

DEA ROMA AND MARS

INTERTEXT AND STRUCTURE IN CLAUDIAN'S PANEGYRIC FOR THE CONSULS OLYBRIUS AND PROBINUS

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I. Introduction *

Following his victory at the Frigidus river over the usurper Eugenius, who had been supported by pagan members of the senatorial aristocracy, Theodosius granted the consulship for the year 395 to two young brothers from the most prominent Christian family in Rome, thereby showing both his unfailing benevolence towards their city and his decision to foster Christianity.¹ The poem that Claudian delivered in the ancient capital to celebrate the appointment of Olybrius and Probinus (279 lines)²—his first political piece—met the tastes of the Roman aristocracy and presented the emperor in a manner likely to please even the pagans in this audience by omitting any reference to the Christian faith and giving a conspicuous place to *Romanitas* and to the “traditional” gods.³ Intertextuality was part of this strategy. The panegyric is pervaded by a literary tradition of which the senatorial aristocracy was fond. As has rightly been observed, some Virgilian passages—in particular from *Eclogue 4* and *Aeneid Book 8*—are essential guides to its interpretation,⁴ and its form is brought very close to that of epic by the inclusion, among

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¹ See notably Taegert 1988:30–34 (cf. 19–29 on the prosopography of the consuls), further Cameron 1970:32 and 189–190, Döpp 1980:48, Duval 1984:135–136, Ernesti 1998:357–358, Salzman 2002:183–184, Leppin 2003:222–223, Maraval 2009:281–282, Müller 2011:83–84.

² Detailed analysis of the contents and the composition in Döpp 1980:50–60, Taegert 1988:35–51, Charlet 2000:3–5, Schindler 2009:60–76, Müller 2011:63–90.

³ Ernesti 1998:362–365; cf. Ware 2004:156–157 and Gillett 2012:269–270.

⁴ See Wheeler 2007:105–107 and *passim*. Cf. Ware 2004:160–170 on Virgilian subtexts in the narratives of the battle of Frigidus in *3Hon.* and *4Hon.* The fundamental study by Ware 2012 abundantly shows the importance of Claudian's intertextuality with Virgil in general.

other features, of a long narrative (73–265) opened by an invocation to the Muse (71–72).⁵

A remarkable innovation concerns the figure of Dea Roma who is represented in action in the initial part of the “*pars epica*”, where she asks Theodosius to assign the consulship to Olybrius and Probinus in the immediate aftermath of his victory (73–173).⁶ Claudian builds on the process of literary divinisation undergone by the notion of Rome/Roma⁷ and draws on a rhetorical tradition of similar figures pronouncing authoritative speeches,⁸ but he stands out by making Roma a goddess rather than a mere personification⁹ and, more specifically, by taking care to represent her action and describe her external appearance as those of an epic warrior goddess.¹⁰ Claudian’s emphasis on the warlike aspects of Roma recalls her iconography (on which below), but also symbolically extols the military glory of the ancient capital, which may compensate for its previous support for the defeated party, and, at the same time, indirectly honours Theodosius as her fellow-warrior. On the other hand, the nature of her intervention and its timing after the battle, while showing that Theodosius had not needed her help,¹¹ dissociate her from Eugenius and suggest that the emperor’s victory over the usurper and his appointing of Olybrius and Probinus have been beneficial to pagans and Christians alike.¹²

In this sequence, both the intergeneric fusion and the representation of Roma involve an obvious Homeric subtext, which has been duly discussed:¹³ the episode of *Iliad* Book 5 where Hera and Athena come down to earth in order to help the Achaeans. Lines 77b–82,

⁵ On the generic aspects of this poem, see notably Fo 1982:30–33, Perrelli 1992:22–28, Wheeler 2007:99–104, Schindler 2009:60–76, and Müller 2011:63–90. On those of Claudian’s poems more generally, see further Schmidt 1976, Hofmann 1988, Schindler 2004a, Gillett 2012, and Zarini 2012.

⁶ On the representation of Dea Roma here and elsewhere in Claudian (cf. *Gild.* 17–212, *Eutr.* 1.371–513, *Stil.* 2.223–407, *6Hon.* 356–493), see notably Taegert 1988 *ad Ol. Prob.* 73–173 and Dewar 1996 *ad 6Hon.* 356–425, and also Riedl 1995 (esp. 538–544), Roberts 2001 (esp. 535–537), Wheeler 2007:110, Schindler 2009:66–72, 97–101, and 132–137; cf. Christiansen 1969:49–57 and 1971, Cameron 1970:273–276 and 363–366, and Krollpfeifer 2015 (who makes useful observations about gender but, with regard to the passage in *Ol. Prob.*, misses several crucial points, including the complex political motivations for Claudian’s emphasis on the warlike aspects of Roma, the associations with Athena, and the connections with iconography).

⁷ Mellor 1981:1004–1010 discusses this process; a key passage is Anchises’ prophecy at Verg. *Aen.* 6.781–787, where Rome/Roma is compared to Cybele.

⁸ Cic. *Cat.* 1.17–19 and 27–29 (*Patria*), Luc. 1.183–203 (*Patria*), Sil. 15.522–559 (*Oenotria Tellus*), Pan. Lat. 7[6].10–11 (*Roma*), Symm. *Relat.* 3.9–10 and Ambr. *Ep.* 18.7 (cf. 4–6 and 8) (*Roma*), Pan. Lat. 2[12].11 (*Res Publica* involved in Theodosius’ elevation to the purple). Cf. Prudent. *C. Symm.* 2.634–772, seemingly echoed in *6Hon.*: see Dorfbauer 2012:64–68.

⁹ Those features which designate her as a goddess are listed in Riedl 1995:538–541.

¹⁰ Claudian’s interest in describing the external appearance of Roma can itself be explained by the novelty of representing her as a goddess in action.

¹¹ See on this point Schindler 2009:68–69 (and already 2008:336–337)

¹² On this political message, and, more broadly, on the function of the epic narrative in conveying it, see the thorough analysis in Müller 2011:84–90, with further bibliography.

¹³ Notably in the commentary by Taegert 1988.

dedicated to the preparation of Roma's chariot and horses, correspond, in Homer, to the action of Hera assisted by Hebe (*Il.* 5.720–732); lines 83–99 show Roma leaping nearer, compare her to Minerva, and depict her appearance, just as Athena is subsequently described in the Homeric episode (*Il.* 5.733–747); lines 100–112, which narrate Roma's journey and arrival at the Frigidus river, more loosely follow this model (*Il.* 5.748–752 and 767–772), before the focus moves to the picture of Theodosius resting after battle in lines 113–123, and then to the dialogue between both characters.¹⁴

The *Iliadic* subtext most visibly contributes—in addition to the invocation to the Muse—to marking Claudian's narrative as epic. It also endows Roma with the status of an epic divinity by giving a literary background to associations with Athena which are common in visual culture.¹⁵ In particular, Roma shares with that goddess attributes like the helmet and the shield, described in lines 92–99, and the spear, mentioned in line 80. In accordance with a frequent iconographic type, Claudian mixes these attributes with features characteristic of the Amazons, such as the unbound hair and the unveiled breast, especially in lines 85–90.¹⁶

This article explores how the sequence in which Claudian constructs Roma as an epic warrior goddess and introduces her meeting with Theodosius (73–123) further includes intertextuality with passages from Statius featuring Mars.¹⁷ These connections deserve fresh, and above all comprehensive, examination. I investigate to what extent they are related both to each other and to the explicit mentions of the god of war first in the ekphrasis of Roma's shield (96–99) and then in a simile as a *comparans* for Theodosius (119–123). My argument is that, beyond their significance as parallels *ad loc.*, they also interact together as parts of a network of relationships between Roma and Mars which involves the whole sequence, and that they enhance not only the thematic links between these divinities, but also the structural correspondences between the passages concerned. In

¹⁴ The scene in *Il.* 8.382–396, which reproduces 5.720–752, includes neither the preparation of the chariot (5.722–732) nor the description of the aegis and the helmet (5.738–744). Cf. also note 79.

