986, McGuire 1997, Dominik 2006, Marks 2010a, Tipping 2010a and 2010b; the most obvious hints at civil war are commonly located in the Cannae episode in books 8–10. Marks (2010a: 143) observes that the theme of civil war (including allusions to Caesar and Pompey) is played out twice in the epic, first (books 4–10) with Rome as the loser, then (books 11–17) with Carthage in this role. See also fn.13 above.

20 See recently and extensively e.g. Tipping 2010a and 2010b (p.192 “Lucan’s pre-written sequel”).
Introduction to 850b–895

war is read as an analogy to the Roman civil wars, this victory receives a central position. If the struggle with Hannibal represents Rome’s later internal power struggles, the outcome of the second Punic war should inform the reader’s view of the conclusion of those Roman civil wars. In other words, Scipio’s victory parallels Augustus’ final victory at Actium.21

An illustration of the nature of Silius’ epic as an analogy or parallel to future events is Jupiter’s speech in book 3. The order of the god’s prophecy of the war and Rome’s future is especially instructive. Jupiter first describes the heroism of Fabius, Paulus and Marcellus, great leaders in the Punic saga, and contrasts them with the degeneracy of later generations; even so, the future Romans, corrupted by luxus, will not be able to overthrow the empire gained through the toil of the second Punic war—a clear reference to the future civil wars.22 After this glimpse of the future, Jupiter foretells Scipio’s victory over Hannibal and then directly leaps to the principate, more in particular the Flavian dynasty (with no more than a brief reference to the Julio-Claudian house (3.590ff.).23 The order of the prophecy is then: 1a) heroism in the war with Hannibal – 2a) future civil strife – 1b) Scipio’s victory – 2b) the future emperors. The juxtaposition of Scipio and the Roman emperors suggests that the role of the princeps should be the same as Scipio’s in this epic, namely to unify Rome after civil strife.24 This role is shared by Augustus and by the Flavians after the memorable year 68.

Vergil’s Aeneid eulogized the foundation of Rome and its glory under Augustus, a second Aeneas, without, however, smoothing over the tragic aspects and the victims of Rome’s greatness. Lucan capitalized upon these tensions in his epic, drawing out the themes of discord and self-destruction, thus posing a great challenge to Silius as much as to the other Flavian poets. Silius confronts the problems of civil war by presenting the war with Hannibal as such, but also looks beyond Lucan to Vergil’s adumbration of the emperor as re-founder of Rome. Scipio is quite clearly meant to figure as a ‘proto-princeps’, an ideal leader to unify Rome.25 To establish Scipio as such, Silius adopts Vergil’s presentation of Augustus, but his hero, being not of the house of Aeneas (like Vergil’s Augustus, but also

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21 For Actium, see n.876–881 una ... puppe, n.882 and n.890b–893, and Gen.intr. § 4.3.3 fn.63. This trend towards autocracy is only problematic if we consider the republican setting as of fundamental importance, i.e. if (as Tipping does) we regard Scipio as a republican hero, whose actions seem to go against the principles of that Republic. But the Punic war seems, if anything, rather to bring out the flaws in the republican system; the division of power, for instance, between the consuls Varro and Paulus at Cannae, or that between the dictator Fabius and his magister equitum Minucius in book 7, does more harm than good.
22 3.588–590 hi tantum parient Latio per vulnera regnum, / quod luxu et multum mutata mente nepotes / non tamen evertiss equeant, “with their blood these men will gain for Latium an empire so great, that their descendants will be unable to overthow it, for all their luxury and degenerate hearts.” (tr. Duff, adapted). Especially non tamen evertiss equeant is a clear reference to the power struggle at the end of the republic (pace Tipping 2010b: 35, who believes that Jupiter omits the civil wars with a “loud silence”), and seems to ‘correct’ Lucan’s description of a Rome ruined by Marius at Luc. 2.74 evera ... urbe.
23 A single line divides Scipio and the Flavians: 3.593 hinc, Cytherea, tuis longo regnabitur aevno, “thereafter, Venus, your people will rule for a long age.” Marks (2005: 213) takes tuis as a reference to all Romans, and interprets this line accordingly as a reference to the ‘entire expanse of Roman history from the end of the Second Punic War to the rule of the Flavians’. But the most obvious candidates for tuis are the actual descendants of Venus, i.e. the Julio-Claudians (cf. Pomeroy 2000: 161 n.58). Silius moves immediately from Scipio to Augustus to the Flavians, and thus juxtaposes Scipio’s victory with the emergence of the principate.
24 This interpretation seems more in line with the rest of the Punic saga than that of Ahl / Davis / Pomeroy (1986: 2504), whom the same sequence led to postulate that Scipio and the Flavians are connected to decadence and loss of virtus.
25 For the term, see Marks 2005: 242–244 and 269ff., to which this argument is much indebted. For Scipio as the ideal princeps, see also Stürner 2008.
Lucan’s Caesar), yet recognizably a great Roman, is also suitable for the Flavian emperors to identify with.\textsuperscript{26}

In the \textit{Punica}, the Second Punic war is thus cast as an analogy to the Roman civil wars. After this long excursus, it is time to return to the Sibyl’s prophecy on Hannibal. The Punic leader is juxtaposed with the future Roman civil war leaders, in much the same way as Scipio is juxtaposed with the emperors in Jupiter’s prophecy. The Sibyl’s words on Hannibal are to be taken as a complement to the catalogue preceding it, that is, what we learn about Hannibal should also inform our reading of the prediction of future civil wars. We are not left with an impression of future evil, but rather with a positive end; Hannibal’s death will rid the world of a long terror (893). As we have seen, most of the prophecy is intertextual with the last books of Lucan’s epic, but in this final line, Silius echoes (and affirms) the hopeful words of Vergil’s \textit{Eclogue} 4 on the end of the endless wars.\textsuperscript{27} Furthermore, Hannibal’s suicide by poison aligns him not only with Dido, but also, and more importantly here, with that other African leader, Cleopatra;\textsuperscript{28} his death thus parallels not so much Pompey’s death in Lucan’s \textit{Bellum Civile} as the final victory of Octavian / Augustus, which brought peace and a true end to civil war. Silius thus moves beyond the misery of Lucan’s epic to the \textit{pax Augusta} heralded by Vergil. If Hannibal’s death parallels the end of the civil wars, we may also understand Scipio’s reaction to both prophecies: his tears after hearing of Rome’s future internecine struggle are counterbalanced by his joyful reaction to the prophecy of Hannibal’s end (868 \textit{tum iuvenis lacrimans}, 895 \textit{tum laetus ... iuvenis}).\textsuperscript{29} In the final lines of the book, Scipio is cast again in his role of Aeneas, the forerunner of Augustus, as he returns to his men fully invigorated to begin his campaign against Hannibal;\textsuperscript{30} the development of his characterization is concluded at the end of the epic with Scipio in the role of the \textit{princeps} himself, the leader who has ended the civil war.\textsuperscript{31}

This last scene of the book is a fine example of Silius’ mastery in structuring his epic. The foretelling of Hannibal’s end is the most clear-cut example of the main theme of book 13, namely the adumbration of Roman victory (see Gen.intr. § 5). In this nexus of foreshadowing and parallelism, the prophecy forms a counterpart to several other scenes. Firstly, within the \textit{Nekyia} as a narrative unit, this scene counterbalances the prediction of Scipio’s future at 13.507–515; the prophecies on the Roman protagonist and Punic antagonist thus begin and end the \textit{Nekyia} proper.\textsuperscript{32} Secondly, book 13 as a whole both

\begin{itemize}
\item For Silius’ favouring also others than Aeneas in order to create a truly Flavian epic, see e.g. the end of Intr. 30–93 on the figure of Diomedes; see further Gen.intr. § 6.
\item Verg. \textit{Ecl.} 4.14 \textit{perpetua solvent formidine terras} ~ 893 \textit{terras longa formidine solvet}; see n.890b–893.
\item Similarly, Hannibal’s departure from his defeated city in \textit{una ... puppe} corresponds to Cleopatra’s flight after Actium in \textit{una ... navis} (Hor. \textit{Carm.} 1.37.13). See also Pomeroy 2000: 158.
\item Kîbel (1979: 184) thinks that Scipio can bear the thought of the predicted ruin of Rome after the consoling prophecy of his just victory over evil in the person of Hannibal, but that would leave him a shortsighted, and frankly egoistic, patriot.
\item See n.894–895 with the n. on \textit{laetus}.
\item 17.645ff., alluding to Verg. \textit{A.} 6.801–805 and 8.720ff. (see the bibliography in Marks 2005: 243 n.117), and also evoking contemporary eulogy of Domitian (see Marks 2005: 224–225). For the final two lines, a last reference to Lucan’s \textit{Bellum Civile}, see Marks 2010a: 149.
\item Von Albrecht 1964: 151 and 209, Reitz 1982: 130. See also An. 850b–895 below. The prophecy also responds to other scenes within the \textit{Nekyia}: Scipio’s question after Hannibal’s punishment picks up the description of tortured tyrants (601–612) and wicked women (833–849), while Hannibal’s failure to defeat Rome contrasts with the hopes his father Hamilcar’s expresses at 750 (cf. Reitz \textit{l.c.}).
\end{itemize}
begins and ends with a Hannibal who is frustrated in moving against Rome. A third connection is that with the second major episode of the book, the fall of Capua (which foreshadows the fall of Carthage); its highlight is the suicide by poison of Virrius, which adumbrates that of Hannibal here (see Intr. 256–298). Lastly, both suicide scenes play against the conclusion of book 2, where Hannibal’s end is also foretold (see n.876–881 and Intr. 256–298). The parallelism in the endings of book 2 and 13 is significant to the plot structure; the revenge of Fides, which she foretold during the siege of Saguntum (2.495), is now counterbalanced by a campaign against Carthage (see Gen.intr. § 5.2.3).

