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Invisus Apollini Turnus

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This paper addresses an overlooked aspect of Turnus' characterization in *Aeneid* 7, his opposition to the god Apollo as revealed through two key Virgilian innovations.[1] This theme complements prominent parallels between Aeneas and Hercules in book 8, most especially the evocation of the *Shield of Herakles* within the shield ecphrasis. The motif also has political significance, evoking the defeat of Antony and its association with Apollo in popular thought of the period.

Virgil breaks with prevailing tradition by casting Turnus as a failed suitor rather than a betrayed fiancé.[2] His desire is clearly stated, as is that of Amata (*A*. 7.55-6). However, outside the suspect and incendiary influence of Allecto (cf. *A*. 7.365-6, 7.433) there is no mention of prior marriage promises now broken. It is Turnus who breaks oaths. Inflamed by Allecto, he marches on Latinus, *polluta pace* (*A*. 7.467) Just before his quasi-abdication, Latinus states that Turnus' actions are criminal and culpable: *te, Turne, nefas, te triste manebit supplicium* (*A*. 7.596-7). Later, when Turnus makes his final demand for marriage in book 12, Latinus clearly rebukes him. Betrothal to her Italic suitors was not *fas* (*A*. 12.27-8). The broken promise of marriage was that given to Aeneas (*A*. 12.31).

Virgil also provides a unique etiology for the name of Laurentum, deriving it from the *laurus* which stood in the citadel and which Latinus had dedicated to Apollo at the founding of the city (*A*. 7.59-63).[3] This very tree serves as the site of the first portent forbidding Lavinia's engagement to local suitors and prophesying Aeneas' coming. The sign is unequivocally connected with Apollo and thus complements the many references from early in book 3 onward that the god bids Aeneas to establish the new Troy in Italy (*A*. 3.161-8).

The opening of book 8 connects these two innovations. Having taken power by force, Turnus raises his war standard over the *arx Laurenti* (*A*. 8.1-3). The word choice is significant, for it recalls both the foundation legend and thus the initial portent of book 7. Turnus has seized control of a space sacred to Apollo and now challenges the god's will with arms. In short, he has become a θεόμαχος. This stands in sharp contrast to Aeneas, the champion commissioned by Delian Apollo in book 3.

This reshaping of the story allows for more convenient association of Turnus with Cacus, each of them a brigand defeated by a foreign champion in a setting intimately connected with Apollo. However, the underlying point of comparison uniting both is the legend of Kyknos. Although *Iliad* 18 is the primary contextual model for Aeneas' shield, the ecphrasis itself contains numerous references to the Ps.-Hesiodic *Shield of Herakles*, especially in the description of Actium.[4] Not only do these allusions assimilate the shield of Aeneas to that of Hercules, but they also invite comparison of chief adversary in each poem. Kyknos is a child of Ares; Turnus is also of divine lineage (cf. *A*. 6.90, 10.76). Apollo commissioned Hercules as his champion because Kyknos had usurped the god's τέμενος and was violating the god's prerogatives by stealing hecatombs from pilgrims (cf. *Sc*. 57-8, 68-9, 478-80). Virgil's innovations in the Turnus narrative provide it with a similar outline: an unjust violation of sacred space and overstepping of limits which leads to divinely ordained retribution. The framing of the ecphrasis echoes the specific setting in a τέμενος. Aeneas receives the divine weapons in a *lucus sacer* in Caere (*A*. 8.597-9). Immediately following the shield ecphrasis, we also find Turnus in a *lucus* situated within a *sacrata ualles* (*A*. 9.3-4).

This subtext is one with clear, yet complex, political connotations that are much in keeping with the *zeitgeist* of the 20s. Inasmuch as Aeneas symbolizes Augustus, Antony is cast as a Kyknos-like figure, a usurper defeated by Apollo's champion at Actium, a site strongly connected with the god. At the same time, the Ps.-Hesiodic Hercules is no stoic role model. He destroys Kyknos in a full fit of martial fury (*Sc*. 386-92), meeting a violent creature with violence. Moreover, in Stesichorus' version of the tale (*PMG* 207), the brigand builds an impious altar to Apollo from the heads of his victims. At the end of *Aeneid* 8,

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[1] Neither Fordyce (Oxford 1977) nor Horsfall (Brill 2000) discusses this theme in their commentaries.
[2] See Horsfall, 82, 287-9.
[3] ibid.,85.
[4] Cf. Faber, R. (2000). Virgil's 'Shield of Aeneas' (*Aeneid* 8.617-731) and the *Shield of Heracles*. Mnemosyne 58, 49-57; Heckenlively, T. (2004). The Shield of Herakles: a Study in Archaic Greek Poetics and the Iconography of Violence (Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara). 25-6.

it is Augustus who adorns this very god's temple, which he himself had built, with "gifts" won by aggression (*A*. 8.721-2). The violence of the past is not forgotten, but remythologized through the Kyknos subtext so as to mediate between the disquieting realities and necessary illusions of the Augustan peace.