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Introduction

- ¹ Vergil's *Aeneid*, written in the Augustan period, when the city of Rome appeared to be at the height of its urban development and was widely regarded as the city *par excellence*, powerfully addresses the changes that the urban space has experienced throughout its historical development.¹ In the poem, different sites appear modified by many agents who had appropriated, transformed, and crafted them through a variety of religious and civic practices.² Vergil subtly takes on the topic of urban development. He brings Rome's humble origins and its emblematic places to the memory of his contemporaries, with a strong emphasis on different kinds of religious images and expressions. In this way, the focus on the relationship between Roman religion and urban space allows us to read the *Aeneid* from a viewpoint that warrants further scrutiny. The aim of this paper is to look at Vergil's epic by viewing the city of Rome and its urban development as the main characters.
- ² Vergil tells an extended version of Roman history, from the protohistoric origins of Janus and Saturn's arrival to Latium to the battle of Actium and Augustan Rome. This work, emphasising the *urbs*, its past and its future, offers two different, but complementary instances of religion and urbanism: one centred on the urban development of the city of Rome, as it appears in Book VIII, and another focused on a comparative study of Rome and other cities. This paper will concentrate on the first instance. Vergil, following the Roman tradition, uses urban places as a means of organising both mythical and historical perceptions of the past, and by connecting these places with religious practices he gives them a special meaning and a lasting religious character. However, religion is also employed to constitute the public character of urban places. The relationship between religion and place establishes

Rome in a different position compared to other cities: Rome is not just the home of men, but also the abode of the gods.³ Vergil's presentation of the *urbs* is one of the examples of what Hubert Cancik defined as the city's sacred landscape constituted through Latin literary texts.⁴ Among the sites chosen by Vergil as having a strong ritual meaning, we will identify distinctive interconnections between religion, urban places, and Roman memory and identity.

- 3 *Aeneid*'s Book VIII is the only one whose action takes place in Rome, and it is a privileged source for reflecting on the spatial conditions of religious communication of different actors in Rome's urban space. In that book description prevails over the narrative progress. The historical narrative develops over two extensive passages. One narrates Evander and Aeneas's walk around the *Pallanteum*, which in later centuries will become the site of Rome, and the other describes Vulcan's Shield. Additionally, both passages are woven around the theme of order, notably the topographical and chronological order. The place is visited by Aeneas and Evander, the guide to, and spokesman of, aetiological explanations about the origins of places, customs, and rites. I aim to explore some aspects of Aeneas and Evander's walk through the *Pallanteum*. This topographic sequence parallels the historical series of events presented later in the *ekphrasis* of Aeneas' Shield. Both passages should be read and interpreted as complementary, because Vergil's historical vision consists of a series of foundations based on the development of Roman urban topography within its meaningful natural geography, in association with chronological accounts of relevant human characters and their actions. The topographic description also creates and recreates complex places of encounter and communication, showing the strong relationship between religion and urban space.

Aeneas' Arrival and the Walk through the *Pallanteum*

- 4 The book begins with Aeneas' arrival in Latium. The local god, the river Tiber, like a smooth gliding stream, appears and announces to him that this place will be his home and that his gods, the *Penates*, will be safe there. This is Aeneas's first contact with the geography of Latium and the sacred nature of the Tiber river. The next step is his contact with history.
- 5 The Trojans arrive at the Italic *Pallanteum*, a colony founded by Evander when he was obliged to leave his hometown in Arcadia and migrate to Italy. Vergil narrates Aeneas' arrival at the *Pallanteum* at the exact moment in which the rite commemorating Hercules and Cacus' death is being performed, and the whole community takes part in it.⁵ It is the first fact about Latium that Aeneas learns. It is an historical event that has already become a memory: an individual memory, but a communal one too. Moreover, the rite gives the seen and narrated event an aetiological character, conferring a different meaning to the place, a religious one, and explains its change: the grove – *lucus* – becomes an *ara*. It is the first place and the first date of the future Rome (*Aen.* 8.268-72):⁶

*ex illo celebratus honos laetique minores
servavere diem, primusque Potitius auctor
et domus Herculei custos Pinaris sacri
hanc aram luco statuit, quae maxima semper.*

dicetur nobis et erit quae maxima semper.

Ever since that time we have honoured his name and succeeding generations have celebrated this day with rejoicing. This altar was set up in its grove by Potitius, the first founder of these rites of Hercules, and by the Pinarii, the guardians of the rites. We shall always call it the Greatest Altar, and the greatest altar it will always be.