¹⁵ On the connections with iconography, see notably Cameron 1970:273–276 and 364, Taegert 1988 *ad Ol. Prob.* 73–173, Riedl 1995:539–540, Dewar 1996 *ad 6Hon.* 356–425, Roberts 2001:535.

¹⁶ The articulation between Amazon-like and Athena-like features is discussed in Berlincourt 2015. Bernstein 2016 usefully complements previous analyses of the intertextuality of line 87.

¹⁷ Barth's commentaries on both poets (Claudian: 1612 and 1650; Statius: 1664–1665) were already full of references to Claudian as a "*perpetuus imitator*" of Statius, as shown in Berlincourt 2013:406–407 and 490, and 2014:144–148; cf. notes 29 and 37. Scholars agree that his first panegyric is closely connected to the *Silvae*: while Döpp 1980:22, Taegert 1988:44–46, Roberts 2001:537, and Müller 2011:74 highlight the links with *Silv.* 1.2 (wedding of Stella and Violentilla), Wheeler 2007:104–105 lays more stress on 4.1 (Domitian's seventeenth consulship) and also agrees with Dewar (*per litteras*) on the similarities with 4.3 (Via Domitiana).

each of my main sections, I begin by considering the explicit references to the god of war before addressing the connections with Statius' Mars.¹⁸

II. Roma's Shield and its Reflection (*Ol. Prob.* 94–99)

The ekphrasis of the shield which rounds off the description of Roma represents Mars alongside Romulus and Remus, the she-wolf, and the Tiber.

hic patrius Mavortis amor fetusque notantur
Romulei; pius amnis inest et belua nutrix;
electro Tiberis, pueri formantur in auro;
fingunt aera lupam; Mavors adamante coruscat

Ol. Prob. 96–99¹⁹

The strong similarities with the shield of Aeneas have attracted much interest.²⁰ While aptly transferring the equation of the *urbs* and the *orbis*²¹ to the shield of Roma, goddess of both the city and the world, Claudian drastically reduces the complexity of the Virgilian ekphrasis to the single emblem of the origins of the Roman nation,²² which was the first image depicted on Aeneas' shield (*Aen.* 8.630–634).²³ The recollection of Rome's origins in connection with Theodosius' victory at the Frigidus river and with Olybrius and Probinus forms—both in itself and through the Virgilian allusion—a marker of the Romanness of the emperor and of the new consuls, with a suggestion that the latter are true heirs to Romulus and Remus.²⁴

¹⁸ Connections with later poems of Claudian will be mentioned only very selectively, when they are directly relevant for my argument. I will discuss elsewhere in detail the relationship between such connections and intertextuality with the literary tradition.

¹⁹ All quotations of Claudian are from Hall 1985, unless otherwise indicated. In line 96, *patrius* is the transmitted reading; Hall reads *patris* (F21?, Goodyear).

²⁰ See Taegert 1988 ad loc. and Wheeler 2007:110–113, further Lawatsch-Boomgarden 1992:175–177, Perelli 1992:25, Charlet 2000:146–148, Long 2004:3–4, and Müller 2011:68.

²¹ On Aeneas' shield and its relationships with that of Achilles (which is less relevant than Aeneas' to the issues discussed here), see Hardie 1986:336–376 (esp. 364–366 on *urbs* / *orbis*).

²² Silius Italicus had done the same with the shield of Flaminius (5.143–145). Cf. Juv. 11.104–107.

²³ The connection already involves line 95 *quem tota variarat Mulciber arte*, which refers to *Aen.* 8.724 *Mulciber* in the concluding section of the Virgilian ekphrasis: see Taegert 1988 ad loc., and Wheeler 2007:111 for the notion that the poet thus signposts his allusion; cf. note 32 on *Mulciber arte*. In some sense, therefore, Roma's shield epitomizes the whole shield of Aeneas (cf. Ware 2012:136–139 on *6Hon.*). It may further be observed that line 98 recalls the introductory lines *Aen.* 8.624–625, esp. 624 *levis ocreas electro auroque recocto* (which strengthens the case of Charlet 2000:147 for interpreting Claudian's *electro* as a reference to the metallic alloy rather than to amber).

²⁴ See notably Taegert 1988 ad loc., Lawatsch-Boomgarden 1992:177, Wheeler 2007:113, cf. also Charlet 2000:147 and Roberts 2001:551; Perelli 1992:25 relates the picture to the archaizing taste of Claudian's audience.

Among the distinctive features of Claudian's picture, the special attention given to Mars has rightly been stressed: the god of war, named twice in the space of four lines, is represented as a character, which was not the case on the shield of Aeneas; his role in Rome's founding legend stands in the foreground through the terms *patrius Mavortis amor*, which may bring to mind the Roma/*amor* anagrammatic wordplay.²⁵ The mention of this role builds some kind of genealogical link between the goddess Roma and Mars.²⁶ A further, ambivalent, link exists at the thematic level. In a sense, the representation of the war-god on the shield parallels the warlike characterization of Roma; in another sense, the unexpected designation of Mars as a "loving father"²⁷—like more generally the peaceful picture of which he is a part—starkly contrasts with the characterization of the goddess.²⁸ Roma is associated with Mars not only explicitly through the picture on her shield, but also intertextually. A patent association occurs quite early when *Impetus* and *Metus* enter the scene as auxiliaries of the goddess in charge of hitching up her chariot, in lines 77–78 *famuli currum iunxere volantem / Impetus horribilisque Metus*. While the action they perform matches that of Hebe in the Homeric model mentioned in my introduction, these personifications recall the god of war, notably with reference to *Iliad* Book 15, where Ares orders Δεῖμος and Φόβος to harness his horses, and to Statius' *Thebaid* Book 7, where *Impetus*—otherwise unknown in Latin literature—acts as an auxiliary of Mars among various personifications, including *Metus* (in the plural), who guard the entrance to his temple.²⁹ Interestingly, the association with the god of war established by such "Martial" subtexts takes place, in the linear unfolding of the poem, as the very first element which introduces Roma as a warrior goddess, even before she is characterized by way of connections with Athena and with the Amazons.³⁰

²⁵ These and other features are aptly discussed by Wheeler 2007:112 (on the Roma/*amor* wordplay in Claudian, see further Wheeler 2016:215–216, with bibliography); cf. Taegert 1988 ad loc.

²⁶ See on this point Schindler 2004b:130–131 and 2009:69–70. Cf. notably Wheeler 2007:112 on the further connection with Tiberinus as a character in lines 205–265, esp. 224–225.

²⁷ Note the very different image in Juvenal's lines cited in note 22.

²⁸ Taegert 1988 ad *Ol. Prob.* 73–99 (on page 130) remarks—without referring specifically to the presence and representation of Mars as a character—that the peaceful picture on the shield contrasts with the frightening reflection from the shield in lines 94–95 (to be discussed below).