Analysis of the presentation of 850b–895

The last catalogue of this Nekyia directly follows upon the preceding one. This seamless transition underlines the parallel between the punished criminals in Tartarus and the future Roman leaders, who will similarly pay for their crimes (see n.867). These future Romans correspond to the last two of the ten gates of 531–559, namely that to Elysium, where shades drink oblivion from the Lethe (n.850b–852 potant oblivia), and that to the upper world, which the souls pass through to reincarnate (n.853–855a aetheriam in lucem). The four men are presented in two pairs, with roughly the same amount of lines devoted to each pair (Reitz 1982: 128). The association of Marius and Sulla, and Pompey and Caesar, respectively, is reinforced by Silius’ use of anaphoric pronouns and word order: the first two are referred to with hic (853 and 858), and their names are in second position of the sentence in which they are introduced (853 hic Marius, 855 nec Sulla); for the second two, ille is used (861, 862), and now the names take the penultimate position of the sentence. Incidentally, it is striking how much of the information, even if it is of a neutral nature, is phrased with a negation: 853 nec multa dies, 855 nec Sulla, 857 nulli divum, 859 nec tanto in nomine, finally culminating in 867 nec leviora ... crimina. Since negation often points to frustration of an expectation, a literary observation may be attached to its use here: as the catalogue is formally modelled after Aeneid 6, we might expect to read of the glorious future of Rome, an expectation which is quickly thwarted in this negative, Lucanian catalogue. Then, on the basis of Lucan’s epic, we might expect that these future crimes will go unpunished, but this negative expectation is also thwarted in the final line and climax of the catalogue: due punishment will follow.

34 And even more so if max deinde at 850 is read as part of the speech itself, instead of a connecting phrase; see n.850b–852 max deinde sequentum. The Sibyl would then move to a new subject in mid-speech (indeed in mid-verse); see for this narrative technique An. 417–493.
35 For the gates as a rough ‘index’ of the Nekyia, see Intr. 517–614.
36 Silius varies the common hic ... ille idiom with his hic + hic ... ille + ille, and also makes full use of the deictic value of the anaphoric pronouns: Marius and Sulla are both spatially (in the Nekyia) and temporally (in the future, as seen from the 3rd c. BC) closer to Scipio than Pompey and Caesar.
37 The final line in this series, 860, is notable for its S-sounds.
38 The final position is reserved for the most characterizing element: Magnus is famous for his caput, Caesar for his illustrious avus. For the noteworthy juxtaposition in 863–864, see n.862b–864a Troianus Iulo Caesar avo.
Scipio’s reaction to the catalogue at 868–873 is the key to the structure of the last 46 lines of this book. Firstly, tum iuvenis lacrimans contrasts with the final line, 895 tum laetus ... iuvenis; Scipio’s initial tears are neutralised by his eventual joy, suggesting that the Sibyl’s words on Hannibal counterbalance those on the future Romans (see Intr. 850b–895 above). Secondly, Scipio’s words on the harshness of fate and his subsequent question are analogous to the similar sequence at 517–522. The prophecy of Scipio’s future (506–515) and the subsequent description of the underworld (523–612) is thus set against the description of future Romans and the prophecy of Hannibal’s end, four passages that thus frame the rest of the Nekyia:

1a) prophecy of Scipio’s future (506–515)

L  ## Scipio’s reaction (517–522)
L 1b) description of the underworld (523–612)
(Nekyia)
Γ (2a) catalogue of future Romans (850b–867)
Γ  ## Scipio’s reaction (868–873)
2b) prophecy of Hannibal’s future (874–893)

The hinge function of the hero’s reaction results in two parallelisms:

i) Since the first of both pairs of scenes (1a and 2a) treat the future of Romans, it is suggested that the second halves of each pair are equally linked. The description of the underworld, which culminates in the punishment of tyrants (including, it is implied, Hannibal; see Intr. 517–614), is answered with the prophecy about Hannibal’s last years; at 601–612 the Sibyl thus describes his fate after death, at 874–893 his fate before death.

ii) The two pairs are also mirrored (cf. Reitz 1982: 130). The outer two passages (on Scipio and Hannibal) play against each other, but so do the inner ones (1b and 2a), as is already suggested by the recurrence of enumerare at 522 and 852; the crimina (867) for which the Roman autocrats must pay (867) pick up the punishment of the crimina regum (602).

After an introductory remark, the prophecy about Hannibal is structured in a number of ‘phases’ (perhaps even a series of ‘vignettes’ or tableaux), with a small time lapse between

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39 These six lines resound with alliteration and assonance; note the recurrence of R and L in 868–870, merito mors (870), perfidiae Poenus (871), the U’s in 871–872 undis exaret ductor scelus and the A’s in 872–873 digna renatos ales ... laniabit ... artus.

40 Reitz 1982: 130–131. The opening is the same (517 tum iuvenis), with the marked addition of lacrimans at 868; Scipio in both cases comments upon the fate in store (517 sors durior, 868 ordine duro), but grieves for that of his country where he did not for his own (n.868–869a ordine duro). Another contrast is that Scipio hopes to be free of culpa (518), something that typifies Sulla (858 gloria culpae). Scipio’s question, which prevents the Sibyl from returning to Hades (516 gressumque ... vertebat, 852 paro ... remeare tenebris), is introduced by sed (519 and 869). Other major narrative steps within the Nekyia are also marked by sed; see An. 517–614.

41 This is also why the Sibyl’s answer to Scipio’s vivid picture of the possible punishments of Hannibal, which looks back to that of the women at 833–849 but ultimately to that of the tyrants, is so brief (874 ne metue); both Scipio and the reader already know the full answer.

42 Reitz (1982: 131) notes the similar structure of the prophecies; after a general remark (503–504 and 874–875) the actual prophecy is introduced by namque (505, 876), after which, respectively, the successes of Scipio and the failures of Hannibal follow.

43 Note the alliteration of vi– (vita ... inviolata virum).

44 See An. 179–255 with fn.28; here there is, however, some progress of time within a few of the tableaux (e.g. 882 hinc ... viset).
each of them. The setting of each phase is marked by a participle, after which a number of finite verbs follow. Most verbs cover a large amount of time, and the lapses in between are also large; we are presented with an overview of future history rather than a continuous narrative. The first of these phases (876–878, Hannibal’s recuperation after Zama) features a temporal setting (876 ubi) to place the entire prophecy after the end of the epic; when Hannibal will be *fractus opum* (876) and has tasted defeat (877), he will want (878 *volet*) to renew hostilities. The second phase sees him, after he has been charged with treason and has had to leave his family (879 *damnatus, desertis coniuge ... et ... nato*), fleeing from Carthage (880 *linquet*, 881 *lustrabit*) and then (882 *hinc*) visiting the east (882 *viset*). The Sibyl’s comment at 883–885, which interrupts her prophecy, covers a larger time lapse between 882 and 885, for in the next phase, Hannibal’s stay with Antiochus III is now the (past) setting (885 *post Itala bella*, 886–887 *falsusque cupiti Ausoniae motus*) for his next wandering (887 *petet*), which ends with his arrival at the court of Prusias (*donec ... delatus*, another participle, followed by 889 *paitetur*). The setting for the last phase is the coming of the Romans (890 *perstantibus inde Aeneadis ... poscentibus*), when Hannibal’s takes his own life (892 *rapiet*). The final line 893 is a more general verdict (*solvet*) and forms the coda of the prophecy.

The number of participles also underlines the marked frequency of passive constructions and words with a passive meaning; Hannibal is presented as the object of action, not as its agent, which begins already at 874–875 *vita sequetur ... virum*. Note the verbs with the sense ‘endure’ (877 *pertulerit vinci*, 883 *subire, 889 paitetur*), the passive phrases (879 *damnatus, 888 delatus, 891 reddi*) and even two participles where the passive sense seems deliberately transferred to Hannibal (876 *fractus opum* instead of *fractis opibus*, and 886–887 *falsus ... motus* for *falso ... motu*, see the nn. *ad loc*.). The active verbs, suggestive of Hannibal’s attempts to remain in control of his life, show a similar trend; his original aim of restoring the war (878 *volet*, a wish rather than an action) is soon followed by a forced departure from Carthage (*linquet*), wandering over the sea (881 *lustrabit* and eventually, when he sets out to the sea for the second time, this wandering has become aimless (887 *dubio petet aequora velo*). The passive attitude of Hannibal (now truly the ‘dupe of Destiny’, Vessey 1982) is only resolved in the final lines, when with his last defining act of trickery (cf. 892 *furtivo*, see n.) he takes his own life; the last great deed of Hannibal is the removal of Hannibal.

The final two lines of the *Nekyia*, like the first (385–388) are in perfect tenses (894 *se rettulit*, 895 *revisit*); by ending the story from the viewpoint of his own time, the narrator explicitly concludes the *Nekyia* (and book 13 as a whole) as a narrative unit.

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45 Compare the prophecy about Scipio at 506–515 and also for instance the history of Carthage at 1.21–37, where the narrator also goes with great strides through his material.

46 879–880 are patterned lines, with their strong alliteration of D (*damnatus doli, desertis ... dulci*) and C/Q (*coniuge ... dulei ... linquet Carthaginis areces*).

47 If we take the comment at 883–885 on bearing hardship (and first and foremost slavery) as a reference to the stay with Antiochus, the second and third phases are syntactically (and historically) parallel: after losing a war against Rome (cf. 885 *post Itala bella*, an ambiguous phrase), Hannibal travels the sea (881 *lustrabit caerula, 887 petet aequora*) until he arrives at the land of his new master (882 *hinc ... viset, 880 donec ... delatus*), where he will be nothing more than a servant (883–884 *agegra subire servitia, 889 altera servitia ... paitetur*).