- 6 What stands out here is Aeneas' double contact, on the one hand, with the living memory – Evander – and, on the other, with the memory of the place – the *ara* – since the site where the rite is performed, later to be known as *Ara Maxima*, is where the battle of Hercules and Cacus had occurred. This event is programmatic of what is to come; the fact that Evander has witnessed it gives him special authority. He is in a position to determine how this urban topography has become a memory, and how it should be recalled in an organised and fixed form to set in motion the memory of the reader. But the episode does not only indicate the first place of the future Rome. It also represents the introduction of the first date in the Roman religious calendar, because from that time the rite was solemnized and observed: posterity has kept the day. And Evander also tells Aeneas how it is celebrated – *instaurant epulas* – and who presides over the rite (*Aen.* 8.281-86):

*iamque sacerdotes primusque Potitius ibant
pellibus in morem cincti, flammasque ferebant.
instaurant epulas et mensae grata secundae
dona ferunt cumulantque oneratis lancibus aras.
tum Salii ad cantus incensa altaria circum
populeis adsunt evincti tempora ramis*

and there came a procession of priests led by Potitius, wearing their ritual garb of animal skins and carrying torches. They were starting the feast again with a second course of goodly offerings, and they heaped the altar with loaded dishes. Then the Salii, the priests of Mars, their heads bound with poplar leaves, came to sing around the altar fires...

- 7 These passages are excellent examples of how urban places played a vital role in the articulation of Roman religion: through them several crucial themes find crucial resonances. But religion also influences the determination and characterisation of urban places and the city calendar. By establishing a communal altar in the grove and by fixing the day of the rite, religion also establishes the institutionalisation and regulation of public meetings: religious places are places of encounter and communication. In the multi-layered urban space, religious practices imprint a lasting religious character on specific sites, and thus are appropriated for temporary or permanent use.⁷ Evidently, during Vergil's time, the *Ara Maxima* is the site that keeps alive the memories of the first altar – a major public space in itself – the first calendar, and the first religious celebration of that place. Roman religion guarantees Rome's continuity in the memory of the place, from Hercules to Vergil's time.
- 8 At this point, another detail must be brought into the discussion. Generally, the institution of Hercules' cult in Rome has been seen in connection with Augustus' triumph, identifying one with another.⁸ In Evander's account, however, Cacus is characterised as a thief, who busily plans crimes and lies; in fact, he steals Hercules' cattle.⁹ Killing Cacus – and not a monster like Geryon – is not just the defeat of evil, it further fosters a peaceful coexistence around the Aventine. The similarity with Saturn,

a few lines later, is remarkable. It is similar because the first inhabitants were not civilised, until Saturn brought the laws to Latium. In the same manner, when Hercules kills those who steal cattle from those who arrived in Latium, like himself, he kills a thief. He thus establishes the possibility of survival and coexistence for those newly arrived in Latium. Vergil's choice is remarkable, for he invents the motif of Hercules and Cacus instead of using the traditional story of Hercules and Geryon. The fight against Geryon puts Hercules in the position of an avenger who uses strength and violence indiscriminately. The fight against Cacus shows him using his power for the benefit of the community. It is not excessive violence; it is instead a deed to eliminate the one who disturbs order and coexistence in the community, that is, the people living around the Aventine. In this way, the institutionalisation of this cult also has to be understood in terms of the regulation of violence and the use of power and strength.

9 Once the celebrations for Hercules have been completed, Aeneas and Evander walk from the *Ara Maxima* to Evander's house on the Palatine, that is, they proceed *ad urbem*. In this passage, often used as an example of the Roman sense of space,¹⁰ we find Vergil's palimpsestic view of the city. A multi-layered sense of places is conveyed, in part, by the use of names which these sites would not receive until later. The walk has two clearly outlined sections:

10 1. The early history of Latium.¹¹ As they walk from the Ara to the Carmental Gate, Evander describes the settlements of Latium from the earliest times to his own arrival. Vergil introduces Evander as the founder of the Roman citadel. Later, Evander tells Aeneas that the aboriginal inhabitants were altogether uncivilised. Upon Saturn's arrival, they settled in cities, received laws, and, from then on, their territories were named Latium. Here, the theme of exile is prominent: Evander, Saturn and Aeneas were all exiled. A golden age began under Saturn's reign, which later degenerated into war and plunder.¹² Many invasions of peoples such as the Ausonians and Siconians followed, ending with Evander himself, with his Arcadians. Three elements are immediately evident:

- The novelty in the Roman historical tradition is the introduction of a Greek founder before Romulus and Aeneas.
- The arrival of Aeneas and the Trojans is but the last link in a series of foreign migrations, all Greek in origin.¹³
- As for the theme of exile, Evander was exiled, as well as Saturn and Aeneas, and they all settled in Latium, a fertile place which embraces the exiled.