²⁹ Hom. *Il.* 15.119–120 Ὠς φάτο, καὶ ῥ' ἵππους κέλετο Δεῖμόν τε Φόβον τε | ζευγνύμεν, αὐτὸς δ' ἔντε' ἐδύσετο παμφανόωντα, cited by Taegert 1988 ad loc. (for Δεῖμος and Φόβος as auxiliaries of Ares, cf. e.g. Hes. *Th.* 933–937); the presence of Φόβος and Ἴωκῆ on the aegis in *Il.* 5.739–740 is less immediately relevant. Stat. *Theb.* 7.47–54, esp. 47–49, cited by Taegert 1988 ad loc., Perrelli 1992:25, Charlet 2000:144, and Müller 2011:68; Smolenaars 1994 ad *Theb.* 7.47–48 remarks that personified *Impetus* is found elsewhere only in Claudian's first panegyric, and the link was already noted by Barth 1650 ad *Ol. Prob.* 77 and 1664–1665 ad *Theb.* 7.47 (cf. note 17); cf. also notes 32 and 39. Schindler 2004b:130–131 also underlines the "Martial" connections of lines 77–78.

³⁰ Whereas lines 77b–82 correspond to the preparation of the horses and chariot in Homer, tight connections with that subtext do not appear before lines 81–82, which, as observed by Taegert 1988 ad *Ol. Prob.* 73–99, summarize *Il.* 5.722–723 and 729–732.

My attention here will be focused on another association between Roma and Mars, which reveals in a particularly clear manner, not only how deeply and extensively rooted in the epic tradition Claudian's poetry is, but also how expertly it can make such intertextual roots develop into a structuring device (a point which will be considered in the next section). The lines concerned, which precede the depiction of the image on Roma's shield, describe the effect produced by the reflection given off by that object.

et formidato clipeus Titana lacessit
lumine, quem tota variarat Mulciber arte

Ol. Prob. 94–95

While the picture on the shield explicitly connects Roma to Mars, the reflection from it—a sign of Roma's health and power³¹—intertextually associates her with the god of war, and especially with his Statian incarnation, as we will now see.³²

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In the epic tradition, the reflected light of weapons is a common motif, and the hyperbole of such a light rising up to the skies is frequent.³³ On the other hand, the paradoxical image of a reflection which challenges the sun, as is the case with Roma's shield, is uncommon. Claudian is here reworking a passage in Statius' *Thebaid* Book 3—which I quote highlighting identity or similarity of signifier (in bold) and signified (in italics) with the lines under discussion—where the god Mars caused precisely this effect with his own shield as he returned to heaven.³⁴

³¹ Cf. notably *Gild.* 23–25 (reversal) and 209–212, further *Stil.* 2.274–277.

³² In addition to the reflection from the shield, the Mars of Statius may further be called to mind by the clausula *Mulciber arte*, which occurred at *Theb.* 7.61 in the depiction of the images on the temple of Mars (the only parallel for this clausula with Val. Fl. 5.433 in the depiction of the images on the temple of Sol): see Taegert 1988 ad loc., Charlet 2000:146–147, and, in Statian scholarship, Smolenaars 1994 ad *Theb.* 7.61f., who cites *Ol. Prob.* 95. Cf. note 23 on *Mulciber*.

³³ E.g. Hom. *Il.* 2.457–458, Ap. Rhod. 3.1357–1358, Verg. *Aen.* 7.526–527 discussed below, and Stat. *Theb.* 12.658–660; see also the shield of Achilles in *Il.* 19.373–374 and esp. 379–380 (and, too, the weapons of the Achaeans in 362).

³⁴ This connection is observed by Muellner 1893:186, Taegert 1988 ad loc., Charlet 2000:146, and, in Statian scholarship, Snijder 1968 ad *Theb.* 3.225–226; cf. further Smolenaars cited in note 49. Claudian has already reworked the same passage in lines 23–24 *cum fratre recusso | aemulus adversis flagraverit ignibus orbis* (in a simile), as observed by Taegert 1988 ad loc. and Charlet 2000:130, applying Statius' phrase *aemulus orbis* to a celestial body, the moon; cf. note 40. In this regard, it may be noted that an astrological reference (to Mars as a celestial body) comes to the surface in *Thebaid* Book 3, especially in the word *orbis*—an overlap which goes back to the cosmic dimension of Achilles' shield, see notably *Il.* 19.373–374 cited in note 33.

*clipeique cruenta**lux rubet, et solem longe ferit aemulus orbis*Stat. *Theb.* 3.225–226³⁵

The suggestion that the challenge produced by Roma's shield is allusively related to Statius is supported by the mention that its reflected light frightens the sun (94–95 *formidato ... lumine*). Insistence on this specific effect of reflection from weapons occurs elsewhere,³⁶ but the paradoxical situation in which the sun itself is frightened is unusual. In fact, with regard to this further paradox Claudian reworks another passage of the *Thebaid*—which I quote highlighting identical *sedes* (underlined) as an additional kind of emphasis—where the shield of Mars was again described, in the form of a simile applied to the huge discus which Hippomedon proposes to throw on the occasion of the funeral games for Opheltes.³⁷

qualis Bistonii clipeus Mavortis in arvis
luce mala Pangaea ferit solemque refulgens
territat incussaque dei grave mugit ab hasta

Stat. *Theb.* 6.665–667

The passage in *Thebaid* Book 6, like Claudian's description of Roma's shield, included not only the motif of the reflection which strikes an object, but also the motif of the reflection which frightens (absent from Book 3). However, it dissociated the targets: Mars' shield frightened the sun itself, whereas its light struck not the sun (as in Book 3) but a mountain, the Pangaeum in Thrace.

In Claudian the double effect of Roma's shield challenging the sun with its frightening light can be said to fuse through the technique of combinatorial imitation the distinct effects which the shield of Mars produced on the sun in the two passages of the *Thebaid*—that is, striking it in rivalry (*Theb.* 3.226 *solem ... ferit aemulus*) and frightening it (*Theb.* 6.666–667 *solem ... | territat*).³⁸ It testifies to Claudian's appreciation that both

³⁵ All quotations of Statius' *Thebaid* are from Hill 1983. Contrary to Hill's text, that of the editors Hall, Ritchie, and Edwards reads *cruentum* (Hall's conjecture) and *fert*—translated as “the light of his shield shines blood-red and its orb in rivalry reflects the sun from afar”—, an editorial choice which banalizes the image. Whatever Statius actually wrote, the analysis offered in the present article (including the next section) lends support to the hypothesis that Claudian read *ferit*, not *fert*. A similar banalization, in an analogous context, occurs at *Theb.* 4.665, where, instead of *solem radiis ignescere ferri*, the text of Hall, Ritchie, and Edwards reads *solis ... ferrum* (S2sscr., Madvig); cf. note 39.

³⁶ See notably Ap. Rhod. 2.1069–1070, Hor. *Carm.* 2.1.19–20, and Stat. *Theb.* 9.856–857.

³⁷ This passage is cited by Taegert 1988 ad loc., Charlet 2000:146, and Guipponi-Gineste 2010:86 (who does not refer to *Thebaid* Book 3); cf., in Statian scholarship, Smolenaars cited in note 49, and already Barth 1664–1665 ad *Theb.* 6.666 “*Interpres est huic loco Claudianus*” (cf. note 17).

³⁸ Combinatorial imitation: Hardie 1990.

passages—which are part of a larger set of variations on reflected light³⁹—were interconnected, Book 6 echoing Book 3.⁴⁰

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At this stage, a lexical remark is in order. To depict the paradoxical effect caused by the reflection of Roma’s shield on the sun itself (line 94), Claudian uses the verb *laccessere*, which primarily conveys the idea of challenging or provoking, but may also imply in this context the notion of blows.⁴¹ In contrast, the two passages from Statius’ *Thebaid* Book 3 and Book 6 describing Mars’ shield contained, not the verb *laccessere*, but, instead, *ferire*, meaning that its reflection struck, respectively, the sun and mount Pangaeum.⁴² In the first passage, the added notion of a challenge to the sun was expressed by way of the adjective *aemulus* applied to the shield.⁴³

Claudian’s preference for *laccessere* seems to refer to the authority of Virgil, who used this verb in a partly similar context at the beginning of the confrontation between Latins and Trojans.⁴⁴

aeraque fulgent
sole laccessita et lucem sub nubila iactant

Verg. *Aen.* 7.526–527⁴⁵

³⁹ Taisne 1994:28–36 discusses Statius’ fondness for this motif, and notably for the paradoxical situation where the sun itself is affected, further noteworthy variations of which are the reflections from the Argive arms in *Theb.* 4.665 quoted in note 35 (on which see Parkes 2012 ad loc.) and from the temple of Mars in *Theb.* 7.45–46 (on which see Smolenaars 1994 ad loc.)—the lines preceding the catalogue of personifications cited on page 5 (and in note 29) above.