48 For the golden line at 892, which marks Hannibal’s end, see n.890b–893 *pocula furtivo rapiet prosperata veneno*.

49 The slow spondees, alliteration of T (*tandem terras*) and assonance of O (*longa formidine solvet*) all serve to emphasize the content. Additionally, the caesurae in the first half of the line result in a clash of ictus and word accent, which is resolved at the end; the metre thus mirrors the end of conflict.
850b–860

mox deinde sequentum 850
nunc animas tibi, quae potant oblivia, paucas
in fine enumerasse paro et remearre tenebris.
hic Marius; nec multa dies iam restat ituro
aetheriam in lucem; veniet tibi origine parva
in longum imperium consul. nec Sulla morari
iussa potest, aut amne diu potare soporo;
lux vocat et nulli divum mutabile fatum.
imperium hic primus rapiet, sed gloria culpae,
quo reddet solus, nec tanto in nomine quisquam
exsistet, Sullae qui se velit esse secundum. 860

850b–852 Of the ghosts of men who will follow soon hereafter, which drink oblivion, I now
intend to recount to you a few at the end, and then to return to the darkness.

The introduction to the presentation of the future Romans is clearly modelled after Verg.
A. 6.713ff. animae ... longa oblivia potant, has equidem memorare tibi ..., hanc prolem
cupio enumerare meorum, which marks the opening of the Heldenschau. Silius alluded to
the same lines at 521–522 (see n.519–522 enumera), Scipio’s question to the Sibyl to
provide the names of all ghosts he was about to see. The echo is here repeated, since like
Anchises, she will now tell of future men—but only a few (paucas). For Silius’ choice of
Marius, Sulla, Pompey and Caesar as the only images of the future, see Intr. 850b–895.

mox deinde sequentum The mss. reading videntem at the end of the line is impossible;
the correction videnti (Γ²ς, printed by Duff and Miniconi-Devallet) is grammatically
correct, but would be little more than a stopgap, since the deictic pronouns (853 hic, 861
ille, 862 ille) sufficiently convey the setting of inspection. videntem is probably an error of
repetition after vidisse. We might want a genitive to define the ghosts that will be discussed,
such as Postgate’s nepotum, which is a nice additional echo of the subject of Vergil’s
Heldenschau (A. 6.682, 6.757) and well marks that these are men of the future (although
potant oblivia already suggests pending reincarnation; cf. Reitz 1982: 127 and the foll.n.).
Still, a line ending –entum would be closer to the mss. tradition; Delz suggests potentum,
but other powerful men have already been passed in review (leaving aside the poor jingle
potentum ... potant). Perhaps sequentum? Compare its absolute use at 6.334 and 9.103, and
esp. Verg. A. 6.756–759 Dardaniam prolem quae deinde sequatur / gloria, ... / inlustris
animas ... / expediam dictis, which immediately precedes the parade of future men. mox
deinde is usually interpreted as the connection between two speeches by the Sibyl (‘soon
thereafter [she said]’; cf. the collocation at Ov. Met. 9.143, in the same sedes); but if
sequentum is right, mox deinde would qualify it, and the Sibyl would turn to a new subject
within the same speech, which is not unusual in this Nekyia (see An. 417–493).

potant oblivia Cf. 555 Lethaeos potat latices, oblivia mentis (with the same
etymologizing of λήθη = oblivia), which is another clear allusion to Anchises’ explanation
of reincarnation.

in fine These are the last ghosts that the Sibyl will introduce, ending her guidance that
began with Pomponia’s arrival at 613 and more properly at 721 with ghosts that Scipio
would not know by sight.
**Notes to 850b–895**

**remeare tenebris** This departure of the Sibyl, as at 516 gressumque lacus vertebat ad atros, will be delayed by a question by Scipio; and like these two passages, the line describing her actual return (894 Erebiique cavis se reddidit umbris) ends with a word for darkness.

**remeo** normally goes with a preposition (ad or in); for the use with a dative, cf. Sen. Oed. 233, Aetna 331 and Apul. Apol. 9.

**853–855a** Here is Marius; and not many days are still left before he will go to the light of day; he will reach from small beginnings a long reign as a consul.

**nec multa dies** ‘not many a day’; for the feminine, cf. non multa dies at Hor. Ars 292–293 and Sil. 3.382–383.

**aetheriam in lucem** This picks up the first of Vergil’s list of Aeneas’ descendents, his son Silvius, who proxima sorte tenet lucis loca, primus ad auras / aetherias ... surget (A. 6.761–762); cf. also 556–557 tam lucis honorem sentit. For the collocation, cf. 497 and Sen. Pha. 889.

**tibi** Cf. the same use of the ethic dative tibi in Jupiter’s prophecy to Venus at 3.586 and in the Vergilian models for both these prophecies: Jupiter to Venus at A. 1.261 and Anchises to Aeneas at A. 6.773. It signifies the emotional involvement of the addressee with the prophecy, but it poses a challenge to the translator.

**veniet ... origine parva in longum imperium consul** A reminiscence of another figure in Aeneid 6, Numa, who was Curibus parvis et paupere terra / missus in imperium magnum (6.811–812; Grebe 1989: 120). Just as Numa ‘founded’ Rome with his laws (810–811 primam qui legibus urbem fundabit), Marius was also called the ‘third founder’ of the city (after Romulus and Camillus); cf. Plut. Mar. 27.5. Marius’ ‘small beginnings’ refer to his status as homo novus from provincial Cereatae near Arpinum (RE suppl. 6.1367.32ff.). He was consul an unprecedented (and illegal) seven times (longum imperium), of which five in a row from 104–100 BC.

The clause also paraphrases the rise of Rome itself from its humble start under Romulus to the splendour under Augustus (cf. Gell. 20.1.39 e parva origine ad tantae amplitudinis instar); Vergil connects the two through A. 6.781–782 en huius [i.e. Romuli] ... auspiciis illa incluta Roma / imperium terris, animos aequabit Olympo. The similarity here suggests that Marius’ rise to power foreshadows the imperial age.

**consul** marks the rising trend in this catalogue, from the repeatedly prolonged consulship of Marius to the (equally illegal) dictatorship for life of Caesar. The allusion to Numa, to which the word consul is significantly added, and the replacement of magnum with longum, is incriminating: Marius was consul for an unconstitutionally long period, and therewith perhaps even started to look like a king. Cf. also Lucan’s Caesar complaining of Pompey at 1.333 quem tamen inveniet tam longa potentia finem? For this transformation of imperium into kingship, cf. 11.588–589, where Hanno accuses Hannibal of protracting the war ut longa imperia atque armatos proroget annos / Hannibal et regnum trahat usque in tempora fati, “so that Hannibal can prorogue his long reign and the years under arms and extend his kingship to the time of his death” (cf. also Stat. Theb. 11.549–550 for Eteocles’ illegal longa imperia). For these four Romans and Hannibal, see Intr. 850b–895.

**855b–857** Nor can Sulla delay what is decreed, or drink for long from the sleepy river; the light calls him, and fate that none of the gods can change.
nec ... morari iussa potest *iussa* is ‘fate’, the decrees of Jupiter. The reference is to the civil war; apt parallels are therefore Luc. 7.88 *nil ultra fata morabor* (Pompey before Pharsalus) and Stat. *Theb.* 11.169–170 *desiste morari, / nec poteris* (the fraternal duel between Polynices and Eteocles can also not be prevented). For *morari iussa*, cf. Verg. *A.* 6.40–41 *nec sacra morantur / iussa viri*, [Sen.] *Oct.* 439 and 805.

amne ... soporo The Lethe, which induces ‘sleep’, i.e. forgetfulness (cf. 851 *oblivia*; Spaltenstein compares 4.724); Sulla will not drink for long, that is, he will soon return to life. The soporiferous water of the Lethe is associated with Somnus at Verg. *A.* 5.584–585, Ov. *Met.* 11.602–604 and Sil. 10.355–356; cf. also Ov. *Tr.* 4.1.47 *soporiferae ... pocula Lethes*. Hades is the realm of sleep: Verg. *A.* 6.390 *umbrarum hic locus est, somni noctisque soporae*.

lux vocat See n.807–808 *vocaret*.

nulli divum mutabile fatum An echo of Stat. *Theb.* 9.661 *finis adest iuveni, non hoc mutabile fatum*, of Parthenopaeus (spoken by the mourning god Apollo to goddess Diana; cf. *divum* here)—but also an inversion since for Sulla, the fate that cannot be avoided is not death, but life; his birth will cause much grief.

Reitz (1982: 128) compares the Stoic tenets on the unchangeable nature of *fatum*; but for a Stoic, this insight should give peace of mind, whereas here Sulla’s foretold birth is disturbing. More apt is her comparison of Luc. 6.611–614, where Erictho professes that even she cannot change the greater purposes of the world (cf. also Luc. 5.105 *fixa canens mutandaque nulli*), including the battle of Pharsalia and its outcome. Civil war—or at least the one that brought about the empire—seems inevitably tied with the Roman destiny. See also Intr. 850b–895.

858–860 He will be the first to seize supreme power, but the glory of his crime is that he alone will return it, and there will be none with that great title who will wish to follow Sulla’s example.

The catalogue of future Roman autocrats anticipates Lucan’s *Bellum Civile*; this is apparent not only in the description of Caesar and Pompey, but also with Marius and Sulla (cf. their roles as precedent at Luc. 2.68ff.); see the nn. below for various echoes of Lucan.