11 2. The topographic description. As they walk from the Carmental Gate to his house, Evander points out the most prominent spots within the city: the monuments of great men from the past. The following places are mentioned:

- The *Porta Carmentalis*, an ancient monument in honour of the Nymph Carmenta, the fateful prophetess who first sang of the future greatness of Aeneas' descendants and the glory of *Pallanteum*. This place commemorates prehistoric Rome and alludes to the cult of Carmenta, which lasted until Augustus' period.
- The vast woodland where Romulus opened his *asylum*, a shelter where foreigners were received without being questioned on their origins or their past. This was the location that Romulus institutionalised, making possible the melting pot on which Rome further developed. The urban development is consistent with the need to welcome people who made Rome its own home. With this growth, the city is modified in its institution and topography:

there is not only an institution, but also a special place that brings it to life and leaves an imprint on the *asylum*.

- 12 The Lupercal, named thus after the Lycaean Pan by Vergil, was an open cave at the foot of the Palatine.

- The sacred forest named *Argiletum* was a Roman neighbourhood between the Quirinal and the Forum. A positive reading, which seeks a parallel with places in Augustan Rome, associates the *Argiletum* with the Temple of Janus, whose doors were closed three times by Augustus. A reading of the urban topography as a memory in Evander's words leads us in another direction and evokes a breach of *hospitium*, a homicide and its atonement.¹⁴ It is the place with the memory of what the Romans should not repeat.
- The Tarpeian Rock was a cliff from which traitors were hurled down. It owes its name to Tarpeia, the maiden who betrayed the citadel to the Sabine king Titus Tatius in Romulus' time. This recalls the conflict with an Italian people whose resolution – a *foedus* – appears on the shield,¹⁵ and it also suggests the idea of urban growth through the fusion of the two peoples. This place and the *Argiletum* above mentioned serving as a double warning to traitors: both to the ones who disrespect *hospitium*, and to those who breach a *foedus*.
- Janiculum and Capitolium. Evander points out to his visitors the ruins of monuments built by Janus and Saturn. Thus, Rome's ruined past is part of the city even before its foundation (*Aen.* 8.355-59):

*haec duo praeterea disiectis oppida muris,
reliquias veterumque vides monumenta virorum.
hanc Ianus pater, hanc Saturnus condidit arcem;
Ianiculum huic, illi fuerat Saturnia nomen.*

And then here are the ruined walls of these two towns. What you are looking at are relics of the men of old. These are their monuments. One of these citadels was founded by Father Janus; the other by Saturn. This one used to be called the Janiculum; the other, Saturnia.

- 13 The Italian deity Janus recalls that the first city, which would later become Rome, was founded by him before the arrival of Greeks and Trojans, even before Saturn. This element of autochthony shows that Rome was not established only by exiles, as Evander or Aeneas; it also agrees with Janus' characteristics as the god of beginnings and transitions.¹⁶ It is relevant to highlight that the Janiculum is outside the space of the city itself since it is located across the Tiber. From the point of view of the description of the city, it is part of the city because everything mentioned is part of the whole. But from the point of view of urban topography, the Janiculum is outside the city, located in the margins beyond the natural limit which the river Tiber represents. This makes us think about urban development.

- The tour ends at Evander's humble hut on the Palatine. On all sides, Aeneas and Evander saw cattle lowing in the Roman Forum and the smart *Carinae*, one of the most luxurious Roman neighbourhood in Vergil's times. This was the part of Rome where Augustus lived; the size and modesty of this dwelling according to Suetonius¹⁷ follows Evander's recommendation of *frugalitas*: *My guest, dare to scorn wealth*.¹⁸ There is a clear contrast between Augustus' house, which evokes the modesty of Evander's and Romulus' ones, and the lavish Roman residences. The proximity of their dwellings reinforced the implication that Augustus was Romulus' heir, the new founder of Rome.¹⁹

- 14 Based on these considerations, we must face a complex issue: if, on the one hand, the walk through the *Pallanteum* is a description of proto-Rome, on the other hand the places mentioned are, for different reasons, essential to the Roman reader of the *Aeneid* in such a way that a connotated literary reproduction of the urban places might be expected. In this sense, the logic of the places, the buildings, and their depiction throughout the tour of the *Pallanteum* has been variously interpreted.²⁰ A considerable and influential body of scholarship had stressed that places speak of history, exile, and victory in a clearly Augustan ideological line. The focus of the present discussion concentrates on urban places instead. From the outset, *Aeneas capitur locis*: he is moved and captivated by the sites (*Aen.* 8.310-12):

*miratur facilisque oculos fert omnia circum
Aeneas, capiturque locis et singula laetus
exquirique auditque virum monimenta priorum.*

Aeneas was lost in admiration and his eyes were never still as he looked about him enthralled by the places he saw, asking questions about them and joyfully listening to Evander's explanations of all the relics of the men of old.