⁴⁰ This interconnection is remarked by Snijder 1968 ad *Theb.* 3.226, Smolenaars 1994 ad *Theb.* 7.45, and Taisne 1994:29, and discussed by Von Stosch 1968 ad *Theb.* 6.665ff. and Lovatt 2005:106. Claudian’s appreciation of interconnections in Statius may further be testified by a similar fusion in lines 23–24 quoted in note 34; while his phrase *aemulus orbis* reworks the wording of *Theb.* 3.226, the rare verb *recutere* with which he depicts the reflection of sunlight by the *orbis* of the moon is a verb that was used in *Theb.* 7.20–21 (a parallel cited, but not underlined, by Taegert 1988 ad loc.) to describe, not the light, but the rebound of another kind of *orbis*, the discus of athletic contests—that is, precisely the object which is compared with Mars’ shield in Book 6.

⁴¹ *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* 7.2.831–864 “i. q. *irritare, provocare, elicere, instigare sim.*” For the notion of blows, see notably *Lucr.* 2.137, with *ictus* in the context, *Verg. Georg.* 3.233 = *Aen.* 12.105 (*ventosque laccessit | ictibus*), and above all *Aen.* 7.527 discussed below, where the notion is implied; cf. further e.g. *Aen.* 5.429, 7.165, 12.85.

⁴² On the reading in Book 3, cf. note 35. The verb *ferire* will be further discussed in the next section.

⁴³ Cf. note 34 on Claudian’s reworking of *aemulus orbis* in line 24. For *aemulus*, compare further *Stat. Achil.* 1.864–865 *luxque aemula vultum | reddidit et simili talem se vidit in auro* (Achilles sees himself in the reflection of his own shield).

⁴⁴ Taegert 1988 ad loc. and Charlet 2000:146 point to Claudian’s *retractatio*, without analyzing it in detail. Smolenaars 1994 ad *Theb.* 7.45 does the same in his discussion of Statius’ motif (cf. note 49).

In the *Aeneid*, *laccessere* was applied to the effect of the sunlight on the weapons, whose reflected light was then said to rise up to the skies.⁴⁶ Claudian reverses the Virgilian diction when he uses this same verb to describe the effect produced by the shield itself on the sun.⁴⁷ It is worth, however, taking one further step and paying close attention to semantics. What exactly did Virgil mean by saying that the weapons were *sole laccessita*? Fairclough's translation (Loeb) focuses on the meaning of "challenging". The *Oxford Latin Dictionary* assigns to Virgil's expression the distinct meaning of "assail[ing] with repeated blows."⁴⁸ Now, the notion of blows is precisely what Statius expressed with the verb *ferire* when he depicted in *Thebaid* Book 3 and Book 6 the reflection from the shield of Mars. When Claudian uses *laccessere* to describe the effect which Roma's shield produces on the sun, he seems to display his lexical awareness that the verb used by Virgil was capable of expressing both the idea of blows, which Statius had rendered with *ferire*, and the idea of challenge, which Statius in Book 3 had rendered by adding the term *aemulus*. He also seems to build an intertextual narrative that makes the passage in *Aeneid* Book 7 a model for Statius' paradoxical motif in which the reflections of Mars' shield challenged and frightened the sun.⁴⁹ More specifically, Claudian apparently considers that, in Book 3, Statius had reworked Virgil not only by substituting the effect of the sunlight on the weapons with the opposite effect of the weapons' reflection on the sun, but also by splitting up into two words (*ferit aemulus*) the various notions potentially present in the verb *laccessere*.⁵⁰ And it is apparently because he sees such a connection that he combines the

⁴⁵ Text quoted from Conte 2009.

⁴⁶ On the meaning of *lucem sub nubila iactant* (cf. 7.530 *ad aethera* in the simile which follows) and on the broader passage, see Horsfall 2000 ad loc. and Nelis 2001:298–299; the intertextuality of Virgil's image notably includes Ap. Rhod. 3.1357–1358 (the Spartoi).

⁴⁷ Taegert 1988 ad loc. characterizes Claudian's expression as a "kühne Umkehrung" of Virgil's.

⁴⁸ OLD s.v. 5, among "poetical," because figurative, uses (as a development of uses such as Verg. *Georg.* 3.233 = *Aen.* 12.105 quoted in note 41); cf. Horsfall 2000 ad loc. "assaulted repeatedly by."

⁴⁹ Statius' interest in reflections challenging the sun (cf. note 39) is explained as a development of the Virgilian passage by Smolenaars 1994 ad *Theb.* 7.45. Taisne 1994:29–30, who does not refer to *Aeneid* Book 7, relates this interest to the simile describing Aeneas' armour in *Aen.* 8.622–623 *qualis cum caerulea nubes / solis inardescit radiis longaeque refulget* (and recalls, notably, the shield of Achilles, on which cf. note 33); it can further be observed that both elements from the clausula of *Aen.* 8.623 are present in *Theb.* 3.226 (*longe*) and 6.666 (*refulgens*). Statius may have related together the passages in *Aeneid* Books 7 and 8 for the reason that both involve clouds (hit by the sunlight in the latter).

⁵⁰ Claudian will again apply *laccessere* to a light, that from the hills of Rome, affecting the sun itself in *Stil.* 3.66 *qui solis radios auri fulgore laccessunt*, which Keudel 1970 ad loc., Taegert 1988 ad *Ol. Prob.* 94–95, and Charlet 2000:146 analyze as reworking the image of his first panegyric; cf. Muellner 1893:186. This passage, too, reverses *Aen.* 7.526–527, as observed by Keudel (in addition to *laccessere*, note *fulgore ~ fulgent*). Moreover, it may be seen to build upon *Aen.* 8.622–623 quoted in note 49; cf. further Stat. *Theb.* 4.665 quoted in note 35. Claudian will also show Rome challenging the stars with the brilliance of its roofs in *Stil.* 3.133–134. See on both passages Roberts 2001:545–547.

Statian image with the Virgilian wording in a nice instance of window, or double, reference.⁵¹

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The “subliminal image” of the Statian Mars which is perceptible in the reflection of Roma’s shield offers a contrast with the “loving father” Mars in the picture on the shield (96 *patrius Mavortis amor*).⁵² A further relationship between that picture and the reminiscence of Mars as he featured in the *Thebaid* might lie in the final words of the ekphrasis, 99 *Mavors adamante coruscat*. While these words describe the glittering effect produced by the material of which the war-god is made in the picture (with a probable allusion to his involvement in the battle of Actium figured on Aeneas’ shield, *Aen.* 8.700–701 *saevit medio in certamine Mavors / caelatus ferro*),⁵³ it is indeed also tempting to read them as “meta-intertextually” pointing to the fact that the reflection from Roma’s shield alludes to a reflection caused by Mars’ shield elsewhere—that is, in the *Thebaid*.⁵⁴ The connection which the reflection of Roma’s shield establishes between the goddess and Mars—and especially with his quite fearsome Statian incarnation—continues the connection with Mars created by the early mention of the—notably Statian—personifications *Impetus* and *Metus* as her auxiliaries (77–78).⁵⁵ The “Martian” reflection from the shield enhances the characterization of Roma as an epic, and specifically a warlike, goddess, just like those personifications do. In both cases, intertextuality adds a reference to Mars which complements the more obvious references to Athena and the Amazons.⁵⁶ It is mostly concerned with the external appearance of Statius’ war-god, rather than involving a broader interpretive context;⁵⁷ Claudian does not suggest projecting onto the figure of Roma the negative aspects of Mars in the *Thebaid* as the maleficent fomenter of an unholy war.⁵⁸

⁵¹ Window, or double, reference: Thomas 1986:188–189, McKeown 1987:37–45, Wills 1998:284.