Blomgren (1938: 49–50) thinks that these lines could not have been written under Domitian, but the latter would not have identified his legitimate rule with that of Sulla (cf. Wistrand 1956: 50–52, Fröhlich 2000: 15 n.47). The first and only emperor who did follow Sulla’s example by abdicating was Diocletian, two centuries after Silius.

imperium hic primus rapiet Lucan’s Caesar will be next: Luc. 5.389–390 *nomen inane / imperii rapiens* (see below on *tanto in nomine*). Sulla is the first autocrat, ‘grabbing power’, contrasting with the first consul, Brutus, who ‘received power’, whose description by Vergil is here echoed: A. 6.819–820 *consulis imperium hic primus saevasque secures / accipiet*. Vergil’s Anchises foretells the Republic’s beginning, Silius’ Sibyl its end.

gloria culpae The oxymoron (cf. the opposite at 13.30 *pravum decus*) expresses that Sulla is reprehensible for his coup d’état, but still laudable for laying down his power freely; cf. Blomgren 1938: 49 “what does him credit in his crime”.

nec ... quisquam existet Cf. the exhortation of Lucan’s Caesar that Pompey should learn from Sulla at 1.334–335 *ex hoc iam te, improbe, regno / ille tuus saltem doceat descendere Sulla*, “Presumptuous man, now let your Sulla at least teach you to step down
from this reign”. For the diction, cf. Livy’s description of the monarchical rule of the decemviri which none would break at 3.38.2 nec vindex quisquam existit aut futurus videtur (cf. [Sen.] Oct. 255–256 forsitan vindex deus / existet aliquis, on Nero’s despotism). Silius applies the phrase to the autocrat who ends his own rule.

**tanto in nomine** i.e. in this position of power; cf. 11.153 (Varro as consul). The phrase is indubitably a reference to the use of nomen in Lucan, where the great nomina of Caesar and Pompey clash (Luc. 5.468 tanta duo nomina famae; cf. 7.209–210 and above); the word is especially associated with Pompey, with a play on his cognomen Magnus (1.135 magni nominis umbra; cf. at his death 8.550–551 tanti ... ruinam / nominis). In the Punica, it is first Rome, and in particular Paulus, who assume the role of a Pompey figure (11.511 magnum Latia inter nomina Paulus / nomen), and when the scales are turned it is Hannibal (16.18–19 unum Hannibalis sat nomen erat, 17.150–151 tanto ... nomine, 17.393 magno de nomine); see Marks 2008: 70–74, 81–83 and 2010a: 138–139, 146–149.

**Sullae ... secundum** ‘an imitator (or: duplicate) of Sulla’, viz. by also laying down power. Sullae is dative; for the construction and sense, cf. 12.432 miseraeque secunda Sagunto; see OLD secundus 9.

861–867
ille, hirta cui subrigitur coma fronte, decorum et gratum terris Magnus caput. ille, deum gens, stelligerum attollens apicem Troianus Iulo Caesar avo. quantas moles, cum sede reclusa hac tandem erumpent, terraque marique movebunt! heu miseri, quotiens toto pugnabitur orbe! nec leviora lues quam victus crimina, victor.’

861–862a That man, whose hair springs up from a bushy brow, his head charming and dear to the world, is Magnus.

Reitz (1982: 129) rightly notes the allusion to Luc. 8.679–681 Magnum ..., illa verenda / regibus hirta coma et generosa fronte decora / caesaries (with a rearrangement of the adjectives); the scene is Pompey’s beheading, hence Silius’ emphasis on caput. The implied pun in gratum terris ... caput is that Pompey was popular, but his death even more so; at the same time, Silius pays a metapoetic homage to Lucan, who had described Pompey’s caput and whose work was decorum and gratum.

Lucan’s lines themselves echo Venus’ beautification of Aeneas at Verg. A. 1.589–591 ipsa decoram / caesariem nato genetrix ... / ... adflarat. Silius inserts another allusion to Aeneas in his description of Caesar (see n.862b–864a deum gens); both leaders may therefore lay claim to being another Aeneas, which emphasizes the nature of their conflict as a civil war.

As Marks (2008 and 2010a: 150–151) has argued, (Pompey’s) caput is an important structural device both in Lucan and Silius. His head is the great prize in the war between Pompey and Caesar for dominance over the caput mundi (Luc. 2.655), Rome; this bears direct relevance to the subject of Silius’ own epic, where Carthage and Rome vie for the title of terrarum ... caput (1.8), bestowed by Fortuna (cf. also Luc. 8.95–96 hoc iuris habebat in tantum fortuna caput?, again on Pompey’s head / fate; see Marks 2010a: 151).
The connection suggests that the Punic war as narrated by Silius is an analogy for the future Roman civil war; Pompey and Caesar are thus ‘successors’ of Hannibal, whose equally unhappy end is foretold next (Intr. 850b–895).

For *hirta ... coma fronte*, see also n.862b–864a *stelligerum attollens apicem*.

**862b–864a** That man, descendant of the gods, who lifts his star-bearing crown, is Trojan Caesar who has Iulus as his ancestor.

*deum gens* Cf. Verg. *A*. 10.228 (same *sedes*), of Aeneas, who was Caesar’s forefather through Iulus. For *gens* as ‘descendant’, see n.466–468a *gens ... veteris pulcherrima Clausi*.

*stelligerum attollens apicem* A reference to Caesar’s transformation into a star after his death (the comet that shone for seven days during the games Augustus held in his honour for Venus Genetrix and that was believed to mark his deification; cf. Plin. *Nat.* 2.93–94), and more precisely to the star that was set upon the crown (*apicem*) of his statue inside the Templum Divi Iuli in recognition of this (Plin. *Nat.* 2.94, Suet. *Jul.* 88 *simulacro eius in vertice additur stella*, Dio C. 45.7; see Zanker 2009: 297–298). Silius emphasizes Caesar’s descent from Vergil’s Iulus, on whose head appeared a flame at *A*. 2.682–683 (*levis summo de vertice visus Iuli / fundere lumen apex*; cf. also Ov. *Fast.* 6.636), an omen that is reinforced by the appearance of a *stella* at *A*. 2.694, two events that pick up Caesar’s comet (see most recently Williams 2003 for further references in the *Aeneid*).


*Troianus Iulo Caesar avo* The identification of Iulius with Iulus (see the prev.n.) is underlined by the careful juxtaposition and the transference of the epithet *Troianus* to Caesar, echoing *A*. 1.286–288 *Troianus ... Caesar / ... / Iulius, a magno demissum nomen Iulo* (Reitz 1982: 129). The two are paired also in Vergil’s Heldenschau at *A*. 6.789–790 hic *Caesar et omnis Iuli / progenies magnum caeli ventura sub axem* (although this ‘Caesar’ may well be Augustus). For *avo*, cf. Ov. *Fast*. 4.124 *magnus Iuleos Caesar haberet avos*.

**864b–865** What masses will they move on land and at sea, when this house will be opened and they will finally break forth!

These lines pick up Anchises’ words on Pompey and Caesar at *A*. 6.826–835, and especially 828–829 *heu quantum inter se bellum, si lumina vitae / attigerint, quantas acies stragemque ciebunt* (cf. Grebe 1989: 120–121, who also compares 866 *heu miseri* and *A*. 6.832 *ne pueri*; Silius’ replacement of Vergil’s *si lumina vitae / attigerint* with *cum ... hac tandem erumpent* casts the two as Giants broken loose from Tartarus (cf. 12.146 *rumpere*). Perhaps *moles ... movebunt*, highly ambiguous here (*TLL* 8.1339.29ff. *moles belli*, i.e. the toil of war; cf. Spaltenstein), should evoke the mountains they piled on top of each other to reach Olympus. The theme of Gigantomachy is mostly associated with Hannibal; see n.591–594.

*quantas moles* The phrase suggests epic struggle; cf. Verg. *A*. 1.33 *tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem*, Acc. trag. 609–610 (Ribbeck) *quantam Tyndareo gnata et Menelai domus molem excitavit belli* (the Iliad), and Jupiter’s description of the Punica as *hac ... Martis mole* (3.573–574; cf. 3.582 *magnae molis opus*). We may therefore read these
words as a metapoetic reference to their deeds in Lucan’s epic, as an ‘adumbration’ of his Pharsalia. Other uses of moles in the Punica refer to the epic struggle of Hannibal. His first great obstacle (and source of epic fame) is formed by the Alps: 1.127 quanta procul moles scopulis ad sidera tendit; Cannae, which should have been his final victory and the destructive counterpart to Aeneas’ foundation of the Romanam ... gentem, proves to be a false epic ending: 10.382–383 tanta mole ... non Roma, ut creditur, ipsa / sed Varro est victus.

**sede reclusa** Cf. Verg. A. 8.244 infernas reseret sedes et regna recludat. For recludo of the underworld, cf. also V.Fl. 4.231 reclusaque ianua leti, Stat. Theb. 5.156 Acheronte recluso and 11.421, and here at lines 424 and 588 and metaphorically at 523.

**terreaque marique** I.e. everywhere; a common phrase in historiography to describe the theatres of war (cf. e.g. Liv. 21.6.6), but here also another reference to epic labours; cf. Verg. A. 1.3 terris iactatus et alto, 10.162 iam quae passus terreaque marique.

866 Ah wretches, how often war will be waged across the whole world!

This line has reminiscences of various passages in Vergil and Lucan describing civil war.

**heu miseri** In the setting of the Nekyia, this may pick up Vergil’s heu at A. 6.828 (see n.864b–865) and heu miserande puer (A. 6.882, on Marcellus; see n.868–869a tum ... lacrimans). It seems primarily modelled on two contexts of (civil) strife: Luc. 4.382 heu miseri qui bella gerunt! (where the poet criticizes warmongers for not being content with little) and Verg. A. 5.671 heu miserae cives (on the Trojan women after their self-destructive assault on the ships).