- 15 He is seized with admiration, and a dual relationship is established with the place: the site captivates him, and Evander's tale evokes his admiration. The phrase *Aeneas capitur locis* anticipates the effect that the description of the place must have on the reader. Aeneas is captivated by Evander's tale of the *virum monimenta priorum*.²¹ Rome's places are religiously connotated with the force that drew Saturn, Hercules and Evander, and the tale of its proto-history is one way of putting its power into words – a beauty to be seen and recounted – and captivating the reader as well. Again, Vergil's text is a fine example of how urban places played a vital role in the articulation of Roman religion, calendar, memory, and identity.²² But the urban places mentioned by Vergil do not only refer to monuments and buildings: they also convey the magnitude of the transition that intervened from the humble Rome of Romulus and Evander to the Augustan Rome made of marble. They also talk about the continuous growth of its population, through *foedera* between peoples, the *asylum*, and the incorporation of the exiled.

The *ekphrasis* of Aeneas' Shield as an Historical Description

- 16 In the same book, Vergil's description of Aeneas' shield includes incidents from the future history of Rome. The *ekphrasis* of Aeneas's Shield, modelled on the description of Achilles' Shield in the *Iliad*,²³ is at once an historical chronicle and one of the most important prophetic passages in the *Aeneid*.²⁴ Vergil offers a structure and form that endow Roman history with a destiny which goes from Aeneas to Romulus and Augustus, not just in subject matter, but also in form. In this sense, Woodman has noted that the formulation at the start of the *ekphrasis* of Aeneas' Shield is written in the manner of an historical *praefatio* (8.626-29):²⁵

*illic res Italas Romanorumque triumphos
haud uatum ignarus uenturique inscius aevi
fecerat ignipotens, illic genus omne futurae*

stirpis ab Ascanio pugnataque in ordine bella.

There the God of Fire, with his knowledge of the prophets and of time that was to be, had laid out the story of Italy and the triumphs of the Romans, and there in order were all the generations that would spring from Ascanius and all the wars they would fight.

- 17 Aeneas' shield delimits a historical theme that is as central to Augustus' time as the *res Italae Romanorumque triumphi*, and a starting point is established with *ab Ascanio pugnataque in ordine bella*. Thus, Vergil wishes to give the impression that his poem will address an historical theme, just as historical works do.²⁶ The issue of war should be seen in this context. The scenes depicted on the Shield are the following:

- Vignette 1 (*Aen.* 8.630-34): the she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus in the green cave of Mars.²⁷ The cave, as Gransden points out, is the Lupercal indicated earlier by Evander.²⁸ Thus, Vergil consistently maintains a core aspect in the description of the *Pallanteum*: the natural geography and the pastoral environment become essential components of Rome. Evander's account appears as an inescapable instance when it comes to analysing the *ekphrasis*. The urban topography of *Pallanteum*, as a previous foundation of Rome, is a strong force for memory. On the one hand, urban places are the substrates of the historical discourse of images on the shield; on the other hand, history – as written in images – is arranged in chronologically prestigious spaces of the City.
- Vignette 2 (*Aen.* 8.635-41): The Rape of the Sabines and the subsequent pact – *foedus* – between Romans and Sabines, which denotes, after the rape and combat, the merging of the two communities through war. The rape of the Sabine Women was a strategy complementary to the *asylum*.²⁹ While expatriate men inhabited Rome, no neighbouring peoples allowed their women to wed these men. Rome needed to carry out this abduction on account of *penuria mulierum*. The rape of the Sabines and the pact between Latins and Sabines is a necessary condition for the life, reproduction, and growth of the City.
- Vignette 3 (*Aen.* 8. 642-45): The execution of the Alban traitor Mettius Fufetius (*Livy* 1.23-9), which marks the end of the defiance of Alba Longa and the transfer of its population to Rome. In Roman history, this event is not minor since Rome and Alba had disputed the supremacy in Latium and Italy.³⁰ Thus by appropriating Alba's inhabitants, as it did with the Sabine women, the city of Rome continues to grow. Moreover, from the iconographic point of view, this vignette is impressive on account of the vividness and thoroughness of the description of the mutilated body and the bloodshed which finds lexical options only within a tragic register. The quotation is eloquent, beyond its expressive force and the narrative effectiveness: Vergil does not forget the cost and the suffering involved in the growth of Rome. He keeps the memory of the horrible wars in Latium. Nurturing memory is one of the intended effects of the iconographic representation.
- Vignette 4 (*Aen.* 8.646-51): The Etruscan Porsenna besieges Rome to restore Tarquin's monarchy, and the response to Horatius Cocles' defiant heroism shows Etruscan Rome growing in liberty. The continuity of the historical narrative regarding the previous vignette offers no difficulty. Regarding the city development, it is relevant to emphasise this new step in the incorporation of peoples after the end of conflicts: the Sabines in vignette 2, the Latins in Vignette 3, and now the Etruscans in vignette 4. This is how the city of Rome embarks on its process of growth.
- Vignette 5 (*Aen.* 8.652-66): The Gauls attacking Rome. Their attack can be considered as a parallel situation of the *Pallanteum*. Vergil does not intend to emphasise Camillus' defence of