⁵² Taegert cited in note 28 remarks the contrast between the reflection from the shield and the picture on it, but does not relate this reflection to Statius’ Mars (nor does he refer to Mars in the picture).

⁵³ As observed by Taegert 1988 ad loc. and, more specifically, by Charlet 2000:147.

⁵⁴ Cf. note 23 on Claudian’s signposting his reference to Aeneas’ shield in line 95.

⁵⁵ Cf. page 5 above.

⁵⁶ In *Stil.* 2.275–276, within a short sequence much similar to that developed at length in *Ol. Prob.* 73–123, Claudian will compare Roma both to Pallas and to Mars, thus not only establishing a connection with the explicit comparison between Roma and Minerva in *Ol. Prob.* 84 (as remarked by Keudel 1970 ad loc.), but also, as it seems, retrospectively highlighting the “Martian” intertextuality of Roma’s identity in his panegyric for Olybrius and Probinus.

⁵⁷ I am grateful to the anonymous reader of *HSCP* who prompted me to clarify this point. On the question of the boundaries of intertextuality, see Edmunds 2001:139–143.

⁵⁸ Cf. page 2 above on the fact that Roma intervenes only after the battle.

III. The Simile Comparing Theodosius to Mars (*Ol. Prob.* 119–123)

When Roma meets Theodosius, Claudian first shows him seated in a *locus amoenus* which epiphanically reacts to his presence (113–118). The signs of warlike action are limited to sweat and breath, and, while no weapons are mentioned, the emperor's helmet appears, significantly, in an image illustrating his return to peace. The description is continued by a simile: Claudian compares Theodosius to Mars resting after battle, accompanied by Bellona.

qualis letifera populatus caede Gelonos
 procubat horrendus Getico Gradivus in Haemo;
 exuvias Bellona levat, Bellona tepentes
 pulvere solvit equos, immensaque cornus in thastam
 porrigitur tremulisque ferit splendoribus Hebrum

120 in haemo z1 F₂₁vJ₃sscr : in arvo F₂₁J₃, cett.⁵⁹ 122 hastam] hostem vel actam Barthius : astra
 Sixtinus : auras Burmannus : altum Wakefield, Jeep⁶⁰

Ol. Prob. 119–123

The *comparans* serves a twofold purpose with respect to the *comparandum*.⁶¹ On the one hand, by depicting Mars at rest, it suggests Theodosius' readiness for reconciliation and opens up the prospect of peace.⁶² On the other, it obliquely emphasizes the military virtues of Theodosius through the accumulation of frightening features⁶³—which contrasts with the conspicuous absence of such features from the description of the emperor in the preceding lines (113–118).

The presence of Mars in the simile, and the unexpected situation there, are obviously linked to his picture, and to the equally surprising situation, on the shield of Roma (96–99), by which means, in addition, Theodosius himself is ideologically connected not only

⁵⁹ Parallels which may support *arvo* include Stat. *Theb.* 6.665–667 discussed on pages 7–9 above and 16–17 below (and Verg. *Aen.* 3.35 quoted in note 72); parallels which may support *Haemo* include *Theb.* 9.532 discussed in note 68 in connection with the image of Mars resting in *Ruf.* 1.334–337. See further Taegert 1988 ad loc., who, like the editor Hall, reads *Haemo*, and Charlet 2000:150–151, who reads *arvo*.

⁶⁰ Parallels which may support *astra* include Verg. *Aen.* 7.526–527 discussed on pages 8–10 above (and 7.530, cf. note 46). For *hasta*, compare Stat. *Theb.* 6.665–667 discussed on pages 7–8 above and 16–17 below. See further Taegert 1988 ad loc., who prefers *astra*, and Charlet 2000:151, who prefers *hastam*.

⁶¹ On the simile, see notably Muellner 1893:115–116, Taegert 1988 ad loc., and the detailed analysis in Schindler 2004b:127–131; cf. also Schindler 2009:69.

⁶² This function of the simile is discussed in detail by Schindler 2004b:129–130 (cf. 140–141), who also refers to *Stil.* 2.366–376, where Mars wears a *trabea* and rides in a triumphal chariot.

⁶³ See Schindler 2004b:129, who notably refers to Hom. *Il.* 13.298–303 and to the remarkable simile in Verg. *Aen.* 12.328–340 and its reworkings in Luc. 7.568–570 and Sil. 17.487–489; further references in Miniconi 1951:197. Ware 2012:81 notes the link between Claudian's simile and his suggestion of Theodosius' affinity with Mars through the epithet 74 *belliger*; cf. Ernesti 1988:365.

to Mars in that picture (as a parallel to the clear connection between the new consuls and the twin founders of Rome), but also, indirectly, to the goddess.⁶⁴ A closural effect is thus achieved, since the ekphrasis and the simile conclude, respectively, the description of Roma and that of Theodosius. On a different level, and more generally, the image of Mars in the simile, whose fearsome features are mitigated by his withdrawal from action, both corresponds to and contrasts with the warlike characterization of Roma in the narrative.⁶⁵ The situation of Mars resting while Bellona unyokes his horses recalls Statius' *Silva* 4.2, the *Eucharisticon ad Domitianum*.⁶⁶ In that poem, Domitian lying down at a banquet is compared indeed with Mars relaxing after unharnessing his horses (*Silv.* 4.2.46–47 *non aliter gelida Rhodopes in valle recumbit / dimissis Gradivus equis*).⁶⁷ The intertextuality of Claudian's simile with the *Eucharisticon ad Domitianum* adds an imperial reference to Mars as a *comparans*, and thereby reinforces the message conveyed about the *comparandum* Theodosius. What should also be noted, however, are the differences. The panegyric for Olybrius and Probinus develops in juxtaposed images two elements which were combined in Statius, that is, Mars lying on the ground (119–120) and his unyoked horses (121–122). Another and quite important discrepancy is that the simile in *Silva* 4.2 was exclusively focused on peace and did not contain any frightening feature—and, more generally, was not provided with a contextual motivation drawn from warlike contemporary events.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ These links are remarked by Riedl 1995:553 and Charlet 2000:150, and developed by Schindler 2004b:130–131 and 2009:69–70 with reference to the genealogical connection between Roma and Mars, on which cf. page 5 above, and to the hierarchical relationship between Theodosius and the goddess (on which see also Roberts 2001:536–537 and Schindler 2008). Wheeler 2007:113 focuses on the perspective of the shield “look[ing] ahead” to the simile.

⁶⁵ Schindler 2009:69 stresses the contrast.

⁶⁶ This connection is analyzed by Muellner 1893:115–116 and observed by Taegert 1988 ad loc.; it should be noted that Claudian's panegyric thus seems to be connected to the first three pieces of *Silvae* Book 4 (cf. note 17). Statius' simile is further cited as a parallel for the image of Mars' rest in *Ruf.* 1.334–337 (cited in note 68) by Levy 1971 ad loc. and Prenner 2007 ad loc.