**toto ... orbe** The phrase is very common in Lucan; cf. esp. 1.692, 2.643, 3.169, 4.232, 4.402, 5.260, 7.362 toto simul utimur orbe (the whole world is present at Pharsalus). Compare also Vergil’s famous description of the civil war at G. 1.511 saevit toto Mars impius orbe. The war with Carthage is similarly a world war; cf. 14.9 sparsis Mavors agitatus in oris, and the fact that Hannibal’s army comprised contingents from all around the world (16.19–22), like Pompey’s (Luc. 3.287ff.; see Fucecchi 1990b: 158).

**pugnabitur orbe** An echo of Luc. 3.92 pro qua pugnabitur urbe? (i.e. if not for Rome).

867 And you, victor, will pay for no lighter crimes than the loser.

Both Pompey and Caesar were murdered; some have taken this line as a reference to this shared fate (e.g. Ernestri, Duff, Spaltenstein). But it is likely that a punishment in Tartarus is also intended (cf. Kißel 1979: 183 n.65); Reitz (1982: 129 n.5) rightly observes that Scipio says at 869–870 sed luce remota / si nulla est venia, connecting the punishment of the Roman civil war leaders with the future fate of Hannibal. Moreover, nec leviora ... crimina echoes 844–845 neque leviora delicta, of the crime and infernal punishment of the Vestal. The punishments of the three wicked women, which Scipio applies to Hannibal at 871–873, also look back to 601–612, the sentence of the crimina regum (602; cf. Reitz l.c.). Note that Silius focuses not on the punishment (lues), but on the crimes (nec leviora ... crimina), just as he did with the female sinners (see Intr. 806–850a fn.12); the lack of amor patriae of Caesar and Pompey is central to the passage, and this is what Scipio will weep for.

Silius seems to imply that Caesar and Pompey are equally guilty. Lucan mostly condemns Caesar (cf. 7.706 vincere peius erat [Kißel l.c.], 7.551 hic sunt tua crimina, Caesar; Grebe [1989: 122] adduces 6.801–802 [Pluto ...] paratque poenam victori), but
also holds both responsible: 1.126–127 *quix justius induit arma / scire nefas* (cf. Reitz l.c.). Silius corrects Caesar’s interpretation of this question at Luc. 7.259–260 *haec, fato quae teste probet, quix justius arma / sumpserit; haec acies victum factura nocentem est*, “the day which must prove on the evidence of destiny which of us more justly took up weapons: this is a battle bound to make the loser guilty.”

### Notes to 850b–895

868–873
tum iuvenis lacrimans: ‘restare haec ordine duro
lamentor rebus Latiis. sed luce remota
si nulla est venia et merito mors ipsa laborat,
870
perfidiae Poenus quibus aut Phlegethontis in undis
exuret ductor scelus, aut quae digna renatos
ales in aeternum laniabit morsibus artus?’

868–869a *Then the young man says in tears: “I grieve that by a hard fate these things await the Roman nation.*

Scipio’s words, with first a response to the fate that is in store and then a follow-up question, are to be compared with 517–522; see An. 850b–895.

**tum ... lacrimans** Cf. Verg. *A.* 6.867 *tum pater Anchises lacrimis ingressus obortis*, Anchises’ grief for Marcellus’ future fate (6.882 *fata aspera*). Scipio also wept when he heard the story of the deaths of his father and uncle (696), who form a positive counter to Pompey and Caesar (see n.650–651a).

**restare** Cf. 530 *restatque futurum* and esp. 612 *restant patienda tyrannis*.

**ordine duro** The collocation is unique. Cf. the parallel scene at 517 *sors durior aevi*, where Scipio bears his own harsh fate valiantly. The contrasting tears here show his devotion to Rome. For *ordo* as ‘fate’, Spaltenstein compares Luc. 8.568–569 *iuussu ordinis aeterni* (which, as it bears on Pompey’s death, may even be directly relevant to our phrase); cf. also e.g. Verg. *A.* 3.376, 5.707, *TLL* 9.2.958.51ff.

**rebus Latiis** The Roman state, but especially as the heritage of Aeneas; cf. Liv. 1.3.1, Ov. *Met.* 14.610, Juv. 11.115. It will be under threat during the civil war, just as it is now in the war with Hannibal; cf. 7.16–17 *regna iterum labentia Troiae / et fluxas Lati res*. See also n.654–655a *quo stabant Italia regna* and n.710–713 *Oenotria tecta*.

869b–873 *But if after the light of life has been taken away there is no mercy and death itself labours deservedly, in what waves of the Phlegethon will the Punic leader burn out his crime of perfidy, or what suitable bird will tear his regrown limbs apart with its beak for eternity?*

The Sibyl’s mention of *nec leviors ... crimina* (867) has made Scipio think of the wicked women (844–845 *nec leviors ... delicta*) and he connects their punishments also with Hannibal: to swim in the Phlegethon is Tullia’s lot (835–838), and an eagle eats Tarpeia’s innards (839–841); see the respective nn. for poetic models, which are alluded to here again. Thus, the future Roman leaders and Hannibal are associated with each other and with infernal punishment.

**luce remota** I.e. in death / in the underworld. The phrase is shared only with Sen. *Her.F.* 858–859 (see Intr. 517–614 for the relevance of this play); cf. also Luc. 6.713–714 *modo luce fugata* (cf. V.Fl. 2.51, not of death), Stat. *Theb.* 8.102 *de luce rapi*, 11.463 *luce*

**nulla est venia** I.e. sinners will not escape punishment; cf. nn.542–544 and 603–604 seroque piget sub iudice culpae.

**mors ipsa laborat** Cf. 544 mortemque exercet inanem (there with a metonymical use of mors for the dead). For laborat, cf. also 835 labores. This phrase, set as it is in the context of the punishment of the civil war leaders, perhaps contrasts with the philosophical thoughts with which Lucan’s Pompey seeks to ease his mind at Luc. 3.39–40 aut nihil est sensus animis a morte relictum / aut mors ipsa nihil (cf. Sen. Tro. 397)—on the contrary, Scipio notes, for the guilty “death itself” is not nothing, but is full of misery.

**perfidiae Poenus** Hannibal as the ‘paragon’ of Punica fides; the alliterative words are significantly juxtaposed at the head of the verse to mark the new subject (Reitz 1982: 130). **perfidia** refers to the breaking of the Ebro treaty (Spaltenstein, cf. 740), but is probably meant more generally as well.

**perfidiae ... scelus** envelops Poenus ... ductor, which itself frames the punishment quibus aut Phlegethontis in undis exuret.

**quibus aut ... scelus** I.e. what punishment can be harsh enough for the crimes of Hannibal (cf. 848–849 nec par poena ... sceleri)? No ‘extra hot’ waves of the Phlegethon, no bird no matter how rapacious, will be sufficient for punishing Hannibal. Cf. Hannibal’s own realisation at 17.564-65 quis nostra satis delicta piabit Tartareus torrens?

**Phlegethontis in undis** I.e. waves of lava; see nn.563b–565 exundantibus ... aquis and 836b–838. For the phrase, cf. 2.610, Ov. Met. 15.532 and Culex 272.

**exuret ... scelus** Just like Tullia’s (n.836b–838 sub gurgite), Hannibal’s punishment echoes the description of the purification of the souls at A. 6.741–742 alis sub gurgite vasto / infectum eluitur scelus aut exuritur igni (cf. Spaltenstein); in contrast to the souls which Vergil’s Anchises describes, these two are so wicked they will never leave the cauterizing flame (835 non ullos satis exhaustura labores, 873 in aeternum). Blomgren (1938: 54) notes the enallage: not Hannibal himself, but the Phlegethon will burn out his scelus.

**renatos ... artus** Cf. the punishment of Tityos (see n.839–843) at A. 6.600 nec fibris requies datur ulla renatis, and Ov. Pont. 1.2.39 semperque renascens / iecur, Phaed. 5.14 renatum ... iecur, Sen. Ep. 24.18; for renasco as ‘grow back’, cf. also Juv. 14.11 (teeth), Eleg.Maec. 1.83 and Flor. Epit. 1.18.19 (Hydra). The liver is here replaced with artus, for which see below.

**ales** Cf. 820 alite and 840 alitis, the eagle (841 armiger ... Iovis). The same bird would be a suitable nemesis for Hannibal as well, who assaulted Jupiter’s Capitol (a crime similar to Tarpeia’s).

**in aeternum** ‘for all time’; cf. Sen. Her.F. 756 praebet volucri Tityos aeternas dapes and Theseus’ eternal punishment at Verg. A. 6.617 sedet aeternumque sedebit; cf. also line 459 aeternum. For the phrase in poetry, cf. Lucr. 2.570, Ov. Tr. 1.3.63, Luc. 2.9, 10.87, Sil. 3.136.

**laniabit morsibus artus** An amalgam of several literary lacerations: i) the plagued animals in Vergil’s Georgics, driven to mutilate themselves (3.512–514 ipsique suos iam
Notes to 850b–895

*morte sub aegra / ... / discissos nudis laniabant dentibus artus*, a fate the poet would wish only upon his enemies (3.513), which Scipio does here; ii) the snakes attacking Laocoon’s sons at *A. 2.215 miseros morsu depascitur artus* (cf. also the snake at *Cic. Div. 2.63 immani laniavit viscera morsu*); iii) Tydeus’ cannibalism (compared to feral savagery) at Stat. *Theb. 9.13–15 iam morsibus uncis / ... artus / dilacerant.*

874–881

‘ne metue!’ exclamat vates. ‘non vita sequetur inviolata virum; patria non ossa quiescent. namque ubi fractus opum magnae certamine pugnae pertulerit Vinci turpemque orare salutem, rursus bella volet Macetum instaurare sub armis, dammatusque doli, desertis coniuge fida et dulci nato linquet Carthaginis arces atque una profugus lustrabit caerula puppe.

874a ‘Fear not!’, the priestess exclaims.