Rome. Vergil points out Manlius defence of the Capitol (*Aen.* 8.652-54):

*in summo custos Tarpeiae Manlius arcis
stabat pro templo et Capitolia celsa tenebat,
Romuleoque recens horrebat regia culmo.*

At the top of the shield Manlius, the keeper of the citadel on the Tarpeian rock, stood in front of the temple and kept guard on the heights of the Capitol. The new thatch stood out rough on the roof of Romulus' palace

- 18 The geography of *Pallanteum* is closely related to this image on the shield. Lines 663-666 are especially interesting to our focus; Harrison and Gransden, in our view, explained them effectively by placing them in relation to the rite of Evander in the *Pallanteum* (*Aen.* 8.663-66):

*hic exsultantis Salios nudosque Lupercos
lanigerosque apices et lapsa ancilia caelo
extuderat, castae ducebant sacra per urbem
pilentis matres in mollibus.*

Here too Vulcan had hammered out the leaping Salii, the priests of Mars, and the naked Luperci, the priests' conical hats tufted with wool, the figure-of-eight shields which had fallen from heaven and chaste matrons leading sacred processions through the city in cushioned carriages.

- 19 They are timeless scenes, no doubt a celebration of the victory over the Gauls on the shield, reminding us of the celebration of Hercules' victory over Cacus considered above. The whole city is partying, and everyone celebrates and dances; again, the two ancient Roman priesthoods of the Salii and the Luperci appear in the text. It also places the emphasis on the terms *castae matres*, *sacra per urbem*. This scene is a case in which the number of visual components may draw Aeneas' attention, and the apparent disparity of related scenes involves a complex narrative that fits into the urban life of *Pallanteum* and Rome. The places mentioned are not the only reservoir of memory, but are also the stage of action, space of communication and social life. Indeed, they are not empty urban places. They are a meaningful topography, full of actors occupying the streets of the city, celebrating and dancing. In the same way as in Evander's tale, here, Roman religion is also an integral part of the social life of each one of the inhabitants of the city. This is the feeling that lingers in the reader after reading both passages in which reference is made to the religious celebration commemorating the triumph. The city that grew up incorporating people and towns is the same city that celebrates in the streets and in the public spaces.

- Vignette 6 (*Aen.* 8.666-70): This is a brief presentation of the underworld, with the Furies awaiting Catiline, who is sharply contrasted with Cato. Against the backdrop of civil war, the central theme is the regulation of social and civic life that is necessary to the development of the city, as internecine conflict among citizens must be avoided.
- Final Vignette (*Aen.* 8.671-713). It occupies the centre of the shield. It is the one that carries the most remarkable historical and ideological weight since it depicts Augustus' victory in the battle of Actium against Mark Anthony and Cleopatra's forces. Concerning the city, lines 714-16 are relevant:

at Caesar, triplici invectus Romana triumpho
moenia, dis Italis votum immortale sacrat,
maxima ter centum totam delubra per urbem.

But Caesar was riding into Rome in triple triumph, paying undying vows to the gods
of Italy and consecrating three hundred great shrines throughout the city.

- 20 According to the most important commentaries and works on the subject, these lines specifically refer to Augustus' building programme reported later in the *Res Gestae*.³¹ Most of these buildings were erected before Vergil's death (19 BCE). Augustus tells us that he restored 82 temples of the gods in 28 BCE, the year after the *Aeneid* was started³² and Vergil, like everyone else, would have known of plans for the future. Vergil would have been very much aware of the transformation of the Augustan city. However, to draw attention to the fact that Augustus built on a vast scale is no evidence in itself that Vergil is framing the Augustan building programme as a significant theme of his poem. Yet the idea of Augustus as the builder of the city of Rome is a considerable aspect of his epic.³³ The Augustan appropriations of Roman time, Roman space, Roman religion, and Roman history were inextricably connected.³⁴ As J. Morwood put it:

In giving the Augustan building programme a recurrent place in the *Aeneid*, Vergil is doing far more than merely direct our attention to some of Augustus' buildings. Vergil celebrates the achievements of Aeneas, the founder of the Roman race but clearly not of Rome itself. And of Romulus, who founded Rome but a Rome of humble thatch. Augustus, the builder, is one of the great heroes of the *Aeneid*. It is in him that the themes of city and builder become one.³⁵