⁶⁷ Coleman 1988 ad loc. relates this simile—followed by three other—to that in *Silv.* 1.1.18–21, where the “Bistonian horse” of Domitian's statue is compared with that of Mars after fights in Thrace (without explicit reference to Mars' rest). Claudian may have done the same; as remarked by Taegert 1988 ad loc.—who does not relate the Statian passages to each other—, his description of Theodosius is connected to the simile in the first *Silva*, notably in 113 *exhausto ... certamine ~ Silv.* 1.1.18 *exhaustis ... armis*, modelled on Verg. *Aen.* 4.14 *bella exhausta* (cf. also 118 ~ *Silv.* 1.1.15–16).

⁶⁸ Claudian will twice again depict Mars reclining in Thrace, in *Ruf.* 1.334–337 and *Ruf.* 2 *praef.* 17–20; the connection with his first panegyric is remarked by Levy 1971 ad loc., Taegert 1988 ad *Ol. Prob.* 119 and 120, Charlet 2000:206 and 86 respectively, and Schindler 2009:69n36. The closeness in diction between *Ruf.* 1.334 *nubifero seu tu procumbis in Haemo* and Stat. *Theb.* 9.532 *procumbit, Getico qualis procumbit in Haemo* (in a simile comparing the fall of Hippomedon to that of a tree), observed by Levy 1971, Charlet 2000, and also Prenner 2007 ad loc., may suggest to see a connection with *Thebaid* Book 9 already in *Ol. Prob.* 119–120—and therefore to read there *Getico ... Haemo* (cf. note 59). In addition, Claudian will depict Mars' unyoked horses again in *4Hon.* 16–17.

In this section, I will push further the analysis of Claudian's simile, with a particular view to exploring how intertextuality contributes to the various links that relate it to the sequence which it concludes (73–123).⁶⁹

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The image of Mars resting (119–120) is set in the land of the Getae (*Getico ... in Haemo* [or *Getico ... in arvo*]) after the god has “devastated the Geloni with deadly slaughter” (*letifera populatus caede Gelonos*). As it happens, these circumstances repeat those of the action of Mars returning to heaven in Statius' *Thebaid* Book 3:⁷⁰

ille furentes

Bistonas et *Geticas populatus caedibus* urbes
turbidus aetherias currus urguebat ad arces

Stat. *Theb.* 3.220–222

The connection most clearly relies on the phrase *populatus caede*, respectively *populatus caedibus*, which occurs in both passages with the same function and in the same position.⁷¹ The shared presence of the Getae in Claudian's simile and in the narrative of the *Thebaid* adds to the verbal resemblance, even though this people is occasionally associated with the god of war elsewhere.⁷² The difference between Statius' mention of the Bistonas and Claudian's mention of the Geloni (with probable reference to Octavian's triple triumph in the final picture on the shield of Aeneas)⁷³ should not be overemphasized, since the explicit

⁶⁹ Schindler 2004b:130–131 briefly discusses these links, but not their intertextuality.

⁷⁰ This connection is observed by Muellner 1893:115. Cf. notes 59 and 68 on the possible connection with Stat. *Theb.* 9.532.

⁷¹ Claudian will reuse the elements of this phrase with regard to Honorius, son of Theodosius, in *3Hon.* 35–36 *Hyrchanas populatus opes aut caede superbus / Assyria*, within a passage clearly modelled on that of *Thebaid* Book 3 (note in particular 34 *talis perdomito redeat mihi filius hoste* and 36–37 *sic ense rubens, sic flamine crebro / turbidus*, to be compared not only with *Theb.* 3.220–222, but also with 3.229–230 *talis mihi, nate, per Argos, / talis abi, sic ense madens, hac nubilus ira*).

⁷² Notably Verg. *Aen.* 3.35 *Geticis ... arvis*, Val. Fl. 5.618 *Geticis ... antris* and, in a simile, Val. Fl. 7.645–646 *Getico ... pulvere* and Sil. 17.488–489 *Geticas ... nives*. The mythological association with Mars present in Claudian's panegyric for Olybrius and Probinus does not appear any more in his later political poems, where the name of the Getae becomes a way of referring to the Goths.

⁷³ Taegert 1988 ad loc. and Schindler 2004b:130 quote Verg. *Aen.* 8.725 with a view to illustrating the reputation of the Geloni, which indirectly contributes to the praise of Theodosius' deeds. The specific recognition of an allusion may be activated by the fact that the picture on Roma's shield has already recalled the first picture of Aeneas' shield (cf. page 5 above); it should also be observed that the last words of Roma's speech (160–163) will themselves conjure up the representation of Octavian's triumph on that shield (cf. Wheeler 2007:113 and Berlincourt 2016:203–210). Claudian seems to innovate in closely associating the Geloni with Mars (cf. *Eutr.* 2.103–104, *Carm. min.* 53.75–77).

association of the Bistones with Mars, as found in earlier epic and notably in Statius, is consistently avoided by Claudian.⁷⁴

The relevance that the lines of the *Thebaid* quoted here bear to Claudian's simile is increased by the fact that these are the introductory lines of the description which includes the reflection of Mars' shield striking and challenging the sun (*Theb.* 3.225–226)—that is, one of the main subtexts for the reflection from Roma's shield (94–95). The divided allusion to *Thebaid* Book 3 parallels the thematic link between the representation of Mars on Roma's shield and the simile comparing Theodosius to Mars, and its closural effect—an effect common with divided allusions—adds to the closure created by that thematic link.⁷⁵ In this regard too, intertextuality is mostly confined to external features, without more broadly involving the negative characterization of the Statian war-god.⁷⁶

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The description of Bellona taking the spoils and unyoking the horses (121–122) brings to the audience's mind the chariot of Mars, which has not been mentioned in the preceding lines. As critics have observed, Bellona as the auxiliary of Mars corresponds to *Impetus* and *Metus* as Roma's auxiliaries (77–78), and the passages in question frame the sequence leading to Roma's dialogue with Theodosius; in addition, the action performed in the simile by Bellona unharnessing Mars' horses takes over, so to say, that performed in the narrative by *Impetus* and *Metus* harnessing Roma's horses, which also highlights the unusually peaceful attitude of the god and its contrast with the warlike appearance of the goddess.⁷⁷ In the context of the present analysis, it is worth stressing that the correspondence between Bellona and Roma's auxiliaries is supported by the “Martial” intertextuality of *Impetus* and *Metus*.⁷⁸ The link between yoking and unyoking is also interesting with regard to *Iliad* Book 5. Whereas Homer described Hera unhitching the chariot (*Il.* 5.773–777),⁷⁹ Claudian does not say a single word about Roma's chariot after

⁷⁴ This association—already Luc. 7.568–570 (simile), and then Val. Fl. 3.83–85 and Sil. 1.433–436 (similes)—is also found notably in Stat. *Silv.* 1.1.19 (simile cited in note 67), *Theb.* 2.586–587 (narrative) and 7.7 (speech); cf. *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* vol. 5 (1897) 504 s.v. *Biston* (Hoefler) on the genealogical ties of the Bistones with Ares/Mars. In contrast, in Claudian's political poetry they are named only in other contexts, in particular historical (*3Hon.* 111, *4Hon.* 54, *Eutr.* 2.565, *6Hon.* 441); cf. *Rapt. 2 praef.* 8 (Orpheus). Might the substitution of the Bistones for the Geloni have been inspired by their joint mention in *Theb.* 2.420–421?

⁷⁵ Divided allusion: Wills 1998. Compare Claudian's intertextuality with the *Thebaid* in the opening of *De raptu Proserpinae*, analyzed in Wheeler 1995 (esp. 116–118).

⁷⁶ Cf. page 10 above.