The Sibyl does not answer Scipio’s question, or rather, *ne metue* counts as ‘yes’ (Reitz 1982: 131, cf. Spaltenstein). The rest of her speech is devoted to Hannibal’s fate before he will go to the underworld (his *vita*, possibly in response to 869 *luce remota*, Reitz l.c.). Its purpose is to show to Scipio the low status to which Hannibal will fall, itself already a form of punishment, and to the reader the correspondences with the end of the civil war (as narrated by Lucan) that was predicted in the preceding lines; see Intr. 850b–895.

*ne metue* A Senecan expression (Sen. *Ag. 796, Pha. 993, 1240, Thy. 980*); especially relevant is *Pho. 645*, where Polynices asks if Eteocles will not be punished for his crimes, and Jocaste answers (645–650) *ne metue. poenas et quidem solvet graves: / regnabit. ... / ... / ... sceptra Thebano fuit / impune nulli gerere – nec quisquam fide / rupta tenebat illa, “Do not fear. He will suffer a punishment, a heavy one indeed: he will reign. [...] No Theban has been able to wield the sceptre with impunity—and none held on to it after breaking faith.” (transl. Fitch, adapted). Hannibal will also be punished for his similar crime (871 *perfidiae*, 3.1 *rupta fides*; cf. 13.284–285 and Intr. 850b–895).

exclamat vates Also at 436 (of Autonoe); see n. The phrase thus frames the *Nekyia*; in both cases Scipio is told not to be afraid (as in the Vergilian model), but for different reasons.

874b–875 No untroubled life will follow for that man; his bones will not rest in his native country.

We might think of the fate of Decius, the last adherent of *fides* in Capua, whom Hannibal had ordered to be taken away in chains; he ended in Egypt, *atque eadem vitae custos mox deinde quieto / accipit tellus ossa inviolata sepulcro, “and the same country, guardian of his life, soon thereafter accepted his bones inviolate in a quiet grave” (11.383–384; Reitz 1982: 131 n.2). Both Decius and Hannibal die as an exile, but Decius does so in peace; the breaker of *fides*, on the other hand, will receive no such peace, not during the remainder of his life, nor, it is implied in the rest of the *Nekyia*, after death. This is already foretold by Fides in 288–289 (*non illi ... vita manebit / umquam expers luctus lacrimaeque;* see also n.876–881), who will pursue such a man herself (291 *despecta ac violata Fides*).
At the end, Hannibal himself is the victim of a breach of trust when he is betrayed by his host Prusias; Livy tells that at his death, Hannibal cursed him for *violatae ab eo fidei*.

For *ossa quiescent* (Verg. Ecl. 10.33), cf. the curse at Ov. *Ib. 303–304 nec tua quam Pyrrhi felicius ossa quiescant* (Neoptolemus’ bones were scattered after his death; cf. Lucan on Alexander at 10.22–23). Cornelius Severus (*ap. Sen. Suas. 6.26*) asserts that Hannibal’s body was left unharmed by the Romans: *Hannibal ... / membra tamen Stygias tuit inviolata sub umbras*; Silius echoes and modifies this line at 2.706–707 *Stygias bellator ad undas / deformata feret lventi membra veneno*, thus commenting that his body was not *inviolata*, but this was self-inflicted, as the result of poison.

876–881 For when, his power broken after the contest of a great battle, he will have endured to be defeated and to beg for shameful life, he will want to renew war again under Macedonian arms, and damned for treachery, he will leave Carthage’s citadel behind, deserting his faithful wife and beloved child, and as an exile he will sail the sea with one ship.

In 196–195 BC, Hannibal became a suffete and restored Carthage’s economical position, but in the process antagonized many nobles who were deprived of their privileges. These political enemies suggested to Rome that Hannibal sought an alliance with the Seleucids (878 *Macetum*) to start another war; when the Romans arrived to put the matter before the Carthaginian senate, he had to flee to Antiochus III (Liv. 33.45–49; App. *Syr. 4*).

Hannibal’s flight from Carthage and ignominious end was already foretold at 2.701ff. *vagus exul in orbe / errabit toto patriis proiectus ab oris*. Similarly, at 13.284ff. the goddess Fides rebukes the Capuans, whose death adumbrates Hannibal’s (see Intr. 256–298), stating that a pact-breaker will lose his home (cf. *linquet Carthaginis arces*), his wife (cf. *desertis coniuge fida et dulci nato*) and a life without trouble (see n.874b–875), condemned to wander earth and sea (*lustrabit caerula*), driven by *violata Fides* herself.

The renewal of the war is Hannibal’s second attempt at being an (or the) epic hero. He is again cast as an (anti-)Aeneas, just as in his first expedition against Rome (see Intr. 850b–895 fn.11); he will perform the deeds of Vergil’s hero (fleeing from a defeated city, wandering the sea), but is doomed to failure again; see the nn. below.

**fractus opum** Cf. Flamininus’ summary of Hannibal’s life at Liv. 39.51.2 *patriae suae primum, deinde fractis eius opibus Antiocho regi auctor belli adversus populum Romanum fuisset*, and similarly Sen. *Nat. 3.5 fractisque rebus, etiam post Carthaginem pertinax, reges pererraverit contra Romanos ducem promittens*. The phrases *fractae opes* or *res* or *vires* are common in historiography; cf. Liv 2.21.5, 10.5.12, 10.44.6, 23.35.1 (Rome after Cannae), 33.11.9, 42.29.9, 44.1.12, *V.Max. 1.7.7, Tac. 4.76.1, 4.85.2.*

In Vergil, the phrase is used for Troy; cf. *A. 2.170 spes Danaum, fractae vires* and esp. 3.53 *opes fractae Teucrum et Fortuna recessit*, where the Thracians defect to the victors. In *Punica* 11, Capua similarly defects to Carthage, and in the same book Mago declares (11.502–503) *fractas, quis Itala tellus / nitebatur, opes* (cf. also Saguntum at 1.560, another Troy which, like Rome, keeps fighting). But in *this* war, ‘new Troy’ emerges victorious, and it is Carthage which plays the role of Troy when it surrenders: *opibusque superbis vis fracta* (17.620–621).

*fractus* with a genitive of limitation seems unique (*TLL 6.1.1251.4–5*); cf. with an ablative Mart. 7.7.3. Spaltenstein usefully compares poetic turns of phrase like *dives opum*
Notes to 850b–895

(c.f. n.30b–34 laetus opum; see also n.821–822 inclita leti). The enallage suggests that Hannibal himself is broken; cf. 679–680 adesum / cladibus Hasdrubalem; see also An. 850b–895.

magnae certamine pugnae The battle of Zama. For certamine pugnae, cf. Lucr. 4.843, Verg. A. 11.780, Ov. Met. 12.180, Ilias 562 and in prose Liv. 36.19.13, V.Max. 3.2.21. Silius uses the phrase often, and for important battles; cf. 5.574–575 (the first Punic war), 9.370 and 11.336 (Cannae), 12.297 (Hannibal’s first defeat at Nola), 17.546 (Zama).


turpemque orare salutem Hannibal persuaded his fellow citizens to sue for peace after the battle of Zama (Liv. 30.36–37; Spaltenstein). Silius presents the capitulation, however, as a personal plea by Hannibal to avoid death. Preserving life in defeat is shameful; a Roman would prefer honourable suicide. Cf. Sall. Jug. 67.3 turpis vita integra fama potior fuit, Luc. 4.508 turpique volent corrumpere vita, Tac. Hist. 4.60.1 (and the opposite at Nep. Cha. 4.3, Tac. Agr. 33.6). For orare salutem, cf. Luc. 4.346 orandae ... salutis, of Afranius’ surrender to Caesar (which he justifies by calling Caesar a worthy opponent). See also n.883–885a.

rursus bella volet ... instaurare Hannibal, Juno-like, will want to start another Punica; cf. 1.35–36 iterum instaurata capessens / arma remolitur (which itself with its theme of repetition is probably a reference to Naevius’ Bellum Punicum, and also to Vergil’s arma; cf. for metapoetry also Ganiban 2010: 81–82 on 1.39). He thus behaves like a defeated Giant; cf. 12.151 bella iovi rursus superisque iterare volentem. In book 15, his brother Hasdrubal wishes to be another Hannibal, or start his own Punica, by crossing the Alps: 15.489–490 maiora petuntur / rursus bella retro. For the metapoetic value of rursus bella, cf. also Hor. Carm. 4.1.1–2 intermissa, Venus, diu / rursus bella moves?

damnatusque doli I.e. the treason against his own country for stirring up another war with Rome. Spaltenstein notes that in Livy, Hannibal had already fled before he could be convicted. dolus is significant, as Hannibal’s reputation for trickery is now his undoing; compare also falsus at 886 (see n.) and furtivo at 892 (his last dolus). damno is often found with a genitive denoting the crime; see TLL 5.1.14.26–71.

desertis coniuge fida et dulci nato There is a strong contrast between desertis and fida; the faith-breaker flees, his faithful wife stays behind. Her name is Imilce (3.97), his fidissima coniunx (3.133). The farewell scene at 3.62–157 is modelled after that of Hector and Andromache, and Hannibal remains a Hector for his city until the last book (17.512–516); failing to die for his city, however, and fleeing from defeated Carthage, but without his wife and child (who should continue his war, 3.78–86), he has become a failed Aeneas (cf. profugus).