- 21 The reading pursued in this paper has been adopting a different approach. The allusion is neither to his deeds nor to Augustus' building program: rather, it is to Homer and his description of Achilles' Shield, in which the city is the central topic. Moreover, there is an intertextual play with Homer's *Iliad*, apparent from the intriguing structural parallels. Homer's description features three essential elements: (1) the City at Peace, (2) the City at War, and (3) six scenes from everyday life, all framed by earth, sea, sky and the heavenly bodies at the beginning, and the river Okeanos at the end. Vergil's description comprises the same three elements, but in reverse order: first six scenes from Roman history, secondly the Battle of Actium (corresponding to the city at war) and, thirdly, the Roman celebration with Augustus at its head – which, of course, reaches to Homer's City of Peace.³⁶
- 22 Another way of looking at the *ekphrasis* with the topic of the city of Rome at its centre is by considering the scenes 1 to 4 as stages in the urban development: vignette 1) the birth of Rome, 2) the incorporation of the Sabines, 3) the incorporation of the Albans, and 4) the integration of the Etruscans. Vignettes 5 to 6 deal with the city at war: 5) the city defending itself against the foreign enemy, and 6) the city defending itself against the inner enemy. The final vignette represents the city celebrating after the wars and receiving wealthy presents from the defeated.
- 23 Let us go back to the text. In celebrating the triple triumph, Augustus consecrates three hundred temples distributed throughout the city: *maxima ter centum totam delubra per urbem*, three hundred mighty shrines throughout the city. Concerning the three hundred altars, commentators agree that this is a round number, and they interpret it within the ritual context in association with repeated triads. The numbers three and

thirty have always had special properties, and the triad dominates the structure of the *Aeneid*. We should look at these issues from a different perspective, that is taking the emphasis away from Augustus' building program and Vergil's numerological significance. I would thus suggest considering the specific image of the city and its emblematic places. This allows us to interpret Vergil's expression, three hundred altars, as a growth, a dispersion of cult sites throughout the city. An important detail is that these altars are qualified as mightiest shrines – *maxima delubra* – in the same manner as Hercules' primitive altar in Evander's account. From now on, then, there is not only an *Ara Maxima* at the centre of Rome, but there are three hundred mightiest altars, distributed throughout the city, one at every corner. It puts the emphasis more on the cult to the *Lares Compitales* than on the magic meaning of the numerological wonder. Vergil is indicating a new step in the growth of Rome, the incorporation the city's periphery and, in this process, religion is the primary mechanism of appropriation and integration that operates at the spatial level of the neighbourhood (*vici*).

- 24 After mentioning the three hundred mighty shrines, Vergil describes the joyful feast of all the inhabitants of Rome on the streets of the city. It is the third time that the city has been the stage of religious celebration (*Aen.* 8.717-19):

*laetitia ludisque viae plausuque fremebant;
omnibus in templis matrum chorus, omnibus arae;
ante aras terram caesi stravere iuvenci.*

The streets resounded with joy and festivities and applause. There was a chorus of matrons at every temple, at every temple there were altars and the ground before the altars was strewn with the bodies of slaughtered bullocks.

- 25 Who is the main character? Augustus or the City of Rome? The grandeur and brightness of the city of Rome surprise us even more, a collective hero, whose urban space grows and now contains three hundred new temples that completely redefine the urban space. These places are not only buildings that embellish the city, but they are also the meeting place of all the citizens and the space for collective ritual practices. Thus, we can see that the idea of dispersion conveyed by all these buildings tells us about the need of including the *vici*, all of Rome's neighbourhoods. In other words, it means the integration of peripheral communities that from now on will have their centres as places of cult and communication, as the text says in lines 718-19, where the singing of choirs and sacrifices in each one of the *arae* is mentioned. This image of the city of Rome, with its streets full of people celebrating a feast that Vergil shows us three times in the same book, deserves careful consideration, not just from the standpoint of its exaltation of the greatness of Augustan Rome. The dominant view is that Vergil's political goal in writing the *Aeneid* was to link Aeneas to Augustus. In this context, Vergil planned Book VIII as an interlude to underline the ties between Rome's past and present and to characterise Aeneas, Hercules, Saturn, and Evander as forerunners of Augustus, as links in the chain of the founders of Rome. The book is thus about the sacralisation of Augustus' power. Vergil did not seek to recreate the past, but to see in the past sobering examples for the present, so that places of memory could be places of Augustan discourse. Our focus on the city of Rome and its places and religious practices of its inhabitants points towards another direction. The closure of Book VIII is also

significant (Aen. 8.729-31):

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

Such were the scenes spread over the shield that Vulcan made and Venus gave to her son. Marvelling at it, and rejoicing at the things pictured on it without knowing what they were, Aeneas lifted on to his shoulder the fame and the fate of his descendants.