⁷⁷ The connection is remarked by Taegert 1988 *ad Ol. Prob.* 100–126a, Schindler 2004b:130 and Schindler 2009:69, who stresses the contrast, on which cf. page 12 above. Other framing features include the link with 74 *belliger* mentioned in note 63.

⁷⁸ This intertextuality has been discussed on page 5 above.

⁷⁹ Cf. also, with regard to the scene cited in note 14, *Il.* 8.432–435, where even more attention is given to the unhitching of the chariot.

her arrival. From the perspective of the *Iliadic* subtext, Bellona's action seems to be transposed from Hera's—a point which will be addressed in the conclusion to this article. The connections with *Thebaid* Book 3 in the first part of Claudian's simile (in particular 119) may further suggest that the reference to Mars' chariot continues the relationship with the god of war as represented in Statius' narrative. In Statius, the god's chariot is indeed prominent in the scene which shows him returning to heaven (*Theb.* 3.220–229, especially 222) and also in the following scene, as it is in another, remarkably elaborate, episode in Book 7 which itself reworks that in Book 3;⁸⁰ moreover, Bellona's interaction with Mars' horses creates a looser association with Book 7.⁸¹ The description of her activity can therefore be seen to add substance to the divided allusion to Statius which links the simile to the reflection from Roma's shield.

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The final part of the simile, dedicated to Mars' spear (122–123), is itself connected with the broad sequence which precedes, and intertextuality is also involved. The lines concerned create a thematic link with the brief mention of Roma's spear which is found in a general representation of the goddess' activity (80) subordinate to the introduction of *Impetus* and *Metus* as her auxiliaries.⁸² This link, which complements the frame composed by *Impetus* and *Metus* (77–78) and Bellona (121–122), rests not only on the mere reference to the spears of Roma and Mars, but also on some analogy between the action which Roma performs with her weapon, *turbet Hydaspem*, and the effect produced by that of the god of war, *ferit splendoribus Hebrum*. At the same time, it can hardly be denied that Claudian pays much more attention to the spear of Mars than to that of Roma, which he notably leaves unmentioned when depicting her appearance in lines 85–99.⁸³ This omission is noteworthy when compared to Roma's iconography, in which this weapon is eminently important, but also when judged from an intertextual perspective. Special attention was given indeed, in *Iliad* Book 5, to the gesture of Athena grasping her spear when she leaps on the chariot (*Il.* 5.745–747). From these lines in his model, Claudian retains only Roma's leap (83–84). His concern for Mars' weapon in the simile may therefore seem to fulfil a compensatory function with regard to the description of Roma; or, conversely, his exclusion of the spear from that description may be motivated

⁸⁰ See *Theb.* 3.260–261, 262–268, 293 and 316–317, 7.64–74, 81–83 and 105–109 (followed by the description of Pavor), and cf. the similar narrative in *Sil.* 4.430–444. The chariot is also prominent in the similes *Val. Fl.* 3.83–86 and 7.645–646, *Sil.* 1.433–436 and 17.487–490, and *Stat. Theb.* 12.733–735, compared to models such as *Verg. Aen.* 12.331–336 and *Luc.* 7.568–570.

⁸¹ Bellona drives and urges Mars' horses in *Theb.* 7.72–74 (cf. Smolenaars 1994 ad loc. on the relationship with *Verg. Aen.* 8.700–703 and *Luc.* 7.568–570), cf. also *Sil.* 4.438–439; these connections are briefly observed by Taegert 1988 ad loc. and Charlet 2000:151.

⁸² Taegert 1988 ad *Ol. Prob.* 73–173 (on page 128) records that Roma's spear is already mentioned in line 80, but does not comment further.

⁸³ In contrast, the spear is mentioned in *Gild.* 25 and 212. Cf. Berlincourt 2015:§12n22.

by his interest in depicting that of Mars—another matter to be addressed in my conclusion.

In addition, the reflection from the spear of Mars which strikes the river Hebrus parallels the reflection of Roma's shield which affects the sun itself (94–95). The simile comparing Theodosius to Mars is thus linked to that reflection not merely indirectly through Statius (in lines 119–120, and possibly 121–122, discussed above), but also, and conspicuously, at the thematic level. Here I will analyze how this thematic link itself involves intertextuality.⁸⁴

A lexical note may serve as a starting point. For the reflection from the spear of Mars, Claudian uses, not *laccessere*, as he has for the reflection from Roma's shield (94–95), but *ferire*. This is precisely the verb which Statius used in the *Thebaid* to depict the reflection from the shield of Mars, first as it affected the sun in the narrative when the god returned to heaven (*Theb.* 3.225–226), and then as it affected mount Pangaeum in the simile applied to Hippomedon's discus (*Theb.* 6.665–667)—that is, in the two main subtexts for the reflection from Roma's shield. The passage from Book 6 deserves to be quoted again, this time with emphases pointing to its relationship with Claudian's simile comparing Theodosius to Mars.⁸⁵

qualis Bistoniis clipeus Mavortis in arvis
luce mala Pangaea *ferit* solemque refulgens
territat incussaque dei grave mugit ab *hasta*

Stat. *Theb.* 6.665–667

The reflection from the spear of Mars reworks the reflection from the god's shield in these Statian lines (the last of which, by the way, also mentions the spear). The phrase 122–123 *tremulis ... ferit splendoribus Hebrum* is an equivalent to *Theb.* 6.666 *luce mala Pangaea ferit* in its reference to Thrace (a commonplace with respect to the god of war) and, more significantly, in its syntactical construction. Both passages—like that in *Thebaid* Book 3—contain not only the same verb, *ferire*, but above all the same peculiar use of it. This verb had been applied to a reflected light in the simile of *Aeneid* Book 8 illustrating Aeneas' feelings when Tiberinus appears to him,⁸⁶ and Claudian's description of the reflection from the spear of Mars as *tremulis ... splendoribus* may be connected to *tremulum ...*

⁸⁴ My analysis could be expanded by inclusion of the further link with line 99 *Mavors adamante coruscat* in the picture on Roma's shield (cf. page 10 above for a possible “meta-intertextual” reading).

⁸⁵ This passage (like the passage from Book 3) is not cited by Taegert 1988 and Charlet 2000 in connection with lines 122–123, only in connection with lines 94–95; cf. notes 34 and 37.

⁸⁶ Verg. *Aen.* 8.22–25 *sicut aquae tremulum labris ubi lumen aenis | sole repressum aut radiantis imagine lunae | omnia pervolitat late loca iamque sub auras | erigitur summique ferit laquearia tecti* (on which see Nelis 2001:331–334).

lumen there.⁸⁷ However, whereas in the *Aeneid* the grammatical subject of the verb was the light source (*lumen*),⁸⁸ in the panegyric for Olybrius and Probinus it is, surprisingly, the reflecting weapon itself (*cornus*), while the light source is referred to with an instrumental (*splendoribus*). Claudian's simile shares these distinctive features with that of *Thebaid* Book 6, in which, while the light source is referred to with an instrumental (*luce*), the subject is the reflecting weapon (*clipeus*)—and the latter is also true of the phrase in the narrative of Book 3 (where *ferit* has *orbis* as its subject).⁸⁹

Claudian thus splits up the double effect which Statius assigned to the shield of Mars in the simile applied to Hippomedon's discus (*Theb.* 6.665–667). First, he ascribes to Roma's shield (94–95) the frightening effect of the reflection (*formidato ... lumine ~ Theb.* 6.666–667 *solemque refulgens / territat*)—which he merges with the idea of striking the sun present in the Statian account of Mars' return to heaven (*Theb.* 3.225–226).⁹⁰ Then, he ascribes to the reflection from the spear of Mars (122–123) the effect of striking a place on earth (*ferit ... Hebrum ~ Theb.* 6.667 *Pangaea ferit*). This divided allusion to *Thebaid* Book 6 is closely intertwined with the divided allusion to Book 3 in the reflection from Roma's shield (94–95) and the circumstances of Mars' action in the simile (119–120), discussed above in this section. In this way, the intertextuality of the last part of the simile is also involved in the links with Roma's shield and adds the final touch to their closural force.