There is also a link with Lucan. The phrase in our lines is the final part of a sustained interplay with similar phrases in the Bellum Civile which mark the progression of the plot, in three steps: i) The farewell scene in Punica 3 is partially modelled after Pompey’s taking leave of Cornelia at Luc. 5.722ff. (see the bibliography in Intr. 850b–895 fn.15). ii) Before the battle of Zama, Hannibal exhorts his men with a reference to his home and family (17.333–335 non visos tam longa aetate penates / ac natur et fidae iam pridem coniugis
ora / ... repeto), thus echoing Pompey at Pharsalus (Luc. 7.346–348 quisquis patriam carosque penates, qui subolem ac thalamos desertaque pignora quaerit, ense petat). iii) When Pompey has been killed, Cato’s soldiers request an end to the war, again in the hopes of seeing their families again (9.230–231 patrios permitte penates / desertamque domum dulcesque revisere natos). But Cato renews the war effort, just as Hannibal here fights on in defeat, leaving his wife and child again. Cato’s determination is the main Lucanian intertext for our lines. There is also a dramatic irony if this intertext is compared with the interplay with the Bellum Civile in the following lines; Hannibal believes he can fight on, like Cato, but the remainder of the prophecy casts him as a defeated Pompey in flight. For the analogy to Rome’s civil war, see Intr. 850b–895.


Livy is silent on the fate of Hannibal’s family; the general left the city with only two attendants (33.47.10), and boarded a ship to Tyre pretending to be an envoy (33.48.3), which would suggest that he went alone.

Carthaginis arces This line ending, originating in Verg. A. 1.298, was used at Ov. Fast. 6.45, Luc. 4.585, Man. 4.40 (also on Hannibal’s flight), 4.599, 4.778 and frequently by Silius, in varying cases: 1.693, 2.407, 3.138, 4.472, 6.83, 7.37, 8.144, 8.228, 9.539, 11.372, 16.169, 16.211, 17.157, 17.586; cf. also Hor. Epod. 7.5–6.

una ... puppe Hannibal’s single vessel with which he seeks to renew the war plays against his original army, which promised a greater war than that which brought a thousand ships (mille carinis, 3.229) to Troy. Similarly, Pompey boasts at Luc. 8.272 that he has a thousand vessels in Greek waters (and is thus ready for another epic struggle); and yet he, too, is fleeing in a parva puppe (8.258). Like Pompey, Hannibal mirrors the flight of another African leader, Cleopatra, as she fled from the battle of Actium; cf. Hor. Carm. 1.37.13 vix una sospes navis ab ignibus (Spaltenstein, without interpretation), Verg. A. 8.707ff. Another parallel between the two African leaders Hannibal and Cleopatra is their suicide; Silius hints at this parallel when after the description of Hannibal’s suicide, he echoes Vergil’s hopeful lines on the end of the Roman civil war (see n.893 and Intr. 850b–895).

The ‘one ship’ motif also figures prominently in Jason’s flight, when he has obtained the Golden Fleece; cf. V.Fl. 7.45, 8.267, 8.274–275, 8.297.

Finally, Hannibal is also a sad parody of Odysseus: deserting his wife and son to wage war against his enemy, but wandering the seas in a single ship before rather than after the war, and never to return home.

profugus lustrabit caerula Like Aeneas fleeing his fallen city (Verg. A. 1.2 profugus) and in search of a new home (A. 3.377–378, 385 salisAusonii lustrandum navibus aequor), but see the note on desertis coniuge fida et dulci nato above. Cf. also Lucan’s Labienus (together with Pompey): nunc transfuga vilis / cum duce praelato terras atque aequora lustrat (5.346–347).
Then he will visit the rocky peaks of Cilician Taurus.

Livy tells (33.49) that Hannibal first arrived in Tyre and then went to the city of Antioch in Syria, where he was entertained by the son of Antiochus; the king himself was in Ephesus, where Hannibal subsequently met him. Cilix Taurus may be used here for Asia Minor as a whole (Reitz 1982: 132); alternatively, it refers to Hannibal’s visit to Antioch, which bordered on Cilicia. But most likely, Cilicus mainly serves to identify Hannibal with Pompey, who flees to the east after Pharsalus to fight another day: Luc. 8.255–258 iam Taurum ... videt ... / .... / ... Cilicum per litora tutus / parva puppe fugit (cf. 881 una profugus ... puppe; Fucecchi 1990b: 165–166).

In his attempt at a ‘second’ Punica (see n.876–881), Hannibal relives his earlier deeds; his visit to the Taurus echoes his crossing of the Pyrenees at 3.415–416 at Pyrenaei frondosa cacumina montis / ... petebat. Both lines allude to the arrival of wandering Aeneas at Leucas at A. 3.274 mox et Leucatae nimbosa cacumina montis. In our line, saxosa (rare before Silius) may be taken from Lucan’s description of Leucas, 5.650–651 non litora curvae / Leucadiae saxosa.

Cilicis Tauri Cf. Ov. Met. 2.217 Taurusque Cilix. The Taurus is a high mountain range in the S.E. of Asia Minor, separating the coastal region Cilicia from the Anatolian plateau.


Alas! How much easier is it for mortals to endure sorry slavery and cold and heat and flight and sea and hunger than to be able to die!

At the beginning of the epic, Hannibal’s ability to endure hardship is praiseworthy (1.242–260); cf. similarly of his troops 3.326–327 Cantaber ... hiemisque aestusque famisque / invictus, universal evils to which Silius here adds three others that bear directly on Hannibal’s fate: servitia, fuga, fretum. At the end, however, this attitude is dishonourable, because it amounts to a failure to follow the right course. Reitz (1982: 132) compares the Stoic tenet that death liberates men from all kinds of evil, and is no evil itself; Hannibal thus behaves unstoically. She notes the prominent position of servitia; the war with Rome was started to avoid slavery (2.366–367, 3.138–139), but now Hannibal will
become a ‘slave’ (886 *famulus*, 889 *altera servitia*) to Antiochus and Prusias—and, even worse, of his own free will (Reitz *ibid.*, Sen. *Ep*. 47.17). See for the motif of slavery in the *Punica* also Dinter 2013: 185–193.

The willingness of men (significantly called *mortalibus* here) to act shamefully rather than die is a recurrent theme in the *Punica*. At 2.223–224, the narrator exclaims *heu blandum caeli lumen! tantone cavetur mors reditura metu nascentique addita fata?*, when the Saguntines retreat before Hannibal. He himself mocks the fleeing Varro at 10.517–518 *concedam hanc iterum, si lucis tanta cupidio est, / concedam tibi, Varro, fugam*. The fates are reversed at 16.72ff., where the defeated Hanno begs for life (16.73–74 *heu dulci caeli lumina!* and Scipio refers to the Carthaginian willingness to endure slavery (16.77 *servitio si tam faciles, cur bella refertis?*), which points out the paradox of Hannibal’s war.

**quanto levius** Possibly an adaptation of Sen. *Ben*. 3.31.1 *quanto levius mori ante mortis metum*; Silius suggests that it is this fear of death (rather than his enmity of Rome) that made it hard for Hannibal to die.

**posse mori** ‘be able to die’, i.e. ‘to have the courage to die’ (cf. *OLD s.v. possum* 3). Hannibal has thus not learned from his admired opponent Paulus (10.285 *Paulum scire mori*), although he professes a wish to die in battle (4.509 *pugnantem cecidisse meum est*); cf. Fulvius’ retort to Taurea at 379–380. Lucan’s Cato similarly notes that Pompey, after having been defeated, should have committed suicide, and that by killing him, Ptolemy did Pompey a service (Luc. 9.208–209), for “to know how to die is the warrior’s best lot, the next to be compelled to die (9.211 *scire mori sors prima viris, sed proxima cogi*); for the allusion to Pompey’s murder see n.885b–890a *munus regni*. For the thought, cf. also e.g. Sen. *Ep*. 4.5 *inter mortis metum et vitae tormenta miseri fluctuantur et vivere nolunt, mori nesciunt, Dial. 6.3.3, Her.F. 426 *cogi qui potest nescit mori*. In his ‘Nekyia’, Lucan inverts the topos by using a similar lament for the reanimated corpse that is physically barred from dying (6.724–725 *a miser, extremum cui mortis munus inique / eripitur, non posse mori*).

885b–890a After the war against Italy as servant for the Assyrian king and cheated of his desired move against Rome he will set out to sea with uncertain sail, until, brought without strength to the shores of Prusias, he will in his old age, unfit for war, endure a second servitude and a hiding-place by favour of the king.

Strengthened in his resolve by Hannibal’s arrival, Antiochus moved against Greece, which was in the Roman sphere of interest. Hannibal was appointed commander of the fleet. Antiochus’ army was defeated by the Romans at Thermopylae, and later at Magnesia in Asia Minor; Hannibal’s fleet lost against the Rhodians at the battle of the Eurymedon (190 BC). Fearing that Antiochus might surrender him to the Romans, Hannibal fled to Bithynia, where he was received by king Prusias I, to aid him in his war against Eumenes II Soter of Pergamon, another ally of Rome. Hannibal’s wanderings are again to be compared to Pompey’s voyage after Pharsalus and arrival in Egypt; see the nn. below.

**post Itala bella** Duff takes this as a reference to the second Punic war, but it is more likely a summary of the failed expedition of Antiochus III against the Romans in Greece in 188 BC, and thus in line with the second apposition *falsusque cupiti Ausoniae motus*, which refers to the same war. For the phrase *Itala bella*, cf. 12.410.

**Assyrio famulus regi** I.e. in the service of the Seleucid king Antiochus III. Hannibal will do what Pompey contemplates after Pharsalus: seeking aid from the king in the east. At
Luc. 8.262–327, Pompey suggests to go to the Parthians, but Lentulus persuades him not to become a Parthorum famulus (8.339); in their two speeches alone, Assyrius is used for the Parthians four times (8.292, 300, 416, 427).