- 26 The keyword in Book VIII is the verb *mirari*, attested ten times. While Aeneas goes up the Tiber, the waves, and the forests marvel at the unique vision of his men and their fleet. Aeneas is admired on the hike and admires the Shield. While walking around the future site of Rome, Aeneas *capitur locis*, is captured by the place; now he *miratur rerum*. Rome's topography is more substantial than its history.

Final Reflections

- 27 Evander's account is a topographical description that serves Vergil's historical conception, a version of history that distances itself from historical narratives such as that by Livy since it traces Roman history back to Janus and Saturn. The walk through the *Pallanteum* sets up a bridge between prehistoric Italy and historical Rome over the centuries. The most illustrious places in the city that will become the centre of the world are foreshadowed. Vergil's description focuses on urban sites, implying that the city and its monuments are indeed historical evidence in the same way as its political and military characters, so that the topographical description of Rome is indispensable to the understanding of the importance of the mythical and historical facts that have left their mark on the city. This dynamic city grows continually, and the site that receive a mention speak of exiles and immigrants that find a new home in Rome.
- 28 Within the first scene of the Shield, the only event that does not happen in Rome is the Battle of Actium. However, the conclusion of this vignette is the consequence of the victory for the *urbs* and its inhabitants through the effect on the *victi*, the loot acquired and the amount of build, reaching the three hundred temples built in the age of Augustus. Meanwhile, the last vignette shows a redefinition of the *urbs* as space, indicating how historical evolution modifies urban spaces through sites consisting of places, monuments, and religious practices.
- 29 Therefore, the geographical description of the *Pallanteum* takes on a new dimension. The Vergilian description of places, with their distinctive organisation of space, also strengthens the memory of the *urbs*, a city that treasures the memories of its history in its buildings. Thus, the present approach leads to the topic of the construction of historical memory through the recognition of the value of urban places as a reservoir of memory not only within the text, but also outside it, as is the case when geographic description creates an actual external reference, not only through the *monumenta* but mostly through the reader's memory. Vergil's text resorts to the city of Rome as an «intertext»: it mentions places and buildings that every citizen can recognise and enact. Besides, two types of memory may be identified: the citizen's memory, that of every reader who constructs it and in turn evokes it, and the city's memory, in which a

city treasures the memories of its history in its buildings. The best example is the first one: the *Ara Maxima* from Vergil's time is the urban site that keeps the memory of the first altar - public space - the first calendar and the first religious celebration of the place. Roman religion, rather than power and victory, is what guarantees the continuity of Rome from Hercules to Augustus.

- 30 This paper has proposed a reading of several well-known passages through the prism of the interplay between religion and urbanism, with a view to appreciating the inner connection between Roman religion and urban development and to looking at Roman religion as a factor that guarantees continuity and identity. Roman religion is the articulating principle that organises urban development in time and space. Book VIII is an outstanding example of how urban places play a vital role in the articulation of Roman religion. The sites that it touches are not only the reservoir of memory, but are also the stage of action: spaces of communication and social relations in a city that grew up incorporating people and towns. Roman religion is part of the social life of each one of the inhabitants of the city, who worship the gods in the streets and in the public spaces of Rome.
- 31 During the walk through the site that will become Rome, Aeneas *capitur locis*, the places capture him, and *miratur rerum*, he is charmed by the scene of the Shield. We too, reading the *Aeneid*, are caught by the places, and we are also charmed by the image of a vibrant city that celebrates in its streets.

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NOTES

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2. RÜPKE 2015 offers an important theoretical reflection on the concept of public and urban religion and the relation between religious agency, identity, and communication.
3. EDWARDS 1996, 44.
4. CANKI 1985 stresses the importance of places in Roman religion.
5. *Aen.* 8.184-94.
6. The text is that of the OCT edition of R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford 1969). The translation is by David West (*Vergil. The Aeneid*, London 2003).
7. RÜPKE 1995, 2015, 2018.
8. GALINSKY 1996, 1976; LOAR 2017.
9. *Aen.* 8. 205-206: *at furiis Caci mens effera, ne quid inausum/ aut intractatum scelerisve dolive fuisset* ('But Cacus... thinking in the savagery of his heart not to leave any crime or treachery undared or unattempted.').
10. EDWARDS 1996, 32.
11. *Aen.* 8. 306-336.