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The operation performed by intertextual connections with Statius in the case of the simile comparing Theodosius to Mars is quite different from that performed in the case of Roma's shield. Whereas such connections are crucial to endowing the characterization of Roma with “Martial” substance, they do not contribute anything of the sort to the simile, since Mars is explicitly present in it. Instead, they put his presence into perspective. While memories of *Silva* 4.2 enhance the peaceful atmosphere of Claudian's image, recollections of the *Thebaid* cast on it the shadow of a fearsome epic incarnation of the war-god. Moreover, intertextuality supplements the thematic links between the simile and its broader context.

⁸⁷ Taegert 1988 ad loc. and Charlet 2000:151 refer only to Verg. *Aen.* 7.9 *splendet tremulo sub lumine pontus* (and Sil. 14.566), where *ferire* is not present. The apparition of Tiberinus in lines 205–265 is clearly linked to the broader Virgilian passage: see notably Wheeler 2007:113–118.

⁸⁸ Same construction in Claud. *Rapt.* 3.445 analyzed in Bernstein 2016b, where the grammatical subject is *lucis imago*.

⁸⁹ Among the examples in the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* article, Stat. *Theb.* 3.226 quoted on page 7 and 6.666 are, with Claudian's line, the only ones in which the subject is a weapon.

⁹⁰ Cf. page 8.

IV. Conclusion

A final re-examination of the whole sequence discussed in this article (73–173) offers the opportunity to draw some lessons on the interplay of intertextuality and narrative structure.

At the thematic level, a network of relationships between Roma and Mars is generated by:

- (1a) the presence of Mars in the picture on Roma's shield (96–99);
- (1b) the correspondence between, on the one hand, *Impetus* and *Metus* as auxiliaries of Roma hitching up her chariot (77–78), and, on the other hand, Bellona as an auxiliary of Mars unhitching his chariot (121–122);
- (1c) the correspondence between the spears of Roma (80) and of Mars (122–123);
- (1d) the similarity of the reflections from Roma's shield (94–95) and from the spear of Mars (122–123).⁹¹

The last three among these relationships have a structural dimension, since they link, respectively, the beginning (1b, 1c) and the end (1d) of the description of Roma to the simile that concludes the presentation of Theodosius by comparing him to Mars.

Roma	Mars (simile)
77–78 <i>Impetus</i> and <i>Metus</i> (yoking)	
80 spear	
94–95 shield (reflection)	
96–99 shield (picture of Mars)	
	121–122 Bellona (unyoking)
	122–123 spear (reflection)

Thematic connections are enriched, and their density increased, by intertextuality, which links Roma and Mars through:

- (2a) the “Martial” nature, related notably to *Iliad* Book 15 and *Thebaid* Book 7, of the characters who prepare Roma's chariot (77–78)—themselves linked with Bellona (121–122, cf. 1b above);
- (2b) the “Martial” nature, related to *Thebaid* Book 3 and to the simile in Book 6, of the reflection from Roma's shield (94–95)—itself linked with the reflection from the spear of Mars (122–123, cf. 1d above);
- (2c) the divided allusion to *Thebaid* Book 3 in that reflection (94–95) and in the setting of Mars' rest depicted in the simile (119–120)—a divided allusion continued, to some extent, in the chariot of Mars that is present there (121–122);
- (2d) the divided allusion to the simile of *Thebaid* Book 6 in the reflections from the shield of Roma (94–95) and from the spear of Mars (122–123).⁹²

⁹¹ See, respectively, (1a) page 5, (1b) page 14, (1c) page 15, (1d) page 16.

⁹² See, respectively, (2a) page 5, (2b) pages 6–8, (2c) pages 13–14 and 15, (2d) page 16.

Roma	Mars (simile)	"Martial" intertextuality
77–78 <i>Impetus</i> and <i>Metus</i>		Hom. <i>Il.</i> 15, Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 7
94–95 shield (reflection)		Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 3 and 6 (simile) } }
	119–120 setting	Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 3 } }
	121–122 Bellona (unyoking)	Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 3 } }
	122–123 spear (reflection)	Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 6 (simile) } }

These tight thematic and intertextual relationships support the structure of the sequence and reinforce the closure produced by the simile.⁹³ Their effects, however, are also felt on the representation of the divinities. In a sense, they tend to blur the boundaries between Roma and Mars; and the emperor is involved in the blurring, since he is compared to Mars. Consequences are seen in the characterization of Roma as a warrior goddess, and also, indirectly, in the assertion of Theodosius' legitimacy. In another sense, the connections tend to highlight differences. The correspondence of yoking and unyoking stresses the contrast between the warlike identity of Roma and the withdrawal of Mars, and of Theodosius, from military action. More ambivalent is the correspondence between, on the one hand, Roma's spear and the frightening reflection from her shield, and, on the other hand, Mars' spear stuck in the ground as a symbol for the end of the war (contrast), yet frightening through its reflection (similarity).

*

The relationships between Roma and Mars result from a creative process which itself deserves consideration. The respective attributes of each divinity are used selectively; the shield is directly connected only to Roma, not to Mars (nor to Theodosius), whereas the spear is prominent only in connection with Mars.⁹⁴ This selectivity befits the short epic narrative that Claudian dedicates to the encounter of Roma and Theodosius (73–173) and seems motivated in part by a desire to avoid unnecessary duplicates. It lays the basis for the structural correspondence between the reflections from Roma's shield and from Mars' spear—which itself relies on some kind of intertextual transposition, since the former reflection stems from a (Statian) shield which belonged not to Roma but to Mars, while the latter stems from a (Statian) weapon of Mars which was not a spear but a shield.

⁹³ With regard to divided allusions in structural locations, compare the links mentioned in note 73.

⁹⁴ Note that Mars is represented with both attributes even in Juvenal's ekphrasis cited in note 22.

Roma	Mars (simile)	intertextuality
80 spear		
94–99 shield		Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 3 and 6 (shield of Mars)
	122–123 spear	Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 6 (shield of Mars)

The closural effect of this correspondence gains strength not merely from the similar reflections from both weapons, but also, precisely, from selection. The focus on Mars' spear and the resemblance between its reflection and that given off by Roma's shield retrospectively emphasize the modest attention given to Roma's spear and the absence of Mars' shield. The very fact that each divinity is deprived (partly or entirely) of one of its main attributes thus invites the audience to bring together their incomplete images in order to form, so to speak, a complete image including both the shield and the spear. Analogous observations apply to the connection between the harnessing of Roma's horses in the narrative, which recalls the chariot carrying Hera and Athena in the *Iliad*, and the unharnessing of Mars' horses in the simile, which is transposed from the same chariot in Homer. By omitting to report the unhitching of Roma's chariot, Claudian builds an elliptic sequence, and thereby follows a principle of economy which is common in Latin epic and suits his short narrative. At the same time, through the correspondence between Roma's and Mars' chariots, he can be said to play with epic conventions, by creating the illusion of a complete sequence like that found in Homer—or perhaps rather by pointing to his own avoidance of such completeness.

Claudian takes advantage of the literary tradition by carefully picking elements from it and distributing them wherever they may best serve his aims. What the analysis presented here reveals is, in brief, the impressive artistic, and notably intertextual, skills which he displays already in the first of his political poems.

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