Reitz (1982: 132 n.7) is obviously right that famulus is ‘slave’ or ‘servant’ here (cf. 884 servitia, 889 altera servitia) rather than comes (TLL 6.1.267.50–51, Spaltenstein).

falsusque cupiti Ausoniae motus falsus (past participle of fallo, ‘deprived’) could refer either to Hannibal’s dashed hopes of marching on Italy again after a victory in Greece or (less likely) to Antiochus’ decision not to make him the leader of the main host. The construction with a genitive is attested for active uses of falsus (= fallens; TLL 6.1.192.26–30 cites Apul. Socr. 8 sententiae and the quasi-locative use falsus animi at Ter. Eun. 274 and Apul. Flor. 9); for passive, cf. Pl. Epid. 239 sermonis fallebar. Silius often uses the genitive in innovative ways; cf. fractus opum at 876 and n.821–822 inclita leti. Not unlike there, the application of the adjective to Hannibal himself is significant, reminding of his own usual falsehoods (see n.876–881 damnatus doli; fallere is the common specialty of Carthaginians: 1.384, 3.233, 6.482, 10.187).

Ausoniae is presumably gen. of object with motus (“the desired war against Ausonia”). For motus as ‘war’ or ‘clash’, cf. Luc. 1.184–185 iam gelidas Caesar cursu superaverat Alpis / ingentisque animo motus bellumque futurum / ceperat, “now swiftly Caesar had surmounted the icy Alps and in his mind conceived immense upheavals, coming war”. Lucan’s Caesar waged war against Rome in emulation of Hannibal; Silius’ Hannibal here tries to be a Caesar again (and thus to repeat his own war), yet becomes a Pompey (cf. the same interplay with Lucan’s Caesar and Pompey at the beginning of book 13; see Intr. 1–29).

dubio petet aequora velo Compare Pompey’s incertitude where to sail to after his defeat to the question sed quo vela dari (Luc. 8.185): dubio ... pectore Magnus (186) ... tum certus eram quae litora vellem, / nunc portum fortuna dabit (191–192). For the transposition of dubius to the sail / boat, cf. (with Spaltenstein) Ov. Ars 1.558 dubiam ...

donec ... altera servitia ... patietur Cf. 883–884 aegra subire servitia. Instead of the conjunctive patiatur (o), Delz has printed the future patietur; this can be defended on the basis of 3.710 donec ... trepidabant and also Verg. A. 1.273–274 donec ... dabit (both also prophecies). Where Silius uses the conjunctive instead of the indicative after donec, he seems to follow the normal trend (cf. KS 2.2.629 b): with final overtones (6.52–53, 7.716) or in an oblique clause (10.656); the conjunctives at 12.462 and 13.29, both in a simile, may be explained as iterative or universal. The use at 17.168–169 is conspicuous, but there the dream setting may account for the conjunctive. Delz’ decision to opt for the indicative here seems justified.

Prusiacas ... oras For the epithet, cf. Cinna poet. 11 Prusiacae vexi munera navicula.

segniter ... imbelli ... in aevo In Silius’ rendering, Hannibal was not of much use to Prusias, arriving without strength (segniter, which is best taken with patietur rather than delatus; cf. Spaltenstein) and too old to fight (imbelli ... aevo), while according to Nepos (Hann. 10–11) he defeated Eumenes’ fleet (the famous story of the baskets with venomous snakes which were thrown on the enemy flag ship) and his land army several times.

Line 889 displays another correspondence with Lucan; just before the battle of Pharsalus, Pompey wishes that he need not learn to serve in his old age (7.382 ne discam.
servire senex). Incidentally, Lucan uses *imbellis* also for someone unfit to fight due to his age: not Pompey himself, but his host and murderer, Ptolemy XIII, who is too *young*: 10.54 and 10.351 *puer imbellis*.

**latebram** The great opponent of the Romans has fallen low, needing to hide; in this, he is comparable again to Pompey, who likewise cannot find a safe hiding place from Caesar: Luc. 8.12–14 *deserta sequentem / non patitur tutis fatum celare latebris / clara viri facies*.

**munus regni** The king’s ‘favour’ of offering hospitality to Hannibal proves to be the latter’s undoing, as is also suggested by the intertextuality with Pompey’s landing in Egypt: in Luc. 8.653, Cornelia exclaims after witnessing Pompey’s murder *moriar, nec munere regis*. Spaltenstein’s reading of the phrase as a nominative apposition to Hannibal (‘support to the kingdom’) is thus unnecessary.

890b–893 *When next the people of Aeneas will persevere and demand that their enemy be surrendered to them, he will hastily drink a cup of furtive poison and will finally rid the world of a long terror.*

The story of Hannibal’s suicide is told at Liv. 39.51. At 893, Silius has recast Hannibal’s last words as Livy presents them: *liberemus ... diuturna cura populum Romanum* (39.51.9; cf. also Sil. 3.711–712). In this adaptation, Dausqueius (cf. Reitz 1982: 133) already noted the echo of Verg. Ecl. 4.13–14 *si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri / invita perpetua solvent formidine terras*, a hopeful vision of the end of Roman civil war. The continuous identification of Hannibal with the protagonists of this civil war now comes to its logical conclusion: his death parallels the end of that civil war. Silius thus looks beyond the civil war, to the peace under the principate; see Intr. 850b–895.

**Aeneadis** A significant word, tracing the war between Hannibal and Rome back to Aeneas and Dido; Hannibal, seeking to avenge Dido, is only doomed to repeat her suicide, and in a perverted way, using poison instead of her more honourable sword (cf. 2.705–707; cf. also 17.522, where he contemplates falling on his sword). In the proem of the epic, the Punic war is announced as one between the *Aeneadae* and Carthage; the poet now uses the word again in the prophecy of its true ending, with the death of Hannibal.

*Aeneades*, like any Greek patronymic in -ης, is of the first declension. It is commonly found in plural (–ae, –um, –is, –as, –is), as here; for the rare singular (nom. –es at 13.767, dat. –ae at 13.153, acc. –en at Ov. Met 15.804 and Pont. 1.1.35; gen. –ae at Prud. Apoth. 447), see n.153–154 *una mora Aeneadae*.

**reddique sibi poscentibus hostem** The sense of *reddi* is not that Hannibal is ‘returned’ to the Romans (he had not been in Roman possession before, after all), but that he ‘belongs’ or ‘is owed’ to them, as their defeated enemy.

**pocula furtivo rapiet properata veneno** This golden line is notable for its cumulation of incriminating words; Hannibal’s use of poison is his last *dolus* (cf. the use of *venenum* by his troops at 3.273, 15.682, and also e.g. 1.219; for Hannibal’s own cunning, cf. e.g. 7.260 *fraudisque veneno*). His toxic draught to stay out of Roman hands is adumbrated earlier in this book by Virrius; see Intr. 256–298. *veneno* also concludes the prediction of his end at 2.707.

For *furtivo*, cf. Man. 4.42, also of Hannibal’s ignominious death after falling from high glory. The word may signify that Hannibal carried the poison in secret (the story that he kept it hidden in his ring is only attested at Juv. 10.165–166; Spaltenstein adduces
Demosthenes’ use of such a ring, cf. Plin. *Nat.* 33.25), but it is equally likely that his use of poison is condemned as a ‘trick’, a last sneaky act against the Romans (cf. Tipping 2010b: 63 “The Sibyl [faults] ... the act of low cunning by which he finally commits suicide”).

**solv**et The final word of the prophecy; Hannibal’s suicide will be the ‘solution’ of the problem that he posed to the Romans, and the final ‘conclusion’ of the war.

894–895 These words the prophetess spoke, and she returned to the hollow darkness of Erebus. Then the young man joyfully went back to his comrades and the harbour.

As Juhnke (1972: 292 n.261) observes, Silius in these concluding lines alludes to both of his primary models for the *Nekyia* (and adds laetus, on which see below). Line 894 picks up Teiresias’ return to the underworld after foretelling Odysseus’ future at Hom. *Od.* 11.150–151 ὃς φαμένην ψυχὴν μὲν ἐβῇ δόμον ᾿Αἴδος εἴπο / Τειρεσίαο άνακτος (‘spirit’, ψυχὴ, may even return here with umbris) and also the shade of Herakles (the last speaker in Homer’s *Nekyia*) at 11.627 ὃς εἰπὼν ὃ μὲν αὐτίς ἐβῇ δόμον ᾿Αἴδος εἴπο. The last line is an echo of the end of Aeneas’ *katabasis* at Verg. *A.* 6.899–900 *ille viam secat ad navis sociosque revisit.*

**Erebique cavis ... umbris** Also a reminiscence of Aeneas’ *entry* of the underworld in Verg. *A.* 6.404 *ad genitorem imas Erebi descendit ad umbras*. The collocation cava ... umbra is used by Vergil for the night (*A.* 2.360 *nox atra cava circumvolat umbra*; cf. Stat. *Theb.* 5.753); Silius has reapplied it to the cavernous underworld (cf. also Stat. *Theb.* 4.478 *vulgusque cava sub nocte repostum*), with overtones of the emptiness of the nether realm (cf. 526–530) and the hollow incorporeity of the shades themselves (Verg. *A.* 6.293 *umbrae volitare cava sub imagine formae*, cf. Spaltenstein).

**se rettulit** This is the reading in o, retained by Delz. Other editors have *se reddidit* (read by Modius); while that reading has a parallel in the *Punica* (4.119), unlike *se rettulit*, the latter is found at V.Fl. 7.537–538 *segue sub extremis in moenia rettulit umbris* and 7.614 *ad socios paulum se rettulit heros*. For *referre* with a dative of direction, cf. 1.309, 3.342, 6.202, 7.508, 9.134, 9.653, 11.600, 12.631, 15.802, 15.812.

**laetus** Scipio’s reaction contrasts with his tears after hearing of the future civil wars in Rome, 868 *tum iuvenis lacrimans*. Since Hannibal represents the leaders of those wars, his death also adumbrates their end; see Intr. 850b–895.

**socios** See n.492b–493 *comitante tuorum ... globo.*

**portum** I.e. Puteoli (385 *Dicarchea ... in urbe*), where he would presumably take a ship to Rome (see n.385–386 *repetens ... penates*)—like Aeneas.

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