12. Evander's ethnography is a combination of two accounts of the history of civilisation. See ZETZEL 1997, 191 and GRANDSDEN 1976, 37-41.
13. Vergil's sources preserve the complex, blurred historical tradition as it may also be read in Dionysius of Halicarnassus.
14. This reading is comparable to some inglorious incidents and places in Roman history recalled on the Shield.
15. *Aen.* 8.641.
16. Regarding Janus' relationship with Saturn, we must remember that in *Aen.* 7.107 both gods were together in the vestibule of Latinus' Palace, an apparent reference to an Italic past and to the succession of foundations: Janus as the local deity and Saturn as a foundational instance in bringing in the law.
17. Suet. *Aug.* 72.
18. *Aen.* 8.364: *aude, hospes, contemnere opes.*
19. WISEMAN 1981; EDWARDS 1996.
20. GRANDSDEN 1976, for example, states that the areas described are directly related to Aeneas' shield; for ZANKER 1988, the places are ideologically related to Augustus; RENAUD 1990, 80-98, states that foundational stages are shown in pairs of names and places, Janus, Saturn, Evander, Romulus and Augustus, while for PAPAIOANNOU 2003 the sites flow together in Evander to show his nature as a great civiliser and as a bridge between Greece, Troy and Latium. But beyond these attempts to understand the selection of the places mentioned in Evander and Aeneas' walk, it is clear that they all recognise a logic in the organisation, though only Renaud attempts to find a relationship between the organisation and the description of the space covered and the places indicated. The ideological reading of places in an Augustan key remains, in my view, a viable path and is not necessarily in conflict with the line of investigation proposed here.
21. *Aen.* 8.312.
22. PANOUSI 2010, 52-65.
23. *Iliad* 18.483-608.
24. Along with Jupiter's prophecy to Venus in *Aen.* 1.257-96, Anchises's revelation to Aeneas in *Aen.* 6.756-886 and the final agreement between Jupiter and Juno in *Aen.* 12.830-840.
25. HARDIE 1986, 347 and WOODMAN 1989 (= 2012, 147-61) also insist on Virgil's intention of offering an ordered chronology.
26. Undoubtedly this type of formulation is typical of historians evident in the examples collected by WOODMAN: Tac. *Ann.* 12.40.5: *ad temporum ordinem redeo*; Sall. *Hist.* 1.2 Ramsey: *a principio urbis*; Livy in *Praef.* 1: *primordio urbis*, and likewise Florus in *Praef.* 1: *a rege Romulo in Caesarem Augustum*, whose similarity to the Vergilian formula is straightforward. But, at the same time, Horace in *Ars P.* 147 denies that an epic poem can narrate an account from the beginning: *nec gemino bellum Troianum orditur ab ovo*; to which we must add Cicero, *De or.* 2.63, who claims that the historian *ordinem temporum desiderat*, and Macrobius, *Sat.* 5.14.11, claiming that the poet must shun the *historicum stilum...non per ordinem dirigendo quae gesta sunt*.
27. Livy 1.4: the birth of Rome hinged on a decisive divine intervention; had it not been so, Rome would not have been founded.
28. *Aen.* 8.342-43.
29. HARRISON 1997.
30. MORGAN 2005, 190-203.
31. RG 19.
32. RG 20.4.
33. FRATANTUONO-SMITH 2018 *ad loc.*
34. MORWOOD 1991, 212-23. This is perhaps the most frequently quoted paper on the topic of the City in the *Aeneid* in academic bibliographies, cited by scholars as an authoritative work.

35. MORWOOD 1991, 221.

36. CASALI 2006 and PALMISCIANO 2012.

ABSTRACTS

Vergil's *Aeneid*, written in the Augustan period, when Rome appeared at the height of its urban development and was widely regarded as the city *par excellence*, powerfully addresses the changes that the space of the city of Rome experienced over time. In the poem, different sites of the city appear modified by many agents who had appropriated, transformed, and crafted them through a range of religious and civic practices. Subtly, Vergil takes the topic of urban development and brings Rome's humble origins and its emblematic places to the memory of his contemporaries, with a strong emphasis on different kinds of religious images and expressions. In this way, the focus on the relationship between Roman religion and urban space allows us to read the *Aeneid* from a viewpoint that warrants further investigation.

L'*Eneide* di Virgilio, composta nell'età augustea, quando Roma sembrava all'apice del suo sviluppo urbano ed era ampiamente considerata la città per eccellenza, testimonia con forza i cambiamenti intervenuti nello spazio civico nel corso del tempo. Nel poema, i luoghi della città appaiono modificarsi nel processo di appropriazione da parte di agenti diversi, che li hanno trasformati e rimodellati attraverso una serie di pratiche religiose e civili. Virgilio affronta, in maniera sottile, la questione dello sviluppo urbano e ripropone alla memoria dei suoi contemporanei le umili origini di Roma e i suoi luoghi emblematici, ponendo particolare enfasi su diversi tipi di immagini ed espressioni religiose. Sulla base di queste considerazioni, un'analisi del rapporto tra religione romana e spazio urbano consente di leggere l'*Eneide* da un punto di vista che può essere foriero di nuove piste di ricerca.

INDEX

Keywords: Roman religion, urban space, Aeneid, Roman topography, Roman rites

Parole chiave: religione romana, spazio urbano, Eneide, topografia romana, riti romani

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